



UK Shelter Forum

Hosted by British Red Cross.

6th February 2009

Meeting notes from previous UK Shelter Forum events can be found at:

<http://www.shelterforum.org.uk/>

Forum Aim

The UK Shelter Forum is a community of practice for individuals, agencies, academics and built environment professionals involved in international shelter and settlement reconstruction work. In semi-annual meetings and special events, new initiatives and practical approaches to shelter needs of disaster or conflict affected people are discussed. UK Shelter Forum events are hosted by non-governmental organisations, including Oxfam GB, Care International, and Habitat for Humanity.

For further information on the UK Shelter Forum, contact:

- Rick Bauer at Oxfam GB: rbauer@oxfam.org.uk
- Lizzie Babister at Care International: babister@careinternational.org
- Charlie Mason at Save the Children UK: C.Mason@savethechildren.org.uk

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Recent initiatives

Update on projects being run by shelter centre: Dr. Tom Corsellis, Sheltercentre

The review process for Transitional Settlement and Reconstruction after Natural Disasters will be finishing in November 2009.

Transitional Shelter guidelines will be completed in June 09.

Transitional Shelter standards and prototypes have now been agreed by inter agency groups. Prototypes will be shared at the next shelter meeting to be held in Geneva

Shelter Sector Resource Library now has 600 relevant publications including a searchable database of case studies that will link to guidelines (www.shelterlibrary.org).

Emergency shelter cluster meeting Geneva: Graham Saunders, IFRC

An update on ESC meeting in Geneva Jan 15-16 2009. The Emergency Shelter Cluster meeting is not body and does not have a mandate but rather, it is a platform to discuss what can be done about the problems, issues and gaps in things such as:

- Shelter sector surge capacity
- Relief to recovery transition coordination
- IM requirements at field and global level
- Cluster based contingency planning at country level

Funding for shelter sector (at operational, institutional, R&D and pooled levels).

All organisations are invited to offer suggestions and comments on how the ESC can better operate.

Shelter and climate change:

Tom Corsellis Sheltercentre / Graham Saunders, IFRC

IFRC are the lead organisation on climate change within the IASC (The Inter-Agency Standing Committee). In relation to Climate change, the IASC has the following focus areas:

- Adaptation/mitigation
- DRR
- Displacement/Forced Migration

Can we get shelter better articulated in the climate change discussion?

Shelter is not as explicit a theme as it should be within the current climate change debate, and the issues relating to shelter and settlements need to be further explored.

The IFRC has offered to fund and support any specific deliverables to facilitate engagement with the issue of shelter and to make things happen. Contributions need to be consolidated so as to progress the shelter agenda. The work plan is currently at the outline stage. The taskforce is to explore the impact of climate change at the very exploratory stage.

'Lessons from Aceh: considerations in post-disaster re-construction', Jo da Silva, Arup

Arup have been working on a report on post disaster reconstruction in Aceh. The document has been produced following a scoping study and after much consultation. It is intended to be a reference/benchmark as to what happened in Aceh. It is also intended to help to highlight the different dimensions of a post disaster situation that need to be considered. After finalisation it will be distributed to DEC members for final comments. The report will then be published

and will be produced in a downloadable format.

The forum broke out into workgroups to review the Planning, Design and Implementation sections of the document. Each workgroup produced detailed feedback on structure and key messages of each chapter.

On reporting back, general discussion was held about the potential role of the report and the extent to which it should be seen as containing guidance for future disasters. There was some concern, that although lessons can be learnt from Aceh, the context was unique, not least because of the amount of funding.

It was also agreed that the scope of such a document should include larger land planning issues.

Following the reporting groups, there was a discussion about whether Sphere applies to reconstruction. Many of the principles seemed to be relevant to the longer term reconstruction. It was noted that sphere is titled "minimum standards in disaster response". In 2009 there the revision of sphere standards will begin. It was agreed that the next UK Shelter Forum in September could include a focus on Sphere?

Focus on Urban Shelter issues

The immediate-long term post conflict strategies of technical assistance on comprehensive physical urban planning concerning life- saving services including urban planning, shelter, water, sanitation:

Manoucher Lolachi

Urban post conflict contexts are challenging environments to work in. They bring a host of complex issues not seen in rural settings.

Infrastructure is just as important as shelter in an urban setting and a whole range of services are needed. Other than shelter experts, one needs an urban planner and community development experts. Challenges are often around land, local political decisions dominating shelter assistance, structural safety of buildings, effectiveness of the assistance, security, the transition from relief to recovery (timeframe for handover and who is responsible), and the design of transitional shelters that need to look at the local capacity and materials.

From past responses, more effective programmes have been the more holistic ones. Especially in urban environments, clusters need to work with each other to provide more effective assistance.

UNHCR is researching these issues and welcomes agencies to feed into the process through examples and innovative ideas on how to manage the complexities of urban post conflict resettlement.

Case studies: Haiti: Lawrence Hamai, Oxfam and Joseph Ashmore, Independent

Shelter intervention in urban setting

There was an open discussion about successful urban shelter programmes during which the following examples were provided:

Sri Lanka Supporting conflict displaced IDP's (Save the Children:). However it was difficult to distinguish between those genuinely displaced due to conflict or whether they were moving due to normal migration.

Sri Lanka: Host families supported by Helvetas would get a livelihood grant or a grant for the extra burden on the family

In Gonaives, Haiti, tropical storms in 2008 lead to severe flooding and ensuing major deposits of mud leading to large numbers of

families moving in with host families and into collective centres.

Shelter kits were distributed to IDPs for constructing shelter on their plot of land or to repair their house. Unfortunately, initially return kits were offered to families at temporary sites and collective centres without the families clarifying that the distribution of kits was conditional on the families being able to return and vacating the collective centres.

After initial emergency programmes, several thousand people remained in collective centres. To support their return, 10,000 Goudes cash grants were handed out for families to rent shelter. Families were given a blank contract. They would receive the grant when they returned with a signed contract. There was no support programme for those who initially found their own shelter with host families

Rental prices did increase following the flooding. A possible future solution would be to find ways to increase the housing stock and allow renters a rent free a grace period.

Case Study: Kingston, Jamaica: Peter Francis, Jamaica Red Cross

Kingston, Jamaica, is prone to hurricanes and has a high instance of fires.

Challenges highlighted were around planned and unplanned urban situations and development in water sheds and on hilly slopes. Governance issues of no building controls and inadequate shelter standards compound the problem.

The Jamaica Red Cross has responded through community disaster plans and assessment teams in order to have a holistic picture and more effective assistance. This has led to community mobilisation and empowerment, early warning systems at the community level and giving the community more information. The Jamaica Red Cross has

been involved in advocacy through trainings, workshops and assessments. Future plans are looking at an expansion in the use of community training tools, an increase in the production and dissemination of information on mitigation and increased advocacy on behalf of the community. IFRC is also working with French Red Cross on simple messages on safer house construction to address minimum standards for housing construction.

Case Study: Gaza: discussion facilitated by Kitka Goyol, Oxfam GB

The discussion focused on the challenges to the reconstruction of Gaza that are being faced.

The flow and volume of goods into Gaza is hampered by the very time consuming process of delivery of goods through Karem Shalom, the Israeli border that meets those of Egypt and [Gaza](#). Without access for humanitarian personnel and relief items, many reconstruction projects are blocked.

The reconstruction challenges faced are numerous. Israel will not allow metal, cement, timber or glass to enter Gaza for fear of the materials being used in weaponry by militants. There is a lack of specialist equipment to clear rubble and to prop up buildings.

Hard cash is rare in Gaza. Hamas are reported to have given cash handouts to those who lost their homes but there is little civilians can do with this as the local markets have all but collapsed due to the 18 month blockade.

The DEC have so far raised £4,000,000 (pooled and retained by member agencies) One of the main concerns for the DEC is the possibility of cash getting into the hands of Hamas if cash contributions are to be made. It is not within the plans of the DEC to reconstruct Gaza and is focusing more on a humanitarian response for people not for infrastructure. The political dimension of the conflict has dominated the humanitarian

activities. Politically there is a challenge as to who humanitarian organisations can or are allowed to work with.

Pecha Kucha evening

Creating better dialogue between the shelter sector and the built environment professions has been an important issue raised at previous UK Shelter Forum meetings. On Thursday 06 February 2009, Arup, Oxfam and the UK Shelter Forum co-sponsored a “Pecha Kucha” evening. In the pecha kucha format, presenters are given have to present 20 slides, each for 20 seconds, giving a total presentation time of under 7 minutes.

At this Shelter Pecha Kucha evening, hosted by Arup at their conference facilities in London, over 90 people attended. Twelve distinctive ideas, designs, and methods in shelter assistance for poor and disaster-affected people were presented and briefly discussed. To emphasize the importance of viewing homelessness from both a global and local perspective, proceeds from this evening went to a UK homeless charity. £400 was raised to support the local work of Shelter (www.shelter.org.uk).

For information on future Shelter Pecha Kucha evenings see:

www.shelterforum.org.uk



Forum Participants

Manoucher Lolachi, Jo da Silva, Victoria Batchelo, Seki Hirano, Ian Pearce, Manjeet Panisar, Graham Saunders, Peter Francis,, Tom Corsellis, Mohammed Ali, Gordon Browne, Megan Price, Charlie Mason, Lydia Baker, Annie Devonport, Jean-Phillipe Thierry Shailesh Kataria, John Tracey White, Fran Talavera, Joseph Ashmore, Elizabeth Parker, Mona Luxion, Hannah Sanderson, Rick Bauer, Lizzie Babister, Bruce LeBel, Kitka Goyol, Laurence Hamai, Melvin Tebutt, Kate Hart, Liz Hughes, Mike Goodhand, Zehra Rizvi, Caroline Cage, Taji Beklik

Next shelter meeting

Date	Friday 9 th October in London
Hosted by	Save the Children UK.
Contact	Charlie Mason C.Mason@savethechildren.org.uk