

Annual report

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Shelter

MAA00019

14 April 2009

This report covers the period 1 January to 31 December 2009.



More than three million people in the Philippines were affected by Typhoon Ketsana in September 2009. Hundreds died and thousands of houses were damaged. More than 410,000 people are staying in 526 evacuation centres or with friends. **IFRC**

In brief

Programme purpose: 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.

Programme(s) summary: During 2009, the department focused on capitalizing on the expertise and resources of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to meet the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) global shelter commitment. The provision of safe and adequate shelter solutions has been informed by the development of a community-based approach to safe shelter awareness-raising with field testing in Uganda and planned for Bangladesh; analysis of shelter solutions for high-risk countries in Central America; the promotion of flood-resistant housing typologies in West Africa; and further progress on standardized inter-agency rapid shelter relief items, including all weather tents, shelter kits and framed solutions. Ensuring appropriate technical capacity at the national and global level has been addressed through training in the use of shelter kits in the Caribbean and Central America prior to the hurricane season, global technical training for delegates from National Societies as part of regional or global response teams, as well as inter-agency training in the Middle East region for shelter coordinators.

To support the exchange of experiences and knowledge of shelter programming, workshops were held in Montenegro for the Europe region, Kyrgyzstan for Central Asia, the Philippines and Nairobi. Technical support to shelter operations was provided at the request of field offices, including the finalization of the response to the Baluchistan earthquake in Pakistan, the mudslides in Tajikistan, the housing programme in Haiti following the 2008 hurricane season, the

earthquakes in Indonesia (West Java and West Sumatra), the tsunami in Samoa, the floods in Burkina Faso, the typhoons that affected the Philippines and other countries in South East Asia, and the earthquake in El Salvador. As shelter cluster convener for natural disasters, the IFRC deployed shelter coordination teams six times in 2009 to the following locations below. It also continued with the coordination of shelter in Baluchistan, Pakistan, which started in 2008.

- Bangladesh Cyclone Aila.
- Indonesia West Java Earthquake.
- Burkina Faso Floods.
- Philippines Typhoons Ketsana and Parma.
- Indonesia West Sumatra Earthquakes.
- El Salvador Earthquakes.

Coordination support and technical assistance was also provided to Kyrgyzstan and Nepal, where the IFRC convened shelter sector/cluster contingency planning and preparedness activities. With external partners in support of the wider shelter sector, the IFRC collaborated on a number of inter-agency initiatives. These included a scoping study on the technical human resources capacity within the shelter sector; a review of the funding of the shelter sector; the co-hosting of a workshop on owner driven/people-centred post-disaster reconstruction; the development of tools and guidelines from this workshop; the co-sponsoring of the 2nd Asia Pacific Housing Forum; contributions to the development of guidelines on housing, land and property issues of migrants affected by the climate change; and the contributions and lead role to the revision of the Sphere standards in shelter, settlement and non-food items.

Financial situation: The total 2009 budget is CHF 3,627,884 (USD 3,495,100 or EUR 2,438,590), of which CHF 1,840,195 (51 per cent) covered during the reporting period (including opening balance). Overall expenditure during the reporting period was CHF 1,628,637 (45 per cent) of the budget, and 91 per cent of the funding received.

The significant underfunding of the global shelter programme in 2009, has necessitated the substantial scaling back or cancellation of planned activities. There is a significant risk that without additional funding for 2010, the IFRC may default on its shelter cluster commitment to external partners, as well as its membership services to National Societies. This should be seen in comparison with the 2008 programme which saw coverage at 98 per cent and expenditure on planned and budgeted activities at 92 per cent.

[Click here to go directly to the attached financial report.](#)

No. of people we have reached: The IFRC has reached out to 14 million beneficiaries through its disaster management programmes in the first half of 2009. Over 39 million people are directly or indirectly benefiting from secretariat-supported disaster response interventions during the reporting period. This plan specifically targets the strengthening of Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies through the shelter sector in the secretariat.

Our partners: Key Red Cross and Red Crescent partners have provided support ranging from funding to the provision of staff on loan and collaborating on activities. These include the Andorran, American, Australian, Belgian (Flanders), British, Canadian, Colombian, Danish, French, Jamaican, Mozambique, Netherlands, Norwegian, Spanish, Swedish and Swiss Red Cross Societies, the Qatar, and the Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent Society, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Project-specific agreements and collaborations have been or are being established with a number of UN agencies including UN Habitat, UNOCHA and UNHCR, international finance institutions including the World Bank, and international and national NGOs, research institutes and universities including Bath University UK, CARE UK, Catholic Relief Services, Cooperative Housing Foundation, Centre for Research and Application of Earth Architecture (CRATerre), Displacement Solutions, Habitat for Humanity, London South Bank

University, Oxfam GB, Oxford Brookes University (CENDEP), Practical Action, ProVention, RedR UK, RedR India, the Shelter Centre, and the Catholic University in Lima.

Context

The first half of 2009 saw a significant reduction in the number of major natural disasters compared with the same period in 2008, with only seven emergency appeals being launched and 172 notified events. Support for the meeting of shelter needs was therefore limited, including the response to the floods and mudslides in Tajikistan; the continuation of the provision of winterized shelter following the earthquake in Baluchistan, Pakistan; assistance to the households displaced by the conflict in Pakistan; and the unmet needs following cyclone Aila in Bangladesh.

The second half of 2009, on the other hand, was marked by a series of medium to large natural disasters: the floods in Burkina Faso and Senegal; earthquakes in West Java and West Sumatra in Indonesia; tsunami in Samoa; typhoons in the Philippines, Vietnam and Laos; and the earthquake in El Salvador. The shelter support to these operations was very significant and varied reflecting the different nature of the needs. In Burkina Faso, the displacement of an important number of people in an urban context caused many challenges that were met by using different shelter options. The Indonesian Red Cross Society strengthened its successful transitional shelter methodology developed in past operations with the support of a number of partner National Societies. Samoa showed the importance of the traditions and context in a shelter response. In the Philippines, the challenges around collective accommodation were stressed by a series of typhoons and floods, and The Philippines National Red Cross led again a successful shelter response.

In 2009, the reorganization of the IFRC's secretariat as part of the ongoing decentralization process, and the significant underfunding of the global shelter programme reflecting the reduction in global humanitarian financing, impacted the available capacity and resources to undertake planned activities and the support provided to National Societies.

Progress towards outcomes

Programme component 1 - Best practice and policy

Outcome

Sheltering preparedness, response and recovery activities of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies reduce shelter risks and vulnerabilities and use best practices informed by sheltering policy guidance.

Achievements

To review progress to date on the IFRC's shelter commitment, and to identify further opportunities for collaboration and mutual support. A meeting of the informal shelter reference group was hosted by the British Red Cross in London in March 2009. Participants included representatives from the American, British, Canadian, Danish, French, Netherlands, Qatar, Spanish, Swedish and Swiss Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, as well as from the shelter department at the secretariat in Geneva. It was agreed that Participating National Societies would contribute to the development of strategies for capacity-building and technical sheltering solutions with leadership provided by the secretariat.

A number of workshops were also held to explore regional or country-level approaches to shelter, existing capacities and expertise, and to identify additional technical or capacity-building needs. One such workshop was convened by the Europe and Central Asia zone in Montenegro in May for National Societies from Central and Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, including the Albanian, Armenian, Azerbaijan, Bulgarian, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatian, Georgian, Kosovo, Macedonian, Malta, Montenegro, Romanian, and Serbian Red Cross Societies, as well as the Russian speaking representatives from MDA (Israel). A further workshop was convened in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in May by the Federation regional representation for Central Asia for the National Societies from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In the Philippines, the National Society and the Federation country representation held a workshop on shelter operations and preparedness planning for National Society personnel from headquarters level and nine branches.

To address the issue of reducing shelter and settlement risks and vulnerabilities, a number of initiatives were undertaken, some initiated in 2008 and now nearing completion. In collaboration with the British Red Cross, a Participatory Approach to Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA) is being developed based on the successful similar tool developed by the IFRC's water and sanitation unit for hygiene promotion. The first phase of this programme, the development of a technical guide or manual, has been completed. The second phase, comprising field tests provisionally agreed with the National Societies in Uganda and Bangladesh, has started. The field test in Uganda has been successfully carried out with The Uganda Red Cross Society, and the tools have been improved accordingly. The final field test will be done in Bangladesh in 2010. The final phase, including the elaboration of community-level training tools, will be completed towards the end of 2010. In Central America, a study of shelter vulnerabilities in four hazard prone countries – Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua – was initiated in 2008. The aim of this study is to identify existing shelter vulnerabilities, capacities and shelter types, to inform post-disaster shelter assistance, and to guide future capacity building of the respective National Societies and shelter and settlement risk reduction initiatives. Similarly, a collaboration initiated in 2008 between the IFRC and the Catholic University in Lima to investigate simple cold climate shelter response solutions for use in high altitude locations has been completed. This will inform the ongoing development by the IFRC of shelter solutions for regional pre-positioning.

To promote greater understanding of shelter practices in different regions, the IFRC's web-based shelter library on FedNet is now routinely updated based on information provided by National Societies and zone offices. In addition to support documentary information, videos of select shelter activities being commissioned, the latest updates feature the owner-driven housing programme in Sri Lanka, the post-flooding shelter recovery programme in Uganda, and the post-cyclone safe shelter programme in the Philippines. These and other videos are regularly uploaded to the IFRC's YouTube shelter channel: www.ifrc.org/shelter-videos.

Constraints or Challenges

The lack of dedicated shelter personnel in the majority of zones and within National Societies remains a significant challenge to ensure shelter-related issues are systematically addressed. However, the ongoing shelter-specific trainings at the global, regional and country level (see below) are resulting in raised awareness, and an increasingly consistent understanding of the IFRC's shelter commitment and its range of approaches to sheltering. A further challenge to be met is the expectation from external actors including the United Nations system and non governmental agencies on the IFRC – National Societies and secretariat – to provide the leadership on shelter in accordance with the shelter commitment particularly at country level.

Programme component 2 - Capacity building

Outcome

The human resources capacity of the IFRC is strengthened; and used effectively to ensure adequate shelter disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

Achievements

The capacity-building focus of the global shelter programme has been to establish standardized shelter trainings at the global, regional and country level as appropriate; and to ensure that the shelter components of other institutional trainings are consistent with agreed Federation approaches to sheltering, as well as agreed terminology. In keeping with this strategy, the first of the twice-yearly global shelter technical trainings for 2009 was held in Barcelona hosted by the Spanish Red Cross, and jointly delivered by the IFRC's shelter department and the Australian Red Cross. A total of 21 shelter delegates participated, including representatives from the American, Austrian, Belgian (Flanders), Canadian, Colombian, Finnish, French, Mozambique, Netherlands and Spanish Red Cross Societies. The second global training was held in Doha, Qatar, hosted by the Qatar Red Crescent Society. It was delivered by the Australian Red Cross, and organized by the shelter department. A total of 18 participants from nine different National Societies and the secretariat attended the training. They came from the Australian, British, Finnish, French, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and Spanish Red Cross Societies, and from the Qatar and Syrian Red Crescent Societies.

At the regional level in the Americas, in preparation for the hurricane season, a training in Spanish in the use of Federation shelter kits was provided in Panama for regional intervention team personnel. This training was supported by the Spanish Red Cross through the provision of funding, training preparation and delivery. Participants included representatives from the National Societies from Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela; as well as the American Red Cross representatives based in Colombia and personnel from the IFRC's Pan-American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU). Similarly, through collaboration between the IFRC's regional office in the Caribbean, the Caribbean Disaster Management Network, the French Red Cross and the IFRC's shelter department, a training in the use of shelter kits and appropriate shelter solutions is being undertaken to strengthen the capacity and expertise of the Dominica, Grenada and Jamaica Red Cross Societies. This has been complemented by a refresher course in the management of communal shelters after a disaster, using agreed best practices for 10 National Societies in the Caribbean, also coordinated by the IFRC's regional office and the Caribbean Disaster Management Network.

Support for the shelter components of other trainings has included the Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT) training in June; the Relief Emergency Response Unit (ERU) trainings held by the Finnish, Benelux and Spanish Red Cross Societies in April, May and June respectively; the Europe and Central Asia Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) training held in Macedonia in April; the cash transfer training held by the American Red Cross in June; the Relief ERU training in Kuala Lumpur in October; and the field school training held in Nairobi in November.

The IFRC's intranet, FedNet, is used to maintain a regularly updated calendar of shelter trainings, the training modules themselves, and supporting resources.

Constraints or Challenges

In recognition of the IFRC's shelter commitment, a number of National Societies are now recruiting or identifying personnel with shelter backgrounds or with a specific shelter role. The

dedicated shelter trainings have been a valuable resource for such individuals. However, many National Societies do not have readily available funding to support their personnel in attending such trainings, and the underfunding of the global shelter programme in 2009 has constrained the financial assistance that can be provided to subsidize participation. As well as seeking opportunities for country level trainings to minimize participation costs and enable greater access to such trainings, the shelter department is also exploring online or distance-training methodologies.

A further constraint is the lack of appropriate training resources. The training strategy developed as part of the global shelter programme encourages National Societies to host global shelter technical trainings and to commit to translating the training materials into other languages used by the IFRC. In addition, National Societies whose personnel are trained and have the required expertise are being encouraged to provide select individuals as potential trainers. The Australian Red Cross has already supported this initiative.

Programme component 3 – Operational support

Outcome

The IFRC has the operational and technical support to provide an appropriate shelter response, whilst strengthening local capacities.

Achievements

In-country technical support was provided to shelter operations in Bangladesh (cyclone Aila), Haiti floods, Indonesia earthquakes (West Java and West Sumatra), the Philippines typhoons, Samoa tsunami, Vietnam typhoons, Burkina Faso floods, Senegal floods, El Salvador earthquakes and others with the support of the Spanish, Belgian (Flanders), Australian, Canadian, and The Netherlands Red Cross Societies. Technical assistance was also provided by the shelter department to develop and implement shelter activities in a number of other locations, including in Tajikistan, in response to the floods and mudslides; and in Pakistan, to consolidate the winterized shelter programme following the earthquake in Baluchistan. To promote greater consistency in the provision of post-disaster shelter assistance, the IFRC has continued to collaborate with interested shelter agencies to agree on common specifications for standard shelter solutions. The new all-weather family tent specifications developed in 2008 with ICRC and UNHCR have been ratified, and leading manufacturers are now undertaking the required testing to ensure compliance and to enable procurement of the new specification tents as part of the IFRC's global pre-positioning strategy.

The shelter kits, comprising tarpaulins, tools and fixings developed by the IFRC as a standard non-tent shelter solution for large-scale pre-positioning have been reviewed by a consultation group, including a number of interested National Societies and revised specifications endorsed. A standardized post-deployment review of the use of the shelter kits was developed and undertaken in Myanmar and Haiti. This has provided valuable feedback on the use of the kits, the items provided, the type of shelter solutions constructed and the impact on the reconstruction process and local livelihoods through such practical support for shelter recovery. Field guidelines for the use of shelter kits, in the form of a simple booklet with illustrations of best practices and safe shelter principles, have been developed and published with the support of the Spanish Red Cross and will be trialled in 2010. Alternative uses of the shelter kits and complementary items for deployment in particular contexts are being explored with interested National Societies including The Netherlands Red Cross. This includes a winterization kit for use in cold climates and framing options.

The launch of the Emergency Items Catalogue which includes this new all-weather family tent and the shelter kit makes their design and standard specifications more available for use in operations.

A more robust framed solution is also under development, with the Spanish Red Cross leading the design and testing of one approach, complemented by further review of the IFRC's transitional shelter solution used in Aceh and further developed by The Canadian Red Cross Society, and extensively used in Nias. In many contexts, local shelter solutions are preferred, but necessitate consideration of appropriate best practices. In recognition of this, the shelter department is collaborating with the West and Central Africa zone and the Centre for Research and Application of Earth Architecture (CRATerre) based in the University of Grenoble to promote flood-resistant earth technologies for house construction. This resulted from the experience of the flood response operations in 2007, and the preparedness and planning activities led by the zone in 2008. A case study has also been completed on the Spanish Red Cross progressive housing approach developed with the Salvadorean Red Cross Society which will inform IFRC's shelter strategies.

Agreement has been reached with a number of interested National Societies including the Canadian Red Cross Society and the British Red Cross to collaboratively develop Federation-wide guidelines for shelter and reconstruction programming based on agreed best practices. These will comprise complementary principles and supporting tools, with an overarching guide to inform decision making on the type of reconstruction approaches; and to provide separate guidelines on the different construction approaches, including self-help or owner-driven/people-centred reconstruction, assisted self-help, contractor-led, the reconstruction of public buildings, and construction project management. The Canadian Red Cross Society is completing a review of construction guidelines which will inform this process. In this line, the British Red Cross has supported an initiative led by the shelter department to develop guidelines on owner-driven or people-centred reconstruction based on the IFRC's large-scale Sri Lanka programme. These guidelines were prepared in parallel to the external evaluation of the Community Recovery and Reconstruction Partnership that was undertaken in 2009, and benefited from the results of this evaluation.

Constraints or Challenges

Extensive pre-positioning of shelter solutions has been undertaken including tents and shelter kits. Although information on the stock maintained by the IFRC through the regional logistics units is available to inform regional pre-positioning strategies, such information is not systematically available on the stock separately maintained by National Societies. This has been a major constraint to ensuring an overall Federation shelter pre-positioning and preparedness strategy. In addition, the donor community continues to underfund shelter stock pre-positioning, despite the lessons learned from large-scale emergencies which have highlighted the inevitable delay in the provision of emergency shelter when procurement, and in many cases, production, has taken place after a disaster. The scale of shelter needs after a disaster, and the requirement for modest, flexible assistance per household to a large number of households rather than more extensive and expensive pre-fabricated shelter solutions to a few affected households remains the major challenge for the shelter sector. The IFRC continues to explore open, flexible solutions based on locally available materials, and the mobilization of local economy and material suppliers, rather than shelter product providers.

Programme component 4 – Coordination

Outcome

The emergency shelter sector has the appropriate global and in-country coordination and support from the IFRC.

Achievements

As global shelter cluster co-lead, the IFRC has led the reorganization of the global cluster operating model to reflect the need to focus on issues identified by the field and the constraints on operational agencies in being able to consistently engage and contribute to global cluster activities. In addition to quarterly meetings to review sector preparedness and issues arising from the field, the sector issues will be addressed by the cluster through agreed thematic reference groups which enable cluster partners to engage on, and contribute to, activities subject to their resources, availability and geographical location. Each thematic reference group is co-led by cluster agencies to provide an appropriate level of accountability and direction. The thematic issues identified include training, information management, coordination of the transition phase, technical and resource mobilization issues, contingency planning and preparedness, engagement with the built environment professionals, and environmental impact. Issues addressed in 2009 at the global level have included the consolidation and dissemination of the training modules developed by the cluster, informing the revision of the Sphere standards on shelter, settlement and non food items, protection, the sector preparedness through the tracking of stock prepositioning, dialogue with donors on mainstreaming and funding of clusters, and contribution to inter-agency guidelines and operational guidance notes. Preparedness activities initiated in 2007 that were finally completed in 2009, include guidelines on selecting shelter non-food items and a catalogue of shelter solutions to inform field programming. The IFRC also funded and hosted an inter-agency training in cluster coordination in Amman with the support of the Middle East and North Africa zone. The 30 participants included representatives from UNHCR, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), CARE, IOM, Habitat for Humanity, UN Habitat, Mercy Corps and the Shelter Centre, as well National Society Red Cross and Red Crescent participants from Andorra, Canada, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Sweden and Syria. Distance learning materials have been prepared for this type of training in collaboration with the Spanish Red Cross, so that the coordination trainings that will take place in 2010 will already incorporate a distance learning component previous to the onsite workshop.

At the country level, preparedness activities have focussed on establishing an appropriate methodology for National Societies to coordinate shelter sector contingency planning with the support of the IFRC in accordance with the shelter commitment. A simple booklet containing frequently asked questions on the IFRC's shelter cluster commitment has been developed and disseminated in five languages, and a shelter cluster contingency planning checklist developed with reference to the IASC contingency planning guidelines. A short video explaining the cluster approach has been developed in four languages. Technical assistance has been provided to the National Societies in Nepal, the Philippines and Kyrgyzstan to support the establishment and structuring of the ongoing cluster-based preparedness process. The IFRC has also actively supported UN OCHA in delivering humanitarian action trainings in Almaty for the Central Asia region, in Panama for the Americas and in Cairo for the Middle East and North Africa region. Participants in these trainings have included National Society disaster managers and zonal heads, deputy heads and disaster management coordinators, as well as representatives from UN agencies, international non governmental organizations and UN resident coordinators.

To meet the need for additional coordination resources and support, the IFRC has deployed shelter coordination teams six times in 2009 to the following locations below. It also continued with the coordination in Baluchistan, Pakistan, which started in 2008.

- Bangladesh Cyclone Aila.
- Indonesia West Java Earthquake.
- Burkina Faso Floods.
- Philippines Typhoons Ketsana and Parma.
- Indonesia West Sumatra Earthquakes.
- El Salvador Earthquakes.

A total of 26 people dedicated to coordination were deployed as part of these six different teams. The following National Societies and cluster partners provided personnel and support to these deployments: Netherlands, Canadian, American, Spanish, Australian, Andorran, British, and French Red Cross Societies; UNHABITAT; Oxfam GB; CARE UK; and DFID. It is worth noting the excellent support received by the IFRC from all these partners that enabled it to meet the unprecedented challenge of deploying coordination teams to four different locations at the same time.

In 2009, the IASC decided that the coordination of the country-level clusters should be appealed for at the country level. Thus, the IFRC is now appealing for funds for this role by a separate project associated to the emergency appeals. National Societies and donors willing to contribute to this purpose must earmark the funds for inter-agency shelter coordination. The global shelter programme will provide funding for coordination at the country level in those emergencies where no appeal is launched, or where the project for coordination is not fully covered.

In keeping with its commitment to review and report on its shelter cluster coordination role, the IFRC commissions independent reviews of the deployment of shelter coordination teams. In addition, in 2009, an independent review of the impact of the IFRC's shelter cluster commitment to date was undertaken.

Constraints or Challenges

Misperceptions and misunderstandings regarding humanitarian reform and the cluster approach continue to be the major challenge to the IFRC in meeting its shelter coordination commitment. Despite partnership being the foundation for the humanitarian reform process according to UN OCHA, many UN agencies particularly at the country level have not sufficiently engaged on understanding their partners, and adjusting working practices accordingly. A further problem has been the focus within the UN system on countries with humanitarian coordinators, typically those countries experiencing conflicts or instability. However, the IFRC has responsibility for coordinating the response to natural disasters which entails a focus on countries with resident coordinators.

Within the secretariat, the organizational restructuring has limited the opportunities and resources for the required regional and country-level awareness raising within National Societies and key partners. In addition, the restructuring of the secretariat in Geneva postponed the recruitment of the Geneva-based staff dedicated to supporting the IFRC's cluster commitment. Funding for the IFRC's cluster coordination role also remains a major issue. Although the IFRC has mainstreamed its coordination responsibilities as requested by the donors, including incorporating its financial requirements within its global shelter programme, in 2009, in particular the financial resources, are limited to thematic funding provided to the IFRC and committed internally to inter-agency activities. No cluster-specific funding has been separately provided by the donor community, and without further funding in 2010 and beyond, the IFRC will not be able to provide a coordination role at the global or country level.

Programme component 5 – Sector support and networking

Outcome

The global approach to, and provision of, emergency shelter has been advanced through collaborative sector initiatives and the networking of interested stakeholders.

Achievements

A key focus of sector support activities in 2009 for the IFRC has been in promoting greater engagement between the humanitarian shelter and housing development sectors. In March, in

collaboration with the NGO Practical Action and London South Bank University, the IFRC convened a workshop on owner-driven or people centred housing with shelter practitioners and housing development specialists. The event drew upon a wide range of case studies from different countries commissioned for the event, with supporting working sessions to identify advocacy strategies and initial work to develop operational tools for practitioners. Capitalizing on this event, the IFRC also participated in the development and publication of case studies of people-centred reconstruction and a toolkit for practitioners on people-centred reconstruction, both initiatives in collaboration with Practical Action and London South Bank University. Similarly, the IFRC contributed to the handbook on housing reconstruction being developed by the World Bank for the use of public officials and World Bank personnel. In these lines, in September, the IFRC co-sponsored the Asia Pacific Housing Forum in Manila organized by Habitat for Humanity, and led the conference track dedicated to the theme of rethinking emergencies. Participants included government ministers from the region, public and private sector housing officials and representatives, housing and shelter agencies, finance institutions and practitioners. To inform the IFRC's shelter and reconstruction activities and partners, a checklist on housing land and property issues is being developed in collaboration with Displacement Solutions along with complementary training. These initiatives resulted from the scoping study on this theme that was undertaken in 2008 by Displacement Solutions, on behalf of the IFRC, including a number of field visits to discuss with National Societies and regional and country representations. Guidelines on housing, land and property issues of migrants affected by climate change are also being prepared in collaboration with Displacement Solutions and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ).

A further key area of support by the IFRC for the wider shelter sector has been the resourcing of the shelter sector. A scoping study on human resources capacity was jointly undertaken with RedR UK in 2008, and the results and recommendations shared with shelter sector agencies in February 2009. A similar collaboration with Care addressed the issue of funding for shelter sector activities, including operational shelter response, support for institutional capacity and support for ongoing research and development. This study was launched in 2008, and was finalized in mid-2009.

To complement its leadership commitment to the shelter sector, the IFRC is acting as the focal point for the revision of the shelter, settlements and non food items chapter of the Sphere handbook of minimum standards in disaster response. Feedback sessions were incorporated into internal shelter workshops and training, and inter-agency sessions convened, capitalizing on Federation resources as contributions in kind where possible. A review of the current Sphere standards was included in the shelter technical training in Barcelona in March 2009, and during the regional shelter workshop held in Montenegro. Feedback was also solicited from shelter agencies participating in the global shelter cluster meeting in April facilitated by the IFRC, and those attending the Asia Pacific regional cluster meeting held in Bangkok in November 2009. Contributions were made to the best practice guidance being developed by the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) and independent studies by the Humanitarian Outcomes and others. The IFRC continues to engage with the private sector and professional institutes and academia to inform the provision of timely and adequate shelter, to promote best practice on shelter, and provide the required trained and appropriate human resources. Activities include ongoing collaboration with the Disaster Resource Network of the World Economic Forum; liaisons with professional institutes including the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors; and initiatives with Oxford Brookes University in the UK on architectural education; and Bath University in the UK and the Catholic University in Lima, Peru on appropriate material and technological solutions.

Constraints or Challenges

The shelter sector is poorly defined, and agencies and expertise fragmented between humanitarian shelter, housing development, professional development and association, and the private sector. The caseload of households requiring safe, adequate and durable shelter

solutions increases extensively each year as a result of natural disasters, yet the housing development sector tends to focus on the more recognizable caseload of slum dwellers and other established groupings with housing needs. The challenge for the IFRC with its leadership commitment to the shelter sector is in promoting recognition of the common needs of households lacking adequate shelter and the shared responsibility of housing sector agencies – humanitarian and developmental – in meeting these needs.

Working in partnership

Support for the IFRC's shelter commitment from interested National Societies has been promoted through the framework of the global shelter programme. Reflecting internal capacities, expertise or geographical presence, the establishment of informal thematic interest groupings of National Societies is being coordinated by the shelter department within the secretariat in Geneva. Where possible, particular National Societies are being encouraged to lead or co-lead on specific shelter issues. A number of interested National Societies have provided support ranging from funding, to the provision of staff on loan, to leading or contributing to activities. These include the Andorran, American, Australian, Belgian (Flanders), British, Canadian, Colombian, Danish, French, Jamaican, Mozambique, Netherlands, Norwegian, Spanish, Swedish and Swiss Red Cross Societies, the Qatar, and Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent Societies, as well as ICRC.

Collaborations reflect different interests. For example, the British Red Cross is co-funding and advising on the development of community-based safe shelter awareness tools, reflecting their interest in risk reduction. The French Red Cross has been actively engaged in shelter programming in the Caribbean, and hence is contributing to the technical oversight and project management of the shelter kit training with National Societies, coordinated by the IFRC's regional office. The Canadian Red Cross Society has made a strategic commitment to shelter, and is supporting the development of sector specific guidelines and policy, as well as the shelter coordination role. The Qatar Red Crescent Society has provided a focus for shelter activities in the region, has offered to host a shelter reference centre, and has hosted the 4th edition of the shelter technical training. The Netherlands Red Cross has been supporting shelter innovation, is funding a regional shelter delegate within the Asia Pacific zone, and has been working with the shelter department to develop new operating modalities to provide appropriate human resource capacity through maximizing available financial resources. The American Red Cross has established an internal shelter reference group to draw upon domestic shelter expertise, particularly in mass care, to inform wider Federation shelter activities. The Spanish Red Cross has contributed staff on loan, and reflecting its interest in technical issues, is leading the development of framed shelter solutions. The Colombian Red Cross Society has committed to support a range of initiatives including guidance and training on collective shelter, revised standards, and coordination on shelter issues in the Americas. The Mozambique Red Cross Society and the Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan are leading country shelter clusters on behalf of the IFRC to inform the development of appropriate operating models and the required resources.

Project-specific agreements have been established with a number of UN agencies including UNHCR, UNOCHA and UN Habitat, and international and national NGOs and initiatives including Bath University UK, CARE UK, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Cooperative Housing Foundation, CRATerre, Displacement Solutions, Habitat for Humanity, London South Bank University, Oxfam GB, Oxford Brookes University (CENDEP), Practical Action, ProVention, RedR UK, RedR India, Shelter Centre, and the Catholic University in Lima. The IFRC continues to partner with UNHCR as co-chair of the global shelter cluster on the basis of a formal letter of understanding. To address the need for the coordination of shelter recovery activities following the emergency phase, the IFRC continues to develop a partnership with UN Habitat to address longer-term housing and settlement issues. Collaboration continues with UNHCR and ICRC on additional winterization and lightweight shelter solutions to complement the tent specifications

developed in 2008. The IFRC is expanding its engagement with the housing development sector to address the gap between humanitarian shelter and the wider housing sector, in recognition that the issue of adequate shelter for vulnerable communities requires a common approach; and continuity of application in preparing for, responding to and recovering from disasters.

Contributing to longer-term impact

As part of the systematization of the IFRC's approach to shelter, business processes are being introduced which include the required review, monitoring and accountability mechanisms. The group of interested National Societies meeting to review progress on the International Federation's shelter commitment has been formalized as the Shelter Reference Group. Thematic issues within the shelter commitment are being addressed by self-selecting groups of National Societies, coordinated by the secretariat, to promote mutual accountability and the pooling of resources where required. The shelter department is actively supporting senior management in developing the required programme quality assurance and risk management mechanisms, using the full technical resources of the secretariat. These mechanisms have not yet been adequately reflected to date in the decentralization process. Technical guidelines, checklists and complementary training have been, and are being developed to support national and regional level programme management. The regional and national shelter workshops, and the supporting database of best practices, also encourage the sharing of lessons learned and knowledge management. Standardized monitoring tools have been developed, including the shelter kit survey, a beneficiary satisfaction survey, and a replicable methodology for undertaking longitudinal economic impact studies of shelter programmes.

In accordance with its shelter cluster lead role, the IFRC has developed, and is utilizing a performance management system to appraise the coordination service and the impact of the cluster during an emergency. Independent reviews of each deployment of a Federation shelter coordination team are commissioned and publicly shared. Recommendations are appraised through a standardized global consultation process and an annual workshop involving shelter coordination team personnel and cluster advisors. At the global level, the IFRC has established thematic reference groups co-led by cluster partners to promote greater ownership of, and accountability for, global preparedness activities.

Gender is a major issue within the shelter and reconstruction sectors, with a significant imbalance between those who comprise the majority within the professional sectors and decision-makers on the design and construction, and those who oversee and manage the use of dwellings. Through the global shelter programme, the shelter department has been actively contributing to the IASC's promotion of e-learning on gender equality, and in collaboration with the principles and values department is initiating work on gender issues within shelter programming to inform the operational shelter activities of the IFRC and the wider shelter cluster.

In keeping with the commitment of the IFRC to support the wider shelter sector, the global shelter programme has actively contributed to a range of sector initiatives to promote or establish guidelines, principles and best practices. These include the catalogue of shelter projects produced in collaboration with UN Habitat and UNHCR, guidelines on the selection of shelter non-food items developed with the Shelter Centre, CARE, NRC and UNHCR, and the current role of the head of the shelter department as focal point for the revision of the Sphere standards in shelter, settlement and non-food items.

Looking ahead

Further regional shelter workshops with National Societies are planned for 2010. The outputs from the completed studies will be disseminated, and PASSA-field tested, and a complementary

community level training developed. The development of technical safe shelter solutions, drawing upon previous programming, is planned for Jamaica, to be led by the French Red Cross in collaboration with the National Society and with the support of the global shelter programme. Collaboration with The Netherlands Red Cross on an overarching strategy on shelter and settlement risk reduction, including engagement is also planned. To support shelter activities in the Middle East and North Africa zone, discussions are underway with the zone office and the Qatar Red Crescent Society for the National Society to host a shelter reference centre in Doha. The Luxembourg Red Cross have also expressed interest in hosting a shelter training and technical resource subject to further discussion coordinated by The Netherlands Red Cross.

A number of trainings are planned for 2010, including the regular global shelter technical trainings. The delivery of these trainings is being taken by Australian Red Cross for the Asia Pacific zone. Other National Societies are identified for other zones and work is being done to empower them to deliver these trainings. To enable greater accessibility to trainings and capacity-building resources, the shelter department is collaborating with a number of universities with appropriate expertise to establish standard Federation shelter technical trainings online. Subject to available resources, trainings in the use of Federation shelter kits will be provided. A number of National Societies have developed different trainings in shelter management, and these trainings will be reviewed, consolidated, and made available to other interested National Societies according to need. Shelter programme management remains a key area that needs to be addressed, and a training module to be included in standard technical trainings will be developed to complement proposed guidelines.

The completed shelter kit guidelines will be disseminated to complement the extensive training programme, and a winterization kit and complementary framing kit developed. Testing of framed shelter solutions will be done in 2010, and this approach will be further developed. The generic guidelines for owner-driven or people-centred reconstruction will be complemented with training and tools, such as financial guidelines and database. Reconstruction decision-making guidelines will be developed. Flood-resistant earth construction technologies, complementary training and awareness raising will be developed.

The scheduled global shelter cluster meetings will be convened twice by the IFRC in 2010. The IFRC will also actively co-lead the global shelter cluster thematic reference groups for which it has responsibility, namely training, information management and technical and resource mobilization. The IFRC will host its annual global workshop for shelter coordination team personnel to review operating methodologies, tools and key issues arising from recent operations. To ensure appropriately trained and resourced coordination team personnel, the IFRC will be developing its own dedicated training module for its own personnel and personnel from partner agencies who participate in Federation-led shelter coordination teams. This will be based on the inter-agency coordination trainings developed and delivered to date. It will be complemented by an online training package to enable the identification of appropriate candidates. The IFRC's shelter coordination tool kit will be further revised, along with the further systematization of established procedures and practices. The organization will also launch a dedicated shelter cluster web site to complement the evolving inter-agency web site being introduced by UNOCHA. The recommendations of the review of the IFRC's shelter cluster commitment will be followed up as appropriate.

The IFRC will participate in the 5th edition of the World Urban Forum organized by UNHABITAT in March in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Among other issues, the IFRC will facilitate the networking event titled "Linking humanitarian shelter and housing development in disasters".

How we work

The IFRC's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the IFRC's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- 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.

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