

INTRODUCTION

This document was prepared by a technical Task Force of the Shelter Working Group (SWG) in Jordan for the Syrian refugee response and is intended to complement the *“Explanation of Shelter Methodologies and Standards in the Jordanian Host Community”* adjusted extract from the UNHCR Shelter and Settlement Strategy for Jordan and UNHCR’s *Global Shelter and Settlement Strategy, 2014-2018*

Jordan hosts more than 633,000 registered Syrian refugees, the equivalent of approximately 10% of its population. As of January 2016 some 85% or 538,000 registered Syrian refugees were living in host communities throughout the country in urban and rural areas; 25% of individuals are severely shelter vulnerable and 50% are highly shelter vulnerable. They report shelter as their single most pressing need, and the search for shelter is now one of the key sources of tension between Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities. For refugees that have been able to secure a roof over their heads it is often at relatively high rental prices. High rental prices increase vulnerability and contribute to insecurity of tenure. One in five Syrian refugee families in host communities do not have any form of rental contract.

DEFINITION

The sectorial objective for the provision of adequate shelter and settlement of Syrian refugees in host communities as defined in the UNHCR Shelter and Settlement Strategy for Jordan is: to increase number of people that have access to shelter solutions that provide privacy and emotional support, protection from elements, space to live and store belongings, facilitate access to utilize essential household services / infrastructures, enhance security of tenure, minimize risk of eviction and reduce the competition between refugees and vulnerable Jordanian households thus benefitting from peaceful coexistence with host communities.

This activity is conducted in unfinished buildings that require finishing works to bring them to minimum standards and make them habitable. Completion of housing units in unfinished buildings is an integrated approach which addresses multiple household-level needs faced by vulnerable families. It involves the provision of assistance to increase the housing stock and availability of adequate and affordable shelter and link these with vulnerable families based on secure tenure agreements. The invention supports the creation of new housing in local communities, by providing funds to property owners of unfinished housing, who in return shall host vulnerable families without charge for an agreed period of 18 months. It contributes towards an increase in the adequate housing stock in Jordan, the local economy and social cohesion through the clear investment in the host community.

SCOPE OF INTERVENTION

Completion of housing units in unfinished buildings will support the shelter needs of refugees while simultaneously investing in local communities. The activity involves upgrading and rehabilitating existing housing units which are unfinished or incomplete but require a degree of work to bring them to adequate standards. Contract between the agency and the local property owner as well as lease agreements with beneficiary families will ensure that refugees will live in the upgrade units rent-free for a period of 18 months.

Works must not include any structural works, or be implemented in properties which are structurally unsound. Organizations are encouraged to focus on the following core shelter needs:

OUTCOME / JUSTIFICATION	ACTIVITY
Improved, durable protection from cold and wet weather, increased security and privacy	Adding permanent doors Adding permanent windows Insulation (roof, doors and windows) Applying one coat of plastering (base coat)
Improved hygiene and access to water and sanitation facilities	Installing latrines Installing hand-washing facilities Installing washing facilities Improved drainage Building new / expanding existing septic tanks Mending leakages in water supply Fixing drainage systems
Improved connections to municipal infrastructure and services	Water supply, through connection to mains / installing water tanks Installing separate electricity meters
Removing health and safety risks	Adding balustrades or barriers to stairs, balconies etc. Adding electrical earth, removing faulty wiring etc. Dismantle and removal of any existing unwanted items and remove all debris from site
Creating separate sleeping areas to improve privacy and to create a warmer living area (Note: smaller rooms are easier to heat and keep warm in the winter)	Installing internal doors Installing lightweight partitions
Ensure that people with disabilities can move around their dwelling, use toilet facilities and enter/exit their dwelling safely.	<i>Refer to separate document on physical accessibility</i>

Completion of housing units in unfinished buildings is implemented through the provision of conditional cash grants directly to the property owner, against a signed contract. The signed contract should specify and include the following:

- ✓ A detailed bill of quantity (BoQ)
- ✓ A detailed scope of works (SoWs)
- ✓ The obligation of the property owner to make the housing units available under a rent-free lease agreement
- ✓ Land, ownership documents
- ✓ Valid, authorized building permits

In order to reach the most vulnerable families with shelter assistance, organizations are encouraged to use the inter-agency vulnerability assessment framework (VAF) and a vulnerability assessment tool that uses the highest scores for those households that have no written lease, are at risk of eviction, and/or are living in overcrowded accommodation. Female headed households, individuals with physical disabilities, the elderly, families with school-aged boys and girls, and other highly vulnerable individuals and groups should be prioritized as they are more likely to resort to negative coping strategies and less likely to have secure tenancies.

LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE

Completion of housing units in unfinished buildings will be linked to conditions that allow the tenant to remain rent-free in the upgraded property for a set period of time as defined by the agency and the landlord in the contract¹. This can be summarized in the table below which relates investment limits to certain rental conditions, and has been updated for 2016 based on average market rents in Jordan (according to UNHCR’s Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), 2015):

Number of HUs	Investment limit (18 months’ rent free)	Minimum requirements
1	2,000 JDs	Rent-free shelter for 18 months; Security of tenure; No evictions
2	3,000 JDs	
3	3,800 JDs	
4	4,400 JDs	

Agencies are encouraged to consider incorporating environmental concerns by including items such as water-saving fittings to taps and shower heads and energy-efficient light fittings in the BoQ. This will reduce the financial burden on the beneficiaries when paying utility bills.

NRC, currently the only actor implementing this shelter modality in Jordan, is piloting the provision and installation of solar water heaters to extend the occupancy after the rent-free period of 18 months. New lease agreements at a negotiated rent reduction will be secured with the provision of solar hot water systems to assist the beneficiaries to remain in the property.

¹ For more guidance see NRC’s *Legal, Regulatory and Protection Considerations for the Urban Shelter Response*

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

It is recommended that agencies conduct regular monitoring to ensure that tenants are still living in the accommodation, the housing is secure and no additional rents are claimed by the landlord. The shelter WG has developed post-activity monitoring guidelines to monitor the work and outcomes of the projects. Implementing agencies are encouraged to use this endorsed guidelines. It is also suggested that organizations establish a dedicated hotline for beneficiaries to use for queries and problems.

Shelter actors can support landlords and tenants resolve any arising disputes by:

- Ensuring that both parties understand their obligations under the contract with agencies taking time to explain the terms clearly. Arranging legal information sessions for landlords and the tenants together can be a helpful way of making sure both parties understand the seriousness of their contractual obligations and potential remedies at law for breach of contract.
- Drafting appropriate contracts that cover the most common types of dispute
- Providing details of where the parties can go in case of disputes (agreed mediators specified in the contract or legal aid providers)
- Providing a follow-up and feedback mechanism back to the organization
- Monitoring and recording problems (e.g. evictions) to feed into improved program design and to share details with other shelter actors in the shelter WG