



**10th UK Shelter Forum – DRR and Shelter
21st November 2011
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Session 1: Projects Updates / Current Initiatives

Myanmar Post-Nargis Shelter Project - Neil Garvie, Christian Aid

Cyclone Nargis was a major storm, 200 people were killed, 2.5 million people affected and 400,000 house were destroyed. Following Cyclone Nargis, Myanmar, Christian Aid incorporated DRR into post recovery housing.

Before Nargis, the housing stock was simple with local materials - thatch, coconut, palm and stilts were commonly used. There was a low standard of construction works and therefore they failed during the storm. To date only 10% of housing has been rebuilt. Christian Aid has funded 1300 houses.

The project introduced was a 3 yr Programme, through three different phases, which finished in late 2011. Christian Aid has reduced the risk to the houses through raising the houses from the ground to protect from flooding and strengthened trusses, bracings and footings. The project introduced rainwater harvesting. Christian Aid also inserted a platform inside each house where rations, food and documents could be stored in the event of a flood. This has made people more disaster-prepared by making them think about how they would react in a disaster. These platforms only cost around £50 each.

It was found that the Aluminium roofing was unsuitable as there was a fear of fire and escape routes amongst the communities. The roofs themselves previously were a fire risk due to thatch being used.

Initially that it is not clear whether the improvements will count – the only test will be if another incident occurs. DRR evidence shows there is a need to move forward beyond housing i.e. seeding and replanting of trees. Other communities took on the design ideas i.e. bracing their houses

More could have been achieved if more skill sets were available, this in part was prohibited by the access issues. Christian Aid provided skills training through master carpenters, but it was a small scale programme as the programme was not designed to be a training scheme.

Book Launch 'Transitional Shelter: Eight Designs' - Patrick Elliot, Victoria Maynard and Joseph Ashmore

Transitional Shelter: Eight Designs is an IFRC initiative. It includes a collection of Red Cross examples of shelter, including technical information.

The book is broken down into three sections:

1. The challenge of designing transitional shelters and a broad risk analysis.
2. Evaluations of transitional shelters.
3. Typical design detailing.

There is also an Annex with material specifications and bill of quantities.

The book reviews 8 transitional shelters. Each case study includes a summary, description and performance of each shelter type with technical drawings. They take a comparative approach, analysing the transitional shelter in context and location, and suggesting how it might be amended or upgraded.

For each shelter, a structural analysis was also undertaken, and this is included in the book and accompanying cd. In order to conduct each design analysis, a procedure for analysing each shelter was developed. This initially defined the risks at the intended location for each shelter. Shelters were then analysed according to how they performed under those risks.

The book can be downloaded from: www.ifrc.org, the Shelter Centre Library www.sheltercluster.org or sheltercasestudies.org.

Shelter centre are also developing transitional shelter guidelines with Shelter Centre. These focus on the process component of transitional shelter as well as the purely product side

Pakistan Shelter Cluster - Joseph Ashmore

During the 2011 Pakistan Floods, 1.6 million homes were initially reported by the government damaged or destroyed. This came on top of the severe flooding in 2010. This resulted in large scale displacement and the construction of large formal camps.

Resources for shelter projects were limited. The cluster strategy includes the following components

- At low cost, rebuild, Thicken plinths and put additional lintels in the roof. \$300 was issued per house on the basis that additional money and resources would be added by the beneficiaries.
- Establish mobile training and advocacy teams used to train the beneficiaries in improved shelter construction.
- Hoped to track the number of trainings conducted, as there was a big focus on communications.

In past years reconstruction has been relatively slow (140,000 t-shelters built last year). Difficulty is recording the impact of cash for shelter programme, especially as \$300 is not sufficient to build a house. The 2011 strategy includes a move towards training over building of lower quality housing, partly in recognition that the funds and capacities will be insufficient for agency lead reconstruction.

More can be found from www.shelterpakistan.org

DEC is now looking into an evaluation. The biggest test will be the survival rates of the shelters in future flooding.

UN- Habitat Shelter Projects 2010 - Esteban Leon / Joseph Ashmore

Shelter Projects 2010 is based on an Initiative that came from the Shelter Cluster. It was initially conceived as a tool to monitor shelter responses. It has collected responses in both post disaster and post conflict circumstances.

Shelter projects 2010 is an initiative / collaboration between UNHCR, IFRC, and UNHABITAT.

Case studies and submission forms can be found at www.sheltercasestudies.org . Contributions are encouraged, as are any other comments to improve the product and make it more useful. It is intended to be a resource which for field workers.

In the long term it is hoped that the site can become a monitoring tool for past projects and how the population was affected / lessons learnt

ECB Shelter & Accountability - Hugh Earp, Care

ECB (Emergency Capacity Building Project) is supporting the shelter cluster in developing tools, guidance and good practice to increase accountability to beneficiaries. The WASH cluster has attempted a similar process. It is collating experiences and examples of tools to increase accountability.

A Request was made to all members to send any experiences and examples of good accountability tools. Feedback will initially be to Hugh Earp at ECB, but further dissemination is envisaged.

Global Shelter Cluster Focal Point and IFRC Haiti Review - Anna Pont, IFRC

An evaluation report on the response in Haiti is available on Shelter Cluster website. This is an independent review looking at the operational response and the impact of organisation in Haiti. 12 out of 80 agencies were sampled, and interviewed. The purpose was not a cluster review.

Key issues which emerged:

- Distribution of emergency shelter was very successful.
- Slow progress in the implementation of t-shelters.
- Limited range of t-shelter strategies were used by organisations.

Recommendations:

- Solutions need to be diverse.
- Demand rather than supply driven.
- Rental support should have more importance.
- Advocacy roles should be enforced.
- Emergency shelters, transitional shelters and longer term shelters should be implemented side by side.

Cluster perspective:

- There is a need to better articulate what the Shelter Cluster is and does, i.e. should issues such as rubble clearance be included in the cluster role?
- Inter cluster co-ordination is needed to identify gaps & over lapping responsibilities.

The shelter cluster focal point (funded by the British Red Cross) should:

- Ensure the response is at the country level.

- Ensure the team consists of relevant people and is adequately trained and mentored.
- Develop and enhance shelter preparedness.
- Need to prioritise and focus to achieve results and key points of the work plan.

Key aspects of Shelter Cluster Meetings:

- Accountability.
- Impact.
- Stop the competition between agencies (locally and globally).
- Address funding issues and look for alternative sources as required.
- Disseminate information amongst relevant agencies.

NRC - Shelter & DRR - Jake Zarins, NRC

NRC are Developing a tool for environmental accountability. The tool aims to provide linkages between the environment and other sectors, making ourselves more transparent to donors.

This is a pilot NRC project. NRC wrote the tool with shelter specifically in mind. The hope is to ensure environmental accountability, communicate to donors / government etc. with the view to improving and reducing the environmental impact of projects. Highlighting and focussing on bad practice.

The tool is looking to adapt BREEAM methodology, i.e. the idea is to score points of building against BREEAM standards. It is however difficult to compare Western construction techniques with temporary ones from the Global South.

Other related projects include:

- Green guide to DRR (WWF and American Red Cross) – a very thorough set of guidelines which include an environmental perspective and provide a checklist in what a project wants to achieve.
- IFRC – Funding a longer term project and guide to focus at a strategic level. Looking at overall recovery strategies from an environmental perspective.

Contact jake.zarins@nrc.no for more information, and to provide him with ideas and advice about tools, etc. The tool will be field tested at the end of March 2012, from which a project will be developed.

Haiti Projects - Ian Pearce, Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for humanity's projects in Haiti are based on Seeking pathways to 'permanence' approaches to shelter (working with ARUP). It is based on Emergency shelter leading to transitional and upgradable shelters.

Activities include:

- The completion of many core homes with more permanent structures such as block and timber walls as demonstrated in Santos Project. Funded by the Inter American Bank on the basis of 'learning by doing' (training and skill development).

- Trained local work force and conducted advocacy.
- Set up a habitat resource centre.

The overall concept is to improve community in a development context. In Santos 1200 more sustainable and 'green' classified homes have been built. It has been a transparent process, allowing the community to take ownership of the project. Aim to add value to the 'chain' analysis by strengthening local capacity and businesses.

There is a plan to invest in micro finance as a way forward to fund projects. These micro-finance loans will be coupled with construction assistance.

Big issues remain in Haiti; many are to do with land, etc. How do you rebuild a rental market and social housing stock, particularly when there is no land to build on? Conversations about rental markets require co-ordination. The international community will not re-build Haiti.

'HERR and Shelter' Conference - David Sanderson, CENDEP

CENDEP have published an issue of the Journal of Environmental Hazards. This includes 11 papers contributed by people from a 2-day conference held in September 2010. There are podcasts of the conference available on our website.

CENDEP have conducted Another 1 day meeting 'HERR (*Humanitarian Emergency Response Review*) and Shelter: Implications for practice' was hosted by CENDEP in September 2011. 40 people attended this conference and there is a brief report on the CENDEP website.

HPG (Humanitarian Policy Group) Haiti Land Issues - Simon Levine, ODI

HPG is a policy think tank. They have conducted many evaluations in Haiti, particularly around issues on land. The report has been delayed but will be published after Christmas. The report highlights a variety of issues.

Session 2: Agency Case Studies

OXFAM Shelter Projects Review 2006-2011 – Emma Feaney (Oxfam):

This is a report on the lessons learned from shelter projects which Oxfam has undertaken from the period 2006 to 2011. Oxfam drew up a shelter policy in 2006, primarily due to the response to the 2004 tsunami.

Eight case studies were written up and fifteen people were interviewed. A fair and frank account of each case study is given. The scale and types of responses vary immensely. There were a variety of positive and negative results, with some projects falling short and not meeting goals. While it is mainly about learning from lessons, this review is also championing the success stories of Oxfam. These are just as important and need to be communicated.

Organisational challenges included:

- 1) Internal issues within Oxfam, including lack of communication.
- 2) Staffing and management issues, due to the fact that many had different interpretations of Oxfam's shelter policy. Question: does Oxfam's shelter policy allow for implementation of a 'core shelter programme'?
- 3) Procurement issues and a general frustration that materials were sourced from different suppliers.

External challenges included:

- 1) Working in a politically fragile situation.
- 2) Limited land rights / space.
- 3) Constraints imposed by donors.
- 4) Shelter designs were often drawn up without the help of the community.
- 5) More flexible solutions would have been more appropriate, to take into account different people's livelihoods. A person's most important asset often varies, for example it could be livestock.
- 6) Hot shelters were built in hot climates with no room to build a veranda.

Despite its policy, Oxfam continues to build t-shelters and core housing to respond to the needs of the affected populations. The challenge is that due to going against policy, people within Oxfam are not talking and communicating with each other.

Within Oxfam, there is often an inability to describe our contributions other than listing the numbers of shelters built. For example, Oxfam's supportive roles worked well, e.g. conducting an EMMA. Oxfam also has good links with the WASH cluster. This helps with good cross pollination between clusters.

Safer construction guidelines, Malawi – Jamie Richardson (jamie@tyafal.co.uk) and Shailesh Kataria (RICS)

The Malawi earthquake was an unknown and forgotten disaster. It received a small scale response, which was beneficial in many ways, such as with the development co-ordination and the ability to work with the community. At the point of relief people were already thinking of recovery in the long term. They wanted to spend as little money and time as possible on the relief phase. The Malawi Red Cross formed a small group to deal with shelter.

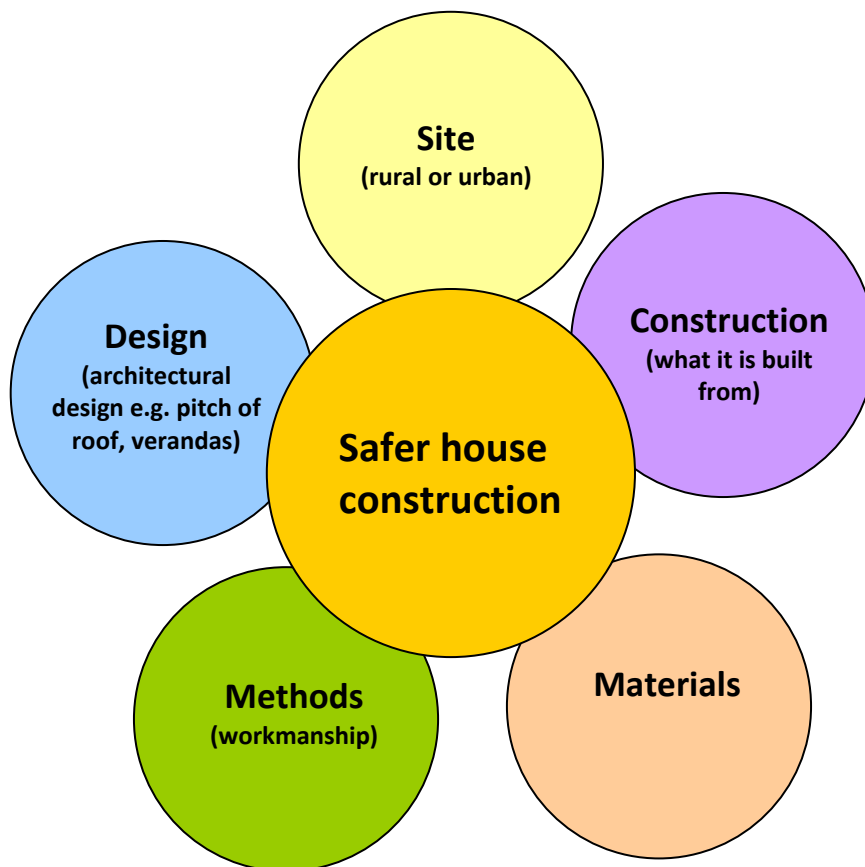
Resources were collectively pooled in order to carry out assessments. Needs differentiated depending on the area – rural vs. urban. Physical resources were required to reconstruct, therefore appropriate technical resources were developed.

The shelter group were requested by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development to produce guidelines, and a reference document was subsequently produced. The guidelines were produced through a consultative process and the government took ownership of the guidelines (therefore had a level of responsibility). Most importantly, there was recognition that the guidelines should be continually reviewed.

The guidelines included Hazards and the associated risks to buildings as well as construction details. The guidelines tend to be brick focused, but may need to become broader to look at traditional materials.

The 'Guidelines for Safer House Construction' technical manual is distributed nationally and is used as a tool for DRR for the rest of the country. The guidelines will soon be available online on the Shelter Centre Library.

Is there a replicability issue? It is believed these guidelines can be adapted for neighbouring countries. UN-HABITAT is keen to include flood mitigation strategies. Projects are now looking at the culture of building in Malawi. There are training colleges being set up for brick layers and carpenters so that others can emanate this.



Training for self-builds (Humanitarian Innovation Fund) – Bill Flinn (CENDEP) and Charlie Mason (Save the Children)

Knowledge transfer is value for money, but much harder to show the long term impacts. There is a need to educate the donor community to provide more funding for such things.

Cash / materials will be made available for assistance and training. Trying to focus the funding on resilience.

The majority of the population will inevitably self re-build, therefore there is a need to develop a methodology for training local builders using models, holding workshops, creating You Tube training videos, etc. People who can take part are homeowners, local construction firms, local builders, etc.

There is an Idea of “build less, facilitate more”. There are multiple ways of approaching shelter after disaster. E.g. SEEDS Mason Training Programme (what about quality assurance (QA)? Does it work?

Shelter core training – agree on most appropriate method of communication, agree on key learning objectives and the main messages. What is the capacity to train? At the moment, there is little in NGOs, but there is a lot of potential capacity in the developing community. There is a willingness to improve access to resources for DRR.

NGOs should not become mass house-builders, there just needs to be general sector-wide knowledge about construction principles.

Session 3: Fishbowl workshop – ‘Death of transitional shelter?’

Opening comments by Kate Crawford (CARE, QBC):

T-shelter is a revolutionary concept.

18 months after the Haiti disaster, a self recovery survey of yellow (damaged/needing repair) and red (dangerous) houses was carried out, which revealed that 30% were red, 30% yellow and 40% of people were not present at the time of the survey. 18 months later, 60% of householders still had damaged (yellow) houses and 24% had dangerous (red) houses.

Need for clarification over terminology – recognition that the process of a t-shelter approach encompasses a range of options and assistance methods that are used in combination to support a family from emergency to durable solution. Vs the reality that most people when using the term t-shelter refer to the product. Use of the term t-shelter kits when referring to the timber shed like structure? Confusion!

Some good examples of ‘t-shelter’ projects:

- 1) CARE, DRC - allowed for people to extend (‘Solidarity Families’)
- 2) CARE, Pedang – cash-based transitional shelter project
- 3) CARE ... - supporting centralised capacity building, which can be resourced in an effective and efficient way

These are all unconventional solutions, which have pushed the boundaries of what donors wanted.

Below are some comments from the discussion:

Why was the rate of self-recovery in Haiti so much slower? Suggestion posited that as a result of (the expectation of) receiving a t-shelter meant that people were not encouraged to start rebuilding themselves, therefore a dependency was created? The argument made in Dead Aid that international support stifles local production...

“We should kill t-shelters as products.” Originally, they were supposed to bridge the gap between plastic sheeting and permanent housing, but they were wrongly interpreted by the sector as a chance to “design a new product”.

Transitional shelter programming – are t-shelters truly transitional? Eg. Aceh: 200,000 IFRC metal-framed t-shelters arrived between 1-2 years after the disaster. Eg. Yogyakarta: 80,000 bamboo framed t-shelters in 1 year (cash grants became available after 6 months).

Not so much what you provide but when you provide it – at the right time to the right people, i.e. the most vulnerable may ‘slip through the net’ and not be able to get the most out of cash grants/technical assistance ... move towards as a sector who does what (some training, some t-shelter etc)?

T-shelters have become the default – but these aren’t necessarily the right solution. Off the shelf designs = aren’t they just improved tents?

Pendulum is being swung back and forth. When is / is it not appropriate to implement t-shelters? Always useful because it is a process and not a product. It is an easily understandable and often misunderstood concept.

There is both a broad and narrow understanding (both process and product).

What is the difference between incremental shelter and (re)construction?

Multi-faceted approach good - it’s not so much the approach that needs to be killed but the terminology... maybe if you ban the use of the term ‘t-shelter’, people will actually have to think about what they are doing and what they want to accomplish and define it in their own terms. What phase of the programming should it come into?

Do we call it a ‘shelter recovery kit’ instead?

T-shelter as a combination of assistance methods, not an end in itself but what you are trying to do with it – encompasses a broad range including t-kits.

It should be more about delivering certain and clear objectives. ‘Shelter’ can encompass a broad range of solutions – do we call them ‘shelter solutions’? We should not have a ‘one size fits all’ approach.

How would you want it described or explained as a beneficiary? What would you want?

Beneficiaries need to know what will happen, what the end is, and where it goes. They are often left waiting around, and waiting for something to happen.

There needs to be continual contact, two way communication between NGOs and beneficiaries – not just come in, give and leave.

Do beneficiaries believe that they will be provided with a permanent house after they have been given a t-shelter?

What about in under-resourced emergencies?

T-shelter product become default position, but equally bad to throw the baby out with the bathwater. Has a role, need for nuance.

Would you rather leave people in a five month or a five year house? For example, in Haiti where it will surely take 10-15 years to rebuild the capital city, people cannot survive in tents for this long.

Need to end up with a series of end states. How do you describe a series of paths which are discreet?

The danger of being caught up in semantics: the need to bring the beneficiaries to the table and find out how they would articulate their own options. Need to get a common agreement.

Nothing new about transitional housing – 1906 San Francisco earthquake and post-war housing in Britain.

Expectation of aid feeding counter-reconstruction. Are these wooden boxes doing more harm than good? We should broaden our view. Intervention can be quite limited.

Integrated programming of host family support and t-shelter programme.

Need to ask question about spending on a 3-5yr product for 100,000 vs. 900,000 slum dwellers – vast sums spent on short term activities. May be argued is lifesaving, but it seems perverse to spend so much on so little. Note: very few INGOs (the exception is Habitat for Humanity) who do housing because it is so difficult and complex.

Can be a contribution to longer term development.

Cycle of help: Beneficiaries who didn't want to deconstruct t-shelter, but by the time some t-shelters were degrading, there was no more help available through cash grants, etc to rebuild their house.

Happens at the other end as well, better offers provided later passes over those who have already received something.

Many responses are increasing people's risk and vulnerability. Need to remember the danger of constructing permanently too early, e.g. in an earthquake zone. T-shelters are the safest technology to build quickly when the skills are not available to build safer.

Need for better assessment of skills within the community - example of NGO advocating against another NGO who wanted to bring in outside materials.

Earthquakes different from cyclones (in terms of building back quicker). Although lightweight transitional shelters will withstand earthquakes, are they resistant to high winds in a hurricane?

But to build in timber means fatality rate lower – in Haiti most deaths actually not due to wind but flooding. Building durable too soon can increase vulnerability.

That assumes a finished product (vs. incremental support).

The self re-build sector in Haiti is building in masonry. There is a liability component in this.

Conclusions

Talking less about t-shelter and more about good vs. bad programme design – relevant to context, speed, and climate. Totally different in an urban vs. rural context.

- Kicking this around with a transitional label on it. Blaming transitional but that doesn't seem to be the main issue, whatever we choose to call it.
- Equal group of people doesn't exist. One person's transitional shelter is another person's final solution.
- LLH left out of the conversation – need to see beneficiary priorities e.g. wanted cash not materials in Padang, so they could rebuild irrigation systems. Our obsession forgets the priorities of the people involved.
- What it comes down to is that we should always be thinking about the final recovery. Everyone is aiming to get to durable solutions. In reality we do as much as the resources we have – not limited by ambition. The question then is how we make best use of our investment, to accomplish the most with what we have.
- Is it possible to do good programme design in isolation as an individual agency, without the whole picture? Coordination about how much is the resource, where, how quickly involved. Missing piece is analysis – there are people who will not have somewhere (to go or put a shelter), we are not good at finding who they are, where and why. Need for more understanding of what we need to

know to make a good programme, even if we already know what a good program looks like in theory.

- To get too bogged down in terminology is not useful – we can discuss what we are doing with beneficiaries themselves, possible to use symbols approach – need to become more sophisticated on assistance methods and how to communicate to people. Idea of incremental shelter.
- Need to explain the question of resources to beneficiaries, be honest with how much we have and how much we can spend. However, we often don't know how many resources we have at the start.
- Let's not generalise, each disaster needs a different response.
- Shelter is not just a roof, tied in to socio-economic factors.
- Be wary of applying academic understanding of good programming – response must come from place and not preconceived ideas - supply driven approach dangerous. We do not know their needs already. We need to ask the affected communities.
- Shelter people try to take responsibility for everything – don't see other sectors/clusters worrying about not completely restoring what had before or getting involved in other sectors. Our role is to support their own coping mechanisms so they can sort their own problems out.
- We are responding to what we think the media wants to see. And we need to be aware of the huge legacy shelter leaves.
- Final word: it is getting better!

Session 4: Group workshop – ‘Resilience frameworks and shelter’

Introduction by John Twigg (UCL):

Resilience is a buzzword that originated in 2005. Resilience varies – i.e. it is difficult to define and more importantly, put into operation. The advantage of resilience over DRR is that it is more to do with capacity, rather than the problems themselves.

The trouble with resilience is that it is so elastic that it can wrap around anything (“rubber band concept”).

A workshop was held with different groups working on differing definitions of resilience.

****Announcement: Next Shelter Forum meeting will be hosted at Habitat for Humanity (if numbers are limited to 35). This will be held sometime around March.****