

Republic of South Sudan

Shelter Technical Working Group (TWIG)

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UNOCHA Juba

DRAFT MINUTES

ATTENDEES		
Name	Organization	Email
Igor Chantefort	Shelter Cluster Technical Adviser	RFP.MENA@sheltercluster.org
Margo Baars	Shelter Cluster Coordinator	mbaars@iom.int
Schelda Jean Baptiste	Shelter Cluster Co-Coordinator	Schelda_Jean_Baptiste@wvi.org
Taka Nakahara	Intersos	Nfis.south.sudan@intersos.org
Daniel Gudere	World Vision International	Daniel_Gudere@wvi.org
Tinos Dube	World Vision International	tinostube@wvi.org
Arinoni Bvuma	World Vision International	arinoni_bvuma@wvi.org
Sylphano Kipyegen	NPA	sylphanok@npaid.org
Therese Foster	Global Communities	tfoster@globalcommunities.org
Keat Bayak Mang	Medair	Keat.bayak@southsudan.medair.org
Olam Amun Amajok	Medair	Olam.amun@southsudan.medair.org
Francis Mandari	LCED	
Beneth Surm	LCED	Bensux2yk@hotmail.com
Jessica Carlson	DRC	m&e.coor@drc-ssudan.org
Bernard Ifeanyi N.	UNHCR	Nwankwo@unhcr.org
Michael Mading	LWF	madinakuett@yahoo.com

1. Welcome brief

- Welcoming Igor Chantefort, Surge Capacity Support - Global Cluster who was facilitating the TWIG meeting and who will also be facilitating the next TWIG meeting;
- Objective of the meeting: Capitalize the lessons learnt from the shelter design proposed in February in order to come up with an improved shelter design that will be considered as standard for all shelter cluster members.

2. PowerPoint Presentation on consolidation of emergency shelter

- The PowerPoint presentation on consolidation of emergency shelter included the followings:
 - General structure, vertical elements, general dimensions
 - Roof structure, trusses and framing
 - Bracing
 - Tying/pegging
 - Structure's ground fixing. Termites' problems
 - Plastic sheeting fixing
 - Ground floor treatment. Pallets, sans backfilling, sand bags
 - Details, other
- The soft copy of the PowerPoint presentation will be shared with cluster members after review.

3. Discussion/Debate around the above points presented

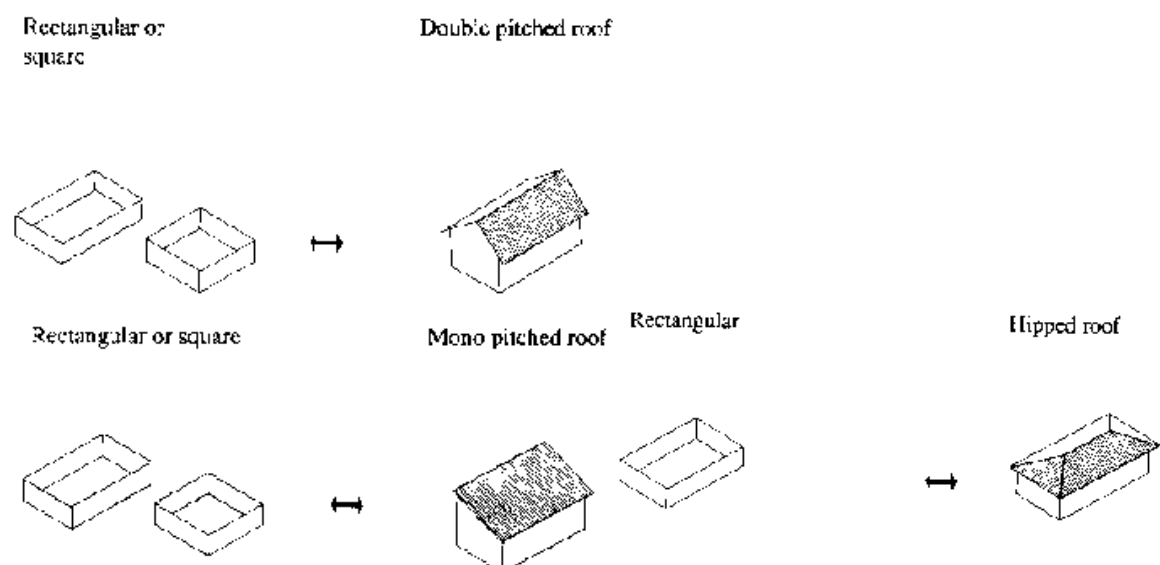
Discussions were mostly about partners experience with the different designs presented for each of the points.

General structure, vertical elements, general dimensions



- When the cluster came up with the design presented in February they didn't have in mind that the fight would continue for a long period of time and that people would live in the PoCs (especially PoC 3) for so long. Now, given the current situation they may stay even beyond December 2014, therefore there is need to seek for more durable solutions;
- There is need to think of sensitivity when using the wooden materials in shelter construction (referring here to the protection of the environment and DNH). Agencies should be well aware of the source of the materials used for shelter. Partners are encouraged to use materials from the common pipeline.
- The door frame needs to be reinforced and strengthened. It currently has 5 poles. One Cluster member proposed to increase it to 16 poles but this will have significant implication on the pipeline (resources are limited and we have concerns on whether or not the donors will allocate more resources). It was also noticed that most of the beneficiaries are also coming with extra poles for the door, good practice;
- It was highlighted that when the cluster came up with the proposed structure, they had in mind that the beneficiaries would also contribute/bring additional elements; we shouldn't undermine the beneficiaries coping mechanism; it is easier to put a lock on an existing door frame. This strategy is very interesting and the main question is which material beneficiaries will have difficulty to access (door, padlock, hinges ...?).
- Some partners are currently using 190 cm for the height of the structure others are using 2 m, while others reported to have the flexibility (180 to 190 cm), it depends on the desire of the beneficiary. As per cluster members, 2 m is fine for shelter being constructed outside the PoC, however there is need to consider the current practice in South Sudan where people prefer to have a very low door (mainly to protect themselves against wild animals);
- It is also observed that in some locations, the structure for young people is different from the one for elderly people because young people prefer to have lot of space (4x4) while elderly people just need a space to sleep and rest.
- For some countries, the cluster decides on the minimum height of the structure (2 m for example in Haiti).

Roof structure, trusses and framing



- Some partners are abandoning the scissor trusses design (CRS design 2014). That design is more appropriate for schools and requires more skills, carpentry work;
- One element is missed in the curved grass (Concern design);
- Using also curved roof NRC designed a sample for UN House a bit more complicated using curved split bamboo; the skill level issue was addressed using hired semi-skilled labor.
- The curved bamboo design (NRC design 2014) is not difficult for plastic sheet fixing; 2 people can build 2 structures like the curved bamboo structure in 1 day;
- The double pitched roof, NRC design 2014 was reported to be the very good. The double pitch roof is a good compromise between skills request, material and resistance.
- There is need for 4 additional poles in the pipeline to strengthen the roofing structure; especially in order to offer the possibility to get an upper frame more resistant, long lasting and rigid toward strong wind.



- There is need to think about ventilation for almost all designs submitted

Bracing

- As per Igor's observation, no one is currently using proper bracing; on mid-term bracing and structural integrity will significantly impact the life span of the shelter.
- Bracing the structure increases its resistance, there is need to reinforce the structure, not with bamboo but with something stronger.

Tying/pegging

- As per the partners' experiences, the wall base, NRC design is much appreciated.
- Despite intervention of NGO in PoC, usually self-made shelters are not using proper pegging and the fixation to the ground is weaker.

Structure's ground fixing. Termites' problems

- As a mitigation measure against the termites, it was observed that the burn oil is not performing well;
- One method that worked for some partners is the digging of small hole (20 cm) around the structure, this has a double function: drainage and reducing the presence of termites;
- Tying the hole with concrete is a good solution however that would require to distribute cement to everyone (add cement to the pipeline) which is not feasible at this point.

Plastic sheeting fixing

- The distribution of plastic sheets every 6 months is not a viable solution especially in the PoCs that may last for long; there is need to analyze the situation and come up with a more durable solution for the long term;
- Currently only UNHCR has a plan for a transitional shelter (still under review).

Ground floor treatment. Pallets, sans backfilling, sand bags

- Backfilling is not advisable in Malakal; or in any place with black cotton soil (liquefaction of the sand and silts)
- In some communities, the IDPs construct dikes and ditches in order to block the water, good practice;
- Sand bags is a good solution but some partners raised the issue of deterioration of the bags and are pushing for a rejection of plastic sheeting materials because it is expensive and not durable; sand bags have systematically to be not exposed to UV's sunray with a light layer of soil.
- Unfortunately in South Sudan, rice husk or sugar cane waste are not available and cannot be used to stabilize the ground;

Details, other

- Currently, no one (no Humanitarian Agency) is doing plastic sheet repair intervention, a very simple way of repairing plastic sheets by using glue and plastic sheeting patches was demonstrated.
- It is encouraged to accompany shelter intervention with fire prevention campaign;
- Positioning 2 emergency doors (or door/window) one in front of the other is good for ventilation; this details could be implemented when the strategy will lead to more permanent solutions (villages of returns, PoC)
- NFI & Shelter Cluster coordinator is proposing to make a consensus and start thinking about transitional shelter especially for the remote areas where it is extremely expensive to reach the people; this idea was also supported by the Global Cluster Surge Capacity Support (Igor) based on his experience [he has seen people living in shelters (that were designed to be an emergency shelters) for about 5 years];
- The use of grass is encouraged outside the PoCs (instead of plastic sheet); grass is cheaper in most of the areas and easier to transport but it has specific period;
- The use of palm leaves is also a good alternative to consider.
- Splitting bamboo and nailing them on wall frame is a good practice to avoid plastic sheet flapping and deteriorating.



Action points

- This TWIG meeting was mostly about sharing experiences and best practices on how partners are doing in the field in regards to each of the component of the emergency shelter structure. Next TWIG meeting will be more about coming up with an agreed shelter design that will be considered as standard for the cluster;
- NFI & Shelter Cluster members agree to talk about “wattle and daub” in the next TWIG that will once again be facilitated by Igor Chantefort;
- Discussing about “lessons drawn from PoC to direct shelter strategy” or “transition from Emergency shelter to transitional shelter” are also proposed as possible subjects of discussion for the next TWIG meeting;
- Cluster members are to look for more information about the use of palm tree leaves as a roofing solution (whether or not it requires technical skills).

NEXT MEETING: The next TWIG will be held on Thursday August 28, 2014 at 9:30 in the UNOCHA conference room.