What is the Pacific Shelter Cluster?

The Pacific Shelter Cluster is a grouping of organisations that have an operational interest in humanitarian shelter preparedness and response in Pacific Island Countries.

What does the Pacific Shelter Cluster do?

The objective of the Pacific Shelter Cluster is to support a coherent and effective humanitarian shelter response following disaster events in Pacific island countries, underpinned by preparedness, contingency planning, and capacity building initiatives. The regional coordination team prioritises provision of support to country-level clusters across the Pacific, according to their specific needs. Much of this support is provided to National Governments who are responsible for humanitarian response in their countries.

Who are the members of the Pacific Shelter Cluster?

Membership of the Pacific Shelter Cluster is open to any organisation (governments, community groups, regional bodies, NGOs, INGOs, Red Cross, UN, faith based, academia, private sector etc), that has an interest in humanitarian shelter.

Who is the Lead Agency of the Pacific Shelter Cluster?

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is the Lead Agency of the Pacific Shelter Cluster, in accordance with its global shelter mandate.

In 2016, the Fiji Shelter Cluster conducted a build back safer training for carpenters involved in the recovery efforts after Tropical Cyclone Winston.

Does the Pacific Shelter Cluster have a Terms of Reference (TOR)?

Yes. A TOR applicable to all Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) Regional Clusters is attached. This is taken from the PHT Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (annex 8).

What is the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT)?

The Pacific Shelter Cluster is part of the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT), which has UNOCHA as its secretariat and is comprised of nine clusters which form the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group.

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Annex 8: PHT Regional Clusters Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

1.1 Outside of an emergency response phase, the clusters[22] aim to ensure increased preparedness of the humanitarian team and national authorities in the region, including preparedness related to domestic laws, rules and policies that govern foreign disaster response. During a disaster or complex emergency where the cluster approach has been activated for the affected country(ies), relevant clusters will be rolled out in the affected country(ies), as determined by PHT HoO group, with the support of OCHA. This can be done within regional available capacity or by requesting support from the global IASC clusters. At this level, the aim is to ensure a more coherent and effective response by mobilizing groups of agencies, organizations and NGOs to respond in a strategic manner across all key sectors or areas of activity.

1.2 The objective of the cluster approach is to ensure that the activities of such organizations are coordinated, and that humanitarian action in the region is principled, timely, effective and efficient, and contributes to longer-term recovery. The overall purpose is to alleviate human suffering and protect the lives, livelihoods and dignity of people in need.

2. Lead Agency

2.1 Each cluster has a clearly identified lead agency, as agreed by the UN RC and the PHT. Below is the list of lead agencies for each cluster:
- Health & Nutrition – WHO (Health) & UNICEF (Nutrition)
- Water, Sanitation & Hygiene – UNICEF
- Emergency Shelter – International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) (Convener)
- Coordination & Camp Management – International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Logistics – WFP
- Protection – UNHCR & OHCHR (co-leads)
- Early Recovery – UNDP
- Emergency Education – UNICEF & Save the Children (co-leads)

3. Composition

3.1 The clusters are composed of organizations that undertake humanitarian action relevant to the particular sector or area of activity in the region and that commit to participate in coordination arrangements. These include UN agencies, IFRC, IOM, non-governmental organizations, regional and bilateral organizations. Observing organizations may participate in clusters.

3.2 Membership criteria: clusters are open to all humanitarian organizations with capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies in the Pacific region. The main criterion is operational relevance.

3.3 In addition to their own organization, members may represent one or more organizations that are not members of the PHT, at their request.

3.4 When appropriate, other institutions and agencies may be invited to participate in cluster meetings.

3.5 During an emergency, clusters will ensure their host government counterparts are included in cluster activities, as well as other relevant local partners.

4. Modus operandi

4.1 The modus operandi of the clusters is governed by the Principles of Partnership.[23]

4.2 The chairmanship style is consensual and facilitative, and the membership style is collaborative and constructive.

4.3 Meetings are operational in purpose, focused on clear objectives, action-oriented, and produce reality-based decisions that are followed-up.

4.4 Cluster activity is informed by strategy and guidance determined by the PHT Heads of Organizations and PHT ICCG group. PHT Clusters will develop their own strategy for action in each emergency dependent on the situation.

4.5 Outside of an emergency response phase, clusters are composed of members based across the Pacific that liaise by various means of communication. During a disaster or complex emergency where the cluster approach has been activated for the affected country(ies), relevant clusters will be formed in the affected country(ies), as decided in the PHT and agreed by IASC global clusters.

5. Interface with other regional and country-based coordination mechanisms

5.1 Clusters support and/or complement government-led coordination structures and/or other relevant coordination structures and groups, such as FRANZ24, and the Samoa Disaster Management Team (DMT), etc.

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[22] This document is based upon the Generic Terms of Reference for Sector/Cluster Leads at the Country Level.

[23] These are equality, transparency, result-oriented approach, responsibility, and complementarity. The Statement of Commitment can be found http://www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org/pop.html

[24] The FRANZ Statement was signed by representatives of the Governments of France, Australia and New-Zealand on 22 December 1992. It commits its signatories to "exchange information to ensure the best use of their assets and other resources for relief operations after cyclones and other natural disasters in the region".

5.2   Cluster Coordinators/Conveners are part of the PHT Inter-Cluster Coordination Group. Cluster Lead Agencies will be represented in the PHT Heads of Organizations group.

5.3   During an emergency response in a particular country, clusters will ensure that the relevant host government counterparts, and other relevant local partners, are included in cluster coordination activities.

6. Responsibilities

Clusters, through their Cluster Co/Leads and Conveners, are responsible for ensuring:

6.1   Ensure inclusion of key humanitarian partners for the cluster, respecting their mandates and program priorities.

6.2   Establishment and maintenance of appropriate humanitarian coordination mechanisms
- Ensure appropriate coordination with all humanitarian partners through the establishment/maintenance of appropriate cluster coordination mechanisms, including working groups at the regional and, if necessary, national level.
- Secure commitments from humanitarian partners in responding to needs and filling gaps, ensuring an appropriate distribution of responsibilities within the cluster, with clearly defined focal points for specific issues where necessary.
- Promote emergency response actions while at the same time considering the need for early recovery planning as well as preventing and risk reduction concerns.
- Ensure that cluster coordination mechanisms are adapted over time to reflect the capacities of local actors and the engagement of development partners.
- Represent the interests of the cluster in discussions with the UN HC/RC and other stakeholders on prioritization, resource mobilization and advocacy.

6.3   Coordination with national/local authorities, state institutions, local civil society and other relevant actors
- Ensure that humanitarian responses build on local capacities.
- Ensure appropriate links with national and local authorities, State institutions, local civil society and other relevant actors (e.g. peacekeeping forces) and ensure appropriate coordination and information exchange with them.

6.4   Participatory and community based approach
- Ensure utilization of participatory and community-based approaches in sectoral needs assessment, analysis, planning, monitoring and response.

6.5   Attention to priority cross-cutting issues
- Ensure integration of agreed priority cross-cutting issues in sectoral needs assessment, analysis, planning, monitoring and response (e.g. age, diversity, environment, gender, environment, HIV/AIDS and human rights) and contribute to the development of appropriate strategies to address these issues.
- Ensure gender-sensitive programming and promote gender equality.
- Ensure that the needs, contributions and capacities of women, girls, boys and men are addressed.

6.6   Needs assessment and analysis
- Ensure effective and coherent sectoral needs assessment and analysis, involving all relevant partners.

6.7   Emergency preparedness
- Ensure adequate contingency planning and preparedness for new emergencies, at relevant levels (regional, national).

6.8   Planning and strategy development
- Ensure predictable action within the clusters for the identification of gaps; Developing/updating agreed response strategies and action plans for the sector and ensuring that these are adequately reflected in overall country strategies;
- Drawing lessons learned from past activities and revising strategies accordingly;
- Developing an exit, or transition, strategy for the cluster.

6.9   Application of standards
- Ensure that sectoral group participants are aware of relevant policy guidelines, technical standards and applicable commitments (both in law and through non-binding agreements) that the respective Government has undertaken.
- Ensure that responses are in line with existing policy guidelines, technical standards, policy guidelines, and applicable commitments (both in law and through non-binding agreements) that the respective Government has undertaken.

6.10   Information Management
- Establish information management protocols to facilitate communications within and between clusters.

FRANZ has in practice been an effective mechanism against the broad range of disasters experienced in the region. The FRANZ Statement applies to South Pacific as broadly defined. It is taken on to include: Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna, and others as agreed on a case by case basis.

- Ensure adequate reporting and effective information sharing (with OCHA support), with due regard for age and sex disaggregation.

6.11   Advocacy and resource mobilization
- Identify core advocacy concerns, including resource requirements, and contribute key messages to broader advocacy initiatives of the RC and other actors.
- Advocate for donors to fund humanitarian actors to carry out priority activities in the sector concerned, while at the same time encouraging sectoral group participants to mobilize resources for their activities through their usual channels.

6.12   Training and capacity building
- Promote/support capacity building and training of humanitarian partners.
- Support efforts to strengthen the capacity of national authorities and civil society.

During a disaster or complex emergency, Cluster Lead Agencies are responsible for:

6.13   Provision of assistance or services as a last resort
- As agreed by the IASC, cluster leads are responsible for acting as the provider of last resort (subject to access, security and availability of funding) to meet agreed priority needs and will be supported by the UN RC and the UN ERC in their resource mobilization efforts in this regard.
- This concept is to be applied in an appropriate and realistic manner for cross-cutting issues such as protection, early recovery and camp coordination.[25]

7.   Review

The TOR was agreed by PHT stakeholders at the 3rd PHT Regional Annual Workshop in 2010. The TOR is recommended for review by the PHT-ICCG at a minimum every two years. The next review of the TOR is due in 2014.

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[25]The Memorandum of Understanding between IFRC and OCHA states that IFRC does not accept accountability obligations beyond those defined in its Constitution and policies and that its responsibilities do not leave room for open-ended or unlimited obligations. IFRC has therefore not committed to being 'provider of last resort' nor is it accountable to any part of the UN system. For further information see Guiding Document 7.1.5 of Emergency Shelter at
http://www.humanitarianreform.org/humanitarianreform/Default.aspx?tabid=_307