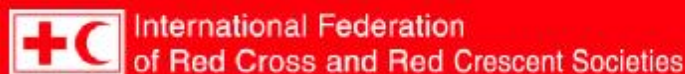


Report 2006-2007



Global Shelter Programme

Appeal No. MAA00019

03/04/2008

This report covers the period of 01/01/2007 to 12/12/2007 of a two-year planning and appeal process.



The Peruvian Red Cross Society volunteers and local communities constructed transitional shelters together using traditional materials, following the Pisco earthquake in August 2007. **International Federation**

In brief

Programme summary: In response to the commitment of the International Federation to take on a leading role in the shelter sector, a range of activities were initiated in 2007 through the framework of the Global Shelter Programme. These activities were carried out to enhance the capacity of the International Federation to meet this commitment, and guided by the meetings and workshops which took place with interested National Societies in Europe; the Americas; East, West and Southern Africa; as well as South and South East Asia.

To build on the shelter experiences to date of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and to contribute to the development of a shelter policy, a database of shelter activities was established which will assist in the identification and promotion of best practices. Shelter components have been developed and included in trainings for Field Assessment And Coordination Teams (FACT), Regional Disaster Response Teams (RDRT) and Relief teams, and collaborative Shelter & Relief trainings delivered in Geneva, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kazakhstan and Bangladesh to strengthen shelter activities in the field. Existing programming tools have been collated and disseminated, and a number of additional tools developed, including field assessment and technical guides.

In support of the International Federation's emergency operations, technical assistance has been provided in response to the typhoons in the Philippines, floods and cyclone in Mozambique, floods in Pakistan, the earthquake in Peru, floods in Uganda and the cyclone in Bangladesh, including the deployment of International Federation Shelter Department personnel. Further support was also provided to the shelter relief activities in the Solomon Islands, the floods in West and East Africa, and hurricane-affected Caribbean. To support owner-driven shelter solutions after disaster, the International Federation has developed a "shelter kit" comprising tools, fixings and tarpaulins, to be complemented by other essential household items. A total of 29,000 shelter kits, plus 1,000 lightweight emergency tents have been purchased through the Global Shelter Programme for pre-positioning through the International Federation's Regional Logistics Units. In collaboration with the UN Refugee Agency

(UNHCR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation is developing commonly agreed specifications for both lightweight and all weather tents, and the International Federation is collaborating with a wider group of shelter agencies to standardize specifications of other shelter non-food items.

To meet the commitment to convene the shelter cluster in specific emergency operations, the International Federation has deployed shelter coordination teams to the Philippines, Mozambique, and Pakistan following the floods, and in Bangladesh following the cyclone. As co-chair of the Global Emergency Shelter Cluster, the International Federation has provided leadership in overseeing a number of key sector preparedness activities including training, information management and the development of a performance management system for the cluster, as well as the refinement of the cluster coordination “toolkit” originally developed by the International Federation, and now widely used by other clusters.

Funding has been adequate to meet the internal shelter capacity-building requirements of the International Federation and its commitments to supporting the shelter cluster in the field to coordinate shelter activities. However, only limited funding has been received for shelter stock pre-positioning. The International Federation has made significant procurement commitments for shelter kits and tents with the funding that has been provided. These commitments were made in October and November 2007 and are not reflected in the financial report, as payment will be made on receipt of the goods in February and March 2008.

Goal: To improve the lives of vulnerable people by reducing the impact and vulnerability to disasters through the development and effective use of national, regional and international Red Cross and Red Crescent capacities and resources in sheltering.

Needs: Total 2006-2007 budget CHF 11,471,301 (USD 10,260,555 or EUR 6,952,304) (out of which 41 per cent covered). [Click here](#) to go to the attached financial reports:

[Report 2007](#)

Our partners: Key Red Cross and Red Crescent partners have provided support ranging from funding, to the provision of staff on loan, to hosting and contributing to activities. These include the American, Australian, British, Canadian, Danish, German, Finnish, Netherlands, New Zealand, Spanish, and Swedish Red Cross Societies. Project-specific agreements have been established with a number of UN agencies and international NGOs, including UNHCR, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), UN Habitat, Acted, CARE UK, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam, RedR Australia, RedR UK, Shelter Centre and Sphere.

Progress towards objectives

Overall programme objective: To improve the lives of vulnerable people by reducing the impact of, and vulnerability to, disasters through the development and effective use of national, regional and international Red Cross and Red Crescent capacities and resources in sheltering.

Sheltering best practices and policy development

Expected Result 1: Sheltering preparedness and response activities of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are informed by a sheltering policy drawing on best practice.

Achievements: Drawing upon an initial mapping of shelter activities as reflected in appeal documents and reviews, an online database is in the process of being finalized to enable ready access to International Federation shelter experiences. Shelter mapping activities being undertaken

or developed by a number of National Societies, for example the Spanish Red Cross Society and the El Salvador Red Cross Society, and the tools and methodologies used, are being utilized as appropriate to update this database. Key best practice references are also being identified with regard to specific emergency operations, such as, previous lessons learned from past Bangladesh cyclone responses, and disseminated as appropriate. A shelter lessons learned workshop was held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, involving National Societies from the region, to share shelter experiences and to identify best practices and potential policy guidance.

The development of appropriate shelter responses in emergency operations have also provided opportunities to draw upon relevant country-specific experiences and lessons learned from other programmes. In the Philippines and Bangladesh, the focus has been on promoting safe shelter through simple improved building techniques, drawing upon examples of local housing that withstood the disaster. In Peru, following the earthquake, the development of a low-cost transitional shelter using locally familiar materials enabled rapid construction by the affected households themselves, assisted by volunteers from the Peruvian Red Cross Society. In Sudan, following the heavy floods, a simple shelter solution enabled this activity to be supported by relief teams rather than technical specialists, promoting the rapid adoption of this solution. Additional Shelter department field visits to Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua have prompted discussions on previous shelter responses to capture key lessons learned.

To meet immediate shelter needs and to promote the process of sheltering after a disaster, a “shelter kit” comprising of tarpaulins, fixings and basic tools has been developed in close consultation with relief advisors to promote the use of local materials, and to provide an alternative to tents as a pre-positioned rapidly deployable shelter solution. Adequate shelter is a combination of safe and appropriate building enclosures, the provision of essential household items, access to water, sanitation, education and health services, as well as sustainable livelihood activities. Hence, lessons learned through relief, recovery, water and sanitation, and emergency health interventions are also being drawn upon to contribute to shelter approaches.

Challenges or Constraints: A major challenge faced by the shelter sector as a whole is the broad understanding of “shelter”, from emergency, to temporary or transitional, and to permanent housing. Analysis of over 100 International Federation responses, including shelter activities, has documented more than 15 classifications of this type of intervention, without explicit reference to shelter, ranging from relief distribution to construction. In addition, many shelter preparedness activities are components of existing community preparedness activities, from the identification of safe shelter to the management of collective shelters. It is apparent that the International Federation approach to shelter, and a guiding policy framework will need to reflect this diversity.

Looking ahead: Further shelter lessons-learned workshops are envisioned in the different regions to prompt discussion on appropriate shelter approaches and International Federation experiences. The online database, to be housed on the International Federation’s intranet (FedNet) and its regular updating following each response, will promote wider discussion on shelter activities. The development of a shelter policy framework had been delayed pending identification of International Federation shelter practices, and internal discussions on overall policy informed by a policy audit. However, the growing interest amongst National Societies for guidance on shelter, and the commitment to shelter as a core activity of a number of National Societies, including, for example, the Canadian Red Cross Society, necessitates the development of initial guiding language as a basis for policy discussions. This activity will be led by the International Federation in collaboration with interested National Societies.

Sheltering human resources capacity and preparedness

Expected Result 2: The human resources capacity of the International Federation and its membership is strengthened, and used effectively to meet shelter needs after disasters.

Achievements: In recognition of the International Federation's commitment to scale up its shelter operations, a series of meetings and workshops have been held with interested National Societies and their representatives in different locations including Geneva, Panama, Lima, Vientiane, Colombo, Nairobi, Dakar, Johannesburg and Buenos Aires. An informal shelter "community of practice" of interested partner National Societies has been established to promote key themes including training, research and development, to be complemented by the embryonic regional National Society shelter networks. Since the initial meeting in Geneva in January 2007, a number of National Societies - including the Canadian Red Cross Society, the French Red Cross Society and the Australian Red Cross Society - have either made defined commitments to shelter, appointed shelter point persons, or expressed their interest to actively engage in the shelter agenda.

A number of complementary approaches have been adopted to better map International Federation shelter capacities. These have included support for ad hoc questionnaires, for example, as developed by the Caribbean Disaster Network, and the collaboration which took place with the Well Prepared National Society (WPNS) process. The WPNS process included a focus on shelter which was piloted in six countries in the South Asia region. A shelter "learning" strategy was also developed to strengthen the approach to building shelter competencies, led by an external consultant with a strong background in technical training.

A range of training modules reflecting the emerging International Federation approach to shelter have been developed for inclusion in the range of standard International Federation training events. These have included trainings for Federation Field Assessment and Coordination Teams (FACT), Regional Disaster Response Teams (RDRT) and Relief teams, as well as collaborative Shelter & Relief trainings. To prompt discussions on appropriate shelter technical training, representatives of National Societies participated in the pilot technical training in Geneva in May, developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Emergency Shelter Cluster, co-funded by the International Federation. Discussions have also been initiated with training organizations, including RedR India, to establish other inter-agency opportunities that could be tailored to meet the specific requirements of National Societies. The International Federation also supported the participation of a number of participants from National Societies in the South Asia region in a technical training delivered by RedR India in Pondicherry, India, to identify potential regional themes and training capacities. In Mozambique, following the cyclone and flood response, the Global Shelter Programme contributed to developing a field level training programme in conjunction with local technical institutes and UN Habitat to promote better building as part of the return and reconstruction process. This training will contribute to the development of a more standardized training that can be utilized in other response situations.

To promote a better understanding of shelter risk, and the potential role of the International Federation in reducing shelter risks and vulnerabilities, a shelter risk mapping database has been developed drawing upon disaster impact data and the capacities of National Societies in the respective countries. In recognition of the trend towards urbanization, a study of shelter risks and the potential role of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in medium-sized urban areas was undertaken, with an initial focus on Kingston, Jamaica, to contribute to the development of a draft shelter strategy for the Jamaican Red Cross Society. Shelter risk reduction as a component of the Global Alliance on Disaster Risk Reduction, as launched by the International Federation in October, is also being advanced.

Challenges or Constraints: Competencies in shelter activities had not been routinely promoted or retained within many National Societies and delegations. The differing mandates of National Societies regarding shelter also require differing skill sets and experiences. Shelter technical trainings therefore need to be tailored to specific regional and National Society requirements. The International Federation also lacks the in-house training capacity to build shelter competencies, thus requiring consideration of "training of trainers" initiatives. As this is a challenge for the shelter sector as a whole, this is being addressed on an inter-agency basis through the shelter cluster. Identifying the needs for National Society shelter response capacity is related to their mandate, and the

requirements resulting from country-level contingency planning.

Looking ahead: A gathering of National Societies interested in shelter will be convened in March 2008, to be hosted by the Netherlands Red Cross Society. The focus of this event will be on reviewing the progress on meeting the International Federation's shelter commitment in 2007, and identifying activities and partner National Societies to be implemented in 2008. Trainings will also be further rolled out in early 2008, including a Shelter Technical Training in March; further support for FACT and RDRT trainings; and complementary trainings in camp planning and shelter management, drawing upon the experiences of National Societies. Promoting shelter risk reduction will be advanced through collaborative activities within the Global Alliance on Disaster Risk Reduction, and initiatives in partnership with ProVention and UN Habitat.

Operational support and technical guidance

Expected Result 3: The International Federation and its membership have the operational and technical support to provide an appropriate shelter response, whilst strengthening local capacities.

Achievements: In support of International Federation emergency operations, in-country shelter technical assistance has been deployed to the Philippines, Mozambique, Pakistan, Peru, Uganda, Ghana and Bangladesh. Support provided has focused on the assessments of shelter-specific needs, appraising the shelter response of disaster-affected households, and the development of appropriate shelter relief and recovery strategies. This has included enabling the provision of appropriate materials, tools, fixings and the promotion of improved building techniques where possible, to reduce future vulnerabilities. Distance support in the form of technical and programmatic guidance has also been provided to delegations and National Societies in meeting shelter needs in Malawi, Tanzania, Vietnam, Zambia, Namibia, the Solomon Islands, Sudan and Timor-Leste.

In recognition of the need for non-tent pre-positioned shelter solutions that promote owner-driven post-disaster shelter activities where appropriate, a "shelter kit" was developed. This "shelter kit" comprises tarpaulins, fixings and tools. A total of 29,000 shelter kits have been purchased for pre-positioning in the three Regional Logistics Units in Dubai, Panama and Kuala Lumpur, as well as in the outreach locations of Nairobi and Harare. These will complement the existing stock of lightweight emergency tents and essential household items. In collaboration with UNHCR and ICRC, commonly agreed specifications for both lightweight emergency tents and all weather tents are under development. These will be complemented by similar collaborations with a range of shelter agencies to harmonize the standards and specifications of other shelter non-food items.

Existing programming tools, manuals and checklists from recent responses - including the tsunami - have been collated to provide more consistent and readily accessible programme guidance. For example, the guidance on cyclone-resistant shelter that had been previously developed by the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society with the support of the German Red Cross Society, was reprinted and distributed to operational National Societies and other shelter agencies during the cyclone Sidr response. Opportunities have also been sought to use programme-specific tool development to provide the basis of more widely applicable products, for example, the Aceh Transitional Shelter Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey which was co-funded by the Global Shelter Programme. In Peru, in response to the earthquake, the International Federation developed a simple pictorial guide to the construction of a basic shelter using locally familiar materials, and in the Philippines, guidance on safe shelter was disseminated through community-level awareness-raising, and the use of posters and other communication aids. Regional initiatives, such as the manual on collective shelter management being developed by the Centre for Natural Disaster Prevention in Central America (CEPREDENAC), involving four National Societies in Central America, as well as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), were also supported. In collaboration with Oxfam, the International Federation led the development of inter-agency guidelines on the specification and use of plastic sheeting in the absence of field-oriented guidance on this common relief item. The process involved over 75 individuals representing

humanitarian agencies, donors, manufacturers and independent consultants, as well as a number of open peer reviews. The International Federation also collaborated with UNOCHA and Care UK to develop guidelines on the specification and use of timber in emergencies, and with Oxfam GB on training and technical briefs on the use of bamboo. This will capitalize on the experiences of the shelter sector in responding to the Yogyakarta earthquake, and the significant International Federation shelter programme. The Shelter Department also participated in an initiative in Panama with ProVention to develop a more comprehensive assessment methodology.

Challenges or Constraints: As the International Federation has only recently made a commitment to the shelter sector, many National Societies do not possess dedicated shelter technical capacity. This has presented a challenge in providing the required support to emergency operations. Shelter department staff have had to be deployed as members of FACT in the absence of nominees from National Societies, and ad hoc agreements reached to deploy former International Federation personnel. This challenge will be addressed through the capacity-building activities and trainings that are being rolled out. Regarding the pre-positioning of rapidly deployable shelter solutions, the lack of large-scale donor support for such an investment is a concern, and not only for the International Federation – UNHCR and leading shelter NGOs have also reported limited funding for stock procurement. Rapid post-disaster procurement to enable locally-determined solutions is also a challenge, and additional human resources capacity in this area is required. The wide range of shelter approaches pursued by the different National Societies, ranging from shelter relief through shelter kits and tents, to transitional shelter and shelter management, to permanent housing, also necessitates a similar wide range of supporting tools and guidelines.

Looking ahead: The measures being taken to increase shelter human resources capacity will enable the provision of timely and consistent support to emergency operations. In addition, a number of National Societies – for example the Canadian and Australian Red Cross Society – have made a commitment to build shelter capacity. A Shelter Technical Training is scheduled for March 2008, which will become a standard annual benchmark training for the International Federation. This training will provide a consistent understanding in shelter, appropriate to the International Federation, with sector-agreed terminology, standards and strategies, and will become the required accreditation for FACT Shelter Delegates. During 2008, revised specifications for lightweight emergency and all weather tents will be agreed between the International Federation, UNHCR and ICRC, as well as harmonized standards for other shelter non-food items. Initial analysis has also been undertaken on specifications for other shelter items that may be required to support locally-driven shelter construction, for example, metal roof sheeting and timber. This analysis will contribute to the development of global and regional procurement framework agreements for such items. Key sector-specific tools and guidance will be agreed in collaboration with interested National Societies, and disseminated both online and via a CD Rom.

Shelter cluster coordination and support

Expected result 4: The emergency shelter sector has the required in-country coordination and support from the International Federation in specific emergency operations.

Achievements: As co-chair of the Global Emergency Shelter Cluster Working Group, the International Federation has been working with cluster partners including UNHCR to advance the agreed preparedness activities. These activities include the development of an overall shelter cluster strategy, initial assessment guidelines, a performance management system for the shelter cluster, agreement on common standards, climatic guidelines, stock mobilization, surge capacity, training, shelter risk mapping and contingency planning, early recovery assessments and strategy guidelines, environmental impact mitigation guidelines and an information management strategy. To enable effective coordination and decision making by the field-level cluster, the International Federation has developed a shelter cluster coordination “toolkit” drawing upon experiences and tools developed by the International Federation in previous responses. This has been made available to all clusters, and has been used by other clusters and agencies in other responses. It is also being revised on an

ongoing basis to reflect the feedback from each cluster activation. Shelter cluster coordination training, developed by the Emergency Shelter Cluster and led by the International Federation and UNHCR, has been delivered in Geneva, Panama, Bangkok and Dakar for participants from the International Federation (delegation and National Societies), UNHCR and the NGO community. A shelter cluster technical advisors' training and a training of trainers have been piloted in Geneva. All Emergency Shelter Cluster training initiatives have been co-funded by the International Federation.

In 2007, the International Federation has deployed shelter coordination personnel to convene the shelter cluster in the Philippines, Mozambique, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Shelter sector service provisions have included coordination, technical assistance, information management and mapping. In keeping with the inter-agency philosophy behind the cluster approach, the International Federation has been proactively working to include other agencies within the shelter cluster coordination teams. In all responses, the International Federation has requested UN Habitat to take on the role of focal agency for recovery and longer-term housing. In the Philippines, the role of shelter technical advisor was taken on by a representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In Pakistan, Care UK provided a shelter cluster technical advisor with funding from the International Federation, and Islamic Relief undertook the role of shelter cluster liaison on behalf of the International Federation in one of the affected provinces. In Bangladesh, the shelter coordinator was provided by the Canadian Red Cross Society. Care UK, Acted and RedR Australia provided a technical advisor, information manager and replacement coordinator with funding from the International Federation. The International Federation has also initiated a standardized handover process of the shelter cluster coordination responsibilities with UN Habitat for the recovery phase, reflecting the commitments of the International Federation to convene the shelter cluster during the emergency phase. Independent reviews of the International Federation-led shelter cluster were commissioned following the handover.

Regional meetings, training events and the development and dissemination of an information package via email and online have been utilized to raise awareness within the International Federation of its commitment to the shelter sector and the humanitarian reform process. The Shelter Department and the Global Shelter Programme have supported these initiatives.

Challenges or Constraints: The demands on the International Federation as shelter cluster convener have been considerable at both the global level, regarding sector preparedness activities, and also at field level, in leading the cluster in the recent responses. Greater institutional support and engagement is required to raise awareness throughout the International Federation – Geneva secretariat, field offices and National Societies – as to the commitment of the International Federation to the shelter sector and the opportunities this presents for influencing this sector. The Shelter Department within the Geneva secretariat has been undertaking this role to date. However, through training and related awareness-raising activities in the field, there will be a greater engagement by other interested parties in meeting this commitment. A further challenge is the positioning of appropriate agencies to take over shelter coordination for the recovery phase. UN Habitat, who has taken on this role, is typically not operational, and has struggled to provide the required flexibility or resources. UNDP, the early recovery cluster leader, although an agency with greater resources, by contrast, does not necessarily have the specialist resources or the dedicated focus required.

Looking ahead: The International Federation is actively involved with global shelter cluster partners, in particular UNHCR, to develop an appropriate training strategy for 2008. Further regional trainings are envisioned, a training of trainers in March for shelter cluster coordinators provisionally scheduled for Nairobi in April, and for information managers in May. Global level preparedness activities will be extended to continue throughout 2008, subject to the agreement of no-cost extensions with UN cluster appeal donors and renewed financial support for the International Federation's Global Shelter Programme. A number of the products being developed will be tested, in particular the shelter cluster performance management system which is being led by the International Federation, who will be supporting field testing in February as part of the Bangladesh

cyclone response. The International Federation will also be leading an activity to appraise the capacity of the shelter cluster to meet the overall cluster contingency planning figures, and to inform a cluster resource mobilization strategy.

To ensure the required capacity for shelter coordination team deployment, the International Federation will seek to establish framework agreements with interested cluster partners to second personnel to International Federation-led teams, with cost coverage by the International Federation. This approach simplifies financial management and accountability for the International Federation, seconding agencies and donors, and enables rapid deployment which is critical in an emergency. The International Federation will also be promoting discussion with UN Habitat and UNDP to ensure more consistent and adequately resourced support for shelter recovery coordination.

Support for the shelter sector

Expected result 5: The global approach to, and provision of emergency shelter, has been advanced by a network of interested stakeholders.

Achievements: The International Federation has been actively engaged in supporting or participating in a range of global and regional shelter events and initiatives to promote greater networking within the shelter sector. This has included the UK Shelter Forum, convened by Oxfam GB and Care UK and hosted by Habitat for Humanity; a meeting in Geneva of interested shelter sector agency representatives and independents, convened by the Shelter Centre and hosted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM); the North American Shelter Group meeting, hosted by the American Red Cross in collaboration with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), InterAction and the Shelter Department of the International Federation; and the Inter-Agency Working Group in East Africa. As co-chair of the Emergency Shelter Cluster, the International Federation is using this forum, which includes a range of shelter agencies, to promote improved networking within the sector. Similarly, by providing contributory funding and leadership on a number of shelter sector initiatives, for example the inter-agency guidelines on the use of plastic sheeting and the use of timber in emergencies, the International Federation is promoting the benefits of greater collaboration between the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, UN agencies and NGOs. Engagement with the housing development sector has also been promoted. This has included, for example, participation in the Asia Pacific Housing Forum and involvement with the Shelter Innovation network initiated by the Netherlands Red Cross Society in conjunction with the Technical University in Eindhoven. Collaboration with the professional architectural and planning institutes in the UK regarding support for the involvement of local specialists in emergency response locations has been explored, as has involvement with leading engineering and materials research practices in the UK to promote informed use of traditional building technologies.

The International Federation also engaged with Aid + Trade and other commercial sector initiatives to establish clearer and more productive links between the shelter sector agencies and the manufacturers and suppliers. The aim is to influence the use of the financial, research and development resources of the commercial sector to better meet the requirements of the shelter sector agencies. The International Federation has also been approached by the Disaster Resource Network, an initiative of the World Economic Forum, to facilitate the potential humanitarian contributions of the major multinational construction companies. The International Federation has proposed a focus on the provision of locally based and experienced specialist human resources to support operational shelter agencies on request.

Challenges or Constraints: Through the Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies the International Federation is one of the leading providers of emergency shelter. However, the lack of a common understanding on shelter, or recognition of shelter as a core competency has inhibited the engagement by National Societies in current shelter networks. Regional initiatives, linked to recognized regional issues such as risk reduction or capacity building, provide an opportunity for National Societies to engage. In addition, the housing development sector does not engage

sufficiently with the relief sector, despite the increasing caseload of households lacking adequate shelter due to the increasing frequency of natural disasters. This limits the attention given to housing, land, property and policy, issues that could enhance the provision of adequate shelter after disaster.

Looking ahead: The International Federation will continue to promote and support inter-agency shelter sector initiatives that encourage networking and collaboration. Project peer reviews will provide opportunities to promote embryonic shelter networks and shelter trainings, and evolving inter-agency rosters will also provide thematic linkages between shelter agencies. The International Federation will also proactively engage with established networks engaged in shelter and related issues such as risk reduction, for example, the “Habitat At Risk” network in South and Central America, and the informal network of NGOs in India engaged in promoting the use of soil as a construction material. The International Federation will continue to participate in major global and regional shelter fora, including the UK, North American and Geneva shelter meetings in January, April and May respectively, and development sector initiatives including, for example the i-Rec network and gathering in New Zealand in April.

To inform the International Federation’s involvement in key sector initiatives, a number of collaborative projects will also be supported. These will include the commissioning of a scoping study on housing, land and property rights issues that impact on the provision of adequate shelter after disaster; the impact of climate change on vulnerable settlements, and the potential expectations on Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies regarding shelter and settlement activities; constructive engagement with the private sector regarding the provision of rapid material assistance to support shelter solutions in the aftermath of disaster; and the involvement of skilled, locally-based human resources in support of the humanitarian sector.

Working in partnership

The Global Shelter Programme is an initiative to enable the International Federation to define and deliver on its commitment to the shelter sector through its membership and sector agencies, academic and research institutions, and national and local governments, as appropriate. A number of interested National Societies have provided support ranging from funding, to the provision of staff on loan, to hosting and contributing to activities. These include the American, Australian, British, Canadian, Danish, German, Finnish, Netherlands, New Zealand, Spanish, and Swedish Red Cross Societies.

National Societies who have participated in the various shelter meetings that have been convened in different regions have identified their areas of interest within the shelter sector. For example innovation in materials and non-food items with the Netherlands Red Cross Society, and the development of rapidly deployable durable shelter solutions with the Spanish Red Cross Society. These thematic areas will be addressed collectively through appropriate collaboration and partnership,

Project-specific agreements have been established with a number of international NGOs and UN agencies, including Acted, CARE UK, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam, RedR Australia, RedR UK, Shelter Centre, Sphere and UNOCHA. A formal Letter of Understanding was agreed with UNHCR regarding the co-chairing of the Global Emergency Shelter Cluster by the International Federation and UNHCR. The International Federation also developed an operational partnership with UN Habitat within the cluster process to address longer-term housing and settlement issues. The International Federation is also working with UNHCR to develop common specifications on both lightweight and all weather tents. Collaborative initiatives have also been established with technical institutes as appropriate. In Mozambique, the International Federation has supported field-level training for volunteers and community members developed with local technical advisors and UN Habitat. The International Federation is also establishing a partnership with the Institute of Applied Sustainability to the Built Environment (ISAAC) in Lugano,

Switzerland, Practical Action and others. This will promote better understanding of owner-driven approaches to shelter provision through beneficiary-focused case studies, a global workshop and field-oriented tools.

Contributing to longer-term impact

The provision of adequate shelter as defined by agreed best practices within the sector will contribute to three of the four goals of the International Federation’s Global Agenda:

- Safe and adequate shelter reduces the vulnerabilities of the affected households, and hence reduces the impact of disasters;
- Appropriate shelter interventions should maximize local involvement to build local capacities to better respond to future disasters; and
- Appropriate shelter solutions should promote respect for diversity and human dignity, as well as reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion.

Appropriate shelter interventions should enable the involvement of women and other vulnerable groups in the design and implementation of shelter and settlement programmes. This aspect of shelter programming will inform all components within the Global Shelter Programme, from best practice and policy formation through training and preparedness to operational support, effective coordination and support for the shelter sector. The International Federation’s Shelter Department within the Geneva secretariat is taking the lead through the promotion of a gender-balanced team.

The Red Cross Code of Conduct and the Sphere Minimum Standards in Disaster Response provide internationally-acknowledged best practices in response programming that will inform the advancement of the Global Shelter Programme. The focal person for the Shelter, Settlements and Non-Food Items is a member of the International Federation’s Shelter Department, and Sphere remains a primary reference for International Federation shelter assessment and monitoring tools. As co-chair of the Emergency Shelter Cluster, the International Federation has promoted the Humanitarian Charter, the Red Cross Code of Conduct, the Sphere Common Standards and the Technical Standards as a primary reference for the proposed shelter cluster performance management system, to provide greater accountability and transparency to humanitarian shelter operations.

How we work	
All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering quality and accountable assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation’s website at http://www.ifrc.org	
The International Federation’s activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation’s mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".	Global Agenda Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters. • Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies. • Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability. • Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.
Contact information	
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