

NFI WG

6th August 2020

The Global Shelter Cluster NFI WG meeting was held at the beginning of August. It had been a few months since the NFI WG had convened due to intervening missions of the co-chairs, the pandemic, and other competing Global Shelter Cluster events. A round of introductions was made.

Shelter Cluster Survey for Capacity Building

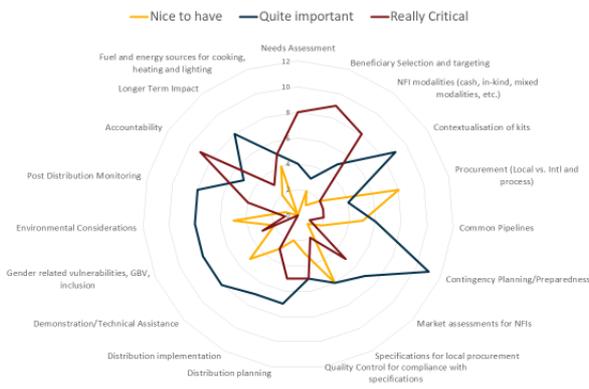
A major topic of discussion for the NFI WG members had been the compilation of an online training curriculum. The Co-Chairs reminded the participants that a survey had been circulated to the NFI WG members. 15 members from the NFI WG based mostly in the field and in HQ supporting roles had completed the survey.

15 respondents from 12 countries



The survey aimed to evaluate what would be the priority components of an NFI training both in terms of priority and in terms of resources to develop the training. The results are displaced in the two charts below:

Evaluation of Importance of Modules for the NFI Training

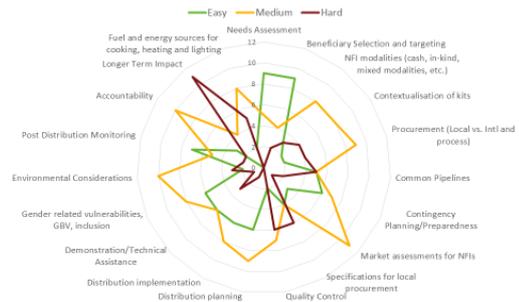


What will be required to compile the curriculum?

Easy = Various resources already exist (handbooks, guidelines, agency internal trainings etc.) but need to be consolidated and reworked into a global online training module; an organisation could champion the module in consultation with the NFI WG members.

Medium = Some resources already exist, but need to be adapted for NFI, and some complementary content needs to be developed in consultation and agreement with the Shelter Cluster, NFI WG members and possibly other stakeholders outside of the cluster.

Hard/difficult = No resources currently exists on this specific topic (or we aren't yet aware of it) so content needs to be newly developed (most likely through hiring of a consultant) in consultation with the Shelter Cluster and NFI WG members possibly other stakeholders outside of the cluster.



Really critical aspects of the training included beneficiary selection, accountability, and market assessments, while quite important topics included contextualisation of NFI kits, contingency planning, post distribution monitoring, environmental considerations, gender-related vulnerabilities, technical assistance, longer-term impact, and fuel in NFIs. In terms of resources for compiling the training, beneficiary selection and needs assessments were considered among the easiest to compile while longer-term impact was thought to require extensive resources to compile and demonstrate through an e-learning.

Participants queried whether it would be possible to put criteria and indicators in terms of how many modules or capacity building activities would be required per country. HUMLOG Institute (The Humanitarian Logistics and Supply Chain Research Institute) responded that in the training plan they are working on with funding that they were trying to include this aspect to support the development of Logistics capacity on NFI teams.

The full presentation of the survey findings is available on the Shelter Cluster Website on the NFI practices page: <https://www.sheltercluster.org/working-group-nfi-practices/documents/training-curriculum-survey-global-shelter-cluster-nfi-wg>

HUMLOG briefed participants about several funding opportunities it was pursuing to try to improve logistics and distribution capacity by working with several logistics teams including IFRC and UNHCR. Several of these aspects may respond to some of the priority topics selected by the NFI WG members.

IOM shared that it has made a [mobile guide and script](#) of the [guidelines that was produced by the Global Shelter Cluster's GBV in Shelter Programming Working Group](#). They shared the guidelines for participants to see. The mobile guide is now with the developers.

Action Point	Who
Follow up on Survey findings and try to organise training work plan	NFI WG Co-Chairs
Identify other sources of funds for components that can be championed and require more resources	Agencies

Fuel and Energy

At the last meeting in February, the NFI Working Group members had selected to discuss fuel and alternative fuel options in NFI response. Several country-level Shelter Clusters had prepared to share about their experiences, challenges, and opportunities in fuel distribution.

Iraq

The Iraq Shelter Cluster has a unique case in that they are not doing distribution as a Shelter Cluster but that they were involved in advocacy in supporting the government to cover the fuel needs in the camps for internally displaced people. As kerosene is the main fuel type, the Shelter Cluster has tried to ensure that humanitarians do not enter the market and risk creating a parallel market for purchasing of fuel. Kerosene has been determined to be the more sustainable solution than other forms of fuel. **The Shelter Cluster strongly discourages use of other fuels unless supported by the findings of a market assessment.** As Iraq is an oil rich country, Kerosene is the only sustainable option for fuel. The Shelter Cluster also works with the CCCM Cluster to provide capacity building activities in fire-risk mitigation and prevention. The Shelter Cluster has developed a **position paper on Kerosene usage and requirements for cooking and heating.** While fuel is provided by the government and monitored by humanitarian actors, the Shelter Cluster is active in providing other NFIs to support heating and cooking, and these **interventions are covered in the Cluster's NFI technical guidance.**

NW Syria

The Colleagues from NW Syria explained challenges and opportunities for coordinating fuel distribution remotely from Gaziantep, Turkey. The SNFI Cluster has calculated that the average household requires 4 litres of fuel for the winter period covering December to March, often Shelter/NFI Cluster partners are only able to cover a limited period of this time. Fuel quality, lack of distribution of appropriate fuel per type of stove, delayed delivery, and IDPs' prioritization of needs are some of the challenges of covering heating needs of the IDPs. The Shelter/NFI Cluster has worked with the Cash Working Group to set up a cash transfer amount for heating which has been set at \$120 USD, though currently there are concerns about the volatility of the exchange rate. Shelter/NFI Cluster partners have done voucher distribution in the past, though at times, cases of beneficiaries selling the vouchers in order to have cash for other needs have been documented. IDPs who struggle to make ends meet sometimes use negative coping mechanisms such as burning trash or clothes to heat themselves due to the expense of fuel. This also creates other risks such as fires and burning of tents. While there is advocacy for early distribution of fuel, displacements during the winter and bad weather conditions can also prevent the distribution of subsequent distribution of fuel batches. The full presentation from the Cross Border Operations in NW Syria are found on the NFI WG page: **<https://www.sheltercluster.org/working-group-nfi-practices/documents/gsc-nfi-wg-nw-syria-case-study-fuel-winter-distribution>**

Whole of Syria colleagues mentioned that it was interesting to hear the updates of the colleagues from NW Syria and that there may be some useful lessons, but their response was heavily dependent on the approval of the government, so there had only been one winterization specific distribution.

Ukraine

In Ukraine, fuel has been part of the winterization response for 6 years. Coverage has been provided through coal, firewood, and now fuel briquettes. While many of the homes impacted by the conflict used coal as a primary source of heating, partners encountered challenges several years into the response due to the rising prices as many of the coal mines were in Non-Government Controlled Areas. Firewood was also not a sustainable source of fuel due to environmental concerns and collusion in the firewood market. Many of the Shelter cluster partners now have adapted briquettes as they are more fuel efficient and sustainable than other fuel sources. Each year the Shelter Cluster issues its **guidance for winterization** which provides the recommendations for specifications and targeting for the winter period, and then conducts a lessons learned exercise in the spring following the conclusion of the recommendations. Some **relevant lessons learned from the 2019-20 period** include the following:

- Solid fuel provided by partners in this winterization campaign was in general of good quality. However, due to the presence on the market of different types of solid fuel for heating, with different characteristics and performance, partners should always request a quality test and obtain the supporting documentation from the suppliers. This would prevent the usage of material that could be non-compliant with national standards and result in a health hazard for the recipients, especially the most vulnerable.
- The installation of heaters should be planned and implemented before the winter season. This is related to the need to consider the necessity of additional installation works, which might delay the actual response to the cold weather.
- Durable solutions are highly recommended after several years in a row of covering the recurrent needs as opposed to the emergency solutions. Energy efficiency programs or synergies with livelihood programs may be considered in this regard.

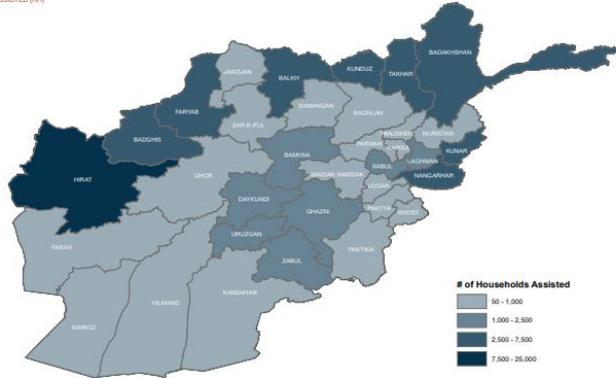
The full presentation shared with the GSC NFI WG is available on the NFI WG page: **<https://www.sheltercluster.org/working-group-nfi-practices/documents/gsc-nfi-wg-ukraine-case-study-fuel-winterization>**

Afghanistan

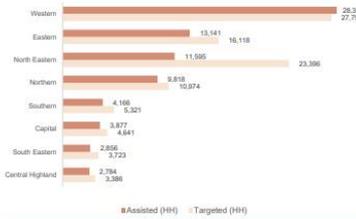
Afghanistan shared that they cover much of the winterization program in cash due to accessibility of markets. Monitoring and ensuring quality of a fuel arise as challenges with this

form of assistance.

ASSISTED (HH)



PROGRESS BY REGION - ASSISTED VS TARGETED (HH)



PARTNERS

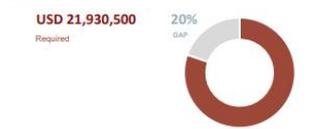


During the winter, the Emergency Shelter/NFI Cluster is making efforts to support the government's leadership in the winterization response to provide assistance to the most vulnerable IDPs, returnees and hosting community members.

ASSISTANCE



FUNDING STATUS



Feedback: atghams@unhcr.org

2. Pilot Project alternative for energy source for cooking – Biodigester (II)

- Is a hermetic reactor that receives the daily waste of a farm or community, in which the compost is fermented.
- This mixture produces biogas which goes through pipes to points of use.
- Biogas is a energy source for cooking.



Figure 1. Components of a biogester. Source: Sistema.bio

Venezuela was activated with energy in its title as it is a major driver of shelter needs in country. Currently, 19% of the response includes energy. A major portion of the population in need has limited access to fuel, limited access to gas bottles, and lack of electricity. Shelter Cluster partners in Venezuela distribute solar lamps to vulnerable people, provide and install renewable and innovative energy sources for social institutions and organisation, and provide and install electric generators for social institutions and organisations. Due to the many challenges, the Shelter Cluster has done a pilot project of a biodigester in one community due to harmful impacts of firewood and lack of domestic gas for cooking. Such projects aim to build local capacity of communities to provide for their energy needs. The sustainability for funding for energy projects is one concern and there are increased limitations put on partners' operational delivery of fuel. The Venezuela presentation is available on the Global Shelter Cluster NFI WG page: <https://www.sheltercluster.org/working-group-nfi-practices/documents/gsc-nfi-wg-venezuela-case-study-fuel>

A question was raised concerning the distribution of gas bottles. For Venezuela, the intervention was thought to not be sustainable. The new Shelter Sector Coordinator from Cox's Bazaar shared the experience from the camp in citing that LPG bottles were what was used culturally and introducing other forms of cooking fuel would require behavioural change which would be beyond the humanitarian scope of the project. LPG was also a better form of cooking fuel source than firewood for example which is not environmentally friendly and which

created tensions with the host community. Some information on the LPG distribution is available in the [Shelter Projects Case Study on Cox's Bazar](#).

The group was asked about **modalities for fuel and whether there was any pressure experienced in terms of distributing cash** to cover fuel needs. Several countries mentioned cash distributions to cover fuel needs. As a GSC support team, some issues had been elevated from the field about cash grants not being enough to cover fuel and in that not being able to contribute to life-saving objective of warmth during winter. Linked with this was the need for data on benefits of fuel and energy on human health and shelter. HUMLOG institute mentioned it was doing a study on what type of modalities were the most effective, so this question of coverage of fuel and heating needs may be one avenue of research. The NFI WG co-chairs offered to put HUMLOG institute in touch with some country-level clusters and to share relevant guidance coming from these Clusters found both in the [coordination toolkit](#) and on the [GSC cash working group web page](#).

There was also a question regarding the research on energy consumption for heating in tents, conducted by the IFRC-Shelter Research Unit with thermal simulation software. Below are links to the newsletters that informed about the research in addition to [presentation of the findings](#).

https://issuu.com/shelterresearchunit/docs/newsletter_3_ifrc-sru_en-10-13_prin
https://issuu.com/shelterresearchunit/docs/ifrc_newsletter_sru_en_140610_a4https://issuu.com/shelterresearchunit/docs/2015_04_6th_newsletter_ifrc-sru_en_34639ce4b3dd66

Some recommendations for the Global Shelter Cluster and for the NFI WG included the following:

- More **advocacy and information (research, knowledge exchange) is needed to better understand and promote alternatives to common fuel solutions**. Cleaner fuel solutions were often found to be **expensive** and not as **sustainable** as less environmentally clean energy solutions.
- **Collaboration with health sector** could be useful to strengthen shelter arguments (such as the need for good insulation/winterisation to keep people healthy or proper ventilation to prevent spread of diseases etc, or consequences for lack of shelter/fuel interventions.)
- Effective ways to **cover fuel needs by leveraging markets and ensuring that beneficiaries can prioritise their most urgent needs without having to compromise on warmth during the winter** requires further guidance and evidence and lessons learned from various winter contexts.

The NFI WG co-chairs thanked the colleagues for their participation and informed them that the next meeting would be organised in September. A doodle poll would be circulated to ascertain their availability and to select the next topic and theme of discussion.