Global Shelter Cluster
ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter

SHELTER & SETTLEMENTS
THE FOUNDATION OF HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Global Shelter Cluster Strategy 2018-2022
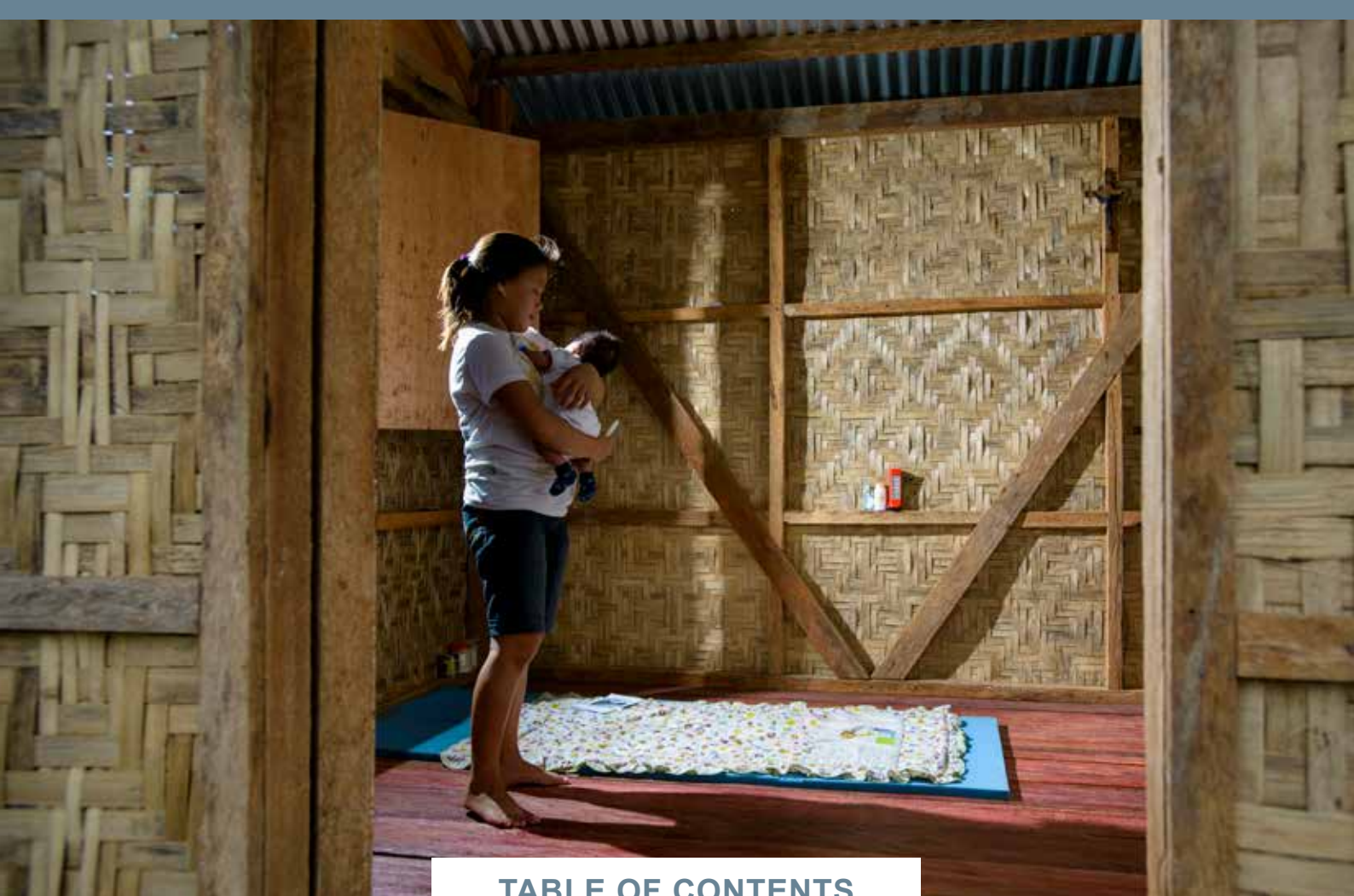### SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE SHELTER & SETTLEMENTS RESPONSE

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Commitment to the Future

The Global Shelter Cluster is pleased to launch our strategy for 2018-22. This document sets out an inspiring agenda to strengthen global shelter and settlement interventions which remain central to effective humanitarian responses around the world, and describes how we will support partner organisations in meeting the shelter needs of people affected by conflict and crisis.

The evolution of the Strategy has been a collaborative process that has engaged partners at all levels, driven by the Strategic Advisory Group and the Cluster lead agencies, to review past performance, articulate key priorities and evaluate the current humanitarian landscape and future trends. The strategy defines core Cluster priorities while articulating the inherent connectedness with other sectors required to achieve effective shelter and settlements responses with demonstrated sector-wide impact.

In little over a decade since the inception of the Cluster Approach, the GSC has gone from strength to strength, evolving into a robust collective of organisations, committed to coordinate approaches and resources, share best practice and unite for a common purpose - constantly adapting and improving its services to support partners to provide shelter and settlements assistance for the most vulnerable families and communities affected by conflict and disaster.

Over this period, the humanitarian context has changed remarkably; with conceptual, programmatic and technological developments driving change in how we work and helping us gauge our impact. Assisted populations have become the centre of our focus, with an emphasis on accountability to affected populations, and the development of robust monitoring and evaluation in support of evidence-based, inclusive and localised programming with a view to empowering people affected by crises.

The context of our work has also changed given the ever increasing impact of urbanisation and climate change, which has resulted in a fundamental shift in our operational reality. With the majority of the global population now living in cities and natural disasters becoming more frequent and severe, we are required to work differently and to constantly innovate to find new solutions. Working with complex urban systems subject to natural disasters, and the effects of conflict, means that we need to be versed in working with issues of chronic vulnerability as much as emergency response; where the best of development approaches need to be understood and synchronised with humanitarian efforts, to reduce risk and jointly work toward sustainable systems in favour of area-based results. Given the state of global displacement, the need for more effective, timely and efficient shelter and settlements responses is now critical and the Global Shelter Cluster is placed at the centre of coordinating information, knowledge and processes to meet this need. Reflecting this, the Cluster has prioritised four main pillars under which activities and processes will be structured:

- **Coordination**
- **Advocacy**
- **Evidence-Based Response**
- **Capacity**

Confronted with limited humanitarian financing, novel approaches that harness appropriate use of cash, evidence of need and impact, that promote participation and inclusion are both a challenge and an opportunity to improve effectiveness; prioritising a spirit of true collaboration with donors, government, the private sector and civil society are an operational imperative.

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

Ela Serdaroglu,
Global Shelter Cluster Coordinator,
IFRC

Brett Moore
Global Shelter Cluster Coordinator,
UNHCR

Shelter & Settlements, the Foundation of Humanitarian Response

Losing one's home, separation from friends, family and community support structures, loss of livelihoods, health services, schooling, separation from the protection that a home and community provide, is hugely traumatic. Access to temporary and longer-term shelter and settlements that are appropriately designed with those affected by crises, a place that families and communities can somehow call 'home', can be both **life-saving** and **life-enabling**.

Shelter and settlement responses provide (i) **a physical dwelling** that protects the health, security, privacy and dignity of families and is designed to bring communities together, provides much needed protection against, physical, climatic, disease and violent (including gender-based) threats (ii) **a stable foundation**, a location, an 'address' where other services, support and protection can be accessed including livelihoods and economic recovery, health, education, nutrition, as well as access to safe and dignified water supply and sanitation facilities, a valuable asset that can be the beginning of a bigger investment (iii) **a sense of identity**, a place to gather belongings, family and community, a neighbourhood to belong to, **a place to be able to consider the past and rebuild a sense of future**.

Shelter and settlement support is therefore the **foundation of humanitarian response**, critical in **rebuilding communities and family life; central to gaining protection and rebuilding the psychological, social, livelihood and physical components of life**; components necessary to move **from survival to effectively exercising rights**, a place where individuals are able to **reach their potential**.

Shelter and settlement responses attempt to ensure that 'no one is left behind'[1], that all community members are included, and interventions contribute to recovery economically, socially and psychologically.

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[1] A feature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is its emphasis on reaching the poorest and most vulnerable. A range of goals and targets, including those on poverty; on cities, food security, nutrition and agriculture; on education and learning opportunities; on water and sanitation, make specific reference to the poor and vulnerable or those in vulnerable situations. The SDGs refer to the empowerment of the most vulnerable and includes "all children, youth, persons with disabilities (of whom more than 80% live in poverty), people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees and internally displaced persons and migrants" as well as "people living in areas affected by complex humanitarian emergencies and in areas affected by terrorism".

Vision

A World Where Everyone Feels at Home.

Shelter and settlement responses support families towards the making of a home, a physical dwelling to protect the health, security, privacy and dignity, providing much needed protection against, physical, climatic, disease and violent (including gender-based) threats; a stable foundation, a location, where other services and support can be accessed; and a sense of identity, a place to gather belongings, family and community, a neighbourhood to belong to, to be able to consider the past and rebuild a sense of future.

Mission

The Global Shelter Cluster collectively supports crisis-affected people to live in safe, dignified and appropriate shelter and settlements.

The Shelter Cluster works with communities, governments and other responders to prepare for, respond to and recover from crises through coordinated, effective, evidence-based and accountable shelter and settlement action to support the most vulnerable.
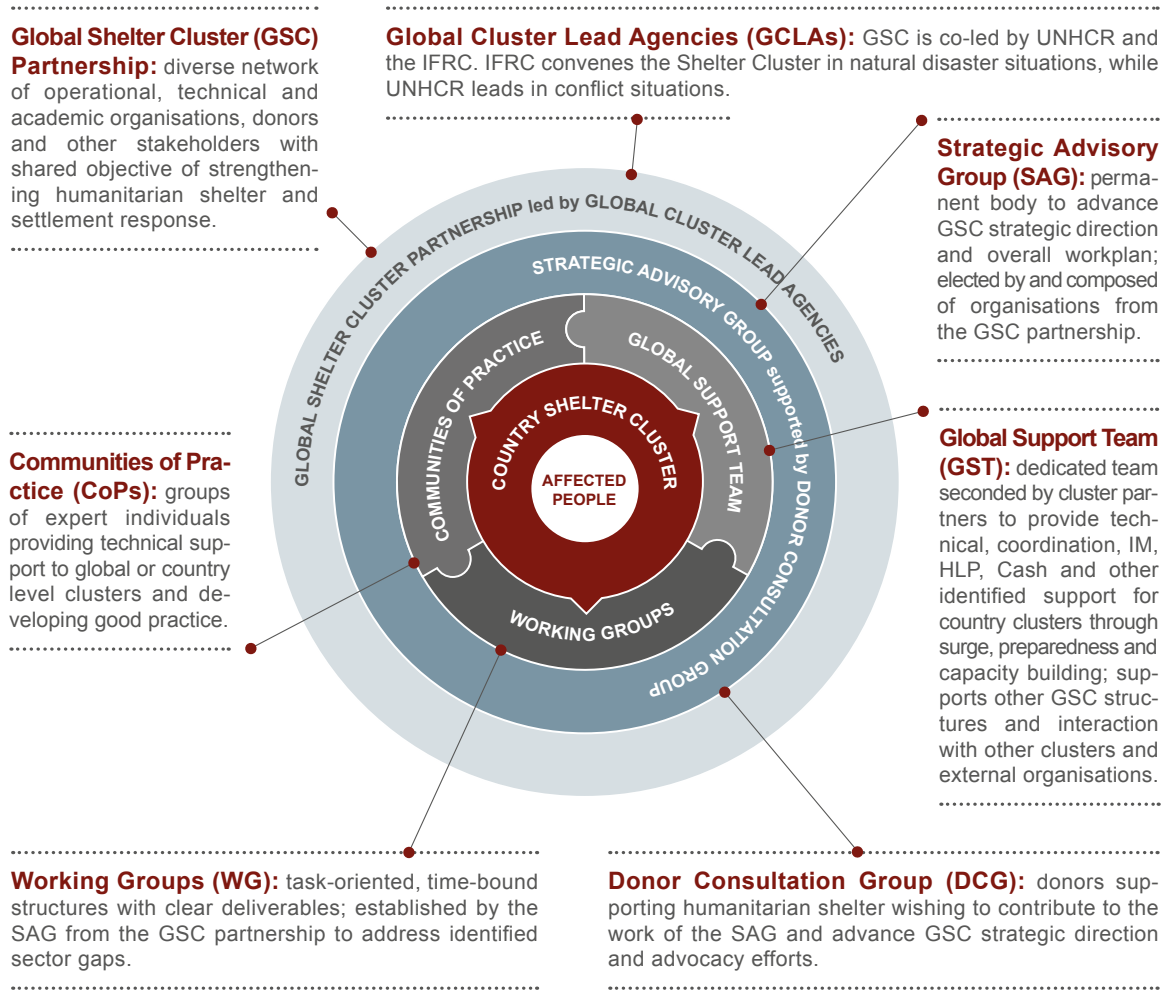
Partnership

Co-led by IFRC and UNHCR, the Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) is a platform of many of the key global shelter and settlement partners. The GSC and country Shelter Clusters work collectively with national response actors to support people affected by natural disasters and internally-displaced people affected by conflict with timely, effective and predictable shelter and settlement responses. In 2017, the GSC supported over 600 shelter partners in 27 country clusters.

The strengthening of the global partnership was an important component of the GSC's 2013-17 strategy, which not only means that the number and diversity of participating global partners is at its highest since the creation of the Shelter Cluster, but critically, the number of collaborative projects is also at its highest level.

This important partnership of global actors has had an impact on the quality of collaboration at country level, resulting in many organisations taking on key shelter and settlement roles in support of the overall response, illustrating the belief and commitment that working collaboratively supports a more effective response and an efficient use of human, technical and financial resources.

Structure

Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) Partnership: diverse network of operational, technical and academic organisations, donors and other stakeholders with shared objective of strengthening humanitarian shelter and settlement response.

Global Cluster Lead Agencies (GCLAs): GSC is co-led by UNHCR and the IFRC. IFRC convenes the Shelter Cluster in natural disaster situations, while UNHCR leads in conflict situations.

Strategic Advisory Group (SAG): permanent body to advance GSC strategic direction and overall workplan; elected by and composed of organisations from the GSC partnership.

Communities of Practice (CoPs): groups of expert individuals providing technical support to global or country level clusters and developing good practice.

Global Support Team (GST): dedicated team seconded by cluster partners to provide technical, coordination, IM, HLP, Cash and other identified support for country clusters through surge, preparedness and capacity building; supports other GSC structures and interaction with other clusters and external organisations.

Working Groups (WG): task-oriented, time-bound structures with clear deliverables; established by the SAG from the GSC partnership to address identified sector gaps.

Donor Consultation Group (DCG): donors supporting humanitarian shelter wishing to contribute to the work of the SAG and advance GSC strategic direction and advocacy efforts.

Guiding Principles

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

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

- The **Centrality of Protection** in humanitarian action: the GSC aims to ensure that the rights of affected persons and the obligations of duty bearers under international law are understood, respected, protected and fulfilled without discrimination[2] and is guided in particular by the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

Strategic Approaches

As part of achieving a more predictable, effective, accountable response, the GSC promotes a number of key **Strategic Approaches** in shelter programming:

- **People-centred humanitarian response:** People's capacity and strategies to survive with dignity are integral to the design and approach of humanitarian response[3]. Interventions therefore need to support and complement the efforts of affected populations who are the first and main responders.

- **Localisation:** Localising humanitarian response is a process of recognising, respecting and strengthening leadership by local authorities and the capacity of local civil society in humanitarian action, to better address the needs of affected populations[4].

- **Capacity Building:** To improve the quality and effectiveness of response, the GSC recognises the need to increase the capacity of responders at country level. It is also important to monitor trends in the overall capacity and flexibility of the sector to respond to increasing needs.

- **Preparedness:** Preparedness can save lives and reduce the impact on the lives of those affected by crisis and reduce the cost of response. Preparedness actions will also be used to support the GSC's commitment to localisation of response.

- **Prioritising the most vulnerable:** With high-impact interventions that address the reality of their diverse needs and capacities.

- **Mainstreaming cross-cutting issues** *(Or good shelter programming)* is required to ensure an effective and accountable response. If our response is not informed by, and able to respond to, needs of different groups, there is a risk of exclusion of those we are most wanting to assist. Equally, as part of the link to recovery, it is important that response activities take into account their potential impact on the long term recovery prospects of communities which includes the environments that support them.

- **Recovery coordination:** Whilst there are immediate needs post-emergency, the GSC recognises that recovery starts from Day 1. The coordination of recovery is therefore needed immediately post-disaster, working with governments and other development actors, bridging the humanitarian-development divide and supporting a localised approach to recovery coordination.

- **Supporting self-recovery:** Increasing the coverage of homes and settlements built-back-safer is key. It is important to find effective ways to support the majority of households that self-recover; thus improving construction quality, building safer resilient homes and settlements and promoting climate and disaster risk-aware communities.

- **Area (Settlement) Based Approaches:** Communities do not perceive their recovery in sectoral terms, but from a holistic perspective. While sectoral technical expertise is an important ingredient in the response, understanding the holistic needs of the affected communities requires better sectoral collaboration. Area (settlement) based approaches, characterised as being: *geographically targeted*, participatory and multi-sectoral, provide a useful approach to gain this understanding. Area based approaches remain applicable in all Humanitarian Program Cycle stages and can be applied in *assessment, coordination and programming activities*.

[2] IASC Protection Policy 2016
[3] The Sphere Project, Core Standard 1
[4] Localising the Response, World Humanitarian Summit Putting Policy into Practice Series, OECD 2017

Scope of the Global Shelter Cluster -
What is Humanitarian Shelter & Settlements?

MANDATE AND GUIDANCE

The GSC is mandated to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies, specifically in (i) providing **Operational Support** (ii) building **Response Capacity** and (iii) consolidation and dissemination of **Standards and Policy**[5]. The GSC is guided by the Right to Adequate Housing with a specific focus on humanitarian contexts, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the IASC Transformative Agenda, in particular its Cluster Coordination Reference Module.

SUPPORT AND ACTIVATION OF CLUSTERS

The Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) supports **activated**, country-level shelter clusters by providing services to improve the predictability, effectiveness and timeliness of humanitarian shelter and settlement response. In countries where **clusters have not been officially activated**[6] but **other sector coordination mechanisms exist**, the GSC can provide support where the in-country lead agency for shelter, settlement or NFIs **makes a request for support** or **accepts offers** of support from the GSC. Whilst some shelter clusters have been merged with other areas, usually Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), the GSC believes that such merged mechanisms are unlikely to provide the same quality of coordination services.

COMPLEXITY OF SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS RESPONSE

Supporting individuals, families and communities with their sheltering needs post-crisis is a **complex social, cultural, technical, economic, legal and political process, closely bound with the climatic, physical and security environment in which it takes place**; in **urban** environments, this complexity can be multiplied several-fold. Shelter and settlement interventions are therefore inextricably linked with the needs and responses of other sectors, requiring **high levels of inter-cluster/sectoral coordination and collaboration**, in particular, Protection, CCCM, WASH and Early Recovery. The GSC also supports an inter-sectoral/cluster **area (settlements) based approach to coordination**, to analyse the specificity of needs and context within a given area to ensure a more **holistic and integrated response**, greater than the sum of its parts.

[5] Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response, IASC, November 2006
[6] And in the absence of any other guidance from the Emergency Relief Coordinator

RANGE OF SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS RESPONSES

The **different needs, desires and vulnerabilities** (age, gender, GBV, diversity, disability) of individuals, families and communities in crises, interlinked with a comprehensive understanding and assessment of this complex environment, will impact the options available for response.
Responses are defined in collaboration with **local governments and responding actors**. The GSC acknowledges the invaluable contributions of national shelter stakeholders and declares its commitment to actively include those stakeholders in the work of the Shelter Cluster.

Shelter and settlement responses use a **variety of methodologies** such as in-kind support of materials, products or work force; cash, vouchers or market approaches; advocacy, and sharing of knowledge or technical guidance and information. The GSC advocates for responses to combine different methodologies in order to meet the different needs of the affected population, **rarely does one single methodology meet all needs**. Adequate shelter cannot be achieved by just providing in-kind goods or cash support alone, **technical advice** and **monitoring** are essential components of all shelter and settlement responses in order to ensure that **minimum living standards** are met and no additional risks introduced. The GSC's scope includes all aspects related to achieving the Right to Adequate Housing with a humanitarian focus and can range from **emergency to longer-term** responses for example:[7]

|	
Settlements Support	Contributing to site and urban planning, upgrading of infrastructure HLP support, Area (Settlement) Based Approaches, Advocacy
Shelter Support	Technical and cross-cutting guidance Strengthening of technical capacity and capacity building Cash and market based shelter responses Emergency, temporary, and transitional shelter Housing repair, reconstruction and construction, Rental support HLP support, Advocacy
Essential Household Support	Coordinating Shelter NFIs Setting standards for shelter materials and shelter-related NFI quality Verifying and connecting reputable suppliers and quality NFIs to affected people Cash and market-based shelter responses Technical and cross-cutting guidance including household monitoring Advocacy

Cross-cutting to these responses is Coordination, Technical Support, Information Management, Assessment and Knowledge Management as well as the mainstreaming of critical cross-cutting of programmatic approaches including protection, inclusion, access and the environment.

[7] The concept of "provider of last resort", as defined by the IASC, will only apply to meeting emergency needs and not to the provision of longer term shelter or housing or longer term settlement planning
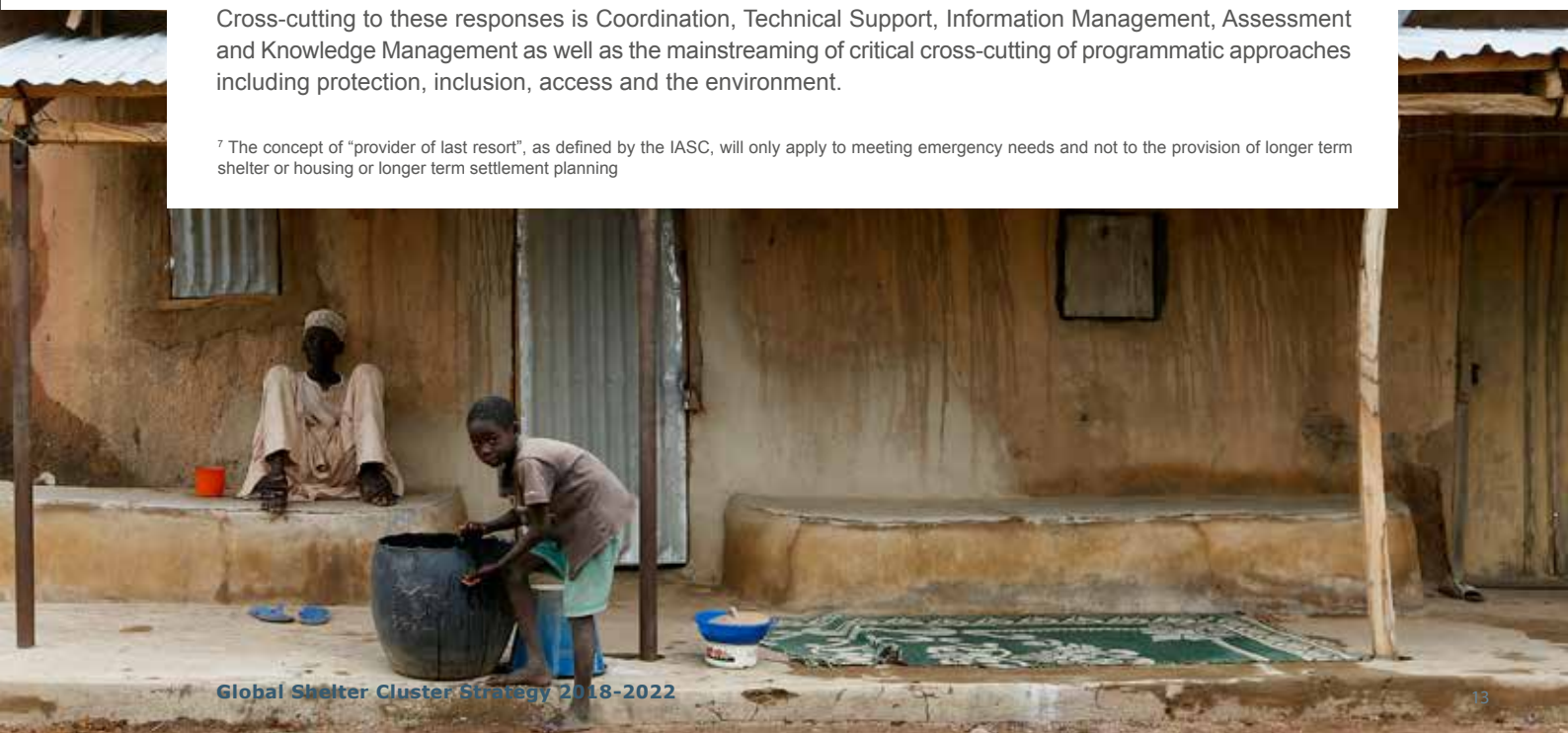
GSC Strategy 2018-2022

Through the evaluation of its Strategy 2013-17, the GSC has listened to those in field operations to ensure that the new strategy maintains and strengthens critical support in key areas for better response and recovery, based on sound evidence and learning that acknowledges and supports the diverse needs of affected populations.

The strong partnerships at the level of the GSC which have been built up, particularly during the 2013-2017 strategy period, continue to be critical and requires continued support and development, this will however no longer be where we will measure our success.

The GSC Strategy is described below in a narrative description of each of the four strategic areas, giving an overview of priorities and actions needed, and the key cross-cutting issues and operational modalities that support them. A detailed description of the specific **strategy workplan of outputs and activities** needed to reach these aims, and indicators to measure progress, have been compiled separately[8].

To support greater impact and accountability, the GSC strategy workplan is uniquely composed of **actions** that are needed at the **global, country and agency levels**.

| AIM | STRENGTHENED SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS RESPONSES THAT BUILD RESILIENT COMMUNITIES |

The strategic aim will be achieved through the combined workstreams of the four strategic areas:

STRATEGIC AREA 1	STRATEGIC AREA 2	STRATEGIC AREA 3	STRATEGIC AREA 4
Coordination	**Advocacy**	**Evidence-Based Response**	**Capacity**

All integrating and mainstreaming cross-cutting response issues as critical in good shelter programming.

[8] An overview table of how the strategy contributes to each of the (i) responsibilities of the Global Shelter Cluster and to that of (ii) the core functions of the Shelter Cluster at country level, to assist in understanding how the strategy contributes towards each of these will be produced separately.

Good Shelter Programming

Cross-Cutting Issues For Effective Shelter and Settlement Response

PROTECTION MAINSTREAMING AND INTEGRATION

Good shelter and settlement programming looks beyond the provision of assistance into the impact this assistance causes. It takes into consideration risks (natural and conflict-induced) and contributes to achieving protection outcomes such as the reduction of sexual and gender-based violence or promoting peaceful coexistence. The GSC will support country-level Shelter Clusters to work with the Protection Cluster to promote Shelter and Settlement interventions ensuring that they (i) avoid exposing people to further harm, (ii) ensure people's access to impartial assistance, (iii) protect people from physical and psychological harm from violence, and (iv) assist them to claim their rights, access available solutions, and recover from abuse. They will work toward the dissemination of, and capacity building around the recently revised GPC Protection Mainstreaming Toolkit to promote the mitigation of protection issues across the programme cycle in shelter and settlement programming. The GSC will further support adherence within all country responses to the SG's bulletin for the Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by humanitarian actors.

Prevention, Mitigation and Safe Response to Gender-Based Violence in Shelter and Settlements Programming. The Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action holds all humanitarians, inclusive of shelter actors, accountable for the protection of all those affected by crises. The GSC recognises that shelter and settlement programming poses great opportunities to prevent, mitigate and safely respond to protection issues, such as Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Specific outputs for the sector to prevent violence and increase safety within shelter and settlement programming will include the integration of the IASC GBV Guidelines across shelter operations and global forums, and participation of GSC actors in the dissemination and uptake of the Shelter NFI distribution Guidelines and Site Planning Guidance for GBV Risk Reduction. The GSC will further support the integration of 'do no harm' principles within the Shelter cash strategy and related standard operating procedures (SOPs) and guidance. They will commit to the dissemination and contextualisation of the GSC-developed constant companion in Level 3 humanitarian responses to ensure safe response to survivors of GBV. The GSC is committed to supporting coordinators and GSC partners at global, regional and national levels to access key tools, guidance and technical support to prevent, mitigate and safely respond to survivors within shelter and settlement programming. The GSC help desk will be available to further support shelter actors to advance protection outcomes within their programming.

INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Crises place people with disabilities in a heightened and disproportionate state of vulnerability and can create additional barriers to accessing humanitarian assistance. The GSC recognises the need to include

persons with disabilities in preparedness, response and recovery activities, to avoid even unintentional marginalisation or exclusion. They will work on the consolidation and dissemination of existing knowledge (Guidelines for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities) along with sharing of best practice to guide activities and programming. Capacity development of coordinators and GSC partners will continue to be supported and improved through associated trainings, advocacy and monitoring.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY SENSITIVE SHELTER AND SETTLEMENT PROGRAMMING

Conflicts and natural disasters affect women, girls, men and boys in different ways. The needs of each of these individuals are further compounded by a diverse range of social and cultural factors (social status and ethnicity for example), producing specific and diverse needs. The GSC believes that by effectively integrating gender issues into future shelter programmes and by acknowledging and promoting program-ming for specific and diverse needs, shelter outcomes will be better met. This will be achieved through consultation and gender and diversity aware analysis, design and implementation, holding a gender and diversity perspective throughout all shelter and settlement programming. Specific outputs for the sector will include (i) the application of the recently revised Gender and Age Marker in country-level responses and emergency funding mechanisms and (ii) dissemination and capacity building for the 'Gender & Shelter Good Programming Guidelines'. The GSC aims to support the capacity of coordinators and GSC partners to work in compliance with gender and diversity initiatives to achieve equal and minimum standards of care for all persons.

ENVIRONMENT SENSITIVE SHELTER AND SETTLEMENT PROGRAMMING

It is important to recognise that humanitarian operations can have a heavy impact on the environments that affected populations rely upon. The GSC seeks to increase understanding of environmental issues facing operational teams and minimise the impact of response activities. The GSC will do this through maintaining the Environmental Helpdesk, supporting field coordinators, collecting evidence, delivering training and supporting the deployment of technical environmental field advisors as required. The GSC will continue to support and disseminate the standards on environmental sustainability through the Environment Community of Practise (ECoP).

STRATEGIC AREA 1

Coordination

Coordination Contributes to a Localised, Predictable, Quality, Effective and Timely Response

PREDICTABLE, TIMELY, QUALITY
Support and Services for Shelter Clusters

Preparedness, Surge, Support – Coordination, IM, Assessment, Technical, Cash, HLP. The direct support given to country clusters is highly valued by coordination team members and partners. The GSC Support Team will provide preparedness, rapid surge, and support through missions and remotely in the core roles of Coordination, Information Management, Assessment and Technical Support. In responding to field demands, this will be expanded to provide Shelter and Cash expertise to promote market-based shelter approaches, and Housing, Land and Property (HLP) experts to support effective shelter and housing recovery. Capacity development of coordinators in cash responses and HLP will further expand this support. Additional roles (e.g. advisors on specific technical areas of shelter and settlement, Environment, Protection, Gender, Gender-Based Violence and Inclusion advisors) can be deployed upon request.

Coordination Capacity Building Tools. Cluster coordination trainings and workshops will continue, focusing on languages where there are the greatest gaps, whilst a more comprehensive approach to coordination capacity building will be developed. This will include initiatives such as 'on the job' exposure through mentoring or shadowing opportunities. Increased and improved capacity building will continue to develop one shared roster open to all partners. Key country-level tools will be shared through the Coordination Toolkit, including guidance around cross-cutting issues, and promoted through trainings/briefings and in the deployment of coordination teams.

Strengthening Information Management. Information Management gaps at country level will be analysed and strategies and tools developed to fill these. Better use will immediately be made of existing partner rosters to support IM gaps. Sheltercluster.org will continue to be the key knowledge management hub and it will be strengthened and complemented with other tools to better respond to field needs.

LOCALISED AND AREA-BASED
Strengthened and Localised Area (Settlement) Based Coordination

Localised Coordination Capacity. Specific emphasis will be given to promote localised and gender-sensitive coordination capacity through increasing and supporting national representation and gender balance in coordination teams, as well as increased national actor involvement and leadership. This will include cross-cluster collaboration to simplify coordination demands, monitoring and supporting direct funding of local actors.GSC partners have been playing a critical role in providing support to country level clusters and this support will be further recognised and developed.

Sub-National Coordination. Evidence, including field and partner feedback, shows that more effective sub-national coordination can have a direct impact on the quality and effectiveness of shelter responses. The GSC will make sub-national coordination a greater priority, by organising preparedness workshops, developing pre-disaster agreements on sub-national coordination (at global and country levels), translation, capacity building, online training and help desk and Community of Practice access for national actors. The GSC will ensure that in each response, sub-national coordination is systematically considered at the outset of the coordination set-up, regardless of the Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) at country level.

Area (Settlement) Based Coordination[9]. As a component of overall area-based approaches (see Strategic Approaches section for more detailed definition), area-based coordination involves undertaking coordination within a defined geographic area whilst taking a holistic, multi-sectoral perspective.

Area-Based Coordination mechanisms can provide a useful framework to promote joint leadership of coordination efforts with sub-national (described further below) and local authorities (whenever feasible), for example, through co-convening area based coordination mechanisms with counterpart municipal or city level authorities. By working in partnership with municipal authorities responsible for the long term development of a neighbourhood or municipality, area-based coordination mechanisms bring opportunities to ensure humanitarian response contributes to long-term municipal/area planning processes.

In order to emphasize possible positive impacts and trial a more systematic approach, the GSC will advance area based coordination by engaging other sectoral cluster colleagues and develop modalities for area-based coordination in applicable contexts, complementing the sub-objectives of sub-national coordination.

Performance Monitoring. To strengthen coordination, increase accountability and ensure corrective action and support where necessary, performance monitoring, will be carried out at country level using agreed tools. As part of this, clarity will also be made regarding support to clusters where the in-country CLA is not a global CLA. The GSC bodies will have greater involvement in assessing and improving the performance of country-level shelter clusters including through joint country review missions.

TRANSITION TO RECOVERY
Facilitating Transition to Recovery Coordination, Enhancing Engagement with Governments and Development Actors

Effective shelter transition and recovery were cited as some of the biggest gaps in shelter response in the evaluation of the 2013-2017 strategy. The GSC commits to playing a pivotal and catalytic role in bringing humanitarian and development actors together to find solutions to support more effective post-crisis shelter transition and recovery. As part of the overall review of solutions to recovery coordination at country level, a review of the process of transition and handover and the exit of cluster coordination will be made. Coordination teams will be supported to identify counterparts for recovery, prepare exit strategies from day one, and define triggers for phasing out. Case studies will be developed around transition and recovery coordination to establish best practice and lessons learned.

INTEGRATED RESPONSE
Effective Inter-cluster coordination and Joint Response Planning Approaches

Inter-cluster coordination at country level is critical to achieving an operationally effective response, responding in an integrated way to the priority needs of people affected by humanitarian crises. One of the greatest threats to predictable and effective coordination highlighted in the strategy evaluation is the use (or not) and application of the cluster approach in new emergencies, the increasing disconnect between HCTs and clusters, exclusion of clusters from decision-making architecture and ineffective inter-cluster coordination; the Humanitarian Response Planning (HRP) processes serve to communicate the added value of this multi-sectoral response. However, these processes have been described for some time as as 'not fit-for-purpose', including in the recent strategy evaluation. The Shelter Cluster will work with other Clusters, Partners and Donors to (i) advocate and organise discussion at the IASC WG/EDG levels on the lack of activation of clusters and associated GLA responsibilities in such responses, and (ii) a review of inter-cluster coordination and HRP processes and demands to ensure they both support a more effective response.

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[9] Area' and 'Settlements' are used here to mean the same thing; 'Area-Based' will be used for simplicity

STRATEGIC AREA 2

Advocacy

Increased Recognition of Shelter and Settlement in Humanitarian Response & Recovery

IMPORTANCE OF SHELTER AND SETTLEMENT
Strengthened Understanding of Shelter and Settlement's Critical Multi-Sector Impact

Whilst some progress was made in advancing the recognition of the importance of the shelter sector and its critical life-saving and life-enabling impact on the achievement of other sector objectives, it was highlighted in the previous strategy evaluation that this work needs to intensify to consolidate this centrality with key policy and funding decision makers at country and global levels - HCs, CERF Secretariat members, OCHA, Inter-Cluster Coordination Groups, Operational Agency Representatives, Donors, as well as national and local stakeholders, including governments, local authorities, partners and communities. Effective advocacy to this effect will focus on highlighting the strong links and significant contribution of quality shelter and settlements programming to achieving protection, health, livelihoods and water and sanitation outcomes. In addition, the need to strive towards meeting the criteria defined for the fulfillment of the right to adequate housing will be part of key messaging. Information produced under the other components of Strategic Area 2, as well as critical evidence produced under Strategic Area 3, will guide the translation of these messages into tailored communications and advocacy briefs at different levels to engage with these key stakeholders in a productive manner.

ENGAGEMENT
Increased Donor & Agency Engagement and Support for Shelter & Settlement Sector

Donor Engagement. As a complement to the comprehensive review of funding of shelter at country-level, a review of donor policies, priorities and funding practices of the shelter sector will inform an overall donor engagement strategy. A Donor Consultation Group was set up in 2016 at global level and this will be further expanded within the strategy period to country level. Tailored advocacy and engagement with specific donors on key shelter policies will also be prioritised to ensure maximum support and influence for the sector. The focus of such advocacy towards increased engagement will not only be on increasing the resources available to shelter and settlements programming but will also emphasise the importance of responses that are more immediately 'fit-for-purpose' according to the nature of the crises; for example, moving much more rapidly to durable responses in crises that will be more obviously longer-term, taking people, as well as material responses, further along the way to recovery, requiring funding strategies that are reflective of this approach.

Agency Engagement. The added value of the GSC and effective coordination mechanisms at country level in addressing and advancing on quality issues will be recognised in the process. In addition to intensified advocacy with donors, efforts will also target key shelter actors. The 2013-17 shelter strategy evaluation identified the need to work more intensively with existing GSC partners, as well as to engage important

operational agencies that are not currently involved, in order to scale up quality responses and advocacy in the sector and to encourage them to become more involved in global level initiatives.

RESPONSE FUNDING
Critical Funding and Response Gaps are Monitored Communicated and Supported

Funding of Shelter Response at country level is the biggest gap highlighted by country-level Shelter Clusters. A comprehensive review of Shelter response funding at country level will be carried out, following up on initial observations in the evaluation of the GSC's last strategy, as well as reviewing how Shelter response is supported at agency level. This will be used to inform the development of a mechanism to more consistently monitor and highlight critical funding, response gaps, quality concerns and their impact, with which Country Shelter Clusters and the GSC will be able to advocate to partners and donors locally and globally.

INFLUENCING
Engaging Others: Engaging Others: Appropriate Urban Assistance, Cash and Markets Programming, Area (Settlements) Based Approaches [10]

Delivering Appropriate Humanitarian Shelter and Settlement Assistance in Urban Contexts. In an increasingly urbanised world, the incidence of affected populations seeking shelter in larger towns and cities will increase. Through the New Urban Agenda (2016), we have committed in offering the most appropriate humanitarian assistance in urban contexts. Every urban crisis however, brings its own complexities for example: (i) Increased density; technically complex physical structures such as high-rise buildings and bridges (ii) Government regulation, policy and politics (iii) The ability to occupy space according to tenancy arrangements which could be complicated by multiple owners, renters, hosting (iv) Diversity of social and economic behaviours (v) Communicating with and assisting highly mobile populations and challenges in identifying the most vulnerable. Though there have been experiences and learning from past crises in Port-au-Prince, Tacloban and Beirut, the humanitarian sector is not yet fully geared to maximise our assistance and to operate effectively in such a context. One cannot solely offer three months' rent and respectfully stop humanitarian assistance, one cannot solely set up settlements in the outskirts of a town and hope families will integrate, find work and access essential services. The GSC will lead efforts to strengthen and increase the ability of its partners to deliver appropriate shelter and settlement assistance in the urban context. This means Cluster partners at each level of operation (Global, National and Agency) must develop strategies that create synergies with civil society and other interest groups and integrate the long-term visions of local governments and other development networks. Through collaboration and concerted advocacy efforts, GSC strategies will result in increased opportunities for the affected populations to access employment, social security, essential services and contribute towards creating a cohesive urban society.

Advocating Strategies for Effective Shelter Outcomes in Cash and Markets Based Programming. Critical to this work is the utilisation of evidence produced from specific research under Strategic Area 3 (Evidence-Based Responses) to communicate the impacts from the use of different cash and markets modalities in shelter (particularly multi-purpose cash) through field communication tools developed to support advocacy for appropriate application of cash and markets programming to key stakeholders - agency, cluster, inter-cluster (OCHA), HCT, HC and donors. Participation and contribution to broader cash coordination, at global and country levels, will be important and serve to keep the wider humanitarian community updated of progress in sectoral cash and markets based approaches , inform the GSC, as well as support learning from other cash responses.

Drive and Support Area-Based Approaches. The GSC is promoting the relevance and importance of area-based approaches - characterised as: *geographically targeted, participatory and multi-sectoral* (see *Strategic Approaches* section for more detailed definition). The GSC is responsible for leading the process of defining area-based approaches for the Global Cluster Coordinators Group. The GSC will work with other clusters and partners to align tasks with other development and humanitarian actors and initiatives working to promote a more integrated and localised response. Starting with agreement on definitions and understanding of terminology internally and externally, the GSC will support piloting at country level, gather evidence, develop guidelines and tools as well as evidence, lessons and best practice to support advocacy and communications to key stakeholders for a greater uptake of the approaches.

[10] Area' and 'Settlements' are used here to mean the same thing; 'Area-Based' will be used for simplicity
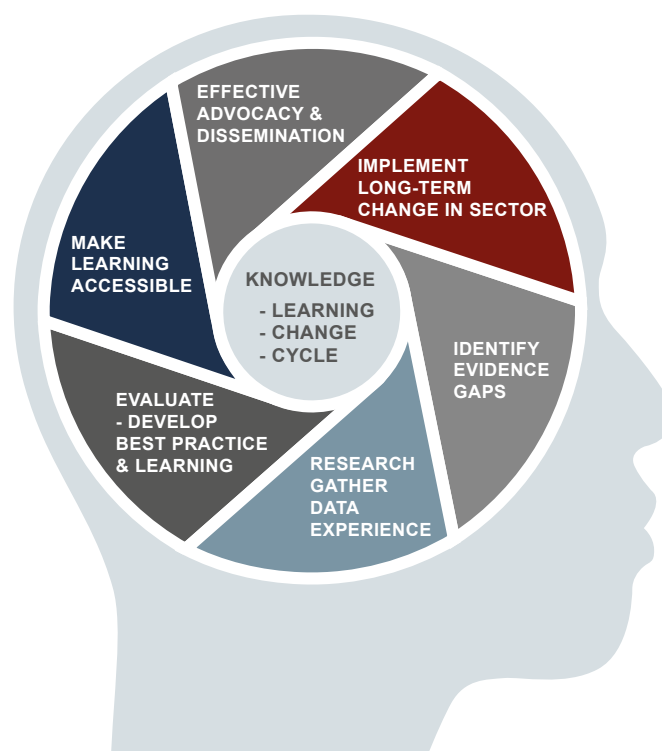
STRATEGIC AREA 3

Evidence-based response

Shelter Response Informed by Evidence, Best Practice & Learning

Completing the Knowledge-Learning-Change cycle is important in making effective decisions and ensuring that humanitarian response is properly informed by evidence, best practice and sustained learning. Over the past years the GSC has developed a predictable capacity to support country-level needs assessments. Building on this, the GSC wants to continue strengthening the Knowledge-Learning-Change cycle to ensure that it applies to informing response planning, advocacy and learning at country and global level.

EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY & DISSEMINATION

IMPLEMENT LONG-TERM CHANGE IN SECTOR

MAKE LEARNING ACCESSIBLE

KNOWLEDGE
- LEARNING
- CHANGE
- CYCLE

IDENTIFY EVIDENCE GAPS

EVALUATE - DEVELOP BEST PRACTICE & LEARNING

RESEARCH GATHER DATA EXPERIENCE

AVAILABLE AND USED
Evidence Available and Used to Inform Planning, Coordination and Decision

Over the past years, the shelter cluster has multiplied the number of needs assessments conducted at country level to inform shelter decision making and strategy development. Building on this, the GSC wants to further strengthen the ability to gather evidence in support of shelter and settlement response decision making and planning, in particular by (a) ensuring greater consistency and predictability in needs assessments (b) supporting shelter actors in assessing various response modalities and promoting cash or markets based response when this is feasible (c) piloting and rolling out outcome-level assessments at country level to help measure the impact of shelter responses against the objectives set in the cluster strategy (d) promoting and supporting inter-sectoral assessments at crisis and area-specific level, and (e) reflecting the inclusion of cross-cutting issues across all assessments. To achieve these, the GSC will further strengthen the availability of global support, while at the same time strengthening country clusters to be more independent in their implementation and analysis capacity by providing high quality and flexible tools. In parallel, the GSC will develop and implement training, guidance notes, as well as providing technical advice in supporting country clusters to effectively integrate evidence in their

planning and coordination, specifically: the HNO and HRP processes; development of a cluster strategy and its indicators; the use assessment findings in the development of indicators for output tracking (3W-like). The GSC will monitor the use of evidence by country clusters in informing their planning. In parallel, the GSC will develop and implement training, guidance notes, as well as providing technical advice in supporting country clusters to effectively integrate evidence in their planning and coordination, specifically: the HNO and HRP processes; development of a cluster strategy and its indicators; the use assessment findings in the development of indicators for output tracking (3W-like). The GSC will monitor the use of evidence by country clusters in informing their planning.

EVIDENCE GAPS FILLED
### Key Shelter and Settlement Evidence Gaps Filled

Shelter sector advocacy has been limited by a lack of strong evidence to support critical messages and programming approaches in highlighting the importance of shelter outcomes and the **significant impact** that it has on so many other **life-enabling** aspects for people affected by disasters and emergencies e.g. the critical role shelter plays in **health, protection, livelihoods, education, psycho-social support**, and the critical role the **environment** plays in sustainable, durable shelter solutions. Evidence regarding the **ability of multi-purpose cash to meet shelter outcomes** is also currently high priority for operational staff. Initial work will further analyse existing evidence and gaps, setting out a broader operational field research agenda. This will also look at the partnership potential between academic institutions and operational agencies in enabling solid and credible evidence forming the foundation for critical advocacy work outlined in Strategic Area 2, starting with a review of the existing evidence-base for shelter.

CAPITALISATION
Knowledge Management Systems In Place to Capitalise on Lessons Learnt, Best Practice and Bring About Change in Sector Policy and Practice

The evaluation of the last GSC strategy highlighted the issue of repeated response mistakes being made in different contexts; having to 'reinvent the wheel' in multiple responses; challenges in easily accessing best practice and learning from existing work as well as closing the knowledge management (KM) loop in translating learning into direct policy and practice changes in programme response. The Shelter Cluster will review good knowledge management practices, look at how existing Shelter Cluster KM tools can be better used; e.g. Communities of Practice, website, annual Global Cluster Coordination Learning Workshops, as well as endorsing existing or developing more accessible tools including Shelter TED talks, tip sheets and field-oriented notes based on evidence, best practice and learning. Inter-agency reviews of country responses will contribute to annual summaries of lessons, bringing together sector learning from each year (informed by national-level learning workshops, as well as more formal evaluations across the sector). Gaps in knowledge will then be fed back into evidence gap activities as outlined above.
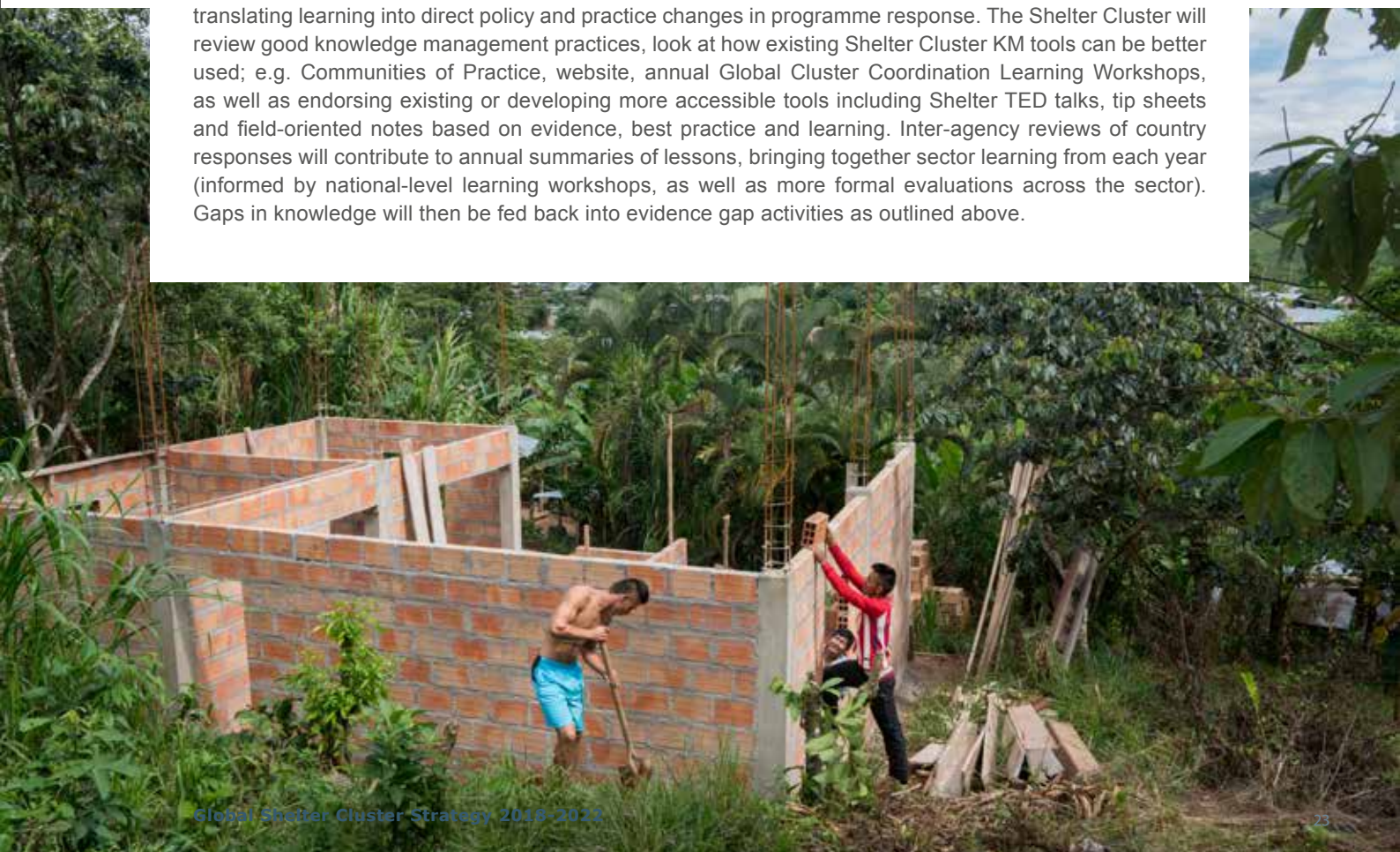
Capacity

Shelter Sector Capacity to Address Ongoing and Emerging Challenges

SKILLS
Increased and Localised, Shelter Response Capacity

Complementing coordination capacity development covered in Strategic Area 1, there is a large gap identified in supporting shelter capacity development, particularly at country level.

Understanding Shelter Capacity and Filling Gaps. Capacity assessment frameworks will be developed and implemented nationally to be able to identify how best to support the development of national and local capacity. Outreach will be made to institutions and universities in key regions and countries to work together to find locally and more sustainable options for capacity development. Preparedness workshops carried out as part of Strategic Area 1 and in Cash and Shelter work at country level will also assist in identifying national capacity gaps in Shelter response.

Existing Policy & Practice. A review of existing policies and practices of operational agencies will examine how national capacity building is currently approached by Shelter partners to identify good practices and inform country-level capacity building approaches on an inter-agency and individual agency level. Country clusters will then be supported to carry out capacity assessments to develop strategies on these two levels, working where appropriate with other sectors.

Access to Training and Capacity Development. Existing guidance and training materials will be reviewed for technical quality and inclusive approaches to shelter and settlement response, then translated to make them more accessible at national level. Capacity building strategies will be developed on global and country cluster levels, incorporating material made available by individual agencies.

Sufficient Technical Capacity. Not only was national capacity found to be often limited, it was noted that, in contrast to comparative sectors such as WASH, the ratio of technical coordination positions was much lower - not necessarily related to donor reluctance to fund, but potentially the importance of such roles is not recognised at a country level. Access to increased technical capacity at a cluster level will be reviewed, utilising immediately existing accessible rosters of technical shelter staff.

HLP Capacity. As the cornerstone of access to adequate housing, security of tenure and larger HLP considerations are critical areas for engagement. The GSC will support capacity building through the newly established GSC Roving Shelter-HLP Advisor. At the country-level, Shelter Coordination teams will engage key stakeholders, particularly government and Protection colleagues, to support localised responses that strengthen security of tenure for affected populations. Moreover, at the country level, shelter strategies will

promote the inclusion of tenure security as a vulnerability criteria and systematically use security of tenure to plan and monitor the response, including advocacy activities.

Developing Quality Partnerships and Supporting Direct Funding of National Partners. Partnership with national/local organisations often goes as far as a grant relationship with little institutional investment. Such grant support is often limited to direct implementation activities with little support for institutional capacity; e.g. management, finance, administration, logistics, and very often no capacity development. Country clusters and agencies will be asked to assess partnerships and encouraged to make greater institutional investments. Linkages will be made with other clusters and OCHA at country level to support better understanding of the humanitarian system and access to funding for national and local actors.

Evidence and understanding the reasons behind capacity limitations of national and local shelter partners will be critical in working with donors (including common humanitarian funds) and shelter partners at global and country levels to support funding access and redesign funding frameworks to facilitate more comprehensive and direct funding to local actors. Preparedness in funding national partners will be particularly important in supporting direct funding in rapid onset emergencies.

PREPAREDNESS
Country Workshops and Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Preparedness

Preparedness Workshops. The GSC will support preparedness workshops at country level to support a localised response planning as well as working with sub-national government and other structures to promote the rapid activation of sub-national coordination and response structures.

HLP Preparedness. As the cornerstone of access to adequate housing, security of tenure and larger HLP considerations are critical areas for engagement. The GSC will undertake preparedness activities, including the development of HLP country profiles to inform country-level strategies and discussions – mapping out critical security of tenure aspects before, or at the onset of, a crisis, to ensure conflict-sensitive programming.

UTILISING CASH AND MARKETS
Shelter Responders Apply Cash Modalities Appropriately
Guidance, Tools, Monitoring, Best Practice, Coordination, Communications and Advocacy. Whilst different aspects of Cash and Markets based Shelter programming are represented within each of the four Strategic Areas, capacity focus in this area will cover the development of guidance, tools and training materials to support capacity development as well as filtering of existing knowledge particularly useful to Shelter e.g. market analysis, cash and shelter preparedness, approaches to support effective monitoring of different modalities of cash and markets responses in meeting shelter outcomes, as well as messaging around the associated potential impacts on protection, environment and technical/safety aspects of shelter. Drawing out and disseminating best practice on cash and markets based approaches applicable and useful to the sector will be a key priority to build upon the extensive work done by other sectors in this area.

FUTURE OF SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS
Analysis of Sector Future Response Needs & Capacity
To ensure the humanitarian shelter sector is fit-for-purpose in the coming years, it is important to take stock, review shelter trends and examine its ability to respond to the changing humanitarian landscape and to plan for the future. This will inform both individual agency and overall sector policy and practice in national and international human resource investment, material response capacity and strategies to strengthen the localisation of shelter response. The work will be initially informed and guided by the State of Humanitarian Shelter and Settlement work, which straddles the two strategies and guides the next 5-10 years of Shelter sector capacity building.

Implementing the GSC Strategy

A **detailed plan** of the specific activities and outputs to achieve the strategy, indicators to measure its success and indicative budgets have been developed.
The GSC will develop bi-annual workplans and budgets to support prioritisation and fundraising.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Key components of the strategy will be implemented by the multi-partner GSC **Global Support Team** (GST), including the Global Focal Points, the co-leads and other partner organisations, who provide support in coordination, information management, technical aspects of shelter, cash and market based responses, HLP, and assessment. The GST also includes agencies as 'champions' to provide specific support and guidance on cash and market-based responses and HLP. An important collaborative implementation strategy has been the wide range of GSC **Working Groups**, formed to implement specific parts of the strategy and are time-bound in nature, linked to the achievement of specific activities and outputs.

The **Communities of Practice (CoPs)** are bodies made up of organisations and individuals with expertise in specific areas of shelter and settlement. They provide a forum as a point of entry to a repository of knowledge from a global talent pool on these specific areas for both field and global partners. The CoPs will be specifically strengthened and supported during this strategy period. During the formation of the bi-annual workplans, other mechanisms through which the strategy can be effectively and efficiently implemented, will be reviewed and proposed.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The GSC Strategy 2018-2022 has been developed with a series of **outcome indicators** that will be reported on a bi-annual basis, with updates provided through the annual Achievement Reports. More detailed workplans of specific areas of the strategy will be developed and have their own reporting mechanisms to the Strategic Advisory Group and the GSC as a whole. A **rapid, mid-point review** will take place to examine the implementation of the first bi-annual workplan, to give real-time pointers of how to improve the next cycle of implementation.

PHOTO CREDITS

Global Shelter Cluster
ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter

Global Shelter Cluster Strategy 2018 - 2022

AIM | **STRENGTHENED SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS RESPONSES THAT BUILD RESILIENT COMMUNITIES**

1 COORDINATION

Coordination Contributes to a Stronger Localised, Effective & Accountable Response

PREDICTABLE, TIMELY, QUALITY
Support to Country Clusters Delivering on Core Commitments

LOCALISED & AREA-BASED
Increased Localisation of Coordination and Application of Area (Settlements) - Based Coordination

TRANSITION TO RECOVERY
Effective Transition to Recovery Coordination

INTEGRATED RESPONSE
Effective Inter-Cluster Coordination and Joint Response Planning

2 ADVOCACY

Shelter Prioritised in Humanitarian Response & Recovery

IMPORTANCE OF SHELTER & SETTLEMENT
Strengthened Understanding Shelter & Settlements' Multi-Sector Impact

ENGAGEMENT
Increased Donor & Agency Engagement in Shelter & Settlement

RESPONSE FUNDING
Critical Response & Funding Gaps Monitored, Communicated & Filled

INFLUENCING
Engaging Others in Appropriate Urban Assistance, Cash Programming and Area (Settlements) Based Approaches

3 EVIDENCE-BASED RESPONSE

Shelter Response Informed by Evidence, Learning & Best Practice

AVAILABLE & USED
Strengthened Timely Availability and Use of Evidence in the Programme Cycle

EVIDENCE GAPS
Key Shelter and Settlement Evidence Gaps Filled

CAPITALISATION
Systems in Place to capitalise on Lessons Learnt, Best Practice and Bring About Change in Sector Policy and Practice

4 CAPACITY

Shelter Sector Capacity to Address Ongoing and Emerging Challenges

SKILLS
Increased & Localised Shelter Response Capacity

PREPAREDNESS
Country Clusters better prepared for response and recovery

UTILISING CASH AND MARKETS
Shelter Responders Apply Cash Modalities Appropriately

FUTURE OF SHELTER & SETTLEMENT
Analysis of Shelter Sector Future Response Needs & Capacity

MAINSTREAMED PROTECTION, GENDER, DISABILITY & ENVIRONMENT