UK SHELTER FORUM

12th UK Shelter Forum – Housing, Land, and Property Rights
22nd February 2013
Hosted by Oxfam and Habitat for Humanity at Oxfam House, Oxford

Contents

Please note: RedR were unable to attend this UK Shelter Forum but they asked forum participants
to contribute to the online RedR UK Shelter Sector Learning Needs Assessment.

SESSION 1: PROJECT UPDATES

Bill Flinn, CENDEP - Building for Safety (no slides)

The premise of the Building for Safety project is that Haiti will be rebuilt by Haitians, Pakistan will be rebuilt by Pakistanis, and so on, and that the humanitarian shelter community don't have a lot of input into this process. Typically the humanitarian shelter community account for only 20% (or less) of post-disaster reconstruction – while the majority of the population 'self-recover' and reconstruct. The Building for Safety project tries to address what humanitarian agencies should do within that 20% to influence the other 80%.

He explained that there were two major issues to address:

1. The need for good, rigorous, peer reviewed information about building technology. There is lots of information out there but no way of knowing if what you are looking at is a good or bad piece of information.
2. The need for information on how to train and communicate to a variety of audiences for people who are going to be in the process of self-recovery. As technology is moving on, a lot of work needs to be done to have a greater impact.

Bill explained that they aim to create a book and website. These will not be full of new material; while there will be a lot of new information they will also contain reliable navigation towards good material that's already out there. Please contact bflinn@brookes.ac.uk if you would like to be involved.

Joseph Ashmore, independent - Shelter Projects 2011-2012 (no slides)

Joseph stated that a new edition of 'Shelter Projects' will be coming out shortly and that you can download past editions and view case studies via www.sheltercasestudies.org. He highlighted that it is a collaborative initiative of the shelter cluster guided by a technical advisory committee. He thanked the individuals and organisations who have been involved in this initiative to date and asked anyone to contact him should they wish to submit their case study to the next edition: joseph@josephashmore.org

Tom Corsellis, Shelter Centre - Shelter Centre Current Activities

Tom explained that Shelter Centre have received funding to update the existing Shelter Library. The current thinking is that it will not just be a library for the shelter sector, but in fact for the whole humanitarian community. The software behind the library will be open source so that anyone can make their own library. Users will also be able to create 'playlists' of their own information (like on YouTube) and that this will actually mean that 'the crowd' moderate the content; as data listed in many people's playlists highlights what the community find more interesting and useful. The new library will make use of 'the semantic web' – enabling users to access the information they need more easily. Tom described how this would open the gates between libraries and create a common humanitarian consciousness. The aim is to achieve this within the next few months.

Tom then moved on to the topic of training and described Shelter Centre's proposal for 'viral' training through a franchising system; arguing that this is the approach needed to deliver the training required by all governments and national actors locally, at the scale which is required. He concluded by asking participants to consider next steps for the Shelter Meeting. Tom stated that it has been very successful, but recently has contained a lot of updates from each of the clusters (WASH, Early Recovery, etc.). Instead of these updates being within the Shelter Meeting he suggested a week of humanitarian meetings, with a day for each cluster for example. Tom

highlighted that this would be fully web-interactive – with participants able to attend and participate from anywhere in the world (using WebEx), it would also be documented on one common platform – www.humanitarianmeetings.org.

Vincent Annoni, REACH – Inter Agency Shelter Cluster Capacity

Vincent described the development of a common shelter cluster assessment tool which has recently been developed and tested. The first test was in the Philippines in 2012, where the cluster used the tool to conduct an assessment between December 10-21, in an area that used to be a conflict area and is difficult to access. For a test in Somalia, the idea was to conduct an extensive country-wide sector review to influence a response in following years, and create a bigger baseline plan for 2 years ahead.

From these two case studies they have found that it is possible to complete the process in ten days and at the end of the process usually you have all the reports and documents to provide information immediately after the disaster. There was massive participation of major shelter cluster members, and a lot of national NGOs found the amount of data impressive. Further documentation and maps are available on the website: http://www.reach-initiative.org/

Jim & Chris Rooney, Hexi-house - Hexi-House: hexagonal inspiration for the world

Jim began by showing the group a video about the Hexi-house. The design incorporates standard European pallets and 6 double cables in each corner; it is strong and robust and was inspired by the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland. The units have a life expectancy of 3-5 years and they are intended to bridge the gap between the tent and the finished home. Jim explained that they are currently looking towards making a prototype of this. The target market is not specific currently, but may include NGO's, governments, and charities.

Gordon Browne, Solent University - Plastic sheeting: 150gsm vs. 170gsm

An experiment on plastic sheeting conducted at Solent University recently took place. Currently, Oxfam use 170g plastic sheets, but had been approached by a different manufacturer offering 150g, so they asked Solent University to investigate if 150g sheeting could perform as well as 170g per square meter plastic sheeting.

The study split into 4 main objectives:

1. To conduct prolonged exposure field tests that replicate the locations in which it will be used.
2. To conduct laboratory tests to determine the tensile strength of the samples.
3. To conduct laboratory tests to determine the tensile strength of the samples with exposure to high temperatures.
4. To conduct laboratory tests to determine the strength of fixings currently in use and possible new fixing methods.

Filter testing was done in Bristol and Oxford. The plastic was set on a wooden frame, with 3 corners secured and one left to flap in the wind. The newer 150g plastic performed much better. They recorded the maximum load the sheeting could take. They cut the new plastic to the same size as is used to replicate testing. They noticed that the weave in the 150g sheeting is more uniform.

For the heat test a fan heater of 45-50 degrees was used. The results show that it is 400 neutrons weaker when exposed to heat. Further research could be done into this considering the locations it will be used. The 150g plastic still beat the 170g plastic in performance. Stage 2 of the testing

was to find out about fixing methods. They copied the previous test to see if anything changed with the new plastic. The plastic eyelets broke in both, but exceeded any other fixing method.

The experiments showed that the 150g plastic is stronger than the 170g plastic but these are only preliminary tests.

Kate Crawford, UCL - Communicating technical evidence research project (no slides)

Kate described the research project she has been undertaking called Communicating Technical Evidence, with funding from the Humanitarian Innovation Fund. Kate began by posing the question 'How do we make money flow to enable repair?' She explained that there is a solid argument that opening damaged housing stock is a humanitarian solution- it's a way of getting people back to their original homes. But there are barriers to getting money to that kind of solution. She questioned whether it is a cash issue or a training issue. The other piece of the jigsaw is whether a policy decision can be made and whether a government or agency feels confident in repairing a building that was not of a good standard to begin with. She asked 'how can you feel confident to make a policy decision like that? And once you've formulated that question can an engineer ever answer it?'

Kate discussed talking to ARUP about what they produce in terms of technical advice. She explained that they have looked at Haiti, Peru, and Pakistan through different contexts and tried to marry up useable evidence and useful evidence. Useable evidence is dependent on timeliness and the type of document; if it's too long this is a problem even if it is very good. Useful evidence looks at questions of humanitarian agencies looking at how many and who is affected. It determines the scale of need.

They have categorised documents as to how well they fulfilled these requirements. Some more technical documents go further than how many and how much people are affected and discussion on the sheltering process before and after so they contain very good information, but it is often buried in generic advice and long documents.

She explained that all the humanitarian documents are like individual units; like with images, you can't see what else would be around or zoom out. There are lots of maps being produced but they all at different scales, and overall there are lots of gaps, and there is little on repair. What is clear is there are degrees of analysis. In the description, there may be reports, for example from engineers, etc.- one engineer might explain the situation, another may interpret why that happened and the physical factors leading to it, and another may provide a social diagnosis of why this happened, for example, a lack of building standard enforcement. This is a means of getting to the root of the problem, understanding why certain materials were chosen and what they could afford. A strategic interpretation of this may be required but if all of this information is in different documents it is a big task. They found that there's a reason no one can answer all the questions and it's because all the info is all over the place! To improve this, they aim for marriage synthesis and gap filling.

Andrew Edwards, ASF-UK - Building Knowledge Centres

Andrew described the work that ASF-UK has been doing in partnership with SEEDS India. He addressed the idea that in the developing world, building using natural building materials is considered less respectable and generates an image of poorly built homes, unlike here, where using natural resources would be considered 'eco-chic'. He highlighted that buildings built with local skills and materials can also be inherently disaster resistant; they have withstood multiple earthquakes and can be made appropriate to the 21st century. Andrew showed images from all over India and described how, despite different climatic backgrounds a singular solution is

becoming commonplace. Contemporary architecture and construction are veering towards the high tech approaches while people in India are disregarding local skills and technology.

The Building Knowledge Centres project aims to mitigate the risk of disasters, enable local skills without waste, and promote cultural diversity. The aim is to focus on promoting techniques using mud and grass, dry earth, and bamboo techniques. It was explained that, today, there are cement manufacturers everywhere; it is necessary to work out how to use cement marketing techniques to dispel myths and show that you can make bamboo construction that is relevant to this century. The current idea is that no-one wants to live in a bamboo construction, and if they did, no-one could build it. Andrew underlined the importance of challenging this view. He explained the idea of resurrecting knowledge centres across India. A virtual knowledge centre is being developed.

Jamie Richardson, consultant - Timber construction research project

Jamie gave a brief overview of the research project on timber frame construction. The aim of this project is to help understand how to construct better post-disaster shelters. A shelter has been built to explore systems and methods of construction that can be achieved with basic carpentry skills and hand tools. The aim is to identify robust and simple construction details that can be applied to any building using timber. Jamie explained that there is a highly developed timber frame industry in North America and Europe that we can draw and extract from. A number of years ago Jamie moved over to timber frame because of environmental targets and due to a skills deficit created by a slump in construction, a lot of trade was lost in the 80s, then when building again in the 90s there was a gap. He has cut the process of making timber frames down to three sets of skills, which he can teach to an individual in three or four days.

Another project Jamie is involved in involved working with several organisations which all got together as a European partnership looking at sustainable use of local timber. A lot of people have come across timber. They developed ideas around using poor quality timber, local timber and untrained construction workers. Information about all of these projects is available on Jamie's website: http://www.shelter-consultants.com/

Victoria Maynard, HFHGB and Neill Garvie, CA - Improving Shelter Responses

Victoria Maynard (HFHGB) and Neill Garvie (Christian Aid) presented the Improving Shelter Responses project they have been undertaking with partners Arup International Development and SaferWorld Communications. Over the past year the team have reviewed Habitat for Humanity and Christian Aid shelter programmes in Haiti, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, and Indonesia using the same research framework. The process is still ongoing but the team hope to share the lessons from this research with the shelter community at future events.

Mike Meaney, HFHI – HFH Disaster Response Shelter Catalogue

HFH have reviewed their work in disaster response (over the last 14 years) and compiled the results into a Disaster Response Catalogue. The catalogue identifies key learning, challenges, and practices for the future. It is available online: www.habitat.org/disaster/work_worldwide.aspx

Mike also described a project entitled "Deconstructing" the Haiti Shelter and Housing Post-earthquake Response. The project organized by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and the Latin America department of World Bank aims to allow actors, especially government, to debrief and analyse the Haiti post-earthquake experience to extract lessons learned to inform future disaster situations, in Haiti and elsewhere. A Steering Committee composed of representatives from Habitat for Humanity International, UN Habitat, the International Federation of the Red Cross, and the World Bank/GFDRR has been established to guide this process. Participants were invited to:

1. Send reports, data, and other technical inputs to Project Team, Steering Committee, or haiti2010casestudy@gmail.com
2. Let project team know if you or your organization would like to be interviewed
3. Write a letter or short issue paper (1000 words or less) and send to Project Team, Steering Committee, or haiti2010casestudy@gmail.com (could be personal POV or that of Haitian families or individuals)
4. Provide photos of good and bad examples, with explanations

Theo Schilderman, BSHF - BHSF Awards

Theo presented the work of the Building and Social Housing Foundation. Their work focuses on social and low income housing both in the UK and in other countries around the world. The organisation is interested in innovation in housing. They look at what people have been trying that is different.

There are 4 parts to their international programme:

1. World habitat awards.
2. Organised study visits to the projects.
3. Research around the topics.
4. Work on knowledge transfer.

Although they work in housing in general it would interest those working in shelter if they think they have good housing that would merit an award, or if they want to participate in a knowledge transfer activity.

BSHF are sitting on a database that has a lot of information on good projects going back 25 years; they'd like to revisit some and see where they are at now. They still have the baseline-application they made for the award and would like to look into their progress. There are certain questions they would like to address: are the houses still standing now or has there been another disaster? And ultimately what is it in the project design that hinders or prevents people from doing it? Often in construction there is an evaluation at the end.

BSHF want to hear from people working in shelter, if you would be able to look back on a project, or if you have ideas on what you would like to learn from them. Theo would appreciate emails to be sent to theo@bshf.org. If you have a good project or know of a good project and it fits the timeframe this can be a joint project. They will begin in May. Please visit www.bshf.org.

Victoria Maynard (HFHGB) – Updates to www.shelterforum.info

Victoria demonstrated the new UK Shelter Forum website which has been updated to include short summaries of previous forums with tags so that they appear in google searches. The new website also includes links to other useful websites and a twitter feed - use the hashtag #shelterforum to see your tweet appear on the page. In addition to the public website there is also a 'members only' LinkedIn group for the UK Shelter Forum. This is managed by Victoria and Joseph and is open to people currently working for an organisation engaged in shelter and settlement reconstruction or researching or studying a related topic.

SESSION 2: FOCUS ON SYRIA

Syria Update via conference call: Shelter solutions for IDPs and refugees in Syria and Lebanon, facilitated by Rick Bauer, Oxfam (to Geneva, Syria, and New Zealand)

The situation in Syria is worsening as the months go on and there has been an increase in the demand for shelter. Of the 23 million population of Syria there are 700,000 refugees outside the country. 80% of IDPs are staying with host families. Every major city has a large portion of it destroyed so there is a large demand for shelter, but education and health are also priorities. In future participants stated that they expected a continual worsening of the situation. More agencies are encouraged to engage in shelter activities because there is significant need.

Julien Mulliez, Save the Children - Syria Shelter Working Group

Julien explained that there are now about 300,000 refugees, potentially up to half a million. In the last 2 weeks 100,000 refugees have gone into the countries neighbouring Syria. In the beginning, most refugees were going to the north. This is still where the highest concentration is, but as Damascus is disrupted by violence there are other places where they are entering now too. 70% of Syrians stay with relatives and are hosted in this way- this is the main coping mechanism. The trend is that people are spending savings on accommodation. Many people are staying in unfinished buildings but are still paying $200 rent for a room. Garages are also being rented out to Syrians.

Julien explained that quick fixing kits are being used to help people make windows and doors. Wood is also being supplied to help make shelter better insulated for winter. Tented settlements have started to grow significantly. Tents are made with timber and recycled sheeting costing about 200/300 dollars to build. Tent improvement kits are also being used to make them more waterproof and protective against the weather. However, these settlements are easily flooded so they are unsure whether they should continue to support these. The government is not against or in favour of the tented settlements. Later, Save the Children will upgrade shelters in unfinished buildings with toilets, kitchen sinks, doors, and windows- this is some of the intervention that is happening. There is a huge demand for intervention. There is the question of what happens if there is a huge influx of refugees- organisations must ask themselves, do we want to put people in collective centres? Will it create sanitation and protection problems? We are far from ready for a larger influx of refugees.

SESSION 3: DFID RAPID RESPONSE FACILITY

Ben Nicholson and Brenda Coughlan, DFID – Rapid Response Facility (RRF)

Ben and Brenda described the Rapid Response Facility which was established in 2012. The facility is based on the belief that the key to affective humanitarian response is that donors provide rapid funding for emergencies. They use flexible funding models to provide fast mobilisation funding. This is based on pre-qualification rather than speculative proposals, to reduce bureaucracy in the event of a disaster, trying to get as much done as possible before the event.

Criteria have been built in to allow the UK to meet recommendations. Projects must provide immediate life-saving action. This is designed to ensure a flexible 6 week period to make assessment of on-going needs of response. They must also provide direct and rapid funding of partners, to ensure immediate lifesaving action, and make sure NGOs are not waiting. Furthermore, they must have good geographical reach and the most appropriate technical ability. This is in order to provide better value for those affected and to the UK tax payer.

DFID identifies and is alerted to the need for response and the funding decision rests with the secretary of state who decides whether or not to activate the facility, and decides who DFID should support. This cuts through internal processes that can take months.

In the decision to activate, DFID always try to take into account what other donors are planning. Within 2 hours of activation they invite people with different sectors of work to give in proposals and they take into account geographical reach and the sectors they have ability in. It is a competitive process but they do encourage collaboration. They look for this to be submitted within 12 hours of activation, depending on the type of emergency. Then, within 72 hours of activation, DFID can alert partners to decisions to enable responses to begin. Funding is available for the first 6 weeks of the response. DFID require certain criteria; proposals have to demonstrate impact and key outcomes. They will expect reports daily, as they recognise the situation will be fluid so information and expectations can change. A narrative financial report comes 4 weeks after the implementation of discussion on how results were achieved.

The RRF has only been operated once so far, in Sierra Leone- predominantly a WaSH response-following the cholera epidemic which was the worst in Sierra Leone in 15 years and the worst in the region in 10 years. There was a spike towards the end of summer; it was the increase in people affected that led to DFID being involved. Funding was needed rapidly and a 6 week response window was considered appropriate.

DFID shared with the audience the key lessons they learned from this operation. Key benefits included using the RRF for rapid decisions making; flexibility in decision making allows them to expand their reach and strengthen the appropriateness of their response. One negative side is that the operations that take place can have a limited long term impact; they are predominantly implemented to save lives. Work is underway to make it smarter. Co-ordination was a key concern for those funding Sierra Leone, with reference to working with other actors.

Bill Flinn, CARE – RRF preparedness work overview

Bill highlighted that for an NGO to respond to DFID within 12 hours (the requirements of the RRF) was challenging and that Care had undertaken several activities to prepare. He described the breakdown of information required; some generic information, some about the country context, and some specific to the disaster, therefore much of this could be prepared in advance. CARE decided on 18 priority countries to work with in order to prepare for the RRF. They worked with each of these countries on emergency preparedness planning; some had shelter in their emergency preparedness plans and some didn't. All of the information was fitted onto a standard DFID

template. In theory, if there was a rapid onset emergency and RRF was activated, then Care would now be able to respond rapidly as a lot of the work has already been done. However, Bill cautioned that having all the documentation together is not enough on its own; countries will need to update their emergency preparedness plans regularly along with their documentation.

SESSION 4: HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS

Victoria Stodart, IFRC Shelter and Settlements - Addressing Regulatory Barriers to Providing Shelter after Natural Disasters

This presentation discussed the fact that, at times during the relief and recovery phase, legal and procedural issues can get in the way of emergency shelter response. Examples include land ownership problems, ill-defined land zoning procedures and building material quotas. Victoria explained that this can put us in a tricky situation; but we must ensure that what is practically done is right and does no harm.

Most countries have regulatory frameworks that apply to land management, building standards, and housing. However these are often inappropriate or inadequate to effectively address the realities after a disaster. Also, regardless as to whether a disaster occurs, an informal system invariably exists, thus when a disaster occurs it is difficult to know which process to follow. Problems such as gender and inheritance issues relate to long term problems. These large social questions are very unlikely to be solved during disasters. However, temporary fixes should be possible to devise with the support of governments. By temporarily removing or reducing these barriers as a preparedness measure before a disaster can lead to better long term recovery and short term solutions.

This project is being run jointly with the Disaster Law department. The reason for this is that there is a need for policy makers and operational practitioners to come together to work on solutions. The Disaster Law department has produced international disaster response laws, also known as the IDRL Guidelines. Today, 11 countries have incorporated aspects of these guidelines and another 12 have pending bills. In order to produce these guidelines over 140 governments were consulted.

The International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is held every four years and brings together the 194 state parties to the Geneva Conventions, ICRC, IFRC, National Societies and representatives of scientific, religious, and humanitarian organisations among others. It is a key forum for strengthening cooperation between states and the Movement. The most recent was held in November 2011. This is where the regulatory barriers mandate was given. In preparation for the conference numerous people were consulted, an expert meeting was held and background documents were presented to the conference. All of these documents can be found under the Disaster Law tab on the IFRC website. They have until 2015 to report back to the conference - that is the first formal milestone for the project. http://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/idrl/about-disaster-law/regulatory-barriers-to-emergency-and-interim-shelter-solutions/

The regulatory barriers project is a two-pronged attack, through advocacy at government level and ensuring that practical solutions that are put in place do no harm. Throughout the project the main issues being looked at will include land and property rights, settlement planning and shelter and housing. The advocacy at government level is initially an information gathering exercise reviewing governments' laws and regulations and finding out if they have adequate frameworks specifically relevant to emergency and transitional shelter. This is being carried out in three zones: Asia pacific, Americas, and Africa. It will consist of three phases: a desktop study, an in-country study, and the development of detailed recommendations from the first two phases. Hopefully this will

also help the shelter cluster by providing first-hand experience and bringing about a stronger position from which to advocate the government. This project depends on people being happy to share the innovative solutions which have been developed to overcome such barriers.

Pecha Kuchas and Breakout Groups

The remainder of the afternoon focussed on the topic of Housing, Land and Property Rights. To initiate the debate several speakers gave Pecha Kucha style presentations on different aspects of the topic:

- Shelter and Housing, Land, and Property Rights – James Kennedy
- Urban land rights in Latin America – Lisa Stead, *HFHGB*
- On shaky ground? Tenure security in post-earthquake Haiti – Fiona Kelling
- Protection and Housing, Land, and Property – Rachel Hastie, *Oxfam*
- The Shelterless Landless – Rumana Kabir

Participants then discussed key questions arising from the presentations in working groups using the Six Thinking Hats Methodology. A summary of key themes arising from the Pecha Kuchas and the breakout groups will be available on www.shelterforum.org.uk soon.