**Global Shelter Cluster: NFI practices WG**

**Meeting summary**

**17th December 2019**

**Participants:** 15 participants from 10 different agencies, 5 country clusters, 2 academic institutes. For contact details see last page.

**Agenda**

* Introduction: quick intro round of participants in the call
* Quick introduction/review on WG scope and workplan 2019
* Update on the concept note for NFI training
* Topics to be discussed whether they are within the scope of the WG:
  + Development of environmentally friendlier alternatives for tarpaulin
  + Fuel and energy sources for cooking, heating and lighting, as they often fall under NFI
  + Document/monitor how modalities have changed over time (e.g. from in kind to cash) and what kind of impact that has on beneficiaries
* Decision on future format of NFI WG communication/interaction
* AOB

1. **Introduction and recap**

After a quick introduction of the participants, several of whom were new to the WG, the WG chairs gave a brief recap of the WG initial objectives the concluded deliverables and the scope of the WG for 2019/2020.

### As statistics extracted from the Global Shelter Cluster website show, 65% to 75% of beneficiaries (average 8mio/year) that received shelter related support received it through NFI. The main objective of the NFI WG is to “develop needed resources to build capacity and improve NFI (Non-Food Items) practices”. Apart from collecting and disseminating resources and experiences on NFI practices, the main task, identified through a number of consultations and confirmed during the [NFI working group session held during the Global Shelter Cluster meeting](https://www.sheltercluster.org/working-group-nfi-practices/documents/global-shelter-cluster-meeting-wg-session-nfi-2019), is to develop a set of online trainings that cover all aspects of working with NFI.

1. **Update on Training Curriculum**

The main challenge for the development of the trainings, is to access funding. HUMLOG (Humanitarian Logistics Institute) gave an update about the various opportunities for funding they are scoping. Applications will be due later-on in 2020.

In order to finalise the concept note and to develop proposals, there is a need for the NFI working group to define what the scope of the training should be, how much time needs to be dedicated to develop the modules and which resources are required for the development. Hence, the call focused on reviewing the initial draft training curriculum and topics for the training modules to be developed. Furthermore, to scope which specific areas of expertise the NFI working group members may have which they can contribute to the development of the guidance.

During a quick round of “prioritisation” of topics in the draft curriculum, participants shared resources and information and voted topics that were both as very important and “easy win” because of already existing resources:

* Assessment/beneficiary selection/targeting

(as pointed out be WG members, in DRCongo, there was a score card developed. REACH had done a study on the effectiveness of this tool. This [**study is available on the NFI WG page**](https://www.sheltercluster.org/working-group-nfi-practices/documents/revue-des-outils-du-cluster-ame-evaluation-de-loutil-score) and could feed into the module. )

* Modalities (in kind, cash, vouchers etc.), ideally including market assessment adapted to NFI and shelter, and how to decide which modality could be most effective.

(HUMLOG Inst. currently has PhD working on CBI modalities as well as one funded project on Cash Vs. NFI on conflict situations)

Further topics received high importance votes but will need more effort to develop:

* contextualization of NFI kits (including and local procurement) as there was still an automatic reflex to easily prepare standard NFI packages without adaptation to the context. This would also link to market assessment.
* Accountability (complaints & feedback mechanisms as well as quality benchmarking and post distribution monitoring)
* Longer term impact of NFI
* Technical assistance, demonstrations
* Environmental impact studies

There was also interested to better understand Common pipeline mechanisms, particularly by participants from Somalia Cluster and maybe DR Congo. Participants from Cox Bazar and Yemen could share experience.  
Common pipeline will be considered as one of the topics for the experience sharing calls/webinars and is planned to be included as a module (standalone or within procurement).

To get a better understanding of priorities in the field it was decided to circulate a survey to collect broader input with ranking of the prioritization of topics and the ease of development for each of the modules in order to better determine what kind of resources are needed for this type of training.

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| **Action Point** | **Who** |
| Determine scope and time (different stages/Phases) for development of modules in order to better determine which resources are required for development of the training curriculum | Group of interested members working on the concept note/proposal |
| Prepare and circulate survey for the NFI WG members to rank priority topics and “ease of development”, suggest missing topics, | Cecilia and Renee |
| Complete Survey in January | NFI WG members and other field practitioners |

1. **Review of Suggestions of new topics and activities for the NFI Working Group**

The NFI Working Group Chairs had received in the last few months and during the Global Shelter Cluster meeting several topics suggested to be included in the scope of works for the NFI WG. The topics were the following:

* **Development of environmentally friendlier alternatives for tarpaulin**
* The first topic proposed was considered to be outside of the scope of the NFI Working Group. Although of high interest, the development of such a new product requires expertise and resources, that are beyond the WG capacities. The WG would be open to support and promote such a project.
* **Fuel and energy sources for cooking, heating and lighting, as they often fall under NFI**
* Fuel and energy sources for cooking, heating, and lighting often fall within the remit of country-level Shelter Clusters especially in contexts where winterisation is an issue. By default, the NFI WG has an interest to collect and disseminate information, best practices and innovations on this topics, however there are dedicated initiatives such as CERES and GACC that are already working extensively to cover the topic. The WG can aim to seek closer contact and exchange with those initiatives as well as with the The Environmental Community of Practice (ECoP) which is also doing work in emergy and fuel. The NFI WG can help collect examples of case studies and examples of energy/fuel being delivered by various country Clusters.
* The ECoP with funding from UNHCR and support from IMPACT Initiatives will contract an energy consultant to develop a brief 8-page document to better explain the linkages between housing and energy. This will be an advocacy document that can better explain how energy relates to shelter outcomes.
* Document/monitor how modalities have changed over time (e.g. from in kind to cash) and what kind of impact that has on beneficiaries.
* Many partners were interested in the topic of modalities and their contributions to NFI outcomes.

Also at Global level, demand has been voiced, to ensure modality reporting is included in cluster 4/5Ws.

HUMLOG announced that it was working on several studies looking at the impact of cash assistance on shelter and NFI outcomes. They would be presenting at Humanitarian Partnership and Network week in Geneva and also at the World Humanitarian Forum in London. Cluster Coordinators were also interested in this effort as it concerned their reporting systems, and there is still no way to report the outcomes on multipurpose cash.

Apparently, the Cash Working Group had discussed this issue and the need to update a Global Shelter Cluster publication from 2016: [**Cash-based programmes for Shelter and NFI – Implications upon Shelter Cluster Information Management Services**](https://www.sheltercluster.org/shelter-and-cash-working-group/documents/cash-based-programmes-shelter-and-nfi-implications-upon). There is a request to come up with a clearer methodology on how to track modalities and their outcomes. NFI WG chairs will liaise closely with the Cash WG to agree how to collaborate and share the work on topics of joint interest.  
 A separate email will be sent to follow up on this issue.

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| **Action Point** | **Who** |
| Share best practices on fuel and energy and the results of the consultancy | Environmental CoP and other relevant NFI WG members for future meetings |
| Reach out to country clusters to collect experiences with provision of fuel/energy for cooking and heating | NFI WG chairs |
| Follow up with members interested by the cash and NFI outcomes discussion | Renee with CWG Chair |

1. **How regular meetings should be and ways forward**

NFI WG members agreed that skype calls to exchange experience in “mini-webinar style” of max. 1.5hours on particular topics would be useful. NFI WG members will suggest and select topics on which they would like to discuss, and the NFI WG chairs will look to find members who have interesting experience and best practices to share on that topics.

Furthermore, there will be calls scheduled per need to follow up on other activities such as the training curriculum.

Doodle poll will be used to align availability of the WG members.

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| **Action Point** | **Who** |
| Identify “volunteers” to share experience (prepare a presentation) on nominated topics of interest. These could be recorded as well and made available on the website. first topics flagged/requested during the call:   * How to get “good enough” data on needs for shelter programming, when field assessments are impossible (e.g. not allowed)? **🡪 session planned for early January.** * providing fuel and energy: Possible example: propane gas bottles in Cox Bazar (Tonja Klansek TBC) 🡪 planned for March * Common pipeline | Cecilia and Renee |
| Circulate the doodle poll to select the date for the next meeting on selected topic | Cecilia and Renee |

**Participants:**

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|  | **Participant** | **Organisation** | **E-mail Address** |
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