

Review of the Baluchistan Earthquake Response 2008-2009

IFRC-led Emergency Shelter Cluster

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Executive Summary

The 2008 Baluchistan Earthquake Response IFRC led Emergency Shelter Cluster secured a coordinated response addressing all essential emergency shelter needs between 4 November 2008 and 27 January 2009. There were challenges along the way and the hand-over was marred by misunderstandings. But from a delivery perspective, the 2008 Baluchistan ESC delivered a coordinated response which met needs on the ground.

The 2008 Baluchistan Emergency Shelter Cluster was faced with a major challenge right from the start; pending Movement deliberations, the cluster was unable to convene. Precious time was lost for the IFRC in taking up the coordination role for the second time in Pakistan. This hampered an otherwise innovative approach to a sensitive context. Efforts to draw upon recent experience from the 2007 flood ESC had shaped the approach to convening the ESC in late 2008. Acknowledging the ambiguous stance of the government toward internationally coordinated response, the ESC established its presence only at province level. Staffing, coordination and information management was designed to reflect high capacity but low profile with a view to supporting rather than superceding central stakeholders in the earthquake response. Important new initiatives regarding staff constellation and management were established during the 2008 Baluchistan ESC that can be drawn upon in future cluster activation.

There are still serious misunderstandings surrounding the two very different roles of the IFRC; as coordinator on behalf of the humanitarian community as a whole and as an operational actor. Again in this otherwise carefully orchestrated cluster, misunderstandings caused considerable strain within the Movement.

With due consideration of these complications important achievements are evident from this response and it is in this light that the following recommendations are made.

Key recommendations

1. IFRC should seek to clarify the Movement stance on IFRC's role as cluster convener. The common understanding should be explicitly formulated in order to minimize the potential for dissonance in communication and delays in establishing the role of Movement partners, here especially IFRC as ESC cluster convener.
2. IFRC should make use of local structures and support local disaster management efforts through its coordinating and information management role.
3. IFRC should seek an agreement with PRCS for future situations where the ESC is activated and IFRC called upon as convener. The agreement would state clearly the IFRC ESC's independent and purely coordinating role on behalf of the humanitarian community, the non-operational nature of the ESC, the non-directional role of the ESC.
4. IFRC should seek ways and means to delegate funding assessments to non-cluster based funding committees, possibly along the lines of country based common humanitarian/emergency funds.
5. IFRC should seek to design cluster staff constellation with a view to the specific context, as was done in this case. Lessons from earlier cluster activations should be brought to bear, as was the case in the Baluchistan Earthquake of 2008. IFRC should seek to maintain a flexible human resource policy throughout the life span of the cluster.
6. IFRC should seek to recruit and train local or regional coordinator and information management candidates. Training and mentoring programmes should reflect the specific liaison qualities that locally and regionally recruited staff members bring to the cluster work. These include a.o. interaction with national RC societies, regional PNS'es, and national governments.
7. IFRC should seek flexible coordination set-ups that correspond to the context, as has been the approach in the 2008 Baluchistan ESC.
IFRC should seek, where due respect for humanitarian principles allow, to seek co-chairing and delegating coordination tasks where this is supportive to existing structures.
IFRC should pursue the coordination principle followed in Pakistan, i.e. coordination at several levels and using context and actor-specific methods. It should recognize that this is a time-consuming, human resource demanding approach and one that requires context-conversant staff.

IFRC should develop TORs relevant for new and emerging staff, such as regional or local coordinators.

8. IFRC should consider making generic shelter strategy for regional cold-weather emergencies. The 2008 Baluchistan ESC Shelter Strategy could be a point of departure, but would need adjustment in collaboration with global cluster members.

IFRC should consider actively chairing standing emergency shelter technical working group in anticipation of future cold-weather emergencies.

9. IFRC should to the extent possible, and where humanitarian principles allow, use existing data collection entities, strengthening existing local structures, as it was done in the 2008 Baluchistan ESC.

IFRC should continue the use of web-based information sharing, combined with audience specific information dissemination.

10. IFRC should seek mapping capacity as part of the information management package. In lieu of developing its own mapping capacity, IFRC should seek to secure clear, standardized agreement with UNHabitat or other relevant organization for the provision of mapping services at clearly specified intervals and under clearly specified conditions.

11. IFRC should seek to continue transition strategies where options such as secondment of coordination staff is pursued in future operations.

IFRC should seek to standardize hand-over procedures including timeframe, hard- and soft-ware deliverables, and formal documentation.

Introduction

A review of the 2008 Baluchistan Emergency Shelter Cluster response was planned shortly after the conclusion of the emergency phase in early February 2009, but security developments in Pakistan hindered its execution. The review finally took place with a visit to Islamabad between 15 and 21 August where relevant stakeholders were interviewed. Subsequently a

number of follow up interviews were undertaken. A list of interviewees is to be found in Annex II. Unfortunately the security situation did not allow for travel to the affected areas in Baluchistan and a major draw-back of the present review is the absence of the voice and opinions of beneficiaries.

The present review covers the IFRC led Emergency Shelter Cluster and thus does not consider operational aspects relating to the response, merely the coordination aspects of the shelter response. ToRs for the present review can be found in Annex III.

Background

On the morning of 29 October 2008, at 4:09 a.m, an earthquake hit Pakistan's Baluchistan province to the magnitude of 5,2 on the Richter scale. A second tremor hit an hour later, at 5:15, with a magnitude of 6,4. The epicenter of the tremors was 80 km northeast of the provincial capital of Quetta and 25 km east of Ziarat district center. The three worst hit districts were Ziarat, Pishin and Harnai districts. These three districts continued to experience upward of 50 after shocks in the following weeks.

The first response to the earthquake was initiated by local organisations, including Pakistan Red Crescent Society, who was already functioning in the three worst hit districts. Tents, food, NFIs such as blankets and jerry cans were distributed among the 70,000 affected persons in the three districts. While the immediate distribution did meet most visible and immediate needs, district and provincial level government did express that a coordinated, international response would be relevant. The national authorities, with the newly established National Disaster Management Agency in the lead, were not immediately of a mind that international assistance would be necessary, but did not on the other hand oppose any assistance that might be forthcoming. It was, however, clearly indicated that the national set-up was in place to lead disaster response.

Cluster activation.

At the outset, the Government of Pakistan (GOP), which had established the national Disaster Management Agency in the wake of the 2005 earthquake, did not wish to have a full-fledged

activation of clusters which would imply central level coordination. International response was to be coordinated by the NDMA and would not necessarily call for an internationally coordinated response. However, at the provincial level cluster coordination was called for – especially as regarded the emergency shelter component.

The international humanitarian community had responded to the 2005 earthquake and the 2007 floods and was thus ready to act on HC's call for activation of clusters, most of which were active already. Food (led by WFP), Health (led by WHO), WASH (led by UNICEF), Shelter, Logistics (led by WFP) and Protection (led by UNHCR) and Education (led by UNICEF) were identified as relevant clusters.

It is clear that earlier lessons (2005 and 2007 floods) regarding clear communication surrounding the activation of clusters had been drawn upon when considering ways and means to activate the ESC. The evidenced sensitivity to the context, as witnessed by staffing considerations, was instrumental in establishing a set-up that would facilitate a collaborative atmosphere with the lead national authorities.

The need to coordinate appeals was taken on by OCHA in the first few days of the response. The subsequent division of labor between central, provincial and district level coordination came to follow this pattern; OCHA coordinated at central level on behalf of ESC with respect to donor-communication, inter-cluster coordination and to a substantial degree with the NDMA.

While a call for cluster activation did come as soon as it became clear that international response would be needed, the IFRC did not convene the Emergency Shelter Cluster before 4 November, a week after the earthquake hit.

The IFRC had indicated its readiness and willingness to step up as convener at the outset – as witnessed by the early identification of designated cluster staff. However, questions arose as to the nature of the situation on the ground; according to the Agreement on the Organization of the International Activities of the Components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movements, commonly known as the Seville agreement, ICRC would be lead agency in relation to the immediate effects of natural disasters in situations of armed conflict or internal strife. The situation in Pakistan raised questions about how to define a situation where some areas of a country could be claimed to be under conflict – and furthermore, how the situation

in Baluchistan province and more precisely the districts of Ziarat, Pishin and Harnai ought to be labeled.

One interpretation of the situation was that since the government of Pakistan had ongoing campaigns against insurgents in western parts of the country, the situation as a whole would indicate that ICRC should maintain lead agency role. If ICRC was the designated Movement lead, this would imply that IFRC would not be in a position to act as ESC cluster convener. Another interpretation stressed the absence of conflict in the province in question, arguing for the lead role of IFRC in responding to the immediate effects of the earthquake. The option of having the national society, PRCS, be the lead agency, was never discussed, although this is an option under the Seville agreement.

While the issue regarding application of the Seville agreement in the context of Pakistan was being debated within the Movement, the international response was in need of a coordinator for emergency shelter. During this time OCHA co-led the ESC meetings with the national, provincial and district level disaster management agencies and ensured that coordination among the agencies and organizations was initiated. The IFRC designated cluster staff were able to attend these initial coordination meetings as observers, but were restrained from participating in the cluster.

During this period, OCHA pursued various avenues for securing a convener for the shelter cluster. In the earthquake hit area there was a refugee presence and in accordance with IASC agreements, UNHCR was approached about whether it would be ready to take on the cluster convener role. UNHCR declined as their resources were already stretched with refugee operations, additional on-going and emerging IDP situations.

The lead question within the Movement was not resolved in any clearly formulated manner. However, one form of settlement of the issue did come about as ICRC and IFRC each launched their own appeal, both including shelter components. It is worth noting that once the cluster was established and the operations underway successful separation of coordination and operations was achieved to the satisfaction of IFRC and ICRC actors.

External actors are hard put to appreciate the intricacies of Movement politics and division of labor that would delay decision making regarding lead roles in a given emergency. In

disaster prone countries like Pakistan that are further characterized with areas of localized conflict, it would be recommended that an initial understanding should be sought within the Movement indicating current interpretation of the Seville agreement. In respect of the current IDP situation, such an agreement has been formulated.

Recommendation:

For future sudden on-set natural disasters, it would ease the process if the Movement means of determining the lead-issue was formulated explicitly. The common understanding should be as final as possible in order to minimize the potential for dissonance in communication and delays in establishing the role of Movement partners, here especially IFRC as ESC cluster convener.

Planning.

The army, local government and organisations present locally began relief work immediately. Food, NFIs and health care was distributed within the first few days of the earthquake, making use of existing stock. The earthquake hit in the mountains of Western Pakistan at the time of year when winter was setting in with the expectation of below-zero degrees and the possibility of snow fall. It quickly became clear that there was a substantial gap in the provision non-tent, winterized shelter.

The initial assessments concluded that as a result of the quakes some 70,000 to 100,000 persons were in need of winterized shelter assistance.

Based on 1998 census the army conducted a village-by-village assessment of damages to houses, categorizing housing according to degree of damage. This assessment became the basis on which planning was made within the Emergency Shelter Cluster.

In addition to the army assessment, organizations conducted their own assessments and a Multi-Cluster Rapid Assessment was conducted. The appeals were based primarily on the multi-cluster rapid assessments and the agencies own assessments. The results of the various assessments varied due mainly to the differing methods and categorizations used.

The assessments varied most in relation to the number of houses damaged or destroyed; thus, the National Disaster Management Agency identified 10,000 houses damaged or destroyed, while the multi-cluster assessment included 3,500 destroyed houses and 4,000 damaged houses.

The difference was reportedly due to the level of damage that would qualify as rendering houses structurally unsafe – where the larger number included cracks in walls or roofs which might not be included in the conservative number. Where the NDMA assessment concerned damaged and destroyed houses, the multi-cluster assessment also looked at the numbers of affected people. At mid November, the earthquake had left 166 dead, 357 injured and 70,000 people affected.

The use of army data as a basis, supplemented by agencies' own follow-up assessments resulted in a relatively thorough amount of data on damage and vulnerability. Consolidating data proved time-consuming, but the planning process was enhanced greatly and the usefulness to local authorities continued to be expressed.

Collaborating with existing structures and supporting with consolidation and analysis is not only cost-effective but is sensitive to the primary role of the affected government.

In the course of planning, the PDMA made extensive use of the coordinating function of the ESC. The ESC was referred to as the main source of information about what the participating organisations were planning to distribute and where. In general, the government expressed satisfaction with the support given to the planning process from the ESC.

The very legitimate wish by the government to have a clear picture of the expected assistance and the role of the cluster lead agency did, however, lead to unfortunate misunderstanding.

In reporting the planned levels of support to the NDMA, the ESC coordination staff included all known plans, both those of already confirmed pledges and the planned appeals. This included the plans of the IFRC to launch an appeal for approx. 4,000 shelter units. This number was taken to be a pledge on behalf of the IFRC rather than a planning figure. The mistaken pledge took on a life of its own generating heated discussions, accusations and unfortunate acrimonious exchanges, involving both NDMA, OCHA, IFRC and PRCS.

In the end, the IFRC appeal was met and the planned shelter units were distributed. But this development exemplifies the precarious role of the cluster convener where the agency is also active in the relief operation. Despite all efforts to explain and clarify the role of the cluster coordinator as separate and independent of the operational agency, misunderstandings continue to occur.

It is difficult to identify a way in which the IFRC cluster leadership could have made their separate identity more clear. As an exceptional safeguard it may be relevant to bring in the national Red Crescent Society in question to planning exercises and especially when reporting to the governmental planning authority. Aside from clarifying the coordinating role of IFRC as cluster convener to national authorities it would serve to place the Movement operations in perspective.

PRCS management had expressed some reservations about the role of the ESC coordination. In the context of Pakistan, IFRC does not have independent legal identity from PRCS. While not an issue as such, the IFRC country delegation is structurally in place to support PRCS and their relations with PNS'es. However, when IFRC acts as cluster convener, the cluster is not in the same position as the IFRC country delegation; where there are reporting and coordinating mechanisms in place between IFRC country delegation, PRCS and Participating National Societies (PNS'es), the cluster acts more independently and in principle reports to the UN Country Team (UNCT).

This situation is still not entirely clear or accepted in the IFRC/PRCS context. Although the staffing composition in the Baluchistan ESC was as conducive as possible toward respecting the complex relations within the Movement, a more systematic approach to ratifying the respective roles of the Movement members is recommended.

Another instance where the role of cluster convener is in potential conflict with the agency operational role is when the cluster is tasked with funding allocations. At end of December DFID presented call for proposals for temporary shelter projects through the ESC cluster. Deliberations ensued as to whether IFRC as an operational actor would be eligible to apply while also being cluster convener. The dilemma concerns the situation where assessment of applications falls to the cluster; the dilemma was resolved in this case by establishing an ad hoc assessment committee, the members of which could not be applicants themselves. This is

a common dilemma to the cluster system. In countries with a stand by common humanitarian or emergency fund assessment committees are established with either UNDP or OCHA, optionally with other humanitarian actors. Such an option could ultimately be sought for disaster prone countries with ad hoc funding committee needs.

Recommendation:

In the absence of conflict, and with due respect to the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence, IFRC is recommended to make use of local structures and to support local disaster management efforts through its coordinating and information management role.

It is recommended that an agreement is sought with PRCS for future situations where the ESC is activated and IFRC called upon as convener. The agreement would state clearly the ESC's independent and purely coordinating role on behalf of the humanitarian community, the non-operational nature of the ESC, the non-directional role of the ESC.

IFRC should seek ways and means to delegate funding assessments to non-cluster based funding committees, possibly along the lines of country based common humanitarian/emergency funds.

Staffing

As stated, at the time of the earthquake there was an asymmetry in the levels of government regarding the need for activating internationally coordinated emergency response to the earthquake.

Building on the lessons of the 2007 flood experience, when the cluster activation took place without the explicit understanding of the GOP, this sensitive situation was understood and appreciated by PRCS and the IFRC country representation. In this light the staffing composition and design was considered thoroughly.

In consultation with Geneva Shelter Department it was decided to deploy a locally identified coordinator to manage coordination at provincial level. The coordinator, who did not have

prior experience in shelter coordination, would be supported initially by an international trainer/coordinator to be deployed for four weeks.

The team would further consist of an internationally deployed information manager and support staff. Thus, the shelter cluster would benefit from designated staff that would assume a low-key profile appropriate to the as yet un-reconciled stance between national and provincial authorities.

IFRC Pakistan country delegation was fortunate to have on hand a candidate for the coordinator position who had prior experience with PRCS. The presence of a candidate known to PRCS was beneficial for the subsequent collaboration and coordination within the Movement. He was able to navigate the sensitive waters of a situation where the presence of high-profile external interlocutors who did not report to PRCS management went against the grain of the established modus operandi of IFRC/PRCS relations.

Factors that worked for the ability of the locally recruited coordinator was his relative young age and relatively modest experience. The candidate's personal qualities further enabled him to communicate with most levels and be perceived positively by his interlocutors. Age, experience and the lack of preparatory training were also qualities that required the initial support of a trainer/coordinator who would support the candidate's coordinator role while training him to take over coordination on his own after the trainer/coordinator's departure.

One of the most experienced and highly respected ESC coordinators was identified from the roster to fill the role of trainer/coordinator. The training consisted of on-the-job training, rather like a four week mentoring programme. Geneva Shelter Department staff provided guidance via e-mail and telephone conversations throughout the ESC lifetime. However, no formal training course was offered to the locally recruited coordinator. No efforts have been made to recruit him to an emergency shelter roster, neither globally nor regionally.

The constellation of a locally recruited coordinator and a trainer/coordinator is innovative and relevant for the context. The constellation seems to have worked well in this particular instance and the elements contributing to the constellation's success should be explored for future replication.

In addition to this innovative constellation the cluster was also fortified with a highly qualified and motivated Information Manager, supported by two data assistants. The team further had the opportunity to avail themselves, via e-mail and telephone, of the experience of yet another highly qualified information manager from the Global Shelter Cluster roster. According to the team, this was highly beneficial as they availed themselves of this advise repeatedly.

Finally, it should be noted that the ESC seemed to have a high degree of flexibility regarding the number of locally recruited staff the cluster could engage. The ESC staff was expanded from the initial three members (coordinator, trainer/coordinator, information manager) to include two data assistants and a local field coordinator. PRCS and IFRC country delegation were highly instrumental and supportive in providing assistance in this respect.

Recommendations:

IFRC should endeavor to design and recruit staff for ESC with a view to the specific context, as was done in this case. Lessons from earlier cluster activations should be brought to bear, as was the case in the Baluchistan Earthquake of 2008.

IFRC ESC staffing should be flexible throughout the life span of the cluster.

IFRC should recruit and train local or regional coordinator and IM candidates. Training and mentoring programmes should reflect the specific liaison qualities of locally and regionally recruited staff members bring to the cluster work. These include a.o. interaction with national RC societies, regional PNS'es, and national governments.

IFRC should clarify roles of individual staff, specifically by developing TORs relevant for new and emerging staff.

Coordination

The coordination needs were felt most keenly at provincial level (Quetta) and subsequently at field operational level (Ziarat). To cover the field level, IFRC as lead cluster coordinator, entered into agreement with Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), a local NGO with widespread presence in Baluchistan. BRSP deployed a Shelter Assistant Coordinator who

assisted in coordination at field level, data collection and additional monitoring. The BRSP Shelter Assistant Coordinator supported the district government (DCO – district coordination office) in establishing IM center in collaboration with the social welfare departments (Women’s Sevelopment, Special Education departments). Thus, the cluster set-up proved to be supportive of existing official structures rather than substituting them.

The ESC established at Quetta, where other clusters also convened. The Shelter Coordinator, the Information Manager and the Shelter Trainer/Coordinator were primarily stationed here but undertook periodic trips to Islamabad and Ziarat.

Positioning cluster coordination in Quetta facilitated communications and liaison with Provincial Disaster Management Agency (PDMA), who co-chaired the Quetta ESC meetings. The PDMA was recently established and was responsible for managing Baluchistan earthquake disaster response. The cluster was thus in a position to support a relatively young government entity in dealing with disaster management responsibilities. This was a challenge but also an opportunity to enhance capacity of provincial government.

At the same time, the distance from the center of the disaster posed challenges in terms of communicating with and ensuring adequate coordination of field-level activities. These challenges were addressed by way of delegating information management at field level to BRSP. This local and well-founded organization, which had in place the logistics required to gather information from the affected villages and to stay informed of field-level activities of the various active organizations, was already engaged in data collection as part of the Information Cell of the local government.

Coordination took place at district level and central level initially on a daily basis. By the time the ESC was activated and the designated cluster staff was in place the meetings were reduced to twice weekly in Ziarat, weekly in Quetta and Islamabad. The Islamabad meetings continued to be chaired by OCHA, the Quetta meetings by ESC and PDMA and the district meetings were co-chaired by District DMA and BRSP . By December the ESC appointed a field coordinator who linked the district level more closely to the province and central level coordination points.

In addition to these weekly and twice-weekly meetings substantial coordination continued between meetings in the form of telephone conversations and occasional informal meetings. Substantial pressure was put on the cluster to deliver on-going monitoring reporting by local government government. While time-consuming in terms of drawing in the data from operational agencies the impression is that the continued monitoring facilitated that gaps were met on a timely basis.

Inter-cluster coordination was facilitated by OCHA in Islamabad. Inter-cluster coordination between ESC and the logistics cluster had a more intensive quality due to the transportation demanding nature of shelter operations. The experience of most agencies was that no warm shelter material was on stock, so procurement and delivery was considerable strain on operations. This coordination did not give occasion to any difficulties and continued unhampered throughout the ESC lifespan.

Coordination with the protection cluster took place on an ad hoc basis, mainly centered around identifying land-rights related cases. UNHCR regularly brought the issue of inclusion of refugees in the shelter programmes to the ESC. The issues were taken up by individual agencies and organisations with local authorities. This coordination was low-intensity and ad hoc in nature.

Recommendations:

IFRC should seek flexible coordination set-ups that correspond to the context, as has been the approach in the 2008 Baluchistan ESC.

IFRC should seek, where due respect for humanitarian principles allow, to seek co-chairing and delegating coordination tasks where this is supportive to existing structures.

IFRC should pursue the coordination principle followed in Pakistan, i.e. coordination at several levels and using context and actor-specific methods. It should recognize that this is a time-consuming, human resource demanding approach and one that requires context-conversant staff. Enough, and the right, staff members are required for this approach to work.

Strategy

An Emergency Shelter Strategy was drafted within few days of the ESC team being in place. Once the essential relief items of food, NFIs and health care were distributed it became clear that the biggest gap would be securing warm shelter before winter set in. The strategy was revised accordingly.

By 14 November the cluster had finalized a shelter strategy that included guidelines and principles as well as operational priorities.

The cluster agreed that members would provide transitional shelter (non-tent) with the expectation that materials would ultimately be used to construct permanent shelter in the future.

The operational principles established 10 principles, including a.o. that the cluster members would;

- Use community-based approaches
- Encourage on-site owner-driven self-construction.
- Provide culturally appropriate shelters
- Ensure equity across vulnerable groups
- Focus on emergency shelter until those in need are provided for
- Avoid duplication and overlap. Actors will update who, what, where and assist in standardization of approach.
- Cover total needs, avoid partial coverage of needs

The interpretation of the principle of community based approaches, on-site self-built models varied greatly between agencies. Some chose to provide local or national craftsmen who constructed the temporary shelters, others provided a demonstration, a model centrally placed in the settlement and instructions to build by.

The district authorities preferred a solution where the structures were built by the agencies, but concerns over the time frame for such an option made other agencies distribute material

for a self-build option. All options were accepted within the cluster and there were no registered disgruntlement on the differences in approach from beneficiaries.

The principle of providing complete coverage, avoiding duplication and overlap was the focus of close scrutiny by the cluster and local government. After the initial rush to deliver relief, gaps in less accessible areas and in less visible areas were discovered. The cluster and local disaster management authorities then assigned areas of operation to agencies in order to ensure that all beneficiaries was reached. Issues of duplication and gaps were addressed within the cluster in unison with local government and needs were met over the course of the emergency response.

The operational principles also called for a certain level of standardization of assistance provided. Although the humanitarian community had experienced the need to provide warm shelter on an emergency basis in Pakistan previously, at the time of the 2008 Baluchistan earthquake there were no agreed standard specifications to take departure in. After the first spurt of distribution, the apparent differences in the technical solution to providing temporary winterized shelters called for a review of the structures. With due respect for the individual organizations and agencies' modus operandi, the ESC offered a review of technical solutions with optional recommendations and suggestions.

The ESC contracted an IFRC country delegation shelter department engineer to review in-field the solutions used. The review came up with a number of technical specifications for the cluster as a whole. In light of the altitude, the expected temperatures and snow fall, the technical specifications included minimum standards for; gauge of roofing materials, slope of roof, timber size, insulation material , bracing, anchoring and columns material specifications for timber and steel constructions. In addition, each organization received a separate review for their suggested technical solution.

The review was well received. It was stressed that the approach of offering engineering review while respecting the operational decisions of the individual organizations was helpful in accepting suggestions for changes. The discussions regarding most appropriate technical solutions for warm shelter in this context are far from over. But this experience of having to go through the technical discussions from the beginning, set in motion procurement procedures against the outcome and only then commence distribution has spurred initiatives

across agencies to develop standard kits for winterized shelter. Activities ensued among several organizations to settle on standards and place these in warehouses locally or regionally. These initiatives could be taken up in a standing technical working group. Although there is a technical working group in existence in Pakistan, it is dormant and without active chair.

Recommendations

IFRC should consider drafting generic shelter strategy for regional cold-weather emergencies. The 2008 Baluchistan ESC Shelter Strategy could be a point of departure, but would need adjustment in collaboration with global cluster members.

IFRC should consider actively chairing standing emergency shelter technical working group in anticipation of future cold-weather emergencies.

Information Management

Immediately the cluster was activated the Geneva Shelter Department identified not only a coordinator but an information management expert. It is noted that this is commensurate with recommendations from previous cluster activations and testifies to the integration of lessons learned in new cluster activations. The Information Manager arrived as soon as the ESC was officially convened and until that time, the cluster members were served by the district established Information Cell with BRSP.

The ESC was provided with computers and telecommunications from PRCS and IFRC country delegation, which was a flexible and convenient solution for the situation in question. It is unclear whether options of providing the ESC with a communications kit (computers, telephones etc) from the Geneva IFRC Shelter Department was considered.

During the ESC life span data collection was generated by the agencies and BRSP, analyzed by the cluster IM staff and made accessible to the government and cluster members. This way, collective monitoring generated adjustment of operations. Importantly, the government relied on this source for their own monitoring of progress.

The information management leg of the ESC was central both to the BRSP, local government and the efficient response to needs. There was a clear division of labor between BRSP and IFRC and the government, which allowed a.o. access to data collected by the army with respect to damage assessment. The relatively ease with which this data was made accessible to the ESC can be attributed to this information sharing structure.

The ESC IM established a web-based group where minutes of meetings and monitoring updates were posted for cluster members to access. This was well-designed and user friendly and hence well-appreciated by cluster members. Information dissemination between Islamabad, Quetta and Ziarat was satisfactorily serviced via the web in between first daily, then weekly meetings. This was also supplemented by coordination via telephone and occasional informal gatherings. Information dissemination media seems to have been adjusted to the audience, a time consuming yet apparently quite effective endeavour. Thus, printed hand-outs and power point presentations of data otherwise accessible on the web catered to the tastes of different interlocutors.

The monitoring data was accessible in both aggregated and disaggregated form, but the ESC IM unit at the ESC did not have mapping capacity. The UNHabitat office in Islamabad had an agreement with OCHA for the provision of maps during the course of the emergency response phase, but there was no separate agreement with IFRC. Shelter monitoring data could have been analyzed to a greater level of sophistication if data had been spatially presented. Residual pockets of need at the margins of the affected area were identified and addressed by UNHabitat during the reconstruction phase, which might have been discovered during the emergency phase had UNHabitat provided the cluster with spatial analysis of data already at this stage. However, the identified essential needs were met by the time the ESV handed over at the end of January 2009.

One of the most important aspects of the information management aspect of the cluster is the monitoring of progress. The information management staff and collaborators did indeed manage to track progress in shelter delivery and managed to target identified delivery gaps for adjusted operations. It is recognized that working under the present conditions and with the security situation developing as it did, participatory monitoring is difficult. It is also noted that the present review was unable to access any beneficiaries to assess the level of

participation in planning process and subsequent monitoring. No conclusions regarding beneficiary involvement can be made against this background, but it may be noted that innovative thinking on how to ensure beneficiary involvement is sorely needed for this kind of operation.

Recommendations

IFRC should to the extent possible, and where humanitarian principles allow, use existing data collection entities, strengthening existing local structures, as it was done in the 2008 Baluchistan ESC.

IFRC should continue the use of web-based information sharing, combined with audience specific information dissemination.

IFRC should seek mapping capacity as part of the information management package. In lieu of developing its own mapping capacity, IFRC should seek to secure clear, standardized agreement with UNHabitat or other relevant organization for the provision of mapping services at clearly specified intervals and under clearly specified conditions.

Exit and handover

During the emergency phase, UNHabitat was operational, distributing transitional shelters.. UNHabitat further provided OCHA with mapping facilities during the entire emergency phase and was an active part of the ESC.

As the operation progressed, discussions were initiated about bringing on board a transitional coordinator, who would be part of the last stages of the emergency phase and take the emergency shelter cluster into the next stage, ie the reconstruction stage. The impetus was to introduce reconstruction perspectives into the ESC with the transitional coordinator, thus ensuring that early recovery issues were ensured in the process.

The option that was considered was for UNHabitat to identify a suitable candidate while IFRC would fund the transitional coordinator. These discussions were conducted in the last days of December with a view to bringing on board to the ESC an UNHabitat identified and IFRC funded reconstruction coordinator in January 2009.

A candidate was identified by UNHabitat and deployed in mid January. The reconstruction coordinator did not, however, make contact with the ESC before the emergency phase was declared complete. As per ESC procedures, once the emergency phase was declared finalized, the emergency shelter cluster closed and returned to Islamabad for final wrap up before achieving hand-over to UNHabitat. Files were handed over to UNHabitat in Quetta on 27 January, although no formal hand-over documentation is evident.

The emergency phase was called off at an earlier date than originally foreseen. According to general recollection, it was expected that the state of emergency would be phased out into reconstruction early February. However, at 22 January 2009 the emergency phase was officially declared completed, a week or two before anticipated. This called for an earlier wrap-up of the ESC and further transition activities were abandoned altogether before the ESC coordinator and the reconstruction coordinator had the opportunity to work together. The hand-over procedures were subsequently conducted in a barely cordial tone.

The handover generated considerable dissatisfaction with the way the situation unfolded between IFRC and UNHabitat in the field. On the one hand, the reconstruction coordinator never started working with the ESC coordinator before the ESC was closed down. On the other, UNHabitat felt that the agreement was for overlap between the two coordinators to take place, irrespective of the close down of the cluster. An aggravating factor was that with the closing of the ESC, the IFRC conveners no longer deemed it relevant to start working with the reconstruction coordinator and IFRC funding for the position of the UNHabitat reconstruction coordinator was therefore curtailed.

Deliberations in respect of the reconstruction coordinator were conducted mainly in Pakistan in dialogue/conference with HQs in Geneva and Nairobi, respectively. The level at which various decisions regarding funding, deployment and step-down was the object of some confusion, contributing to the disenchantment with the process.

There has no doubt been considerable misunderstandings and unavoidable delays hampering the smooth transition. Inviting the reconstruction coordinator to participate in secondment to the ESC would have been beneficial to strategic planning for a reconstruction phase, especially in a situation where the emergency response strategy under the severe weather conditions involved winterized shelters and construction material that could readily be included in early

recovery planning. The secondment would have been even more relevant in a situation where there was no active early recovery cluster to coordinate with.

Recommendations

Given this region's propensity to natural disasters it is highly likely that the need to consider emergency shelter and the transition to reconstruction will recur. It is recommended that the strategy of overlapping coordination staff to the extent possible is pursued in future operations. Should such a road be taken it is further recommended that steps are taken to ease the processes for field staff as well as HQ management. It is recommended that standards for collaboration should be agreed upon with agencies involved in co- or overlapping coordination exercises. These could include a.o. conditions and timeframes for seconding staff. Furthermore, it is recommended that hand-over procedures are standardized, including documentation, terms of relinquishing hard- and soft ware, and a standard set of documents formalizing the hand-over by signature at clearly indicated levels.

Appendices

I. Chronology of Events

Date line:	
29 October 2008	Earthquake hit – request from GoP for coordination support at provincial level
30 October 2008	ICRC launches emergency appeal
4 November 2008	ESC Coordinator in place, confirmation that IFRC will convene ESC.
6 November 2008	ESC trainer/coordinator arrives in Islamabad
8 November 2008	IM arrives in Islamabad
10 November 2008	ESC set up office in Quetta
11-20 November 2008	Mission by engineer from IFRC Pakistan Shelter Department to advise on winterized shelter solutions of cluster members.
14 November 2008	ESC strategy formalized
17 November 2008	ESC arrive in Ziarat
19 November 2008	IFRC emergency appeal for 4,000 shelters
14 December 2008 - 5 January 2009	IFRC/PRCS shelter distribution
27 December 2008	ESC takes up coordination in the field (from Army who left the area on this date)
22 January 2009	Emergency phase of earthquake response is declared completed,
27 January 2009	ESC is handed over to UNHabitat for recovery phase.

II. Interviewees

Name	Organization
Irfan Hameed	IFRC, ESC Coordinator
Jan Willem Wegdam	IFRC, ESC Information Manager
Asar Muhammad	IFRC Country Programme Coordinator
Bastiaan	IFRC Movement Coordinator
Ilyas Khan	PRCS, Secretary General
Pepe Salema	IFRC Country Director
Imran Siddique	IFRC Shelter Department Coordinator
Lotte Laupe	ICRC Movement Coordinator
Kamran Sharif	OCHA National Disaster Response Advisor
General Farooq	NDMA Director
Fawad Hussain	OCHA Disaster Management Coordinator
Brian Kelly	IOM
Maggie Stephenson	UNHabitat
Anna Maria Selleri	UNHabitat Shelter Cluster Coordinator
Siarmak Moghaddan	UNHabitat Country Director
Kamran Ahmad	UNHabitat Information Manager
Killian	UNHCR Protection Officer
Nadir Gul	BRSP Chief Executive Officer
Muhammad Hamayoun Kasi	BRSP – ESC field coordinator
Azmat Ulla	IFRC Regional Director

Terms of Reference

A Review of the Baluchistan Earthquake Response 2008 - 2009 IFRC-led Emergency Shelter Cluster

Objective of the Baluchistan Earthquake Shelter Cluster Review

The objectives of the review are to:

1. appraise the service provided by the International Federation as shelter cluster coordinator to shelter cluster participants – Government, UN agencies, Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (Pakistan Red Crescent, IFRC, ICRC as appropriate), NGOs both national and international, and other actors;
2. appraise the service provided by the shelter cluster as a whole to meeting the needs of the households affected by the disaster;
3. review and analyse the experience of the International Federation with respect to the establishment and operation of the Shelter Cluster, with a particular emphasis on lessons to be learnt for future operations;
4. provide recommendations with regard to the International Federation's leadership of future emergency shelter cluster coordination activities at both national and global levels.
5. examine if there were aspects of the Federation's cluster leadership which potentially might have or actually did compromise the mandate and principles of the Red Cross/Red Crescent.

Scope of the Review

The review will encompass, but not be limited to, the following areas:

- The activation of the cluster process and the extent of involvement and influence of the Federation, as an IASC member, in the decision-making process;
- the understanding and support of the Federation's shelter coordination role within the in country delegation, the region and Geneva;
- the impact of the Shelter Cluster on the Federation Delegation, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society, and other operational Red Cross Red Crescent Societies;
- the design and implementation of the Shelter Cluster, including factors and determinants which provided the Shelter Cluster's strengths and weaknesses;
- the value of linking and/or separating the Shelter Cluster and the Red Crescent relief operation;

- the design and implementation of the exit/handover strategy;
- relations with other clusters, the UN system and the Government;
- the staffing of the Shelter Cluster and the support provided from the Secretariat;
- the equipping and funding of the Shelter Cluster;
- the involvement of the Shelter Cluster in the transition from meeting emergency shelter needs to permanent housing and resettlement;
- issues with regard to visibility for the International Federation and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

Methodology

The methodology employed by the reviewer/s in gathering and assessing information should include:

- A field visit to Pakistan;
- Review of available documented materials relating to the start-up, planning, implementation, and impact of the Shelter Cluster (reference to the Pakistan Emergency Shelter Cluster website);
- Interviews with key internal stakeholders within the Secretariat in Geneva, (by 'phone) with IFRC Regional Representation in Delhi and Country Representation in Pakistan, the IFRC Asia Pacific Disaster Management Unit in Kuala Lumpur, the Pakistan Red Crescent, IFRC regional representatives, and other operational Red Cross Red Crescent Societies;
- Interviews with other key stakeholders, in particular Government officials where possible;
- Interviews with UN OCHA and the UN Humanitarian Coordinator's office;
- Interviews with shelter agencies participating in the Emergency Shelter Cluster, and in particular UNHCR, UN Habitat and IOM;
- If feasible, interviews with beneficiaries (beneficiary perceptions regarding the extent to which the shelter response and the cluster approach is fulfilling their needs, and their satisfaction with their involvement in planning processes).

Note: A suggested list of interviewees will be provided separately.

Proposed Timeline

The exercise will be implemented over a period of 21 days between 20th April 2009 and 20th May 2009, the date of the travel to Pakistan subject to agreement with the IFRC Representation in Pakistan.

Outputs

1. Concise, written document with key recommendations and supporting information. This document should be of use for discussing the IFRC experiences of the cluster process internally and also with key donors and other stakeholders.
2. Additional notes, summaries of interviews etc. as appropriate, or supporting documentation.
3. Summary of review activities undertaken, including interviews, visits, documents reviewed etc.

Key reference documents to be provided:

1. IFRC-UN OCHA Shelter MoU
2. IFRC Emergency Shelter Cluster ToRs
3. Email to Global Emergency Cluster informing on the deployment of the SCG
4. Emergency Shelter Cluster Handover document IFRC-UNHabitat January 2009
5. All documents (meeting minutes, strategy documents etc.) available from the Emergency Shelter Cluster website (<http://groups.google.com/group/SC-EQ08>) or otherwise on request.
6. Reviews of IFRC-led shelter cluster coordination in Nepal (Floods 2008), Myanmar (Cyclone 2008), Bangladesh (Cyclone 2007-2008), Tajikistan (Cold weather 2007), Pakistan (floods 2007) and the Philippines (typhoon 2006). These reviews can be found at: <http://www.humanitarianreform.org/Default.aspx?tabid=688>

