2019 Vulnerability Criteria of the Shelter and NFI Cluster

The Socio-Economic Vulnerability Assessment Tool (SEVAT) developed by the Cash Working Group has been updated to take into account the changing context of Iraq (less new displacement and more returns and prolonged displacement). In a transition to more durable solutions in the post conflict phase, which implies a gradual departure from a status-based approach, the SEVAT is for developing a need-based approach which better complies with a social policymaking perspective. The assessment tool, a consumption-based survey which takes into consideration families’ behaviours and characteristics, allows for vulnerability classification of the family unit according to their distance from the poverty marker. This approach realigns with the model used by the Government of Iraq and the World Bank to assess households for MoLSA’s cash transfers. In effect, SEVAT helps to target interventions at the most vulnerable households by decreasing reliance on under- or over-reporting of household expenditures. The SEVAT model allows for identification of families likely to be eligible for MoLSA’s social safety net programme and therefore, from a mid-term perspective, it is designed to facilitate the transition towards a governmental programme. A vulnerability mapping of the country resulting from a wide usage of the tool would represent an advocacy tool and a practical instrument to facilitate the transition to post-conflict situation.

The new model is based on the REACH Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment (MCNA) data and takes per capita expenditure – an indicator of per capita consumption – as a proxy for vulnerability. Using a range of household characteristics and behavioural indicators that have been found to have a statistically significant relationship with consumption, the new tool estimates a value of per capita consumption for each household. Unlike the previous tool, the SEVAT does not assign a score to households based on different indicators; instead, it uses those indicators to obtain a value for per capita consumption, which is widely considered to be a better proxy for household welfare. Using consumption as a proxy also allows us introduce an identified poverty marker as a cut-off (110,000 IQD per person per month).

Moreover, the tool takes into account how different indicators are found to be associated with consumption in different regions. The regional classification of the tool is based on the one used by the World Bank for its estimation of household welfare. This new model is a result of our desire to be more inclusive and reflective of the diversity of the communities we work with.

Shelter/NFI component

There are a number of questions in the questionnaire that specifically ask about the settlement and shelter conditions, occupancy type, and basic NFI needs. Combined with the overall vulnerability score of the family, this data can help SNFI partners to look into additional areas of intervention or just support more accurate targeting of out-of-camp populations and facilitate more in-depth technical assessment. The SNFI Cluster supports the rolling out of the new tool and encourages SNFI partners to use it in their initial assessment of areas of operation to improve vulnerability targeting.

Capacity Building

The CWG, with the support of the SNFI Cluster, has led a number of trainings to facilitate the rolling out of the tool, especially with partners who have not used it in the past. The SNFI Cluster and the CWG further hope to roll out trainings for enumerators in the future. However, due to the high number of enumerators, the current CWG/SNFI strategy is to conduct ToTs on the assessment tool for officers at sub-national level and specific training on the scoring model for data management staff, with support to enumerators to follow.