

Information Manager

of the Shelter Coordination Team (SCT)

The SCT is a flexible team, deployed by the IFRC to coordinate the Shelter Cluster in response to natural disasters during the emergency phase.

Its composition varies upon the size and needs of a disaster, ranging from a 2 to 20 person team. The key roles of the SCT include the following:

- Cluster coordinator
- Information manager
- Technical coordinator
- Recovery advisor

Additional roles can be deployed as required.

Background

In a disaster response operation, the provision of shelter assistance can be an extremely complex process to manage. It is the mandate of the Shelter Cluster to contribute to the effective and efficient distribution of shelter assistance through the provision of coordination services. The information manager provides a critical element of the coordination process, and consequently it is a key role in the shelter coordination team (SCT).



Shelter Cluster information manager revising a map in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in 2010.

The role of information manager

During a response, shelter agencies often face the challenge of providing basic needs for a large number of beneficiaries over a wide area, in a timely manner. Information management (IM) services facilitate the process, which are created by the information manager. He/she is responsible for analysing information, and providing a global overview on progress and gaps in implementation.

Depending on the context and needs of the operation, the role of information manager can expand to include other IM staff including mapping and geographic information system (GIS) technicians, information managers for the hubs, database and web developers, and data collection technicians that are often a mix of national and international staff.

External to the SCT, the information manager liaises with information managers from other clusters, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in

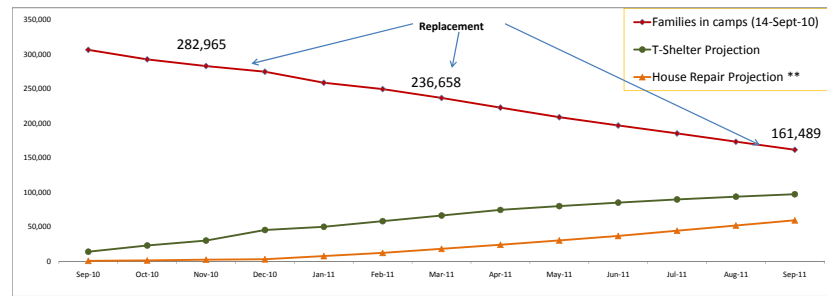
order to ensure information is shared properly, and that all humanitarian actors involved in the response are using common datasets.

Main activities

The information manager is responsible for the creation and provision of IM services. The process of information management is broken down into three steps, with further details on each step in the following section:

- 1. Identification of needs and shelter programmes:** The information manager collects data (in conjunction with the recovery advisor or by using other resources) on the needs of beneficiaries, and shelter agencies notify the information manager on their planned or existing programmes. This is a pre-requisite to creating a consolidated picture of a humanitarian operation.
- 2. Creation of IM products:** The information manager analyses the data collected and creates tables, maps, and other IM products to provide an overview on the response. These products help monitor the progress of shelter agencies, and highlight gaps and overlaps in the shelter response.
- 3. Dissemination to guide shelter programming:** The information products provided by the information manager feed into coordination efforts to ensure effectiveness and efficiency among implementing agencies. It allows shelter agencies to refine and improve their programmes and activities.

Tarpaulin Replacement Forecast until the End of 2011 (Based in Construction increasing Capacities)



	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Dec-10	Jan-11	Feb-11	Mar-11	Apr-11	May-11	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11
Families in camps (14-Sept-10)	308,445	292,608	282,965	274,751	258,731	249,475	236,658	222,671	208,685	196,664	185,186	173,147	161,489
T-Shelter Projection	13,513	22,630	29,644	45,121	49,709	57,865	66,020	74,176	79,783	84,847	89,306	93,384	96,952
House Repair Projection **	324	850	2,010	2,593	7,258	11,922	17,793	23,584	29,998	36,412	43,992	51,572	59,352

** House repair projection is based on the assumption that 40% of yellow houses will be repaired by the end of 2011

	Families in Camps	Tarpaulins Needed
Nov-10	282,965	565,929
Mar-11	236,658	473,316
Sep-11	161,489	322,978

	Tarpaulins	Gap Cost *
Needed	1,362,223	
Planned	270,000	20%
Gap	1,092,223	80% \$18,229,208

* This represents the material cost and does not take into account the cost of distribution (16.89\$/unit)

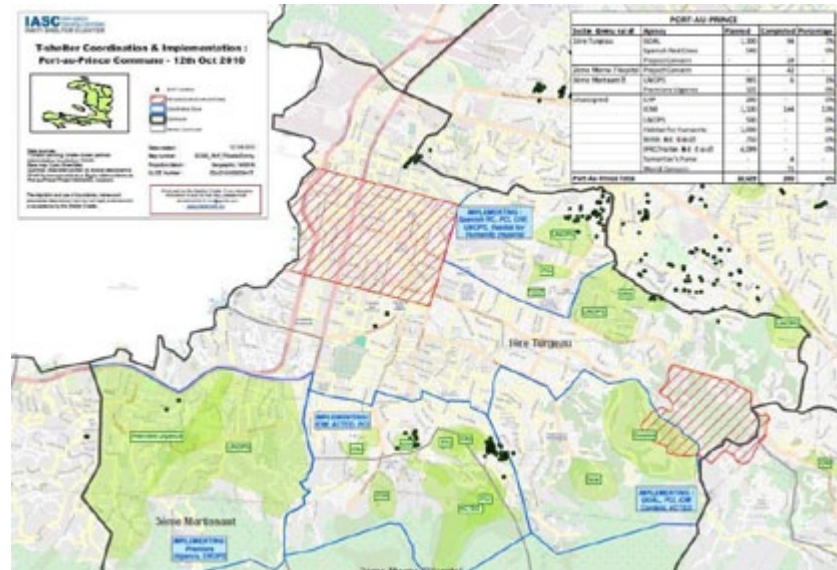
Identification of needs and shelter programmes

Initially, the establishment of needs is derived from various sources such as government data on affected populations, or the results of agency assessments. This provides an overall quantification and geographical layout of the required need. In situations where the government or agencies are unable to provide a figure on various shelter needs, the information manager and SCT IM staff can go through a process of analyzing a range of alternative datasets such as satellite imagery, analysis of building damage and surveys from camps, to develop an estimate of shelter needs. In turn, the provision of the needs data allows shelter agencies to decide upon a target population for their programme. If shelter agencies have already begun implementing their

shelter programmes, the information manager or IM staff collect the necessary data to feed the information into the coordination process.

Creation of IM products

The information manager uses the data of planned or existing shelter programming and beneficiaries’ needs in order to provide a consolidated overview of the shelter response. The results are produced in the form of tables, charts, maps or matrices, as illustrated below:



Information management in action

The effectiveness of the information manager and SCT IM staff in the Shelter Cluster is demonstrated by a conflict which arose in the Nazon area of Port-au-Prince, Haiti in 2010. During a coordination meeting at the commune level, three different shelter agencies discovered an existing overlap in their response - meaning they were all targeting the same beneficiaries.

However through the mapping provided by the SCT information management staff, which provided an early identification of this issue, agencies were encouraged to exchange information, and ensure their respective programmes targeted different families. As a result, the agencies were able to serve a wider percentage of the affected population in need of shelter assistance.

Dissemination to guide shelter programming

Information products can be used to create a common operational representation of what has been delivered to date, as well as plans for future programming activities. The results are disseminated to shelter agencies at Shelter Cluster coordination meetings, which allow shelter agencies to visually identify their implementation activities. They provide an analysis that is used to improve efficiency and effectiveness of implementing agencies, as agencies adapt accordingly in order to respond to gaps, and avoid overlaps in the response.

Impact

- With an information manager (and SCT IM staff) within the SCT, shelter agencies receive consistent and reliable information on the adapting needs of the affected population, gaps in their response, future projection of needs, and a macro-level overview on their implementation. All of these aspects contribute to the success of programming, and help agencies meet the needs of beneficiaries efficiently and effectively.
- The information manager (and SCT IM staff) and IM products provide a coordination service that complement the work of shelter agencies. It is particularly valuable in a context where agencies’ availability to make ongoing assessments is limited by financial or human resources, etc.

- Information management products provided by the information manager (and SCT IM staff) allow shelter agencies to have a clear visual outline of their respective responsibilities including where they are needed, who is responsible in their zone, the boundaries of their implementation area, and which partners they contact when necessary. Each element is important in improving coordination and service delivery.



**For further information,
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For more on the Humanitarian Reform, the role of the IFRC as convener of the Shelter Cluster and the SCT, please visit **www.sheltercluster.org**