IFRC bamboo frame for emergency shelters and emergency roofs
Technical sheets

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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
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IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The drawings and information provided in these technical sheets must be treated as
guidance and examples only and evaluated for suitability in the context of specific
local conditions. Risk is inherent in shelter design after natural disaster, and caution
must be exercised so as not to increase the threat to disaster affected persons. Users
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including the death or injury of persons or property damage, associated with the use
of or reliance upon information contained in this document.
Section 1 – Standard bamboo shelter model

Summary information
Materials: shelter kit and bamboo poles
Material source: available in Emergency Items Catalogue and locally procured
Time to build: 2 hours for basic structure + additional hours for improvements
Construction team: 3 people

Shelter description: this emergency shelter has a rectangular shape, pitched roof. Covered floor area: 3.40 x 5.15 m (17.5m²). The frame has plastic sheeting (tarpaulin) for both roof and wall covering, and one entrance at the front.

Plans
**Materials and tools, including Bill of quantities (BoQ)**

The table of quantities below is for the materials required to build the standard shelter model. It does not take into account issues such as which lengths of bamboo are available and allowances for spoilage in transport and delivery.

The materials for the structure and stakes should be locally sourced. The other materials and tools are available in the Emergency Items Catalogue (EIC).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Specifications</th>
<th>Q</th>
<th>EIC Code / source</th>
<th>Alternative / comments</th>
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<td>IFRC standard</td>
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<td>Tools and fixings</td>
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<td>Green bamboo (reduced resistance)</td>
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Installation guidelines

**Step 1: assembling the bamboo poles to create the roof frame**

- **Materials:**
  - 4 poles (length: 2.90m)
  - 4 lashings (length: 2.00m)
- **Tools:**
  - Handsaw, machete, measuring tape

Instructions/recommendations:
- Overlap the four 2.90m bamboo poles in turn to make a roof frame with a central square of 0.75 x 0.75m
- The central square measures approximately 0.80m on centre
- Cross lash the poles together
- Pole overlap is approximately 50mm

**Step 2: assembling the ridge pole on top of the two support poles to create the support frame**

- **Materials:**
  - 1 ridge pole (length: 3.50m)
  - 2 support poles (length: 2.45m)
  - 2 lashings (length: 2.00m)
- **Tools:**
  - Handsaw, machete and measuring tape

Instructions/recommendations:
- Lay the 3.50m bamboo ridge pole on top of two bamboo support poles
- Cross lash the joints
- Support frame overlap is approximately 100mm (4 in.)
**Step 3: assembling the roof frame on top of the support frame**

![Diagram]

**Materials:**
- 1 roof frame
- 1 support frame
- 2 lashings (length: 2.00m)

**Tools:**
- Machete

**Instructions/recommendations:**
- Lift the roof frame onto the support frame
- Cross lash together
- Support poles are located inside the top of the roof frame and the ridge pole

**Step 4: anchoring the base of the roof frame to the ground**

![Diagram]

**Materials:**
- 2 wooden stakes (length: 0.45m)
- 2 lashings (length: 2m)

**Tools:**
- Sledge hammer, machete, measuring tape

**Instructions/recommendations:**
- Anchor the base of the roof frame to the ground by cross lashing it to two large wooden stakes
- The 2 stakes should be placed at 3.20m apart (3.25m on centre)
- The stakes should be placed vertically to ensure a good anchorage
- The 2 stakes are located inside the base of the roof frame
- Overlap should be approximately 50mm

**Step 5: attaching two sides ropes between stakes and ridge pole**

![Diagram]

**Materials:**
- 2 ropes (length: 4.00m)

**Tools:**
- Machete

**Instructions/recommendations:**
- Attach each side rope to the top of each stake and the ridge pole
  - this is used to create the side of the shelter
- Do not tighten the side ropes yet
Step 6: anchoring the support frame to the ground

The shelter frame is now complete. The next steps are dedicated to covering the shelter with the two tarpaulins.

Step 7: cutting of one tarpaulin in the middle lengthwise

Step 8: attaching the tarpaulin to the sides of the shelter

Instructions/recommendations:
- Loop the guy ropes over the top of the two support poles
- Peg out to the sides of the shelter
- The stakes should be placed vertically to ensure a good anchorage
- The side ropes can now be tightened

Instructions/recommendations:
- Cut the tarpaulin lengthwise to obtain two pieces of 2 x 6 m
- Position each piece of tarpaulin to each side of the shelter

Instructions/recommendations:
- Fold the tarpaulin over the roof frame
- Attach the tarpaulin to the central part of the roof frame
- Attach the tarpaulin at different places (4-5 in total for each piece of tarpaulin): base of the roof frame, bottom and top of the support pole and the ridge pole

Materials:
- 2 wooden stakes (length: 0.45m)
- 2 ropes (length: 4.00m)

Tools:
- Sledge hammer, machete

Materials:
- 1 tarpaulin 4 x 6 m

Tools:
- Machete or shears

Materials:
- 2 sides tarpaulins (pieces of tarpaulin previously cut 2 x 6 m)
- 8 lashings (length: 2m)
Step 9: covering the shelter top with a tarpaulin

The shelter is now complete.

Possible improvements to the standard shelter
In order to improve the resistance and comfort of the standard shelter, it is possible to carry out a few tasks after the assembly of the shelter.

Here are a few:
- Looping the guy ropes over the top of the tarpaulin and securely attaching to the stakes
- Anchoring the support poles to the ground, by digging holes approximately 40-60cm (16-24in.) deep
- Securing the base of the tarpaulin to the ground by placing stones at the base of the tarpaulin or digging a trench and burying the tarpaulin
- Placing a bamboo/palm leaves mat on top of the roof frame to lower the temperature inside the shelter

Materials:
- 1 tarpaulin 4 x 6 m
- 4-6 lashings (length: 2m)

Instructions/recommendations:
- The tarpaulin is placed on top of the roof frame and overlaps each side
- The overlap is 30cm (12in.) to enable the fastening of the tarpaulin
- The tarpaulin is attached to the four corners of the shelter frame using lashing or bamboo strips
- The extra part of the tarpaulin can be placed differently depending on the time of the day: folded on and securely attached to the support poles at night, or attached with bamboo poles and ropes to make an eaves during the day
Section 2 – Elevated bamboo shelter model

Summary information

Materials: shelter kit and bamboo poles
Material source: available in Emergency Items Catalogue and locally procured
Time to build: 4 hours for basic structure + additional hours for improvements
Construction team: 3 people

Shelter description: this emergency shelter has a rectangular shape, pitched roof. Covered floor area: 3.40 x 5.60 m (19 m²). The frame has plastic sheeting (tarpaulin) for both roof and wall covering, and one entrance at the front.

Plans
**Materials and tools, including Bill of quantities (BoQ)**

The table of quantities below is for the materials required to build the elevated shelter model. It does not take into account issues such as which lengths of bamboo are available and allowances for spoilage in transport and delivery.

The materials for the structure and stakes should be locally sourced. The other materials and tools are available in the Emergency Items Catalogue (EIC).

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<tr>
<td>Tarpaulin</td>
<td>Size: 4 x 6m Woven plastic, white/white</td>
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<td>IFRC standard</td>
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<td>Shelter tool kit</td>
<td>Tools and fixings</td>
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<td>KRELSHEK01</td>
<td>IFRC standard</td>
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<td><strong>STRUCTURE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bamboo (roof frame)</td>
<td>Length: 2.90m Diameter: 45mm (range 30-60) Dry, mature, treated</td>
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<td>Locally sourced</td>
<td>Green bamboo (reduced resistance)</td>
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<td>Bamboo (ridge pole)</td>
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<td>Bamboo (long support pole)</td>
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<td><strong>ADDITIONAL TOOLS</strong></td>
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<td>Measuring tape</td>
<td>Length: 5m, 19mm tape, metric and inch, rolling case</td>
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</table>
Installation guidelines

Step 1: assembling the bamboo poles to create the roof frame

Instructions/recommendations:
▷ Overlap the four 2.90m bamboo poles in turn to make a roof frame with a central square of 0.75 x 0.75m
▷ The central square measures approximately 0.80m on centre
▷ Cross lash the poles together
▷ Pole overlap is approximately 50mm (2in.)

Step 2: position the roof frame on top of a ridge-pole square

Instructions/recommendations:
▷ Overlap the four ridge poles in turn to make a 3.40 x 3.40m square
▷ Place the roof frame on top of the ridge poles
▷ Cross lash the ridge poles and the roof frame
▷ Roof frame and ridge poles overlap is 50-100mm (2-4in.)
**Step 3: prepare the support poles by cutting slots in top of each of them and placing dowels**

Instructions/recommendations:
- Cut slots in top of support poles to take ridge poles
- Cut 4 dowels (12mm-diameter) made of bamboo
- Drill one 12mm-diameter hole in each support pole under a knot to place the dowel

**Materials:**
- 2 main support poles (length: 2.40m)
- 2 lower support poles (length: 1.80m)
- 4 dowels of bamboo/wood

**Tools:**
- Handsaw, machete, measuring tape, (optional: wood chisel, drill brace, hammer)

**Note:** if tools (handsaw, machete, drill brace) are not available for cutting slots in top of poles and dowels, then ridge poles can simply be cross-lashed to the support poles (as in the standard shelter model).

**Step 4: position the support poles into the ground**

Instructions/recommendations:
- Mark position of main support poles on ground
- Sink main support poles to a depth of 0.40m (16in.)
- Lift ridge pole frame onto the main support poles
- Lift the lower part of the ridge pole frame to the required height and mark position of lower support poles on ground
- Sink lower support poles to a depth of 0.40m (16in.)
- Place the ridge pole frame on top of the lower support poles
- Lash the roof frame to the support poles

**Materials:**
- 2 main support poles (length: 2.40m)
- 2 lower support poles (length: 1.80m)
- 1 roof frame
- 4 lashings (length: 2.00m)

**Tools:**
- Hoe, shovel, machete, measuring tape

⇒ The elevated shelter frame is now complete. The next steps are dedicated to covering the shelter with the two tarpaulins.
**Step 5: cutting of one tarpaulin in the middle lengthwise**

- **Materials:**
  - 1 tarpaulin 4 x 6 m
- **Tools:**
  - Machete or shears

**Instructions/recommendations:**
- Cut the tarpaulin lengthwise to obtain two pieces of 2 x 6 m
- Position each piece of tarpaulin to each side of the shelter

**Step 6: attaching the tarpaulin to the sides of the shelter**

- **Materials:**
  - 2 sides tarpaulins (pieces of tarpaulin previously cut 2 x 6 m)
  - 12 lashings (length: 2m)

**Instructions/recommendations:**
- Fold the tarpaulin over the sides of the shelter frame, making sure that all short sides are covered
- Attach the tarpaulin to the ridge poles and support poles at different places (6 in total for each piece of tarpaulin): each corner of tarpaulin, each corner of the shelter and bottom of the support poles

**Step 7: covering the shelter top with a tarpaulin**

- **Materials:**
  - 1 tarpaulin 4 x 6 m
  - 6 lashings (length: 2m)
  - 2 ropes (length: 2m)
  - 2 stakes (optional)
  - 2 stones (optional)
- **Tools:**
  - Hammer
The elevated shelter is now complete.

Possible improvements to the elevated shelter
In order to improve the resistance and comfort of the elevated shelter, it is possible to carry out a few tasks after the assembly of the shelter.

Here are a few:

- Securing the base of the tarpaulin to the ground by placing stones at the base of the tarpaulin or digging a trench and burying the tarpaulin
- A bamboo/palm leaves mat can be placed on top of the roof frame to lower the temperature inside the shelter
- Anchoring the support poles to the ground, by digging deeper holes approximately 0.60m (2ft) instead of 0.40m (16in.)
Section 3 – Bamboo roof frame model

Summary information
Materials: shelter kit and bamboo poles
Material source: available in Emergency Items Catalogue, locally procured and/or salvaged
Time to build: less than 1 hour for basic structure + additional hours for improvements
Construction team: 3 people

Shelter description: this roof frame is used to cover a damaged roof. Covered floor area: up to 3.60 x 3.60 m (13 m²). The frame has plastic sheeting (tarpaulin) for the roof.

Plans

Note: Two bamboo roof frames can be jointed/paired to cover a larger area, as shown in the drawing below. In this case, an extra bamboo pole placed between the two frames is needed to support them.
Materials and tools, including Bill of quantities (BoQ)

The table of quantities below is for the materials required to build one roof frame. It does not take into account issues such as which lengths of bamboo are available and allowances for spoilage in transport and delivery.

The materials for the roof frame should be locally sourced or be salvaged materials. The other materials and tools are available in the Emergency Items Catalogue (EIC).

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<td>STRUCTURE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bamboo (roof frame)</td>
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<td>Unbraided rope, bamboo strip, coconut fibre, wire, rubber strip</td>
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Installation guidelines

Steps to take prior to the construction of a roof frame:

▷ Assess the damaged roof and building – make sure the structure is sturdy to receive a temporary roof, make sure to remove all roof elements that are not well attached to the structure

▷ Measure the roof area to be covered and verify if building a bamboo roof frame is the best solution to repair the roof – surface to cover adequate with roof frame surface (max: 3.60 x 3.60m) and a 10° minimum roof pitch
**Step 1: assembling the bamboo poles to create the roof frame**

Instructions/recommendations:
- Overlap the four 3.00m bamboo poles in turn to make a roof frame with a central square of 0.75 x 0.75m
- The central square measures approximately 0.80m on centre
- Pole overlap is approximately 50mm (2in.)
- Cross lash the poles together

**Materials:**
- 4 poles (length: 3.00m)
- 4 lashings (length: 2.00m)

**Tools:**
- Handsaw, machete, measuring tape

**Step 2: anchoring the roof frame to the structure**

Instructions/recommendations:
- Place the roof frame over the structure
- The roof frame should not overhang the structure
- Anchor the four bamboo poles to each corner of the structure

**Materials:**
- 4 lashings (length: 2m / longer depending on type of structure)

**Tools:**
- Machete
Step 3: covering the roof frame with a tarpaulin

Instructions/recommendations:
▷ The tarpaulin is placed on top of the roof frame and overlaps each side
▷ The overlap on the shortest side of the tarpaulin is 20-30cm (8-12in.) to enable the fastening of the tarpaulin
▷ The longest side can be equally shared on each side
▷ The four corners of the tarpaulin are attached to the structure using lashings or bamboo strips.

➔ The roof repairs are now complete.

Possible improvements to the roof frame
In order to improve the resistance of the roof frame, it is possible to carry out a few tasks after the repair of the roof.

Here are a few:
▷ Looping the rope over the stone placed inside the corner of the tarpaulin and securely attaching to the structure or wooden stakes

If the walls are made of sand bags:
▷ Anchor the roof frame by passing the rope under at least 3 rows of sand bags
▷ Wrap the edges of the tarpaulin below one row of sand bags
▷ One row of sand bags can also be placed over the tarpaulin on the gable ends to improve the anchoring of the tarpaulin

Materials:
▷ 1 tarpaulin 4 x 6 m
▷ 4-6 lashings (length: 2m)
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**Humanity**  The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

**Impartiality**  It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

**Neutrality**  In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

**Independence**  The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

**Voluntary service**  It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

**Unity**  There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

**Universality**  The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.
For more information on this IFRC publication, please contact:

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