# Shelter Meeting 14 Breakout Technical Sector Priorities

## Group 6 Other Priorities

**Shelter Meetings**

*The Shelter Meeting is a global biannual conference for the humanitarian shelter sector, with participation in-person and online from around the world from governments, donors, IASC clusters, UN bodies, IOs, the Red Cross Movement, NGOs, independent humanitarian shelter specialists and academic research bodies.*

*Objectives of the Shelter Meeting include; engaging and supporting all stakeholders in the global shelter sector; linking all coordination that is supporting the shelter sector including IASC clusters; engage, linking and supporting other events and initiatives in the shelter sector; engaging in, linking and supporting the events and initiatives of other humanitarian sectors and cross-cutting issues; supporting consensus on policy, standards, specifications & operating procedures; sharing programmatic and technical good practice on on-going field operations; sharing information on project activities valuable for the global shelter sector; agreeing on and prioritising further project activities valuable for the global shelter sector; forming external working groups to support project activities; and reviewing project activities.*

**Shelter Meeting 14, 10th October 2014**

On 10th of October 2014, the Shelter Meeting welcomed participation in-person and online from over 25 countries by representatives from 44 different agencies. Hosted by the IASC Global Shelter Cluster, the meeting breakout groups covered the areas of 'Response Options' and 'Technical Sector Priorities'.

Presentations from Shelter Meeting can be viewed [here](http://www.sheltercentre.org/shelter-meeting-14).

As a part of each Shelter Meeting, there are breakout groups, which are meant to begin a greater exploration of the topics relevant and important to current Shelter sector concerns. In Shelter Meeting 14 the breakout session for Technical Sector Priorities was meant to examine technical priorities within the shelter sector to come to a better understanding of those priorities and ways forward.

**Next steps**

The conclusions of these breakout groups, including suggestions, will be first circulated in draft to the session chairpersons and team members for their comments. The final notes will inform broader and more formal discussions of these topics within the shelter sector, including through: comments made to the notes posted online on the Shelter Meeting 14 webpage; subsequent Shelter Meetings; related fora, such as the UK Shelter Forum; technical and innovation working group meetings of the IASC global shelter cluster and other IASC global clusters, such as the CCCM, Early Recovery and WASH clusters; as well as other national, regional and global fora, research and academic agencies.

**Notes Summarising Group 6 Open Session on Other Priorities**

Group Facilitator: Dave Hodgkin, Independent

Group Rapporteur: Andriy Muzalyev, IMPACT Initiatives

Notes Editor: Amanda Wigfall, Shelter Meeting Coordinator, Shelter Centre

*This breakout group in the Technical sector priorities session was meant to discuss priorities that warrant more consistent consideration by the sector. These notes, along with the notes from the other groups in the breakout sessions from Shelter Meeting 14, will be taken forward through various fora, including the Technical and Innovation Working Group (TiWG) of the IASC Global Shelter Cluster.*

**6.1 Disaster epidemiology**

**6.1.1** A way needs to be identified where localised risks, whether from epidemics or hazards, may be understood by both national and international stakeholders, proportionate to those risks. For example, for a high wind hazard, the engineering of roofs should be better understood.

**6.1.2** Health cluster indicators from other sectors might be useful in the shelter sector, for example the IASC Health Cluster quality adjusted life year (QALY) and disability adjusted life years (DALY).

**6.2 HR & career-pathing**

**6.2.1** The issue of retention of qualified personnel needs to be considered. A lot of work goes into creating qualified teams and capacity building those teams, this can be undermined by short-term projects and contracts.

**6.2.1** It was stated that agencies need to be more specific about what set of qualifications and experiences shelter people should have in order to get a job.

**6.2.3** There is a shortage of suitably experienced people working in humanitarian shelter. The need exists for more creative career-pathing. This implied to the group a need for greater investment in expanding the pool. One suggestion by the group was to be more creative in supporting career paths.

**6.2.4** Another group suggestion was that the creation a professional association might be a step in the right direction, such as an “International Association of Shelter Professionals”. Membership in the association could be both organisational and individual. The group considered the benefits of having a professional association include that professionals can be held to account, as they should respect professional ethics and follow a set of specific standard accepted practice when they are doing their work. The idea discussed was that a member of association should have obligations towards the association and that the association itself should have obligations towards its members. The association might additionally cover the legal fees of its member, if there is such a need.

**6.3** **Funding by humanitarian bi-lateral and multi-lateral, developmental, DRR and IFI donors**

**6.3.1** There is a need identified for better and more secure funding from humanitarian bi-lateral and multi-lateral, developmental, DRR and IFI donors within the sector.

**6.3.2** The group discussed that a way needs to be found whereby shelter specialists may have a greater opportunity to discuss with donors the technical modalities of shelter interventions. Many donors have extremely limited specialist capacity, especially at regional and national levels. Programme quality and impact will be improved if conversations between donors and agencies are better informed technically.

**6.4** **Evidence-based impact analysis**

**6.4.1** What would be acceptable standards in one context to rebuild, is not acceptable in another context. People should be allowed to understand and manage their own risk. There needs to be a greater discussion with people about their understanding of the risk. For example some houses can be designed with sacrificial elements that can fall down and not be damaged in a common low or medium intensity typhoon, this means the cost of these items can be saved by putting them back up again. This is not the case in a high intensity typhoon. People have to be able to understand these choices and make them for themselves.

**6.4.1** There is a lack of a body of evidence about what actions result in improvement of shelter needs of beneficiaries and what actions are a waste of time.

**6.4.2** The question was posed, do we need to ask beneficiaries do they want their houses to be reparable? For example, houses may not be reparable, but can resist low-intensity or middle-intensity typhoons. However, they will be smashed by high-intensity typhoons.

**6.4.3** Analyses of a shelter situation, should take into account both shelter and settlement. This understanding of shelter and settlement should include social and economic impacts, impacts on dignity of life and a cost benefit analysis.

**6.4.4** A clear understanding needs to be formed on the impact and effectiveness of transferring knowledge to beneficiaries and between them. For example, to what degree do such activities result in suitable behaviour change such as reducing risk by changing construction practices? A suggestion was made that the IASC Global Shelter Cluster technical working group should carry forward the work.

**6.5** **Group discussion on linking peace building and shelter**

**6.5.1** There was broad agreement that shelter interventions may impact positively or negatively upon recovery and peace building between different localized communities. One example offered was the involvement of different local communities in communal service infrastructure projects, such as building or repairing roads and bridges. A further example was offered from Indonesia, where Muslim and Christian communities worked together on building a mosque and subsequently a church.

**6.5.2** The suggestion of the group was thatthe link between peace building and shelter needs to be further explored, as shelter interventions cannot avoid on-going conflict situations.