Evaluating the Shelter Cluster
Overview and tools

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Abbreviations and glossary

ALNAP	Active Learning Network on Accountability and Performance
CAAP	Commitments to Accountability to Affected Populations
CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CPM	Cluster Performance Monitoring
ECB	Emergency Capacity Building Project
GLIDE	GLobal IDEntifier (number)
GSC	Global Shelter Cluster
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IDP	Internally displaced person
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies
NFI	Non-food items
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development / Disaster Assistance Committee
SAG	Strategic Advisory Group
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
ToR	Terms of Reference
TWIG	Technical working group
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Contents

Introduction

The Shelter Cluster

The Shelter Cluster coordinates the work of organizations involved in provision of shelter and NFI during humanitarian crises which require an international response. The Shelter Cluster is co-chaired at global level by IFRC and UNHCR. IFRC is convener of the Shelter Cluster for natural and man-made disasters: UNHCR leads the Shelter Cluster on conflict related emergencies.

At country level, the designation of Cluster Lead Agency usually mirrors arrangements at the global-level. In some cases, however, other organisations, including IOM, UN-Habitat and NGOs, may be better placed to take the lead.

External evaluation in the Shelter Cluster

To date, most reviews of Shelter Cluster performance have taken place following natural disasters. Most reviews have focused on the planning, implementation and outputs of coordination. In a small number of cases, cluster lead agencies have commissioned or facilitated external evaluation of shelter delivery.

Most evaluations have taken place after cluster handover or closure. Independent reviews have been intended primarily for purposes of learning and to inform future Shelter Cluster deployments. In addition, they have provided external evidence to demonstrate how personnel, finance and resources have been utilised.

The global Shelter Cluster now wishes to define a common approach to external evaluation capable of use at different phases of the shelter response and in situations of either natural disaster or conflict.

A common approach can facilitate evaluation of coordination and shelter outcomes. Acknowledging the different contexts in which lead agencies operate, the global Shelter Cluster wishes to use external evaluations to compare and contrast cluster performance in different emergencies and countries.

How to use this guide

The contents of this guide are intended primarily for those commissioning, planning, managing or facilitating external Shelter Cluster evaluations, and for evaluators, cluster coordinators and cluster partners.

The guide should be used as a framework, with annexes providing a number of checklists. Generic tools and templates in the annexes should be adapted to resources and context and reflect the values and evaluation standards of the agencies that commission the evaluation.

Key concepts and definitions are listed in the glossary.

Part 1: Planning a Shelter Cluster evaluation

1.1 Role of the evaluation manager

The evaluation manager is responsible for initiating and overseeing the evaluation from the planning stage to implementation of the evaluation and utilisation of its findings and recommendations. [1]

The evaluation manager is normally a senior staff member in the agency commissioning the evaluation. If a group of agencies provides funding, an evaluation manager from one, capable of providing management support, must be appointed. If an internal evaluation management team is assembled, one member must take on the role of manager.[2]

The evaluation manager oversees logistical and contractual arrangements, directly manages external consultants, secures approval of inception and evaluation reports, and ensures quality control throughout the process.[3]

⇒ ***Tool 1 Summary of tasks for the evaluation manager (planning stage)***

1.2 Involving partners and stakeholders

The evaluation management team will consist of three people, one of [whom] is from the Shelter & Settlements department, one from the Asia-Pacific Zone Office and one from [the] Pacific Regional Office.[4]

The evaluation manager should elicit buy-in and co-operation from internal and external stakeholders, for example, the cluster coordinator, cluster partners and cluster host agency. Stakeholders may be involved in evaluation design through the evaluation management team or a reference group. Involving cluster partners is also a way of finding out about other evaluations of relevance to the cluster, building on findings and avoiding duplication.

Participation in evaluation planning should be wider when the scope of the evaluation includes delivery by Shelter Cluster partners. Evaluation planning may include country-level cluster partners, other clusters, the shelter coordination team, and the affected population. The evaluation manager will need to build trust and address possible concerns, for example, the safety of informants and of evaluation teams or the reputation of lead or partner agencies.[5]

1.3 Purpose, timing, budget, audience

'The purpose of an evaluation is always an action that the evaluation is intended to make possible.'[6]

A strategic approach to evaluation considers rationale and intended use *before* commitment to the evaluation is made (see 1.3.1). With the management team and stakeholders, the evaluation manager should define the purpose of the evaluation, showing who will use it and how it will be used (see also Section 3). S/he should consider who will take action as a result of evaluation findings and what decisions rest on these findings.[7]

If no action or decisions are intended or possible, the manager should ask whether spending time and money on an external evaluation is worthwhile (see Section 1.4 for alternatives). Questions to consider include:

- □ Has the shelter response / cluster deployment been large scale or costly?
- □ Does the cluster lead agency foresee a long-term role for the Shelter Cluster?
- □ Does the shelter response have unknown or disputed outcomes?
- □ Are stakeholders interested in an evaluation?
- □ Is an evaluation likely to add new knowledge?
- □ Can the new knowledge be used by the cluster lead agency / Shelter Cluster / Global Cluster?[8]
- □ Is it safe to conduct an evaluation?

The decision will also be affected by factors such as timing, budget and information available.

1.3.1 Timing

The purpose of an evaluation is partly determined by its timing. Timing is also a factor in gauging availability of information (see 1.3.3).

Table 1 Evaluation purpose and timing

Possible purpose	**Evaluation timing**
To assist the lead agency and partners to ensure that the work of the Shelter Cluster is on track and that it is likely to meet its strategic objectives.[9]	During deployment (e.g. real-time, interim or mid-term evaluation)
To enable the global lead agency to review the effectiveness of shelter coordination services it provided as well as [that] of the shelter humanitarian response to this emergency, and identify key lessons and recommendations which will improve and inform future response.[10]	End of deployment / shortly after cluster closure or handover

Evaluations should coincide with planning in order that the why can inform decision-making.

'Evaluations that appear after major decisions have been made are facing an uphill struggle if they are to have any impact. To have a better chance of bringing about change, evaluation timetabling should start with an analysis of programme planning cycles, and ensure that evaluation products feed into this.'[11]

On the other hand, field research should be scheduled to avoid foreseeable events.

'Apart from the decision on when an evaluation should be carried out within the project cycle, climatic, seasonal and cultural-religious (e.g. Ramadan) events also need to be considered'[12]

1.3.2 Budget

If the purpose of an evaluation includes accountability, one or more external evaluators will be required. Evaluation personnel are normally the most expensive budget item.

It is good practice to build a percentage for evaluation into project budgets. The ILO, for example, sets aside at least 2% of a project budget for evaluation. The IFRC builds in 3-5% for evaluation of projects costing more than 200,000 Swiss francs. Joint evaluations provide an opportunity to share with partners the costs of commissioning an evaluation and to expand 'ownership' of evaluation findings and recommendations.

UN-Habitat, REACH, IOM, OXFAM and IFRC deployed personnel and/or provided in-kind support, for example by seconding staff or supplying vehicles, accommodation and local transport. Additional funding of 20,000 Swiss francs was provided by AusAid.[13]

Evaluation of programmes by the Shelter-CCCM Cluster's Rental Working Group in Haiti involved CRS, Concern Worldwide, IFRC, IOM, JP HRO, and WVI. SIDA provided funding of $50,000.[14]

If an evaluation will be used to compare and contrast cluster performance, the budget must be sufficient to enable evaluators to match the scope of comparable evaluations.

If insufficient funds are available, alternatives to external evaluation should be considered. See Section 1.4.

⇒ ***Tool 2 Budget for an external evaluation***

1.3.3 Timeline

If the scope of Shelter Cluster evaluation includes shelter results, the number of days allocated and the timeline for evaluations is likely to increase.

Time needed for an external evaluation

Budgets must include time for initial briefing and preparatory work for consultants, field visits to one or more sites, and time for further interviews, drafting, revision and presentation of findings and reports at country and/or headquarters level. ALNAP estimates that a 'small' evaluation (of a single activity at a single site by a single agency) typically requires 3–7 days per consultant for preparatory work.

Fieldwork will require at least 12–14 days, including travel. It will include at least one week at each major site included in the scope. Detailed consultation with beneficiaries will require 2-3 weeks per site. A quantitative evaluation requires a bigger team who will spend longer in the field, particularly if consultation with the affected population is required.

A small evaluation will typically require about 7–12 days for post-fieldwork activities, such as analysis, writing, circulation and comment on drafts. The time needed for post-fieldwork will increase according to size of evaluation team and scope of evaluation. [15]

Tool 3 provides examples from UNHCR, showing that an evaluation, depending on its type and scope, is likely to take from four to fifteen months.

⇒ **Tool 3 Evaluation timeline – examples**

1.3.4. Availability of information

Lack of information or informants is likely to be a significant issue following rapid onset disaster, changes in operational context, in cluster operations where monitoring systems are weak or absent, travel or communication is difficult or staff turnover is high. If a cluster is due to close or the lead agency due to hand over to another agency, evaluations should take place within three months of closure or hand-over in order to avoid loss of information.

It is the job of the evaluation manager to collate background information and web links and provide a dossier for the evaluation team at the time the contract is signed. Global or country websites alone rarely provide a full or up to date record of cluster activities. If there is no 'knowledge bank' (for example, a Dropbox) available to the evaluation manager, s/he should reconsider the value of an external evaluation: it is likely to be more efficient to collate knowledge by other means.

If significant information or informants are *not* available, the evaluation manager should note gaps. Depending on the purpose of the evaluation, it may be appropriate to delay the process until information is available. However, too long a delay will mean that informants' memory of events will have faded. In these circumstances, alternatives to evaluation should be considered. (See Section 1.4).

Interviewing stakeholders one year after the shelter cluster was active meant that recall of events in detail by informants was not always easy. [16]

'As the review was getting to an end, new documents and information were made available ... sometimes giving new facts that obliged [us] to review the findings ... some interviewees were not currently involved in the ... shelter response; some key informants were on vacation.' [17]

⇒ ***Tool 4 Documents for the evaluator***

1.4 Alternatives to external evaluation

A field visit by external evaluators may be difficult or impossible because of security, insurance or liability. In some agencies, recruitment of external consultants may be too slow to contribute to real-time learning. If insufficient funds, time or information are available, alternatives to external evaluation may be preferable.

In some agencies, the type of evaluation depends on the duration of a project or its cost. In the example from ILO below, external evaluation is used when project expenditure exceeds a certain figure.[18] Similarly, the cost of the shelter response or cluster deployment may trigger different types of cluster evaluation.

If a cluster deployment is recent, short-term or small-scale an internal evaluation may be more appropriate and proportionate. Alternatives to external evaluation may be preferable to *no* evaluation. IOM recognises the value of self-evaluation and UNHCR the advantage of using agency staff as real-time evaluators.[19] [20] IFRC has employed staff from other departments to conduct Shelter Cluster evaluations and UNHCR the global shelter cluster's partner REACH.

The IASC provides tools and indicators for cluster performance monitoring (CPM) and analysis by partners in processes that can be led by OCHA or by the cluster lead agency. [21]

Audit,[22] after-action review, 'good enough' tools, management visits by lead agency staff, including the Global Focal Point for Coordination, and end of mission debriefing are among other options for learning and improvement at country and global level.[23] These are low-cost or no-cost options and the Shelter Cluster Toolkit includes relevant tools. [24]

⇒ ***Tool 5*** ***Alternatives to evaluation***
⇒ ***Tool 8*** ***Shelter Cluster evaluation terms of reference - template***

1.5 Evaluation scope

Scope represents the categories of activity that will be evaluated and the geographical area(s), operational phase or dates the evaluation will consider. Involving stakeholders is valuable in identifying scope and increasing interest in findings.[25] The evaluation's terms of reference (ToR) should name any target groups to be included and highlight any groups or aspects to be excluded. [26] [27]

If evaluation reports are used to compare and contrast cluster performance, their scope must have common elements.

Scope	Example
Coordination	- The evaluation will cover the period during which this agency led the Shelter Cluster and examines the processes related to the provision of coordination in the shelter sector, including cluster activation, staffing, activities, support and handover.[28]
Coordination	- The evaluation will focus on the examination of processes relevant to the provision of Shelter Cluster coordination services. Shelter operations themselves and their achievements will be referred to only when they support the main focus of this evaluation.[29]
Shelter operations	- Evaluation scope: shelter provision in Regions X, Y and Z[30] The performance of the Shelter Cluster coordination team will not be assessed during this evaluation.[31]
Shelter operations	- How the shelter needs of the population affected by the disaster in his country were met during the time that this agency was leading the Shelter/NFI Cluster.

The scope of an evaluation will also be determined by its budget. If there are few funds, geographic scope may be confined to the area covered by the main cluster and/or selected sub-clusters. If budget and/or access are limited, options for remote evaluation or alternatives to external evaluation should be considered.

1.6 Evaluation questions

Evaluation questions build on purpose and scope. They help give focus and direction. They are the overarching, top-level questions that the evaluation asks and which evaluators seek to answer. [32] Evaluation stakeholders, including the affected population, should be involved in agreeing these questions. It is the job of the evaluation manager to ensure that evaluation questions are set. It is the job of external evaluators to develop second-level questions used in the implementation phase of the evaluation.

One year after the earthquake, almost a million people continue to live in emergency shelter. This has provoked questions from the affected population and others.

- *Why have shelter agencies been unable to fulfil targets for interim shelter solutions?*
- *Why are people still living beneath plastic sheets?*
- *What more could shelter agencies and others have done?*[33]

The greater the number of questions, the less attention each one can receive.[34] Evaluations must therefore focus on the questions of greatest concern and on eliciting information that will be used for major programme or policy decisions.[35] [36]

1.7 Evaluation criteria, frameworks and indicators

1.7.1 Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria define the standards against which programmes will be assessed. The evaluation criteria of the OECD/DAC and the norms and standards of the UN Evaluation Group represent the most commonly used criteria in the humanitarian sector. The use of common criteria enables evaluations to be compared and contrasted and assists evaluation managers in framing evaluation questions. Some agencies use their own evaluation standards in addition to those of OECD/DAC. [*]

1.7.2 Evaluation frameworks

Using the IASC's core cluster functions to structure the evaluation report makes it easier for evaluation managers to compare and contrast cluster performance and to monitor the use of Shelter Cluster tools.[37] [†]

[*] E.g. IFRC Evaluation Standards: utility; feasibility; ethics and legality; impartiality and independence; transparency; accuracy; participation; collaboration.
[†] Shelter Cluster coordination management, https://www.sheltercluster.org/References/Pages/Tool-Kit-Coordination-Management.aspx

Table 2 IASC core cluster functions and Shelter Cluster tools

Cluster core function	Shelter Cluster tool (examples)
1. Supporting shelter service delivery	- Meeting notes template - SAG Terms of reference [38] - Contact list template [39]
2. Informing strategic decision-making of the HC/HCT for the humanitarian response	- Draft assessment guidelines [40] - Guidance on mainstreaming gender and diversity in shelter programmes[41]
3. Planning and strategy development	- Shelter Cluster Backbone [42] - CAP Guidelines [43] - Technical Guidance Note [44]
4. Monitoring and reporting the implementation of the cluster strategy and results; recommending corrective action where necessary	- Basic Information to be included in an End of Mission Report [45] - IFRC Short mission performance review
5. Contingency planning/preparedness/capacity-building	- Checklist for Cluster/Sector Contingency Planning [46]
6. Advocacy	- Factsheet Template - Shelter Cluster Brand Guidelines - About the <COUNTRY> Shelter Cluster

However, the language of humanitarian reform is likely to be unfamiliar to many evaluation informants and this should be reflected in wording of second-level questions.

No single framework can address all the issues of importance to a Shelter Cluster evaluation. However, core cluster functions and familiar standards will help ensure evaluations are used in comparing and contrasting performance. Other commonly used standards are listed in the Shelter Cluster's handbook Coordination in Natural Disasters. [47] Standards and guidelines to consider in cluster evaluations may include

- Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (2004)
- Humanitarian Accountability Partnership standards (2010)
- NGO/Red Cross/Red Crescent Code of Conduct (1994)
- People in Aid Code (2003)
- Sphere Coordination and Collaboration Standard (2011)
- Sphere Shelter and Settlement Standard (2011)
- The Shelter Cluster's local or global standards, guidelines and specifications
- UNEG Standards for Evaluation in the UN System (2005)

1.7.3 Evaluation indicators

The ToR should state any indicators the evaluation is expected to use. The Shelter Cluster has contributed to development of a number of standards and indicators. People affected by the emergency may also have been asked to develop indicators by cluster partners.[48]

Table 3 Common indicators

Theme	Sources of indicators
Cluster core functions	IASC Activation checklist
	IASC Cluster Performance Monitoring (CPM) process
	Shelter Cluster Performance Management System
	Sphere Coordination and Collaboration Standard
Shelter response	Global Shelter Cluster (see Tool 7)
	Sphere Shelter and Settlement Standards
	Country level cluster
	Indicators developed by affected population
Accountability to affected populations	ECB/GSC Shelter Accountability Framework
	IASC CAAP
	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
Cluster personnel	People In Aid Code
	Sphere Aid Worker Performance Standard

⇒ ***Tool 7 Global Shelter Cluster core shelter indicators***

1.8 Evaluation terms of reference [49]

A template for a ToR is included in the annexes. The ToR summarizes the purpose of an evaluation and how it will be carried out. It is based on the planning and consultation processes that have preceded them. It forms the basis of the contract between commissioning agency and evaluator(s) and, in a joint evaluation, should reflect the concerns of partners.

The evaluation manager should consider whether the ToR can answer the questions potential evaluators may have, for example:

- *Is there likely to be sufficient access and information to answer the evaluation questions in the time available?*
- *Is there any flexibility for negotiation if the evaluator(s) finds problems, e.g. with access, once the evaluation has started?*
- *Are there any evaluation methods in the ToR that are not negotiable (for example, a structured survey that will be statistically significant)? Are these methods reasonable given the time and budget available?*
- *Will the evaluation require expert knowledge, for example of a particular country, approach to shelter, cross-cutting issue, evaluation method or language?*
- *Will the evaluation manager and stakeholders be available and able to provide logistical and administrative support at the time of the evaluation?*[50]

⇒ ***Tool 8 Shelter Cluster evaluation terms of reference - template***

1.9 Appointing consultants

Recruitment should begin as early as possible with distribution of an invitation for calls of interest (see Tool 9). This will produce the widest possible choice of consultants and ensure there is time to check references and conduct child protection screening where possible. [*]

Larger teams take longer to recruit, are more expensive and require greater support from the evaluation manager and in the field. These issues may be partly addressed through joint evaluation (see section 1.3.2) or by having an evaluation team that includes agency staff as well as external consultants. However, in an *external* evaluation, staff should not be in a majority in the evaluation team nor take the lead role.

Qualifications and level of experience will be partly determined by evaluation scope and timing. If a single consultant is to evaluate both coordination and response (likely to be possible only in a small-scale response), s/he will require experience both of operational and institutional issues.

> *When dealing with sensitive issues of partnership, you need consultants with an understanding of institutional relationships in general and partnerships in particular. For a real-time evaluation, you need consultants with sufficient operational experience to be credible to the staff in the field.* [51]

A shelter response can encompass a range of approaches, for example, tents and tarpaulins, cash transfers, transitional shelter, host family support, collective centres, urban or rural response, permanent shelter, settlement planning. It may be more appropriate, therefore, to appoint a larger evaluation team or to conduct separate evaluations that employ evaluators with different skills. Following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, four different evaluations were conducted at different times. They considered the quality of emergency shelter, cluster coordination, overall shelter response and rental support.

Gender should be highlighted in the ToR, briefing and evaluation scope. Like staff, potential consultants who will have access to the affected population should, where possible, be screened for purposes of child protection.[52]

The need for diversity in evaluation teams should be balanced with the need for security not only for evaluation team members but for staff who accompany them.

> *When putting an evaluation team together, consider how team members will be perceived. Local consultants may be at risk if they belong to a community involved in a local conflict. International consultants may be seen as representing parties to international conflicts. The commissioning agency has a duty of care towards consultants and to staff who accompany them. Whether or not it acknowledges a legal duty of care to consultants, an agency's reputation is likely to be damaged if it fails to protect them.*[53]

⇒ ***Tool 9*** ***Call for expression of interest - sample***
⇒ ***Tool 10*** ***Incorporating gender into a Shelter Cluster evaluation***

[*] See Routier, (2010). Note that consultants evaluating shelter operations can be expected to have access to the affected population to a greater extent than those evaluating coordination only.

Part 2: Implementing the evaluation

2.1 Role of the evaluation manager

During implementation, the evaluation manager acts as 'broker' between the evaluator(s) and the commissioning agency and/or steering group. The evaluator should receive background documentation and a list of contacts and key informants.

Evaluators may require assistance arranging interviews or meeting with stakeholders and project staff. The evaluation manager should ensure that key informants, particularly senior managers, know about the evaluation, its ToR and timeframe, and that they are likely to be approached by the evaluator. The evaluation manager will also check that the process is evaluation is running to schedule.

The evaluation manager should assess the quality of inception and draft evaluation reports and provide feedback. However, s/he must also respect the independence of the evaluation and be prepared to accept findings and conclusions that do not support preconceived ideas about cluster performance.[54]

- ⇒ ***Tool 4*** ***Documents for the evaluator***
- ⇒ ***Tool 11*** ***Summary of tasks for the evaluation manager (implementation stage)***
- ⇒ ***Tool 12*** ***Summary of tasks for the evaluator***

2.2 Inception report

The inception report gives the evaluator(s) an opportunity to deepen his/her understanding of the ToR and to develop a methodology and work plan. The inception report should help clarify areas of uncertainty and resolve any conflicting expectations. It enables the evaluation manager and stakeholders to see how well the evaluator(s) understands the evaluation purpose and questions, and whether the work plan is feasible and comprehensive.

The inception report should be submitted *at least* two weeks before any field visits in order to allow time for the evaluation manager to circulate it for comments and for discussion with the evaluator.[55] The evaluation manager should check the inception report against the ToR, and travel plans against schedules and important dates at headquarters and in the field. Any changes to the ToR should be agreed in writing.

- ⇒ ***Tool 13*** ***Inception report – format***

2.3 Evaluation methods

Shelter Cluster evaluations are likely to use mixed methods – quantitative and qualitative approaches. The methods used will be determined in part by the evaluation budget (see section 1.3), scope, and access. ALNAP ranks methods in order of increasing difficulty where access is limited and suggests possible alternatives (see Tool 14).

Time and resources will affect the depth or level of evaluation as shown in Table 4 below. Most Shelter Cluster reviews to date have resembled Level 3 evaluations in which methods normally comprise

- Interviews with relevant departmental staff
- Desk review
- Minimal analysis of quantitative data
- Interviews in the field
- Email questionnaires and telephone interviews [56]

Evaluations of the response to Typhoon Bopha or the work of the Haiti Rental Working Group resemble Level 4 or Level 5 evaluations. These evaluations have required additional time and resources for collection of credible quantitative data (see 1.3.2). For a detailed discussion of research methods, including sampling, see e.g. Chapter 5 in Buchanan-Smith and Cosgrave, (2013). [57]

Table 4 Levels of evaluation studies on the basis of resources available[58]

Level 5	Thorough research leading to in-depth analysis
Level 4	Good sampling and data collection methods used to gather data which are representative of target population
Level 3	A rapid survey is conducted using a convenient sample of participants
Level 2	A fairly good mix of people are asked their perspectives about the project
Level 1	A few people are asked their perspectives about the project
Level 0	Decision-makers' impressions are based on anecdotes, brief encounters; mostly intuition

It is important that both evaluation manager and evaluator acknowledge the effect of resource constraints in the planning and inception stages and reflect these in the choice of evaluation methods and reporting.

⇒ ***Tool 13 Inception report – format***

2.3.1 Desk and data review

Background documentation needed by the evaluator is listed in Tool 4. Baseline and monitoring data are frequently lacking in humanitarian responses. This is partly due to the nature of emergency response but may also indicate lack of personnel, knowledge management, partnership or support for service delivery in the field or at headquarters, issues that evaluator(s) should explore through key informant interviews.

Lack of monitoring data may make it difficult for evaluators to comment on the effectiveness of the shelter response. [59] Absence of key documents and data should be considered at the planning stage (see 1.3.4), acknowledged by the evaluation manager and possible solutions advanced in the inception report.

Recognizing their differences, it is also important to remember that both monitoring and evaluation are integrally linked; monitoring typically provides data for evaluation, and elements of evaluation … occur when monitoring.[60]

At times, managers seem to request evaluations to compensate for the lack of monitoring information. This is an expensive way of obtaining information that should be routinely collected and analysed. [61]

Table 5 Missing documentation

Missing documentation [62]	**Possible solution**
Owing to rapid response or to management issues, planning and monitoring documents may be scarce, cluster objectives unclear, and early plans out-dated because the context has changed.	Consider constructing a chronology of the cluster deployment in the period evaluated. Use interviews with the shelter coordination team and partners to identify the cluster's actual or implicit objectives and how these changed over time. An evaluator with shelter experience can assess changes in physical shelter and settlement quality through observation (see 2.3.3 below).[63]
Shelter baseline data may have been destroyed in the disaster or become irrelevant – for example, because a large proportion of the population has been displaced.	Ask key informants, including beneficiaries, about the extent to which shelter conditions have changed and reasons for the changes. Use photographs to compare and contrast conditions before and after the shelter response. Ask evaluators to take photographs that provide evidence of shelter conditions at sites aided by cluster partners and by other agencies in order to assess Shelter Cluster contribution. [64]

2.3.2 Key informant interviews

Key informants are individuals who, because of their role or experience, can be expected to have an informed view of the Shelter Cluster, its deployment in the country, the shelter response or the emergency context.

Key informants will include cluster lead agency managers, staff and their counterparts at global level, the cluster coordinator(s), shelter coordination team and the cluster's partners at national and sub-cluster level.

Table 6 Key informants: Shelter Cluster partners [65]

Host government	Ministries or central/local government departments responsible for civil emergencies or housing.
UN/IOM	Agencies with a role in shelter, for example, UNHCR, IOM, and UN-Habitat. Representatives of the Humanitarian/Resident Coordinator or OCHA. Specialists in individual cross-cutting issues.
NGOs	National and international NGOs delivering shelter and NFI or working in related areas, such as the environment, legal aid or human rights.
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement	The IFRC or Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies delivering shelter and NFI.
Other clusters	Notably Camp Coordination and Camp Management, Early Recovery, Protection, WASH.
Donors	Shelter or cluster donors, such as DFID, ECHO and USAID.
Others	Any other organizations with an interest in humanitarian shelter and NFI, for example, ICRC (usually a Shelter Cluster observer and frequently involved in NFI distribution), academic organisations, women's organisations, private sector organisations.

Most key informants will be suggested by the evaluation manager and the cluster coordinator. However, the evaluator should aim to include former members of the shelter coordination team and representatives of other organisations outside the cluster that have an interest in humanitarian shelter or humanitarian response (see Table 7).

Table 7 Other key informants

Regional offices	Regional manager, technical or coordination specialists.
Cluster observers or non-members, working in shelter	For example, ICRC.
Other local organisations	Faith-based organisations, community organisations that represent the affected population.
NGO networks	Local networks, HAP, ICVA, People In Aid, Sphere.
Diaspora	Migrant organisations whose members have remitted funds to the

organisations	affected country. *
Cluster staff	Former shelter coordination team members

Face to face or phone/Skype interviews should be conducted in accordance with the evaluator's and the contracting agency's code of ethics, and key informants informed about their rights and confidentiality (see Tool 15).

Semi-structured interviews with key informants normally last 45-60 minutes and have a maximum of 25 questions. [66] Questions will vary: different informants have different perspectives on the cluster and the response. An informant's answer may require a follow-up question for clarification or to deepen the evaluator's understanding; informants may be asked to help fill gaps in documented information.

[Key informants] included UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs, IFRC, donors and the government's Disaster Information Management Centre. In the absence of any documentation analyzing the response these were lengthy interviews usually taking between 1.5 and 2 hours each.[67]

Both the evaluation manager and the evaluator should use the inception report and progress reporting throughout the evaluation process to ensure that evaluation questions *will* be answered. They should review the draft report to confirm that evaluation questions *have* been answered.

* 'Remittances from the diaspora are huge and continue to grow and withstand financial crises; around $325 billion of remittances flow to developing countries every year.' (Background Paper for the Diaspora - International N.GO Leaders' Roundtable: 17th October, 2013.) 'If half of the annual remittances increase [in Haiti] was used by recipients to obtain shelter it would mean [more than] the same amount of money that the shelter actors spent as of November 2010' - Beunza and Eresta, (2011), page 52

2.3.3 Observation

If sites are accessible, an evaluator with appropriate experience can assess shelter quality, preference and use of standards through observation. Photos communicate evidence rapidly. The ToR for an evaluation of emergency shelter commissioned by the Shelter Cluster in Haiti in May 2010 specified that outputs should include:

> *Photographs that explain and give evidence of the issues discussed in the document. The most relevant photographs will be included in the report and will be given in soft copy … If possible photographs will be geo-referenced.*[68]

The report showed the range of emergency shelter provided after the 2010 earthquake. It included photographs that illustrated different types of shelter distributed, wear and tear after four months and differences in quality.

Popular frame tent with heavy canvas covering, Haiti, May 2010
(Joseph Ashmore)

Leaking canvas tent, Haiti, May 2010
(Joseph Ashmore)

The evaluation combined observation with rapid participatory appraisal. The evaluator asked members of the affected population at eight sites to rank shelter options in order of preference. Further evidence of satisfaction was provided by observation of prices at local markets. There it could be seen that tarpaulins were more durable and maintained their value whereas tents did not (see Table 8). The re-sale price was used as an indicator of beneficiary satisfaction with each type of shelter.

Table 8 Tarpaulins: beneficiary satisfaction and resale price, Haiti, May 2010 [69]

1. USAID specification

Most popular. Resale price US$ 19 per sheet

2. MSF/ IFRC/ OXFAM/ UNHCR specification

Resale price US$ 19

3. Braided blue

Made shelters hotter and let light through, thus reducing privacy. Resale price US$ 15

4. a) Blue woven lightweight b) Other

Least popular. Decayed rapidly in strong sunlight. Resale price US$ 12.50

2.3.4 Consulting the affected population

Subject to 'Do No Harm' principles, security and access constraints and evaluation resources, larger teams and thematic evaluations offer an opportunity to consult the affected population about the shelter response hence consultation should be included in the ToR.

Common methods and examples of consultation in Shelter Cluster evaluations are set out in Tool 16. Even small samples provide an insight into the response and beneficiary satisfaction. However, small-scale surveys may not provide credible evidence to support general statements about the wider shelter response. This should be clearly stated in the evaluation report.

If no consultation with the affected population is possible, information on beneficiary satisfaction during the response may be available from specialist cluster staff or from cluster partners who have used the Global Shelter Cluster's indicators of shelter accountability, IASC or HAP indicators (see Section 1.7.2)

Focus groups with affected people in Haiti

The consultation to affected population was done through focus groups with women and camp leaders and a survey to 177 residents in 12 site ... It must be said that this survey was conducted on a small sample of affected population and does not claim to have statistically valid results, but serves to become a piece of information useful to understand the feelings and plans of these affected people.[70]

Interviews with villagers in Myanmar

A field team of five nationals … visited 15 villages in the affected area and interviewed villagers about their opinion of the emergency shelter intervention. The [CDA] interview methodology … encourages villagers to speak openly about what is most relevant to them about the emergency response, rather than answer a structured or semi-structured questionnaire.[71]

Interview with Shelter Cluster community liaison officer in Indonesia

The Shelter Coordination Team was able to identify a very capable and strong advocate (activist) for the community who was hired primarily to capture the voice of the affected people … Having direct access to a community voice was invaluable for the SCT particularly in shaping decisions and for interacting with all levels of local government. [72]

⇒ ***Tool 16 Consulting the affected population***

2.4 Evaluation report

If the commissioning agency has these, a report template and style guide should be given to the evaluator(s) at the time the contract is signed (see Tool 15). Report drafting and review steps are set out in Table 9 below. Timely recommendations are particularly important in mid-term evaluations. The evaluation manager and evaluator(s) should allow sufficient time for local discussion or a workshop on draft findings and recommendations in the evaluation schedule.

The evaluation manager and evaluator(s) should also allow adequate time for review of drafts by stakeholders - between one and three weeks per draft (and see Tool 3).[73] In commenting on the accuracy and quality of the report, the evaluation manager and stakeholders must respect the independence of the evaluation and be prepared to accept findings and conclusions that may not support preconceived notions about the cluster and the response.[74]

Table 9 Report drafting and review [75]

Evaluator(s)	Evaluation manager
Share initial findings and recommendations with shelter coordination team and stakeholders and elicit feedback before leaving field.	
Draft evaluation report according to length, format and style stipulated (see Tool 15), with annexes but without executive summary.	
Use photos where possible to illustrate findings (see 2.3.3).	
Link recommendations with cluster core functions and supporting functions, and the evaluation indicators (see Section 1.7.3).	
Number report pages and lines and share document in PDF with evaluation manager.	
	Share draft report with steering group. If necessary, request a (virtual) meeting to discuss report with evaluator(s).
	Provide corrections and comments on errors of fact and understanding or lack of clarity and check that the report provides a qualitatively satisfactory response to the evaluation questions. However, respect the independence of the evaluator(s). Give the report a file name that will facilitate retrieval, dissemination and utilisation.
	Consolidate corrections and comments from all evaluation stakeholders before sharing them with evaluation team.
Respond to feedback point by point. Revise report. Add executive summary and file name.	Review revised draft, and request further corrections or approve.
Give evaluation manager a separate note of informants' email addresses for dissemination of report.	

Part 3: Using the evaluation [76]

Evaluations should generate lessons, recommendations and action that improve cluster or shelter performance or feed into the decision-making process of stakeholders, including partners and donors. The evaluation manager should seek assistance if necessary from advocacy and communications staff to develop a dissemination strategy for the evaluation report, taking into account the needs and interests of different audiences. The cost of dissemination should be included in the evaluation budget (see Section 1.3.1).

The report can be shared and used in different ways. In the case of a real-time or mid-term evaluation, lessons learned can be shared with the shelter coordination team and others before the evaluator(s) have left the country. The complete report should be shared with the cluster coordinator as soon as possible after it has been approved.

The evaluation manager should share the report with the steering group, cluster lead agency, cluster coordinator, donors, partners and global Shelter Cluster. All annexes should be included. The evaluator(s) should be asked for a list of email contacts for informants who wish to receive a copy.

Busy managers may read only the executive summary but others can be expected to review everything, including information in the annexes. If annexes are detached from the main report, they may be lost. A logical series of evaluation file names, perhaps based on the GLIDE number, can make it easier for reports and follow-up action to be tracked, and for information on a country, type of emergency or good practice to be retrieved and used.

The evaluation should be translated into relevant languages so that it can be used by local as well as international staff and organisations. A management response (see Tool 15) should be elicited and follow-up action reviewed six months after the evaluation has been approved. Information about the report and follow-up action should be included in annual reports on shelter and shelter coordination until action is completed.

Recommendations, lessons learned and emerging good practice can be extracted from the report and posted on learning pages on the Shelter Cluster website and/or shared via Twitter. This can make them more visible and inform future deployments and evaluations. However, it is important that cluster lead agencies and those designing and implementing cluster deployments also receive direct notification of learning updates.

A written report is not the only way to share the evaluation findings and recommendations. It is probably the *least* attractive, particularly to those without English or French as their working language. Other options include workshop presentations, one-to-one meetings, case studies, a video or photo essay, an exhibition using timeline and still photos, briefings for policy makers and programme planners, discussions with partners and donors, and Shelter Cluster (virtual) meetings.[77]

The final phase of the project involves the presentation of the findings of the evaluation and training/workshop on Results-Based Management (RBM) that will enable the Government of Haiti and stakeholders to incorporate the data and findings into the national strategy and into the management of its programs. The evaluation findings will be presented in PowerPoint in Port au Prince.

The Evaluation Team will submit a final report, incorporating comments and remarks made during the presentation of the evaluation, to the Evaluation Commission … The final evaluation will be documented in a written report in both French and English.[78]

⇒ ***Tool 15 Shelter Cluster evaluation report - template***

Tool 1 Summary of tasks for the evaluation manager (planning stage) [79]

- □ Determine purpose and users of an external evaluation
- □ Check security situation and whether it is safe to use external consultants
- □ Draw up budget
- □ Determine key stakeholders to be involved in evaluation process
- □ Define evaluation objectives and questions with key stakeholders
- □ Decide whose views should be sought during evaluation (e.g., cluster partners, central and/or local government counterparts, Humanitarian Coordinator, affected population, local NGOs, other clusters, OCHA, etc.)
- □ Propose evaluation field visit plan
- □ Identify mix of skills, languages and experience required by evaluator(s)
- □ Collect/oversee collection of background information/data on cluster activation and deployment and the shelter response (see Tool 4)
- □ Draft evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR) and time-frame
- □ Issue invitation for submission expressions of interest
- □ Recruit evaluator(s), check references, ensure child protection screening, clearly advise on agency liability and insurance
- □ Ensure appropriate security briefings are provided before departure and in field
- □ Ensure all evaluation documentation can be tracked for future reference by, for example, using a GLIDE number and posting the report on the Shelter Cluster website

Tool 2 Budget for an external evaluation

Evaluation budget item	**May include** [80] [81]
Evaluator(s)	Fees and per diems for team leader, international consultants, national consultants, focus group leaders.
Support staff	Fees for local survey teams, data entry and analysis staff, interpreters, drivers, security staff. Training costs, for example for survey teams.
Travel	Visas; flights for briefings; flights and local travel for evaluation team and support staff; additional days for evaluation team to make visa and travel arrangements, to undertake pre-departure training and security and administrative briefing; vehicle hire, accommodation; expenses for consultants and support staff.
Meetings and workshops	Venue hire, meals, and participant travel and allowances.
Communication	Mail and couriers, teleconferencing, remote interviews, mobile phones.
Dissemination	Briefing meetings and workshops, translation, artwork, graphic design, layout, printing, development of electronic media, video, distribution, workshops, evaluation database
Indirect / overhead costs	Evaluation manager, evaluation management team, logistics managers, admin. staff in headquarters and field
Contingencies	Unforeseen delays, over-runs

Tool 3 Evaluation timelines - examples

'Getting evaluations started and completed takes time, and usually longer than first imagined. As a guide to planning, the main stages of evaluation are set out below in the form of three sample evaluation types, with suggested timelines in months.' [82]

	Examples		
Evaluation stage	***Self-evaluation***	***Country operation*** ***Externally-led: no competitive tendering)***	***Complex thematic, multi-country operation*** ***Externally-led: with competitive tendering***
Agree ToR, set up Steering Committee and assemble evaluation team	0.5 – 2 months	1 – 3 months	2 – 4 months
Conduct evaluation up to draft report stage	0.5 – 1 months	1.5 – 2 months	2 – 6 months
Get comments, complete final report and publish	0.5 – 1 months	1 - 1.5 months	1.5 – 2 months
Publish management response – (timeframe set by UNHCR's evaluation policy)	3 months	3 months	3 months
Total months elapsed, (approx.)	4.5 – 7 months	6.5 - 9.5 months	8.5 – 15 months

Tool 4 Documents for the evaluator [83]

This checklist is for the evaluation manager to ensure that all documents are presented to the evaluator at the time the contract is signed.

Key contract documents

- ☐ Evaluation contract, including payment schedule
- ☐ Terms of Reference, including evaluation timetable and budget
- ☐ Contracting agency's security briefing package or online registration details
- ☐ Evaluation manager name and contact details
- ☐ List of focal points, key informants and other individuals relevant to the evaluation and their contact details
- ☐ Contracting agency's code of ethics for evaluation
- ☐ Contracting agency's code of personal conduct
- ☐ Contracting agency's policy on insurance and liability
- ☐ Contracting agency's style guide and logo for use in report
- ☐ List of documentation provided and/or links to online sources
- ☐ Intranet password(s) if needed

- ☐ Evaluation documentation (Made available ___________________________)

  a) Country cluster

  - ◻ Cluster activation correspondence
  - ◻ Cluster and sub-cluster organigram
  - ◻ Cluster Factsheets illustrating evolution of cluster and response
  - ◻ Cluster handover agreement if relevant
  - ◻ Cluster press releases
  - ◻ Cluster strategy
  - ◻ Cluster website address
  - ◻ Details of cluster deployment extensions and budget revisions
  - ◻ Links to photos and films
  - ◻ List of national and international cluster and sub-cluster partners
  - ◻ List of past and present national and international shelter coordination team members and remote support personnel

- Minutes of latest cluster, sub-cluster, SAG and TWIG meetings
- Mission reports by country and headquarters staff
- Monitoring / CPM reports by shelter coordination team and OCHA
- Monitoring reports
- Progress reports
- Reports of past evaluations of this cluster
- Shelter coordination team job descriptions
- Shelter coordination team end of mission reports
- Standards/indicators used by the cluster
- Studies and research undertaken by the cluster / sub-clusters / TWIGs
- ToR of cluster remote support personnel
- Who-What-Where information

b) Shelter response

- Emergency GLIDE number
- Baseline reports and related data
- Key evaluations of this response, e.g. shelter or multi-sector evaluations that include shelter
- Links to photos and films
- Project beneficiary records
- Partner reports from complaints mechanisms
- Partner reports on beneficiary satisfaction
- Situation reports

c) Cluster host agency role in shelter delivery

- National programme framework
- National programme structure
- Press releases
- Role in shelter delivery – project document

d) Evaluation templates for the evaluator

- Evaluation report
- Inception report

Tool 5 Alternatives to evaluation[84]

These vary in purpose and level of analysis, and may overlap to some extent. Evaluation is to be differentiated from the following:

a. Appraisal: A critical assessment of the potential value of a project before a decision is made to implement it.

b. Monitoring: Management's continuous examination of progress achieved during the implementation of a project to track compliance with the project plan and to take necessary decisions to improve performance.

c. Review: Periodic or ad hoc and often rapid assessments of the performance of a project, (for example, by remote or support staff) that do not apply the due process of evaluation. Reviews tend to emphasize operational issues.

d. Inspection: A general examination that seeks to identify vulnerable areas and malfunctions and to propose corrective action.

e. Investigation: A specific examination of a claim of wrongdoing and provision of evidence for eventual prosecution or disciplinary measures.

f. Audit: An assessment of the adequacy of management controls to ensure the economical and efficient use of resources; the safeguarding of assets; the reliability of financial and other information; compliance with regulations, rules and established policies; effectiveness of risk management; and the adequacy of organizational structures, systems and processes.

g. Research: A systematic examination designed to develop or contribute to knowledge.

h. Internal management consulting: Consulting services to help managers implement changes that address organizational and managerial challenges and improve internal work processes.

Tool 6 Cluster core functions [85]

The core functions of a cluster at the country-level are:

1. **Supporting service delivery**
   - Provide a platform to ensure that service delivery is driven by the agreed strategic priorities
   - Develop mechanisms to eliminate duplication of service delivery

2. **Informing strategic decision-making of the HC/HCT for the humanitarian response**
   - Needs assessment and response gap analysis (across sectors and within the sector)
   - Analysis to identify and address (emerging) gaps, obstacles, duplication, and cross-cutting issues
   - Prioritization, grounded in response analysis

3. **Planning and strategy development**
   - Develop sectoral plans, objectives and indicators that directly support realization of the HC/HCT strategic priorities
   - Apply and adhere to existing standards and guidelines
   - Clarify funding requirements, prioritization, and cluster contributions for the HC's overall humanitarian funding considerations (e.g. Flash Appeal, CAP, CERF, Emergency Response Fund/Common Humanitarian Fund)

4. **Monitoring and reporting the implementation of the cluster strategy and results; recommending corrective action where necessary**

5. **Contingency planning/preparedness/capacity building**

6. **Advocacy**
   - Identify advocacy concerns to contribute to HC and HCT messaging and action
   - Undertake advocacy activities on behalf of cluster participants and the affected population

Tool 7 The global Shelter Cluster core shelter indicators

In 2012, the Global Shelter Cluster's *Assessing Shelter Impact Working Group* developed the *Shelter Cluster Indicator Guidelines* as part of an overall objective to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the cluster's activities.[86] The guidelines do not consider cluster coordination but aim to promote consolidation of key country-level cluster data, comparison between different clusters and enable more effective knowledge management and dissemination of lessons learnt and best practices.[87]

> *'Core indicators refer to indicators that meet the following characteristics:*
>
> *1. Information provided by these indicators can be used for the comparison of a given situation across countries or time.*
>
> *2. The data measured by the indicators is time-bound. It can be collected at any stage in an emergency and across all stages of an operational cycle.'*

Core indicators

1. Number / % of population in need of shelter assistance
2. Number / % of targeted households living in adequate shelters meeting shelter standards defined by the cluster
3. Number / % of households in need of shelter assistance receiving shelter support
4. Number / % of houses/dwellings damaged, destroyed or inaccessible
5. Number / % of houses / dwellings uninhabitable as a consequence of [event]
6. Number / % of households in need of NFI assistance
7. Number / % of targeted population receiving NFI kits
8. Number / % of families displaced from original home
9. Number / % of population / settlements occupying hazardous land
10. Number / % of constructed / rehabilitated shelters incorporating hazard mitigation measures

Core indicators do not address satisfaction of affected population. However, indicator 24 states:

24. Number / Percentage of beneficiary households satisfied / unsatisfied with shelter solutions they received

The full set of 47 Shelter Cluster indicators is included in OCHA's draft Humanitarian Indicators Registry.

Tool 8 Shelter Cluster evaluation terms of reference – template [88]

Title of evaluation and GLIDE number

1. Background

 Briefly describe

- The history and current status of the Shelter Cluster in country
    - Country and region(s) in which the cluster is/was active
    - The cluster's strategic aims
    - Cluster lead agencies
    - Cluster partners and donors
    - Current response phase

 Describe / illustrate Shelter Cluster and coordination team structures.

 Indicate significant dates, for example, activation of cluster, start of sub-clusters, deployment of additional personnel, handover, closure, etc.

 Briefly describe economic, political, social, cultural, and/or historical context of the country/region, and how this may have influenced the work of the Shelter Cluster.

 Briefly describe the political, economic and social environment within which the evaluation will take place.

 Note the titles and dates, including GLIDE numbers, of earlier evaluations, reviews, monitoring and mission reports concerning the Shelter Cluster in this country or other relevant emergencies (by GLIDE number) in which the Shelter Cluster has been deployed

2. Evaluation purpose

 State whether the evaluation is to be used mainly for accountability (e.g. to donors or affected population) or learning (e.g. by cluster partners or lead agencies) or both.

 State why the evaluation is being conducted at this time. Briefly describe how the evaluation report and recommendations will be used and by whom.

 Identify decisions which depend on the findings and recommendations of this evaluation (e.g. funding; change of Shelter Cluster strategy; handover, closure or continuation of the Shelter Cluster; global Shelter Cluster policy review, etc.)

 Briefly identify the main audience(s) for the evaluation and how they will learn about it.

3. Evaluation scope

 Specify

- Dates and/or response phase to be covered by the evaluation
- Category of activities on which the evaluation will focus (e.g. coordination activities; effect of cluster on shelter response)
- Geographical areas or target groups to be included
- Category of activities, geographical areas or target groups to be excluded

4. Evaluation criteria

 State sector/agency criteria to be used in evaluation (e.g. OECD/DAC criteria; contracting agency's evaluation criteria)

 State other relevant criteria for cluster evaluation, for example, the cluster core functions and supporting functions:

- Cluster leadership
- Cluster personnel
- Strategy, planning, policy and standards
- Informing strategic decision-making by the HC/HCT
- Contingency planning/preparedness/capacity-building
- Cluster resources and partnerships
- Supporting shelter service delivery
- Shelter advocacy and communication
- Monitoring and reporting on implementation of Shelter Cluster strategy, shelter achievements and corrective action

 State additional criteria, for example,

- Lessons learned from other cluster deployments
- Cluster contribution to shelter response
- Accountability to affected populations
- Attention to cross-cutting issues, i.e.

  - ☐ age
  - ☐ disability,
  - ☐ environment
  - ☐ gender,
  - ☐ HIV and AIDS
  - ☐ human rights
  - ☐ mental health
  - ☐ mines and other explosive devices

- Sphere standards and indicators
- Shelter Cluster standards and indicators

□ Define specialist terms, for example 'emergency shelter', 'transitional shelter', 'early recovery', 'shelter kit', 'NFI kit'; local names for particular types of shelter

5. Main evaluation questions

 List main evaluation questions: these will be related to the evaluation purpose, budget, timing, availability of information, and evaluation criteria.

6. Methodology

 Identify information needs and possible sources of information.

 Describe expected mix of evaluation methods, for example, desk study, field research, key informant interviews, group discussion, observation, beneficiary survey

 Specify stakeholders for inclusion in key informant interviews, for example,

- Cluster lead agency staff
- Cluster partners
- Current/former shelter coordination team members
- Donors
- Global Shelter Cluster representatives, etc.
- Government counterparts
- Headquarters and regional managers
- Humanitarian Coordinator
- NGOs
- OCHA
- Representatives of the affected population

 Specify use of primary and/or secondary data sources, particularly if shelter response is to be evaluated.

 Describe involvement of key stakeholders in the implementation of the evaluation, including finalization of report.

7. Risks, constraints and assumptions

 Describe the risks and challenges that are expected to arise in the evaluation and how the evaluation manager proposes that they be addressed, for example,

- Change in operational situation
- Evaluation fatigue
- Informant workload
- Lack of access
- Lack of baseline data
- Loss of corporate memory
- Security issues
- Staff turnover

 Describe constraints the potential evaluator(s) must take into consideration, for example,

- Accommodation and transport
- Curfews and limit to working hours
- Language skills
- Security

 Describe assumptions made in planning the evaluation, for example,

- Cluster partners and other agencies are willing to share information about targets, achievements, challenges (including internal organizational challenges).
- Partners or other organizations which have offered logistical support (office space, accommodation, vehicles, local personnel, etc.) are able to fulfil their commitments

8. **Schedule**

□ Describe key stages of the evaluation process, for example,

- Desk review
- Briefing
- Data collection and analysis
- Presentations / discussions
- Draft and review of evaluation reports, etc.

and an indicative time frame, including milestones / deadlines.

9. **Main outputs**

□ Specify the main outputs of the evaluation, including, for example,

- Inception report
- Draft evaluation report
- Photographs
- Stakeholder workshop
- Final evaluation report with executive summary

□ Specify the dates of delivery

□ Specify the language, format, structure and length of reports

□ Describe how the quality of the report will be assessed

10. **Evaluator(s)**

□ Specify the desired competencies of evaluator(s) and preferred composition of evaluation team (e.g. gender balance, shelter expertise, international/local, participation by cluster lead agency or partner agency, etc.).

□ State that the external evaluator should have no links to cluster management, or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation.

□ Describe the roles and responsibilities of evaluation team members, evaluation stakeholders and partners.

□ State clearly whether evaluator(s) will be self-supporting in terms of visa and international/local travel arrangements.

□ State application/bid procedures, supporting documentation required and deadlines.

11. **Management**

□ Describe the support to be provided by the evaluation manager and commissioning agency at headquarters, regional and country level, for example, briefing, security, travel and visa arrangements, accommodation, interpretation, administrative, work space, other logistics, documentation, etc.

□ Describe agency procedures for reporting by the evaluator(s) on any ethical issues observed or suspected, e.g. following allegations of child protection, sexual abuse, bullying, or breaches of security.

□ Describe the support to be provided by other partners in the evaluation.

□ State the available budget for the evaluation.

□ State the schedule and procedures for payment of consultants' fees, expenses and working advances.

Roles, responsibilities and coordination [89]

a) The Evaluation Commissioning Agency

- *Provision of copies of all documents related to the program under a confidentiality signed agreement*
- *Facilitate the contact with resource personnel and with actors involved in the project*
- *Enumerators and logistic for phone survey plus statistic analysis (IOM DMU)*
- *Local transportation*
- *Approval of draft and final reports*
- *Final report lay out, printing and delivering to actors' involved in the project* including *donor/s*

b) The Evaluation Team

- *Document and second source documents analysis*
- *Evaluation tools and methodology design (including final phone survey sampling protocol, the design of the survey questionnaires and of the tabulation plan for statistical analysis for the phone survey).*
- *Evaluation field activities*
- *Draft report writing*
- *Evaluation finding presentation in PowerPoint and workshop*
- *Final report writing and translation*
- *International transportation and accommodation.*

The exact contractual relationship will depend on agency policy. A common practice is to link payments to stages in the evaluation, such as signing of the contract, acceptance of the inception report, completion of the fieldwork, and acceptance of various drafts and the final report.[90]

12. Annexes

- Attach relevant documents for example, standard report template, style guide, evaluation criteria, ethical guidelines, programme documents, etc.

Tool 9 Call for expression of interest - example[91]

Evaluation consultancy, 'Tazbekistan Shelter Cluster' and GLIDE number

[Agency] is looking for an external evaluator for an independent mid-term evaluation of the Tazbekistan Shelter Cluster. ToR are attached.

The assignment is for approximately [number] days' duration, spread over a period of [number] weeks, [dates]. This will include initial briefings in Geneva and a [number] week mission to Tazbekistan.

Academic requirements: [State]

Professional experience:

Established experience conducting evaluations, familiarity with humanitarian reform and an understanding of the role of the Shelter Cluster.

Candidates should have excellent written and oral communication skills in English. Knowledge of [language] and the region would be an advantage.

Proposals

Interested candidates should send their proposal (max. 4 pages), outlining availability budget, and CV with three references to [email address]. Please indicate "Tazbekistan Shelter Cluster evaluation" in the email's subject line.

The deadline for submission of expressions of interest is by close of business on [date].

Tool 10 Incorporating gender into a Shelter Cluster evaluation [92]

a) Some issues to be considered by the evaluation manager

- □ Is there gender balance and/or adequate level of gender expertise in the evaluation team?
- □ Are evaluators provided with background documentation, including literature and documentation on gender and shelter issues, including Shelter Cluster Toolkit, IASC or cluster lead agency documents?
- □ How does the evaluator(s) propose to measure the different effects of activities and interventions on women and men?
- □ Are gender-specific topics identified and assigned within an evaluation team?
- □ Do evaluators understand how to disaggregate information by sex?
- □ Will the views of female beneficiaries be sought in a culturally appropriate manner?
- □ Are the results, conclusions and recommendations in the evaluation report expected to refer to gender issues?

b) IASC gender marker for humanitarian projects

Gender Code	Key	Rationale
0	Project has no visible potential to contribute to gender equality.	There is a risk that the project will unintentionally fail to meet the needs of some population groups and may even do harm.
1	Project has potential to contribute in a limited way to gender equality.	There are gender dimensions in only one or two components of the project.
2a	Project has potential to contribute significantly to gender equality.	A gender analysis is included in the project's needs assessment and is reflected in one or more project activities and one or more project outcomes.
2b	Principal purpose of the project is to advance gender equality.	Gender analysis in the needs assessment justifies this project in which all activities and all outcomes advance gender equality. All targeted actions are based on gender analysis.

Tool 11 Summary of tasks for the evaluation manager (implementation stage) [93]

- □ Brief evaluator(s) on the purpose of evaluation
- □ Ensure that background documentation is submitted to the evaluator(s) well in advance of evaluation implementation
- □ Ensure that the evaluator(s) have full access to files, reports, publications, intranet, websites and any other sources of relevant Information at country, regional and headquarters level
- □ Review the inception report and evaluation work plan with other stakeholders and provide feedback to the evaluator(s)
- □ Write to key informants advising them of the evaluation and introducing the evaluator(s)
- □ Ensure that country-specific security briefing, insurance and travel health advice are provided and that child protection screening and briefing are undertaken before travel to the field
- □ Ensure the evaluator(s) receive adequate help with practical matters as necessary before, during and after field visits, for example, administrative, security, expenses, travel and logistical support, interpreters, booking interviews and preparing site visits.
- □ Follow the progress of the evaluation; provide feedback and guidance to the evaluator(s) throughout implementation
- □ Assess the quality of the evaluation report(s) and discuss strengths and limitations with the evaluator(s) to ensure that the draft report satisfies the ToR, that evaluation findings are defensible and recommendations realistic
- □ Arrange for a meeting with the evaluator(s) and key stakeholders to discuss and comment on the draft report
- □ Approve the final report
- □ Ensure presentation of evaluation results to stakeholders; include cluster and country office staff and partners to promote information sharing and use of evaluation results
- □ Ensure all evaluation documentation can be tracked for future reference by using e.g. GLIDE number

Tool 12 Summary of tasks for the evaluator[94]

- □ Review ToR
- □ Provide inputs to evaluation design; refine evaluation objectives and questions via inception report
- □ Design, refine and test data collection instruments, for example interview guide
- □ Conduct evaluation; team leader supervises team members and manages the day to day process of carrying out the evaluation and makes sure all aspects of the evaluation are covered
- □ Review cluster and response documentation
- □ In case of a response evaluation, select sample and sites
- □ Undertake site visits; conduct interviews with informants
- □ In case of a participatory evaluation, facilitate beneficiary participation
- □ Provide regular progress reporting/briefing to the evaluation manager
- □ Team leader acts as mediator if there are dissenting views within the evaluation team
- □ Analyze and synthesize information; interpret findings, develop and discuss conclusions and recommendations; draw out lessons learned
- □ Participate in discussions of the draft evaluation report; correct or rectify any factual errors or misinterpretations
- □ Guide reflection/discussions if expected to facilitate a presentation of evaluation findings in a seminar/workshop setting
- □ Finalize the evaluation report and prepare a presentation of evaluation results if necessary

Tool 13 Inception Report – format [95]

Cover: evaluation title and GLIDE number
Table of contents
Abbreviations and acronyms

1. Introduction

    a) Background and context
    b) Purpose and scope of the evaluation

2. Methodology

    a) Evaluation questions
    b) Indicators
    c) Methods of data collection and analysis
    d) Sampling if relevant
    e) Preliminary findings (e.g. from initial desk review)
    f) Limitations to the evaluation

3. Work Plan
    a) Initial interviews
    b) Travel itinerary: headquarters and field
    c) Allocation of team responsibilities
    d) Deadlines for completion of evaluation stages and review of drafts
    e) Role of evaluation manager and others in evaluation

4. Logistics and Support

5. Outstanding areas for discussion

Annexes (example)

    a) Evaluation matrix
    b) Terms of reference
    c) Documents reviewed to date
    d) Draft data collection instruments
    e) Questionnaires
    f) Interview questions / interview guide

Tool 14 Alternative evaluation methods [96]

Evaluation method	Possible alternative if access is limited
1. Document research	
2. Numerical data analysis	
3. Key informant interviews at headquarters	
4. Key informant interviews in the field	Phone, Skype, SMS or email interview Email response to written questions Interviews elsewhere, for example, at a conference or workshop in a neighbouring country
5. Beneficiary interviews and group discussions in the field	Beneficiaries travel to safe/accessible area
6. Observation	Use of photos, videos, satellite images with GPS data
7. Beneficiary surveys	Text, phone, online survey
8. Participatory rapid appraisal	

Tool 15 Rights of evaluation interviewees[97]

- *You have the right to terminate the interview at any time.*
- *You have the right not to answer any question.*
- *Nothing you say will be attributed to you directly or indirectly without your express permission.*
- *Your name and agency (if relevant) will be included in the list of informants unless you wish to remain anonymous.*
- *The notes on this interview will not be shared outside the evaluation team.*
- *If the client agrees, and we have your email address, we will send you the draft for comments.*

Tool 16 Consulting the affected population[98]

Method	Advantage	Challenges	Shelter Cluster review
Individual and household interviews	Privacy/confidentiality for interviewee Possible use in case studies	Time consuming: requires more interviews. A smaller sample may not support generalisations, although it could still be illustrative.	Cyclone Giri cluster review, Myanmar, 2011. 1 x international personnel 5 x local personnel
Semi-structured key informant interviews with beneficiaries	As above Checklist ensures consistency but also allows flexibility.	Needs good local knowledge for selection of interviewees and interpretation of responses.	
Community meetings	Can use existing community structures May be able to use appraisal tools.	May be dominated by community leaders. Women and young people may be reluctant to speak. May not be possible to disaggregate responses to enable useful analysis. May not support generalisations. May be difficult to ask sensitive questions. May put people in danger.	Haiti technical evaluation, 2010 1 x international personnel ? local personnel Haiti cluster review, 2010 1 x international personnel
Formal surveys	Provide statistics and comparable data sets. Can generalise using data if sampling method is sound. Quantitative info may be more convincing to decision-makers.	May be too time consuming and expensive. Careful design, translation and testing before implementation. May require training for enumerators May not be feasible if access is limited or people mistrust strangers' questions.	Typhoon Bopha response evaluation, 2013 2 x international personnel 27 x local personnel Haiti Rental Working Group evaluation, 2013 3 x international personnel 2 x local IOM teams
Focus groups and group meetings	Can seek the views of a homogenous group Checklist ensures consistency but allows flexibility. Interviewers can use participatory rapid appraisal methods with the group.	May be hard to control size and composition of the group; this may affect its dynamics. Requires skilled facilitator and note-taker. May be difficult to ask sensitive questions. May put people in danger.	Haiti shelter response evaluation, 2011 2 x international personnel ? x local personnel

Tool 17 Shelter Cluster evaluation report - template

Title page

Include

- □ Title as stated in ToR, plus GLIDE number
- □ Project reference code if relevant
- □ Type of evaluation, e.g. external, joint
- □ Timing of evaluation, e.g. mid-term, final
- □ Name of evaluator(s)
- □ Submission date of final report

Data page

Include

- □ Administrative details
- □ Acknowledgements

Acknowledgment should be given to those who contributed significantly to the evaluation, and interviewees and documents consulted should be listed to the extent that this does not breach the privacy and confidentiality of those concerned.[99]

- □ Suggested citation for the evaluation

Executive summary

Include

- □ Background and context
- □ Purpose, scope and clients of evaluation (as per terms of reference)
- □ Methodology of evaluation:
- □ Main findings and conclusions:
  - Summary recommendations
  - Lessons learned and emerging good practices

Do not include unexplained acronyms or local terminology.

Table of contents

Include

- □ Include lists of tables, figures and charts.
- □ List annexes

List of acronyms

'Use acronyms only when a term occurs so frequently that having a short form is helpful to readers, or when it is more recognisable in its acronym form. Always spell out acronyms and define unfamiliar terms on first use in the text, even if you think they will be familiar to many readers. These practices not only make a document

more readable but also help emphasise that the report was written for all stakeholders, not just agency or sector insiders.[100] *If the report includes unfamiliar terms, for example, local words for a particular type of shelter, list these terms and their definitions.*

Introduction

Include

- □ Purpose, scope and evaluation clients(s)
- □ Brief history of humanitarian reform and transformative agenda[101]
- □ Background to cluster approach[102]
- □ Background to Shelter Cluster[103]

Methodology

Include

- □ Main methods used
- □ Constraints or limitations

Two key United Nations Shelter Cluster partners were not available for interviews despite repeated attempts to contact [them] at the time the review process took place. While this did not significantly impact the analysis and outcomes of the review (additional information was obtained through other interviewees), given the role they played in the response it would have been preferable to secure their participation in this exercise. The limited time available for the review also prevented additional cross-examination and validation for some of the issues highlighted through the document review and interview processes.[104]

As there was no single, common project proposal or logical framework that held together this alliance of operational partners, the evaluators depended heavily on interviews and workshops with partners to reconstruct a collective view of the intended impact, outcomes and outputs.[105]

- □ Potential biases in evaluation team

Background and context

Include

- □ Context of the emergency response
- □ Shelter Cluster activation
  - When?
  - What was the rationale for cluster activation?
  - By whom requested?
  - What was the response to the activation request?
- □ May be supported by a chronology / timeline in an annex

Findings

Include

- □ Cluster leadership
- □ Cluster personnel
- □ Cluster resources and partnerships
- □ Supporting shelter service delivery
- □ Strategy, policy and standards
- □ Informing strategic decision-making by the HC/HCT
- □ Shelter advocacy and communication
- □ Accountability to affected populations
- □ Monitoring and reporting on implementation of Shelter Cluster strategy, shelter achievements and corrective action
- □ Contingency planning/preparedness/capacity-building

Recommendations

Include

- □ Numbered list
- □ Relationship of recommendation to evaluation framework (e.g. core functions) and/or indicators (e.g. global Shelter Cluster indicators)
- □ Rationale for recommendation
- □ Person/organisation/region who should take recommended action
- □ Priority of action recommended
- □ Time frame for recommended action

Do not include unexplained acronyms or local terminology.

Annexes

Include

- □ Evaluation ToR
- □ Cluster timeline
- □ Shelter coordination team roles and deployment dates
- □ List of people met or consulted
- □ Team itinerary
- □ Management response matrix

Management response matrix[106]

Rec. no.	Accept	Partly accept	Reject	Comment	Action	Department responsible	Date for action
1							

- □ Other annexes, e.g. maps
- □ Bibliography

Glossary

Accountability

The obligation to demonstrate to stakeholders to what extent results have been achieved according to established plans. [107]

Cluster

Clusters are groups of humanitarian organizations (UN and non-UN) working in the main sectors of humanitarian action, e.g. shelter and health. They are created when clear humanitarian needs exist within a sector, when there are numerous actors within sectors and when national authorities need coordination support.[108]

Cross-cutting issues

Although the term “cross-cutting issues” was officially introduced by the IASC in 2005, at no point has the IASC provided an “official” definition. Age, environment, gender and HIV/AIDS were generically identified as “issues” of concern to all sectors of humanitarian assistance which should be integrated into the cluster approach and other elements of humanitarian reform. During the following years, the original four issues were progressively joined by other ones, to the point the current list includes disability/diversity, mental health and psycho social support, disaster risk reduction, early recovery, and a generic area of “human rights, protection, rights-based approach”. Then UN civil-military coordination asked to be included, and at a recent meeting on Cash Transfers there were calls for this approach to be considered a cross-cutting issue as well. [109]

At the time of writing, the Shelter Cluster designates the following as “cross-cutting issues”:

- age
- disability,
- environment
- gender,
- HIV and AIDS
- human rights
- mental health
- mines and other explosive devices [110]

‘Do No Harm’

M&E practices should uphold the principle of “do no harm”. Data collectors and those disseminating M&E reports should respect the fact that certain information can endanger or embarrass respondents. “Under this circumstance, evaluators should seek to maximize the benefits and reduce any unnecessary harm that might occur, provided this will not compromise the integrity of the evaluation findings” (American Evaluation Association 2004). Participants in data collection have the legal and ethical responsibility to report any evidence of criminal activity or wrongdoing that may harm others (e.g. alleged sexual abuse).[111]

Emerging Good Practice

A lesson learned may become an "emerging good practice" when it additionally shows proven marked results or benefits and is determined by the evaluator to be considered for replication or up-scaling to other projects. An emerging good practice should demonstrate a cause-effect relationship. It may also show potential for replication and broader application. It can derive from comparison and analysis of activities across multiple settings and policy sources or emerge from a simple, technically specific intervention. [112]

Evaluation

The systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision– making process of both recipients and donors.

Evaluation also refers to the process of determining the worth or significance of an activity, policy or program. An assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of a planned, on-going, or completed development intervention.

Evaluation in some instances involves the definition of appropriate standards, the examination of performance against those standards, an assessment of actual and expected results and the identification of relevant lessons. [113]

Evaluation manager

The person responsible for managing and co-ordinating the evaluation, providing support to and briefing the evaluator(s) and making the completed evaluation available for use by others. In practice, the evaluation manager is likely to be a senior shelter manager or evaluation officer within the agency or group of agencies commissioning the evaluation. [114]

External evaluation

The evaluation of a (development) intervention conducted by entities and/or individuals outside the implementing organization and its partners.[115]

Humanitarian evaluation

Humanitarian evaluation is 'the systematic and objective examination of humanitarian action, intended to draw lessons to improve policy and practice and enhance accountability'[116]

Independent evaluation

An evaluation carried out by entities and persons free of control by those responsible for the design and implementation of the (development) intervention.[117]

Indicators

Indicators are quantitative or qualitative factors or variables that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor.[118]

Internal evaluation

Follows a formalized evaluation process but is managed by the cluster lead agency, and may be conducted by a member of lead agency staff. If internal staff are used, no ties or conflict of interest should exist with the management of the cluster or the shelter response in country. Where an internal evaluation is conducted at midterm, recommendations should be put forward for amendments where appropriate.[119]

Lesson learned

An observation from project or programme experience which can be translated into relevant, beneficial knowledge by establishing clear causal factors and effects. It focuses on a specific design, activity, process or decision and may provide either positive or negative insights on operational effectiveness and efficiency, impact on the achievement of outcomes, or influence on sustainability. The lesson should indicate, where possible, how it contributes to 1) reducing or eliminating deficiencies or 2) building successful and sustainable practice and performance.

A lesson learned may become an emerging good practice when it additionally shows proven results or benefits and is determined to be worthwhile for replication or up-scaling. [120]

Monitoring

A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.[121]

OECD/DAC evaluation criteria [122]

Relevance / Appropriateness
Effectiveness
Sustainability / Connectedness
Impact
Coverage
Coherence
Coordination
Protection

Process evaluation

An evaluation of the internal dynamics of implementing organizations, their policy instruments, their service delivery mechanisms, their management practices, and the linkages among these.[123]

Real-time evaluation

A timely, rapid and interactive peer review of a fast evolving humanitarian operation (usually an emergency) undertaken at an early phase. Its broad objective is to gauge the effectiveness and impact of a given response, and to ensure that its findings are used as an immediate catalyst for organizational and operational change. [124]

Results

The output, outcome or impact (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a development intervention.[125]

Review

An assessment of the performance of an intervention, periodically or on an ad hoc basis. Note: Frequently “evaluation” is used for a more comprehensive and/or more in-depth assessment than “review”. Reviews tend to emphasize operational aspects. Sometimes the terms “review” and “evaluation” are used as synonyms. [126]

Self-evaluation

Conducted and managed by cluster lead agency, with little or no budget being required. The self-evaluation should include assessments of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Sometimes considered a part of regular project reporting, a self-evaluation should address issues of project accountability to the extent possible, as well as offer insights into how future deployments might benefit from knowledge gained through the self-evaluation.[127]

Scope

The scope sets boundaries around the object of evaluation. It determines what is included in the study, and what is excluded. Boundaries can be delimited by time, geography, structure, or sequence, period of implementation, and target groups and beneficiaries. [128]

Terms of reference

Written document presenting the purpose and scope of the evaluation, the methods to be used, the standard against which performance is to be assessed or analyses are to be conducted, the resources and time allocated, and reporting requirements.[129]

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