

**A Review of the Cyclone Aila Response 2009
IFRC-led Emergency Shelter Coordination Group**



Photo:ESCAilaIM

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**Review of the IFRC-led Emergency Shelter Coordination Group
Cyclone Aila Response
Bangladesh 2009**

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (large National NGO)
BDRCS	Bangladesh Red Crescent Society
CDMP	Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme
CGI	Corrugated iron (sheets)
CHT	Country Humanitarian Team
DER	Disaster and Emergency Response Group
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DG	Director-General
DMIC	Disaster Management Information Centre
DMB	Disaster Management Bureau
DNA	Disaster Needs Assessment
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Organisation
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation (UN)
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IM	Information Management
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LCG	Local Consultative Group
MoFDM	Ministry of Food and Disaster Management
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NFI	Non-Food Item
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RC	Resident Coordinator
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SWG	Shelter Working Group
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDMT	United Nations Disaster Management Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (Cluster)
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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Professionally Appreciated, Institutionally Challenged

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The manner in which the emergency shelter response for cyclone Aila unfolded was impacted by a range of factors that can be classified under two broad headings;

- The nature of the disaster, and
- The way humanitarian response is conceptualized in Bangladesh

Within the confines of their limited tenure in Bangladesh, the contribution made by the IFRC Emergency Shelter Coordination Team was considered useful by the shelter partners including UNDP. A range of factors that could have made the contribution more useful will be discussed later in the report, but these were generally outside the control of the team.

Based on this experience and that of the IFRC emergency shelter coordination support for Cyclone Sidr in 2007, and, under the present arrangements of humanitarian response coordination and UN leadership in Bangladesh, IFRC involvement in emergency shelter coordination should be reviewed in order to find the most appropriate way to provide assistance for future emergencies. As present arrangements for the SWG stand, involvement of the IFRC that mirrors the Aila experience appears unlikely except in the case of a formal cluster roll out under a directive from the ERC. The reluctance of the government to declare an emergency and request external assistance, and the UNRCO's apparent disinclination for any arrangements that would either officially or unofficially transfer management control over emergency operations from country level agents to global cluster leads, make the use of clusters a challenge. *This apparent tension between country leadership and global capacity in an emergency response would benefit from further attention in the humanitarian reform dialogue.*

Engaging with UNDP on issues surrounding preparedness through a permanent Shelter Working Group (SWG) potentially offers one opportunity for IFRC to support preparation for improving the emergency shelter response. This could include setting up standing procedures for coordination of a response agreement on an interagency shelter assessment tools, training in information management tools and guidelines for emergency shelter kits and transitional shelters. It would require a commitment and support from the UNDP and the relevant government counterparts that the shelter working group would be both inclusive and sustained. This would ideally fit within the Local Consultative Group (LCG) structure in Bangladesh and should ensure clarity in the relationships between the SWG (responsible for preparedness), the shelter coordination group (responsible for coordinating the emergency response) and the agency responsible for the coordination of shelter recovery beyond the emergency phase of a disaster, usually UNDP in Bangladesh.¹

By engaging in emergency preparedness, IFRC could contribute to a more effective shelter response irrespective of the extent of the disaster. Involvement of the IFRC in emergency shelter preparedness would also ensure that the global mandate of the IFRC in regard to emergency shelter leadership was understood by all stakeholders. In the event of a large scale emergency and a call for international assistance, an IFRC surge team could provide coordination and information management support into the local structure in a way that was predictable and understood by all stakeholders.

¹ For information on the local consultative groups (LCGs) see <http://www.lcgbangladesh.org>

1.1 The Nature of the Disaster

On the 25th May 2009, Cyclone Aila affected coastal districts of Bangladesh, especially Khulna and Shatkira. Although it brought heavy rains and storm surges which combined with high tides to breach flood protection embankments, Aila was classified as a category 1 cyclone and the government reported a death toll of 190 people across 11 districts affecting 4.8 million people. However, as a category 1 storm, cyclone Aila was less dramatic than Cyclone Sidr, a category 4 storm in 2007 which affected 9 million people across 30 districts and was responsible for around 4000 deaths.

The perception in the initial days following the storm influenced the response of the government, the humanitarian community in Bangladesh (particularly the UN) and the media. Although taken seriously, particularly by the government which had been issuing regular and detailed situation reports since the threat of the cyclone emerged and had responded quickly with initial distributions, Cyclone Aila was not considered a major disaster. *This initial perception amongst key actors is seen by many as inhibiting the amount of international assistance made available to support the response to Aila.*

The government issued its last Aila situation report on the 11th June. However, in the weeks that followed, it became clear that while the severely affected areas were confined to the south west of the country the extent of the damage was very intense. Government figures indicated that almost 250,000 houses had been completely destroyed and approximately 370,000 were damaged by the storm. More significantly (see the table below), the proportion of houses damaged or destroyed in the affected unions was extremely high. This is supported by an IOM assessment conducted in August that found 100% of the population displaced in the *most severely affected areas*.²

District	Upazila	Worst Affected Unions	Most Affected Family	Most Affected People	Dead and Missing	Household Damaged
Satkhira	Shyamnagar	Gabura	6,007	30,034	24	100%
		Padmapukur	4,432	22,163	10	100%
		Burigoalini	4,289	26,810	5	80%
		Atulia	4,621	28,879		50%
	Assasuni	Protapnagar	3,750	15,000	1	100%
		Sreeula	2,250	9,000		80%
		Khazra	2,000	8,000		70%
Baradal		1,875	7,500		50%	
Khulna	Dacope	Kamarkhola	3,200	16,000	4	90%
		Sutarkhali	8,000	40,000		100%
		Tildanga	8,000	24,000		80%
		Banisanta	2,800	14,000		60%
	Koira	Uttar Betkashi	4,050	8,000	1	100%
		Dakhin Betkashi	5,000	15,000	47	100%
		Moharajpur	5,000	20,500		80%
		Koira Sadar	6,204	25,000	5	50%
		Maheshwaripur	5,000	20,000		70%
Total			76,478	3,29,886		

² IOM conducted 2 assessments, the first from the 25-27 June and the second from the 15-17 August. These are available at <http://groups.google.com/group/shelter-working-group-bangladesh/web>

It also became clear that the extent of the damage to the flood protection embankments had created a situation where large tracts of land remained inundated with water. With the onset of the monsoon bringing more water and limiting repairs to the embankments this section of the affected population were then displaced on embankments unable to begin any kind of recovery for several months.

Aila has been described by several stakeholders as a “creeping emergency”. According to the government and UNDP, the majority of the estimated 4.8 million people originally affected by Aila have been able to self-recover (UNDP estimates a self recovery of 80%). At the same time, the IOM assessment found that 80% of those in the most affected areas were still living on the embankments and roads, with the rest migrating away from the area. This assessment claims that 150,000 people continue to reside on the embankments in very cramped conditions.

As of October 2009, almost 5 months after Aila struck, all of the agencies interviewed that were engaging in some form of response were of the view that the situation was worse than it had been when they had assessed the situation in the initial days after the cyclone.

1.2 Humanitarian Response in Bangladesh

In addition to a complicated disaster, the way humanitarian response is understood in Bangladesh also had a significant impact on response to Cyclone Aila.

The following extract from a recently released United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Bangladesh Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Natural Disasters (June 2009) explains how coordination of emergencies in Bangladesh is designed to happen;

Excerpt from UNCT Bangladesh SOP (June 2009)

“The two main coordination forums regarding disasters in Bangladesh are the Sub-Group on Disaster & Emergency Response (**DER**) of the Local Consultative Group (LCG) and the United Nations Disaster Management Team (**UNDMT**). The DER is a coordination forum comprising of representatives from the Government, UN, donors, NGOs and others in the humanitarian community. The DER Group is headed by the Secretary of Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM) and in his absence, Director General, Disaster Management Bureau (DMB), with WFP acting as the Secretariat of the Group. The Group meets on a monthly basis in non-emergency times, and more frequently during an emergency. The DER Group promotes active participation of the Government. The four main objectives of the Group are:

- Objective 1: Rapid, coordinated, and timely response to disasters.
- Objective 2: Establish an improved information system with continuous access for the main stakeholders.
- Objective 3: Enhance disaster preparedness and response capacity of the GoB and partners.
- Objective 4: Advocate for the preparedness and response needs of those vulnerable to or those affected by disasters

The UN Resident Coordinator is responsible for forming and leading a standing United Nations Disaster Management Team (**UNDMT**) in each disaster/emergency-prone country, including Bangladesh. The composition of the UNDMT is determined by the types of disasters/emergencies to which the country is prone and the organisations present in country. The team includes a core group consisting of the country-level representatives of FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, UNHCR and IOM. The team is a mechanism for co-ordination, providing a forum for information exchange, discussion and seeking consensus. It recognises the mandates of the various agencies. WFP acts as the Chair of UNDMT in Bangladesh.

Clusters:

The Cluster approach was proposed as a way of addressing gaps and strengthening the effectiveness of humanitarian response through building partnerships. In a sense, a **Cluster** is an **Emergency Sector Working Group**. Moreover, the cluster approach ensures predictability and accountability in international responses to humanitarian emergencies, by clarifying the division of labour among organizations, and better defining their roles and responsibilities within the different sectors of the response. It aims at making the international humanitarian community more structured, accountable and professional, so that it can be a better partner for host governments, local authorities and local civil society.

The aims of Clusters in general are as follows:

- Sufficient global capacity
- Predictable leadership
- Concept of partnerships
- Accountability
- Strategic field-level coordination and prioritization

This SOP is aimed at clarifying the role of the UN system in Bangladesh, operating within or without the rolling out of Humanitarian Clusters. An effort has been made to make the SOPs complimentary to the recommendations of Humanitarian Response Review (2005) and its subsequent revisions coordinated by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)."

One of the notable factors in regard to this set of SOPs is that it relates specifically to the UN agencies in Bangladesh and that it is not an IASC document. The SOPs also place a heavy emphasis on the government's DER group. Although the DER officially includes the boarder humanitarian community in Bangladesh "...donors, NGOs and others in the humanitarian community" the stakeholders have varying reports of the inclusiveness of this group in the way it actually functions. For instance, meetings are not held regularly unless there is an actual emergency.

Apart from two DER meetings held in late May to discuss the Aila situation, most stakeholders could not recall any over-arching coordination of the response from either the government or the UNDMT. Most equate this to the government decision not to declare an official emergency and ask for external help with the response. The implication is that the government's DER structure really only provides an overall coordination structure for response to an emergency of significant scale and scope for the government of declare a disaster and request the assistance of the international community. *This indicates a dichotomy between the value ascribed to coordination in a declared and an undeclared emergency.* That is, if coordination in emergency preparedness and response is truly valued, then this should be present regardless of the scale and whether international assistance is requested or provided.

In the absence of an IASC Humanitarian Country team, it also appears that the UNCT is often assumed to represent the "international humanitarian community" in Bangladesh. In the wake of the "informal" cluster roll out for cyclone Sidr, a re-invigorated emergency preparedness process in Bangladesh would have been expected. However, almost 2 years after Sidr, there have not been any consolidated, inter-agency contingency planning activities that have taken place. The SOPs have been designed by UNDP, WFP and UNICEF, without any reference to the role of INGOs and the IFRC/ICRC in the document.

1.3 Implications

Aila represents the kind of emergency that Bangladesh and perhaps many other countries, will probably need to respond to in the future. Growing risks of extreme climatic events in countries where many people live in vulnerable situations means that occurrences this kind of event will escalate. The government's reluctance to officially call on international assistance and the reluctance of the UN to draw attention to the gaps in the response are systemic issues that need to be addressed. At the country level, there is a need to develop systems of coordination that enable preparedness and response to transition seamlessly from small to medium to major emergencies. This requires greater focus on the institutional relationships that will manage preparedness, early warning, emergency response and recovery. As with Aila, the devastation of an event may not always be immediately clear.

As with other recent emergencies, (e.g. Nepal Koshi Floods 2008) Aila highlights the complexity of the IFRC relationship with the cluster system. Questions over when and how the IFRC can provide leadership to emergency shelter are particularly pronounced in the very important preparedness phase and in the event of undeclared disasters without an official cluster roll-out.

The limited government leadership in the transfer of shelter coordination to IFRC, and UNDP undertaking this role on behalf of the government highlights the difficulty of non-UN actors undertaking a leadership role in countries where there is no IASC Country Humanitarian Team. As highlighted in the review of the Koshi Floods in Nepal in 2008, the Aila experience suggests that globally IFRC should look at how emergency shelter coordination fits within a framework of "permanent clusters" (or in the case of Bangladesh "working groups") and country level preparedness. This needs to specifically address the appropriate relationship and protocols between the IFRC globally and country level clusters who lead shelter coordination during the non-emergency phases of the emergency response cycle.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background to the Cyclone Aila Emergency Shelter Coordination Group Review

Under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding between IFRC and UN OCHA³,
"subject to available resources, constitutional limits, and the rules and regulations of the Federation, the Federation will assume a coordination role for emergency shelter in specific emergency operations within an agreed coordination system".

Cyclone Aila hit the south-western coast of Bangladesh on the afternoon of 25th May 2009. Although Aila's storm center struck West Bengal in India, it caused great damage to property with significant loss of life within Bangladesh. The wind-driven tidal surge damaged many flood-control embankments and dykes, inundated vast areas of land and washed away thousands of homes. A total of 11 districts and 64 *Upazilas* were fully or partially affected. The Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM) Relief Control Room reported on May 27th that 829,000 people were taking refuge in cyclone shelters and that 610,000 houses had been damaged or destroyed. As of the 4th June 2009 it was reported that the death toll reached 180 people, 318,000 acres of cropping land had been damaged with a total of 4.8 million people affected.

³ IFRC-UNOCHA Memorandum of Understanding, signed September 19th 2006

The effects of Cyclone Aila were initially assumed to be minor as compared with that of cyclone Sidr which occurred in 2007. This assumption was made largely based on the fact that Aila was a Category 1 storm and did not impact with the wind speeds of Cyclone SIDR (Category 4) and the death toll was significantly lower. Cyclone Aila however did occur at high tide and as a consequence contributed to a significant tidal surge. These tidal surges breached and destroyed large sections of the system of embankments in the affected regions inundating vast areas of land with salt water. In many places this water was unable to drain away and these areas have remained submerged. In some of the areas where the embankments had been destroyed there are repeated tidal inundations preventing people from returning to their homes and cultivating their land. In the two worst affected districts, Khulna and Satkhira the initial, ongoing and repeated inundations have resulted in many of the majority bamboo and mud constructed houses to be completely and totally destroyed.

In Bangladesh, a shelter coordination group was established by IFRC after cyclone Sidr. After the emergency phase was over, IFRC handed over the coordination of the shelter response to UNDP (as agreed with UN Habitat - the focal point for early recovery in the Global Shelter Cluster). After Cyclone Aila occurred, IFRC in Bangladesh and Geneva contacted the Cyclone Sidr Coordination Group coordinator to offer their support to coordinate the shelter response to Cyclone Aila. The coordinator welcomed IFRC to send a team to coordinate the shelter response. A Coordinator from Netherlands Red Cross and an Information Manager from Canadian Red Cross arrived in Bangladesh on the 22nd of June. A coordination group for Aila was then established under the umbrella of the overall existing coordination group. The handover of coordination responsibilities from IFRC back to UNDP occurred on the 4th of August, 2009.

2.2 Objectives of this Review

The objectives of the review, as set out in the Terms of Reference are to:

1. Appraise the service provided by the International Federation as shelter coordinator to shelter coordination group participants – Government, UN agencies, Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (Bangladesh Red Crescent, IFRC, ICRC as appropriate), NGOs both national and international, and other actors;
2. Appraise the service provided by the shelter coordination group 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 Coordination Group, 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 coordination activities at both national and global levels.
5. Examine if there were aspects of the Federation's coordination group leadership which potentially might have or actually did compromise the mandate and principles of the Red Cross/Red Crescent.
6. Review and analyse how the International Federation and UNDP worked together before and after the cyclone Aila to trigger the creation of a new coordination group for Cyclone Aila.
7. Provide recommendation on how the International Federation can work with UNDP to improve shelter preparedness for future disasters in Bangladesh.

2.3 Methodology for this Review

This review took place in Dhaka and draws primarily on interviews with those involved in the emergency shelter response to Cyclone Aila. This included UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs, IFRC, donors and the government's Disaster Information Management Centre (DMIC). In the absence of any documentation analyzing the response these were lengthy interviews usually taking between 1.5 and 2 hours each. The key informants for the review were those proposed by the IFRC coordination team for Aila and the Geneva based IFRC shelter department as well as some other informants that emerged during the course of this research. The key informants are listed at Appendix A and comprised of 28 personal interviews, 8 email responses, and 5 phone interviews.

Not everyone who was asked to participate in the review accepted the invitation. The Resident Coordinator, who had previously met with the IFRC Head of Delegation in Bangladesh and the Coordinator of the IFRC team declined the invitation for an interview. Although not included in the list of key informants proposed by the IFRC team, meetings were unsuccessfully sought with the acting head of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP), a donor funded project within the government's Disaster Management Bureau (DMB), and the Director of the GoB Disaster Management Bureau.

Reference documentation included the Aila Shelter Coordination group google group site, the MoU between OCHA and the IFRC on emergency shelter, Humanitarian Reform documents, reviews of recent IFRC shelter coordination deployments (particularly Sidr 2007 and Koshi 2008), the recently released UNCT SOPs for Natural Disasters and the emails surrounding the request for the deployment of the IFRC team.

At the advice of the Head of the IFRC Delegation in Bangladesh a field trip to the affected areas was not part of this review because the focus was on the coordination of the response and all of the key actors involved were available in Dhaka.

2.4 Humanitarian Reform, the Cluster Approach and the role of IFRC in Emergency Shelter

The humanitarian reform process launched by the international humanitarian community in 2005 has sought to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian response through greater predictability, accountability and partnership. Through this effort the international humanitarian community seeks to reach more beneficiaries, with a more comprehensive needs-based relief and protection, in a more effective and timely manner.

The key elements of humanitarian reform are: (1) the 'cluster approach'; (2) a strengthened Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) system; (3) more adequate, timely, flexible and effective humanitarian financing; and (4) the development of strong partnerships between UN and non-UN actors.⁴ Clusters are essentially emergency sector working groups which seek to deliver: (1) high standards of predictability, accountability and partnership in all sectors or areas of activity; (2) more strategic responses; and (3) better prioritization of available resources.

Efforts to introduce the humanitarian reform concepts in Bangladesh took place in 2006 and 2007 as part of the WFP support to the DER. On the Humanitarian Reform website Bangladesh is identified as one of the countries which has a Resident Coordinator (RC) but no Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) that has used the cluster approach to respond to a major new emergency for cyclone Sidr in 2007. Those involved in the response to Cyclone Sidr have variously described the cluster approach adopted as "informal" or "local". As such, there is some confusion about the linkages of the Sidr response to the global cluster system. This

⁴ <http://ochaonline.un.org/roap/WhatWeDo/HumanitarianReform/tabid/4487/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

confusion is not surprising given the relatively new nature of the cluster approach and the short history of humanitarian reform⁵.

In terms of how to introduce the cluster approach at the country level, the IASC has agreed that this should be a field-driven process which allows flexibility in application depending on the country context as outlined in the IASC Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response. In the 69th IASC Working Group meeting in Rome on 5-7 November 2007, the Working Group "Requested global cluster leads to assist humanitarian country teams in assessing additional resources or support needed to adapt their working methods to conform to the cluster approach, and requested OCHA to facilitate the development of a global cluster implementation plan and to provide by March 2008 an update on roll-out plans, based on information provided to the ERC by Humanitarian Coordinators and humanitarian country teams."

This allows for global cluster leads to support preparedness to ensure that when clusters are rolled out in emergencies, they do so in a smooth, predictable way that is inclusive of all stakeholders.

At the global level the Emergency Shelter Cluster is co-chaired by UNHCR and IFRC. UNHCR leads the Emergency Shelter Cluster for displaced populations resulting from conflict situations while IFRC is convener of the Emergency Shelter Cluster in disaster situations. Under a Memorandum of Understanding between the IFRC and OCHA, the IFRC is committed to "assume a coordination role for emergency shelter in specific emergency operations within an agreed coordination system"⁶ The Federation's commitment to "take a leadership role in the provision of emergency shelter in natural disasters"⁷ expressly excludes conflict situations which are the domain of the UNHCR.

Emergency Shelter is defined as: "the provision of basic and immediate shelter needs necessary to ensure the survival of disaster affected persons, including "rapid response" solutions such as tents, insulation materials, other temporary emergency shelter solutions, and shelter related non-food items." This definition explicitly excludes transitional and permanent housing.⁸

3. EMERGENCY SHELTER in RESPONSE to CYCLONE AILA

3.1 Shelter Coordination Prior to Cyclone Aila

The emergency shelter cluster led by IFRC was initiated after Cyclone Sidr in 2007. Once the emergency phase was over, IFRC handed over the coordination of the shelter response to UNDP as agreed with UN Habitat (the lead for early recovery in the Global Shelter Cluster). The UNDP led shelter working group lay dormant from some time but was convened again in April 2009 to engage in monsoon preparedness under the leadership of the DER.

"I do attend those meetings...it seems the UNDP has a leadership problem because most of the actors involved in shelter do not attend the meetings. Only about 15 people go to the meetings that are lead by [UNDP] and UNDP is not taking a strong role to set an agenda for the group... [we] have already made strong comments to the group that it is clear that the concept of a "cluster" is not understood." (INGO Shelter Partner)

⁵ This is also noted by the IFRC review of the Emergency Shelter Response to the Koshi Floods in Nepal in 2008.

⁶ Memorandum of Understanding between International federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs In regards to the International Federation Assuming a Leading Role in Emergency Shelter in Natural Disasters. Article 6.4.

⁷ Op cit article 1.1.

⁸ Op cit article 5.

Under this arrangement the mandate for the SWG was very specific to monsoon preparedness and the group was not expected to coordinate actual emergencies nor engage in preparedness for other kinds of emergencies.

The SWG was considered by UNDP to be distinct from the “Shelter Cluster” established to respond to Cyclone Sidr. However, it is difficult to separate these two entities because they are conflated in the minds of most of the shelter partners in Bangladesh.

Some areas of concern regarding this SWG were identified by shelter actors in Bangladesh as follows:

- **Inclusiveness:** some organizations indicated that, rather than include all actors involved in shelter preparedness and response, the lead agency “picks and chooses” who will be involved in the group. Some actors even suggest that the group comprises primarily of those organizations with some kind of funding relationship with the lead agency (e.g. as pre-qualified NGO partners).

“[We were] not really involved in the ongoing group [because we were not invited]. Recently [we were] invited to one meeting (September 10th) ...[The] general impression of UNDP is that they are a very slow moving organization and not suited to moving rapidly as is required in this emergency context....[we are] not an official partner of UNDP, not one of the pre-qualified NGOs, so no official relationship. ... It is our impression the UNDP doesn't try to coordinate all shelter partners, only their own official partners.”
(INGO Shelter Partner)

- **Coordination Style:** Shelter stakeholders felt that the SWG was organized as a forum where shelter partners shared what they were doing and received instruction from the lead agency. This was not understood to be a forum of equal partners who could come together to share knowledge resources and capacities to determine how to respond to the shelter challenges collectively. This was particularly evident in the shelter design process where it was assumed that the lead agency would make the final decision on the shelter design.

“The perceived lack of ownership from the government causes concern and frustration....whilst the government might have been present for a couple of meetings, they do not take a lead and often don't stay long (and this is when they turn up at all). It is in the non-emergency times that there should be engagement with the government on the issues related to shelter because in the emergency time we can understand that the government doesn't have time.”
(Donor)

- **Government Involvement:** Shelter actors consider the buy-in and ownership of government essential to effective shelter preparedness and / or response. The limited government involvement in the SWG was seen by shelter partners as a failure of the lead agency to involve the government in the SWG activities.

At the time of writing this review, the SWG was seeking approval of the government to continue as a “permanent cluster” and engage in preparedness activities for all future emergencies. This would enable a more systematic approach to capacity building in coordination methods and user friendly information management tools.

3.2 Emergency Shelter Coordination post Aila and prior to IFRC Deployment

The IFRC coordination team did not arrive in Bangladesh until 4 weeks after Cyclone Aila struck. The time between the onset of Aila and deployment of the IFRC team was longer than is desired or normally expected. This was primarily because the devastation caused by Aila was initially underestimated by all actors and

because the government didn't declare an emergency which would have triggered the activation of the cluster system.

Given the delay in deployment it is useful to review what emergency shelter coordination efforts were underway prior to the arrival of the IFRC team.

- Initial information was shared by the government's Disaster Emergency Response group (DER). In a special DER meeting on the 30th of May the government shared their initial information on the extent of the damage caused by Cyclone Alia and requested agencies to inform the DMIC of their activities.
- The UNDP led Shelter Working Group (SWG) for monsoon preparedness met in the days following the cyclone and agreed that it was useful for the agencies present to share information about how they were responding to Cyclone Aila. Those shelter partners involved in this meeting and one subsequent meeting indicated that although these meetings enabled information to be shared any coordination was limited.
- Some of the actors involved in the shelter response were not involved in the SWG because they were not invited. These agencies reported that the first indication that they had of the coordination of the emergency shelter response came after the arrival of the IFRC team.

"The first meeting we were invited to was after the IFRC team arrived. We hadn't been invited to any meetings about shelter for the Aila affected population by UNDP. There had been DER meetings to discuss the emergency response in general, but nothing specific to shelter. The impression that we had was that UNDP wasn't doing much because the government didn't declare an emergency."

(INGO shelter partner)

"We were involved in the WASH cluster, but had not been involved in any shelter coordination activities for Aila. There were some general DMB meetings but nothing related specifically to shelter... As far as [we] were aware, the Shelter Group was closed after Sidr. We were not aware of UNDP having ongoing shelter work before Aila... but we only became aware that a Shelter Group was operational after the IFRC team arrived because we met them at the WASH cluster meeting."

(NGO shelter partner)

With this backdrop, it is probably fair to claim that there was limited effort to coordinate the emergency shelter response to Cyclone Aila prior to the arrival of the IFRC coordination team 4 weeks after Cyclone Alia occurred.

3.3 IFRC Shelter Coordination

3.3.1 Deployment

"The deployment was quite difficult with many challenges due to existing coordination structure of the UNDP and its relationship with the Government of Bangladesh."

(IFRC Shelter Team Coordinator).

On the 10th of June, 2 weeks after Cyclone Aila, when the extent of the damage was becoming clear, the IFRC shelter delegate in Bangladesh (working on recovery from Cyclone Sidr) received a request for the IFRC to provide shelter assistance to the Aila response. After further communication with UNDP on the 12th of June, the shelter delegate suggested that, the Head of Delegation investigate this request for support in line with the IFRC commitment to provide coordination of an emergency shelter response. .

After ascertaining its standing capacity to provide coordination support, IFRC in Bangladesh and Geneva extended an offer of coordination support to the UNDP coordinator of the Shelter Working Group for Monsoon Preparedness (SWG) on the 16th June. The SWG coordinator confirmed that UNDP was not going to coordinate any emergency response to Aila and welcomed the IFRC to send a team to for this purpose. Within one week a two person IFRC team comprising of a coordinator and an information manager met with UNDP in Bangladesh.

Confusion surrounds this deployment. The offers of assistance to coordinate the emergency shelter response were extended through phone calls between the Head of the IFRC delegation in Bangladesh and the IFRC Shelter Department in Geneva to the coordinator of the UNDP led SWG. There is no documentation to confirm that the UNDP had accepted the offer of IFRC support.

Upon their arrival in Dhaka, the IFRC team was positively received by the key UNDP staff involved in the SWG (UNDP and the GoB officially co-chaired the SWG, however GoB activity in the group was limited and UNDP was the agency taking the lead role). In the initial meetings it was decided that the IFRC team would convene an Aila coordination group as a sub-group of the ongoing Shelter Working Group for monsoon preparedness. This would remain under, but separate from, the SWG with IFRC supporting a range of coordination and information management services for this Aila dedicated sub-group.

At this point the UNUNRCO became aware of the deployment of the IFRC team. In spite of meetings with the Resident Coordinator's Office and the RC herself, the IFRC team report being unable to provide leadership to the emergency shelter response. Some of the reasons the team gave for not being able to provide comprehensive leadership to the shelter response included; being omitted from key meetings, having the agreed Aila Emergency shelter website shut-down without warning or information and an absence of follow-up from UNDP on decisions agreed with the government counterparts.

It needs to be noted that aspects of the IFRC shelter deployment for cyclone Sidr in 2007 had created tension between IFRC and the UNRCO even though the relationship between the UNDP and IFRC shelter coordination teams is positive. The nature and origin of this tension have not been specifically documented but the shelter stakeholders were not oblivious to this tension.

In fact, the IFRC review of the Emergency Shelter Deployment for Cyclone Sidr recommended that *"Agreement should be made in writing before capacity is deployed"*⁹. It is unclear why this recommendation was not taken into consideration by the IFRC in Geneva and Dhaka in relation to the Aila deployment. A recent change in the Head of Delegation in Dhaka in the weeks prior to Aila could explain why this protocol was not followed. This also highlights a broader concern in the humanitarian sector that the attention to analysis and learning post emergency is not given adequate attention.

The confusion regarding the deployment of the IFRC team could have its origins in a lack of understanding by key stakeholders (particularly UNDP and UNUNRCO) of the designated IFRC role in relation to emergency shelter. This may extend to the provision of IFRC support to leadership in an emergency shelter response if a coordination vacuum is identified at the country level regardless of whether or not a formal cluster system has been rolled-out.

The confusion in the deployment of the IFRC team may also have had its origins in a lack of clarity within UNDP about the role that the SWG would play in response to Aila. This varied from a perception that UNDP

⁹ A Review of the IFRC-led Shelter Coordination Group; Bangladesh Cyclone Sidr Response 2007-2008.

was responsible to coordinate the SWG in early recovery shelter and monsoon preparedness but that they did not have the capacity or mandate for emergency shelter in response to Aila. At the same time, there was a perception that UNDP had convened the SWG meetings to "...take up 3 urgent responsibilities to address Cyclone Aila situation" that included a strategy group (to coordinate clusters and devise action plans in discussion with GoB), a technical group (to coordinate and establish guidelines, time lines and objectives of different shelters), and an information and advocacy group.¹⁰

They tried a lot, the IFRC team.....perhaps it was an issue of competitiveness between UNDP and IFRC over control. UNDP thought that the disaster was over and they should take back control....UNDP appear to feel threatened by the IFRC coordination....it appeared that UNDP caused [the IFRC] a lot of problems.
(Shelter Partner)

It appears as though the deployment of the IFRC emergency shelter coordination team did not receive sufficient attention from the UN and related to this is the failure to secure a deployment request in writing by the IFRC. However, in spite of the confusion about the requests for deployment, it still remains unclear why the IFRC coordination resources, once in country, were frustrated rather than welcomed.

3.3.2 Length of deployment (timing of arrival and departure)

The IFRC emergency shelter coordination team was in Bangladesh for only 6 weeks, arriving one month after the cyclone. The time of arrival is late when compared to most deployments but this was related to the nature of the emergency (the impact of Aila was not immediately known), how the situation was understood by the GoB and other stakeholders (those not in the affected areas did not perceive the severity of the disaster, especially compared to Sidr, there was an expectation that the water would soon recede and people would move home), the fact that an official emergency had not been declared by the GoB, and a lack of clarity about what emergency shelter coordination arrangements would be offered at the country level. The late arrival of the IFRC shelter team is not a reflection of inefficiency on the part of the Federation. Once confirmation was received from the UNDP SWG coordinator, the IFRC team arrived within a week and began supporting coordination activities immediately.

"The IFRC team arrived too late to coordinate the emergency response; they were required immediately after the cyclone when everyone was running around trying to do something with whatever resources they had and there was no coordination at all....they arrived after nearly 4-5 weeks late and 4 weeks is a long time in an emergency." INGO Shelter Partner

Although most shelter partners found the deployment of the IFRC team useful, their late arrival critically impacted the utility of the support that they could offer. When the most critical initial phase of emergency shelter provision had not been coordinated at all there is some legitimacy to the skepticism surrounding the delayed deployment of the IFRC coordination team.

"It would have been more helpful if they had come earlier...there was more that could have been done....e.g. mapping of cyclone shelters; where they were, how many they could accommodate, services they had (sanitation, stockpiles, water storage, space for livestock...)"
NGO Shelter Partner

There is a general consensus amongst the shelter partners that although most of the displaced people have some kind of emergency shelter (i.e. a roof over their heads constructed using a combination of donated &

¹⁰ Email communication dated 11 June 2009.

salvaged materials) they also agree that the emergency shelter efforts were relatively ad hoc. There is a general agreement that some form of coordination in the early weeks after the cyclone would have improved the response.

“The team should have arrived earlier; like all of us, we started too late. This would have helped with raising awareness among donors about how bad the situation was and also created more of a sense of legitimacy for working in the affected areas.”
(INGO Shelter Partner)

There is far less consensus over the appropriateness of the departure of the IFRC team. Most of the shelter partners felt that the IFRC team had left prematurely when the emergency phase was not over. These shelter partners felt that the IFRC team could have played a valuable role in ongoing analysis of the needs of displaced people for emergency shelter and identification of the gaps in the response - which could potentially be used in advocating for funding.

“Also it seemed that the IFRC team left very suddenly...we assumed that UNDP no longer wanted them here, although we didn't really know anything about this.”
NGO Shelter Partner

There were some shelter partners who saw the absence of funds supporting the shelter response to Aila as an indication that there was nothing to coordinate and thus implied that there was no further need for the IFRC coordination team.

They were not here for very long, but as it turned out, even if they had stayed longer, without the funding there was not much work to be coordinated.
(INGO Shelter Partner).

The team should have stayed longer....the “emergency” is not over, so why have they left....the mapping of work should be ongoing and we are not aware of this being ongoing from UNDP.
(NGO Shelter Partner).

Following the departure of the IFRC team, a number of shelter partners expressed their concern over who would continue with the coordination efforts after the departure of the IFRC team. This concern has been warranted with only one meeting taking place, on September 10th, more than four weeks after the IFRC team's departure, and no other meetings since then.

It was unclear who would keep the group moving after [the IFRC team] left...and this has been an issue.....from our point of view we definitely would have appreciated the continuation of the group.
(INGO Shelter Partner).

3.3.3 Support to the IFRC team by the IFRC Delegation in Bangladesh.

The IFRC coordination team was well supported logistically and organizationally by the Federation's delegation in Bangladesh. Although office space was utilized by the IFRC coordination team, they decided not to use the Federation's premises for Aila coordination meetings. This was an attempt to maintain a clear distinction between the work of the coordination team and the response efforts of the IFRC and the BDRCS.

The IFRC coordination team, the IFRC delegation staff and the BDRCS all report a positive working relationship and no confusion in roles. As the coordination team was brought in specifically for the purpose of coordination and dedicated exclusively to this task, there was also no confusion amongst the shelter partners.

The Federation's delegation is confident that the relationship issues with UNDP and the UNRCO that influenced the effectiveness of the coordination team will not have any effect on the reputation of the IFRC in Bangladesh. This was attributed to the clear firewall that was maintained between the work of the coordination team and that of the Federation delegation in Bangladesh.

3.3.4 Service provided by the IFRC team

All of the partners involved in the emergency shelter response to Aila that contributed to this review appreciated the efforts of the IFRC coordination team and found their contribution useful.

An important feature of the positive perception of the IFRC Shelter coordination team was that they exclusively dedicated themselves to the coordination role. This made a big difference to the effectiveness of coordination. Most emergency shelter partners saw the arrival of the IFRC team as the beginning of coordination efforts.¹¹

The improved quality of coordination services provided by the IFRC team was accompanied by greater information management and an increased flow of communication. Some partners did note that they found the google group to be un-user friendly especially in the field where the internet was slow.

Certainly while they were here the email communication about shelter increased and this was positive, then they left and things slowed down over Ramazan and Eid and since then [there has been] very little communication.
(Shelter Donor)

During the deployment of the IFRC team the meetings were regular and frequent and there was an attempt to provide information products that would minimize the duplication and gaps in the response. Some partners felt that more effort could have been made to involve the government in the coordination process.

"Their [IFRC] approach was very good, meetings were regular and frequent (weekly). They did a good job of trying to ensure that there were no gaps or duplication..."
(INGO Shelter Partner).

According to shelter partners, the IFRC team actively sought information, their management of the information was good and the minutes of meetings were produced immediately and disseminated.

"It was a useful service in terms of highlighting the gaps and trying to prevent the overlaps."
(INGO Shelter Partner.)

It was generally felt that the IFRC team members were good communicators and knew what information products and maps were useful to the shelter partners however some partners thought that the maps could have been made more useful.

¹¹ The exception to this is the ECHO Shelter Coordination Group.

"They provided good mapping, a really good and helpful service."
(NGO Shelter Partner).

The IFRC team members were found by partners to be collaborative and easy to work with and were considered useful in moving the process of agreement on shelter designs forward.

"There was a marked increase in activity when they arrived and their departure was sudden. Things were going strong and there was lots of activity in the group. When they left, the focus of activities was still on relief. Their ongoing support of the process of getting consensus on the design of shelters for the recovery phase would have been useful, some progress was made on this but it wasn't complete....we need commitment early on this to ensure proposals are in time to get funding...and the design was still not yet finalized by the group....it appeared that the Sidr designs hadn't been picked up [since Sidr] until [the IFRC team] arrived....then we began updating the work done at the time of Sidr to use for Aila.....why are we still reinventing the wheel?"
(INGO Shelter Partner).

The shelter coordination service faced several challenges from the outset as a result of the late deployment and compounded by the limited duration of the deployment to Bangladesh. Given these constraints the quality of coordination service was limited by:

- The absence of a consolidated shelter needs assessment. Partner specific assessments that had been done in the immediate aftermath of Aila were very difficult to combine into a consolidated needs and baseline assessment because of their different methodologies and parameters measured.
- There was no clearly articulated emergency shelter strategy within which the shelter working group was operating. This would have assisted in defining a beneficiary targeting strategy which would have been particularly useful given the limited resources.

Emergency Shelter Response Strategy

An emergency shelter response strategy enables estimates to be made regarding:

- How many households the shelter group can expect to support
- Which families will receive support and why (targeting)
- What form shelter support will take
- For how long the shelter support will be provided

Without a strategic framework for the response the deployment of information products becomes limited to tracking distributions of partners. This limitation of the scope of their coordination efforts caused frustrations to the IFRC team who had hoped to provide greater depth of coordination.

IM support in the shelter coordination group (within the constraints) consisted mainly of tracking distributions, producing reports on gaps in coverage, creating maps for damage and coverage and taking detailed minutes at coordination meetings to ensure the coordination activities remained transparent.

3.3.4 Relationships

The IFRC emergency shelter coordination team was commended for their communication skills and collaborative relationship building within the emergency shelter group and amongst other key stakeholders. This was enhanced by the fact that the IFRC emergency shelter coordinator had worked in Bangladesh previously and had some knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of key players. It does not appear that

the team did anything that contributed to tension amongst the emergency shelter partners including the UNDP or the GoB.

UNDP

In the absence of sufficient capacity of UN Habitat in Bangladesh and with the IFRC having a mandate for emergency shelter (not early recovery and beyond) UNDP took over the cyclone Sidr shelter cluster and re-activated this group as a “shelter working group for monsoon preparedness”(also referred to as the SWG) in April 2009. There are some indications that this SWG will continue and has the potential to become something like a permanent shelter cluster. Presently the linkages between the activities of the SWG and emergency response are unclear and would need to be clarified under a “permanent cluster” arrangement.

At a personal level, the IFRC team maintained good, professional relations with the UNDP shelter team throughout their deployment. The UNDP team acknowledged the benefit of having a team dedicated to the role of coordination and the professionalism of the team.

At an organizational level the IFRC relations with UNDP and the office of the Resident Coordinator were affected by the confusion surrounding the deployment of the IFRC shelter coordination team. This was evidenced by a failure of UNDP to empower the IFRC team in regards to key coordination meetings (i.e. the Strategic Advisory Group for Aila), follow- up with the government and enable access to information platforms (i.e. the shelter coordination website). This was also complicated by a perception of UNDP that they were responsible for the review and approval of shelter designs being developed by the Aila coordination group.

DMIC

The Disaster Management Information Centre (DMIC) is part of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) - a donor funded project within the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM). In an effort to strengthen emergency response, the DMIC provides a range of GIS mapping and database services that can be used to convey information related to early warning, impact and response. Although part of the government ministry, the DMIC is responsive to requests from all stakeholders for information products.

DMIC reported a positive, collaborative working relationship with the IFRC coordination team. The relationship worked well largely because the IFRC team was specific and detailed about the information products they wanted generated to assist in coordination and gap analysis.

Government

Active government involvement in the sector working groups or clusters is extremely important to ensure the best possible use of resources and avoid parallel coordination systems. The shelter sector in Bangladesh struggled in this regard because there is no obvious government counterpart and no corresponding Local Consultative Group.¹² During the response to cyclone Sidr in 2007 the lack of a government counterpart was also identified as an impediment to shelter coordination.¹³ The DMB has recently been identified as the government shelter counterpart. While this appears promising the actual role the DMB will have in the SWG is still to be addressed.

¹² For information on the Local Consultative Groups in Bangladesh, see <http://www.lcgbangladesh.org>

¹³ A Review of the IFRC-led Shelter Coordination Group; Bangladesh Cyclone Sidr Response 2007-2008.

During the short duration of their time in Bangladesh the IFRC team managed to garner government support for carrying out a consolidated shelter needs assessment of the displaced population. This joint assessment did not proceed because it required the support and engagement of the UNDP led SWG and this was not forthcoming.

“Even [in the initial weeks after Aila struck] when the UNDP group met to share the feedback from the visit to the field, the government representative wasn’t there....so UNDP was discussing the serious needs and the government wasn’t present. In all of the meetings I went to since Aila I didn’t see the govt representative, this was in contrast to WASH and Health where the government counter part plays an active role and co-chairs the meeting....this shows a failure on the part of UNDP to motivate the government involvement as well as failure on the part of the government to take an interest.”
(INGO Shelter Partner).

Other “clusters”/sectors

In the absence of an official appeal for humanitarian assistance by the government there was no overarching structure for cross-sector coordination of the response to cyclone Aila. In spite of the general feeling that OCHA could fill a coordination vacuum in Bangladesh it was also noted that there was no intention of the UNRCO to utilize OCHA capacity for short term missions for specific emergencies.

“No one really knows why [OCHA is not here]. We suspect that UNDP, WFP and IFRC are so strong that they didn’t give OCHA the space to lead.”
(INGO Shelter Partner)

In the absence of OCHA, the OCHA role is carried out by the UNRCO. As “non-official” emergency shelter leads the IFRC was not invited to participate in any inter-cluster meetings and struggled to obtain information regarding inter-cluster linkages and contact information for other cluster leads. A positive relationship was developed with the WASH coordinator however this was based largely on personal contact and a mutual willingness for collaboration rather than any formal mechanism. Linkages between WASH and Shelter included information sharing meetings and IM/database support provided by the shelter IM to the WASH support staff.

The importance of linkages between clusters for a cohesive response and the inadequacy of formal mechanisms were highlighted by the shelter partners, some of whom were working in more than one sector.

This is important, [we were] involved in the WASH, Shelter and Health groups...but any linkages were informal, there was no clear overall structure coordinating the response.
(NGO Shelter Partner).

3.4 Effectiveness of the Emergency Shelter Response

There was a consensus amongst the shelter partners that the conditions for the displaced people on the embankments and roadsides are unacceptable. Although most people did have some kind of a roof over their heads the situation is “ad hoc” and would not conform to any basic international standards such as the Sphere standards.

“Basically what people have is a shelter that has been self-constructed of thatch, sticks and plastic sheeting (CGI maybe if they have it) usually about 1.5 x 2.5 meters of space and this might hold a family of several

generations.

The situation has not changed much (not improved) from what we saw on 26th May, with people still living on roads and embankments...no one knows when the embankments will be repaired due to the monsoon and it is expected that most people will remain on the embankments for another 3-4 months at least."

(INGO Shelter Partner)

There is also consensus that the emergency shelter response is bound to be challenging given the limited space available for shelters to be erected, the reluctance to move too far away from their submerged land and a protracted monsoon season. For example, people from the most affected areas of Khulna and Shatkira will be unable to return to their land and rebuild their houses until the water recedes and the embankments are rebuilt. At the time of this evaluation they had already been displaced for almost 5 months.

"[People are living in] very temporary, ad hoc arrangements but there is no where reasonably for the people to go to. Some people stayed in the communal shelters for a month or more, but then they had to leave so that school could resume in mid September.....People can't go back this is the main problem.....Waiting for the water to recede or be removed, don't know when this will be, people are in a very vulnerable condition."

(Shelter Partner).

"It has been Ad Hoc. Everyone appears to have some kind of shelter, but the conditions are almost inhumane....there are serious constraints....space on the embankments....it is difficult to imagine the situation getting better until the embankments are re-built and the water is pumped out.....People are still really suffering. Recently water is finally receding (Oct 10th), but up until now it had actually been increasing.....The situation would improve if resources were available and if it had been better organized from the start."

(INGO Shelter Partner).

"...in reality, people have been living on the embankments in temporary arrangements, there is no where for them to go, it is a much worse situation than Sidr because people can't go home....at the same time they have no livelihoods opportunities and they can do nothing but sit and be depressed."

(NGO Shelter Partner).

The situation in the Aila affected areas has caused some agencies to acknowledge that there is a need for new solutions to emergency shelter in Bangladesh. With the vulnerability of Bangladesh to rising sea levels and extreme weather events many of the shelter partners viewed cyclone Aila as a precedent to an escalation of this kind of humanitarian emergencies in the future.

"There is a clear need for some kind of temporary shelter that goes beyond just giving people a shelter option that is more than just a sheet of plastic."

(INGO Shelter Partner)

Some of the shelter partners involved in providing emergency shelter also noted problems with the procurement of quality materials in the early stages of the emergency. Partners reported great variability in the quality of plastic sheeting that in some cases was already deteriorating within 6 weeks of distribution.

Those displaced people who had the means to find other places to stay (in towns or cities) have done so and according to IOM (August 2009) this amounted to approximately 20% of those originally displaced. It is expected that these people may return to the affected areas as the waters begin to recede at a time when rebuilding can almost commence. This will result again in a swelling of the numbers of people on the embankments.

Child friendly spaces established by Save the Children (UK) were originally planned for 1 month but many of them have been operational for almost 5 months. Schools in the most affected areas have not yet opened. Save the Children (UK) estimates that around 70% of schools in Dacop *upazila* and 85% of schools in Koyra *upazila* remain under water where they are running 50 temporary learning spaces.

3.5 Improving the Response

In spite of the challenges inherent in the nature of the Aila emergency, shelter partners agreed that the quality of the response could have been improved with:

- dedicated coordination of the emergency shelter needs from the outset, and
- Joint planning in the preparedness phase.

Joint planning could have addressed:

- Which agencies already had presence and partners in what areas
- What emergency shelter materials were stockpiled and available
- The minimum shelter kit design
- The review of the quality of local suppliers of materials
- The mapping of the existing cyclone shelters (capacity and provisions)
- The standing emergency shelter coordination arrangements
- The development of a consolidated/inter-agency shelter needs assessment
- The distribution amongst partners of useful IM products to be deployed
- Training on the use of google groups

Attention to these aspects during preparedness would also have provided an opportunity to draw attention to the importance of community participation in emergency and longer term shelter provision. By-and-large it seems as though community consultation was largely absent in the shelter response to Aila.

3.5.1 Observations of shelter partners

- For a disaster such as Aila, providing adequate emergency shelter in a cramped space is the major challenge.
- There is a need for a more-coordinated emergency shelter response and greater consistency in terms of what is provided, quality of materials and also, for the transition phase, shelter design.
- Community participation and consultation was absent in the response.
- A consolidated shelter needs assessment is essential. An agreed assessment framework would not preclude agency specific information requirements but would enable an overall picture of the shelter needs of the affected community to be obtained.
- An environmental perspective was missing from the response.
- Shelter coordination would be enhanced if there was field level presence while maintaining a central team in Dhaka.
- Resources will remain an issue in future disasters of this scale if the government remains reluctant to declare an emergency. This means that shelter partners will need to be aware of this and prepare appropriate solutions.

ECHO Shelter Partners' Coordination Forum

"As operations continued we discovered a separate coordination group of ECHO funded agencies that were capturing and sharing information in a more 'traditional cluster' sense. The UNDP was unaware of these activities until informed by the IFRC team."

IFRC Shelter Team Coordinator

ECHO took an “emergency funding decision” to fund 8 agencies in the areas of shelter, food and water from June to December 2009. As a donor exclusively dedicated to humanitarian relief, ECHO only has a mandate to fund emergency and transitional shelter (not recovery). ECHO does not routinely set up coordination groups, but it does recognise the value of coordination in ensuring an effective response. Because of this, ECHO’s partnership agreement requires the partners that it funds to engage in the coordination forums available at the country level.

ECHO observed that the emergency shelter response after cyclone Sidr was ‘ad hoc’ and inconsistent. This caused tension amongst assisted communities and hindered the effective use of resources in the response. The agencies funded by ECHO expressed a desire to have a forum to share ideas, information and experiences from the field in practical way. ECHO supported this suggestion and helped to facilitate a coordination forum for ECHO partners. The ECHO shelter coordination forum is viewed as “quick and dirty” as compared to more formal coordination mechanisms (i.e. the WASH cluster) but it has been dynamic and flexible in sharing information and ensuring a common approach in the provision of emergency shelter.

4. CHALLENGES

4.1 Status of the Emergency

Cyclone Aila occurred within 6 months of the election of the first government after the care-taker period. Even though the storm was obviously outside of the control of any government, there was a political concern that officially launching an appeal for external assistance to respond to this a disaster of this magnitude by the government would reflect poorly on the administration. This timing along with the fact that the storm appeared to cause far less damage than Cyclone Sidr prompted the government not to declare an emergency and ask for international assistance. The fact that Aila was not officially declared as an emergency by the GoB impacted how coordination and the funding of the response unfolded.

“The government was new, ministries etc didn’t know how to keep their political standards and relate to the donors, [and they] thought that their credibility would grow if they faced the disaster on their own.”
(Shelter Donor).

A coordination structure for managing disasters does exist in Bangladesh. The case of Aila does however seem to illustrate that the coordination instruments will not be activated unless the government declares an emergency. This seems to be true for the UN system in Bangladesh also.¹⁴

“For Aila nothing was formalized because the government didn’t declare an emergency.”
(INGO Shelter Partner).

Without an IASC Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), the UNRC appears to be the only avenue to bring to the attention of the government the seriousness of the situation and to approach the international community for assistance. Most of the INGOs and NGOs thought the devastation caused by Aila was significant and the need extended far beyond the resources and coordination capacity available at the country level.

“The government didn’t declare an emergency...maybe the UN thought they should have but didn’t want a disagreement...without the emergency there was no appeal and thus no money...also a lack of legitimacy for

¹⁴ A separate issue is the capacity of the government to fully undertake the coordination. Cyclone Sidr illustrated that capacity was lacking. This is further frustrated when officials in key government posts change frequently.

our work perceived by some.”
(INGO Shelter Partner).

“If the government isn’t interested to entertain the international community, the then challenge is for the international community to clearly establish its own role.”
(Shelter Donor).

In addition to being an un-declared emergency, Aila also turned out to be a “creeping emergency” – that is an emergency that worsened over time. So while Aila was a relatively unspectacular category 1 cyclone the longer term devastation has been severe. The unspectacular nature of the storm and the lack of a request for humanitarian assistance limited the media attention and this in turn limited funding.

Almost two months after Aila struck, the government with the support of the UN presented the need for additional donor assistance. This was mostly directed at large infrastructure repairs to embankments and roads. Some donor funds were pledged as a result of this request but it is unclear what the donor commitment to the rebuilding of embankments and roads has been.

The perceived inability of the GoB to declare an emergency in the aftermath of Aila is a consequence of the absence of a well functioning coordination structure. This resulted in a lack of international attention and consequently a lack of funds.

4.2 Contingency Planning

Shelter partners cited a range of different “contingency planning” activities that had taken place since the response to Cyclone Sidr. This revealed that there had not been a consolidated, inclusive, inter-agency IASC or humanitarian reform contingency planning process.. It also revealed that the exercises undertaken were started but generally not completed. These include:

- DMB exercise that included some NGOs under the previous DG (not really concluded and doesn’t seem to have moved forward)
- DFID conducted a post-Sidr ‘lessons learned’ exercise but nothing seems to have come out of this.
- The Shelter Working Group committed to publish a booklet on lessons learned from Sidr but this hasn’t eventuated yet.
- UNDP held a lessons learned workshop for some partners but not all the actors involved in the shelter response were included.

INGOs and NGOs involved in shelter revised their own planning activities post Sidr. They often shared information on their response capacity with their peers but the absence of sector-wide preparedness process inhibits the speed and quality of a coordinated response. The recent experiences of the cyclone Sidr response provided an opportunity for the SWG to improve the response to future emergencies. Unfortunately, this had not happened by the time Aila struck and the quality of the response suffered accordingly.

Joint planning by all of the agencies that will respond in the event of an emergency can contribute to a predictable, coordinated response for small, medium and large scale emergencies regardless of the deployment of surge capacity. Without robust planning processes, agencies will respond as best they can but without the benefit of an overall guiding framework. In such situations, the response is likely to be *ad hoc* with important aspects often overlooked (i.e. cross-cutting issues such as environment or gender and vulnerable groups)

4.3 Government Counterpart

In the absence of an active government counterpart for shelter the response lacked acceptance and credibility. In the immediate rush of the response it is virtually impossible to motivate a government counterpart to participate in coordination processes. This again is something that needs to be addressed during contingency planning processes.

By conceptualizing the government's role as one of ensuring coordination rather than managing coordination, the government counterpart may legitimately delegate coordination and information management to a forum or a partner with this capacity and experience. The forum or partner that takes on the management of coordination is then accountable to the government for the quality of the coordination management service that they provide.

4.4 The IFRC role in Emergency Shelter

Almost uniformly, the emergency shelter INGOs, NGOs, GoB, UN agencies and donors interviewed knew little of the mandate assigned to the IFRC of providing leadership in the emergency shelter response to natural disasters. For most partners, any information in this regard was furnished by the IFRC coordination team on their arrival. Even the UNDP SWG coordination team only had a cursory knowledge of why the IFRC would send in surge capacity to coordinate emergency shelter and was not familiar with the IFRC/OCHA MoU and therefore was unable to explain to partners why the IFRC team had arrived.

"For a start, UNDP could have been more official in handing over the coordination responsibility for Aila coordination publicly in the first meeting."
(INGO Shelter Partner).

"We didn't know anything about a "role" we thought they were here and offering to provide a very useful service."
(NGO Shelter Partner).

This absence of an understanding of the role of the IFRC in providing leadership in emergency shelter relates to the fact that the humanitarian reform concepts are not well understood among partners and have not been promoted in Bangladesh for several years.¹⁵

"[the role was] not well understood at all. The clusters are assumed to be a part of the UN system so no one knows what the IFRC has to do with it. The IFRC in Bangladesh is known for its disaster preparedness, early warning, volunteers, food and NFI distributions but the role of coordinating emergency shelter is not understood."
(INGO Shelter Partner)

Regardless of the terminology adopted at the country level, the tenants of inclusiveness, predictability and accountability in responding to an emergency have not been internalized in the disaster response process in Bangladesh. By way of example, the recently finalized UN SOPs for emergency response highlight the manner in which the UN family in Bangladesh fails to actively include INGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement and civil society actors. According to the feedback provided by most shelter partners the concept of coordination is not practiced in Bangladesh with any depth.

¹⁵ Activities around humanitarian reform were led by WFP in 2006 and 2007 as part of WFP's provision of secretariat support to the DER. When funding for this finished activities did not continue.

“In Bangladesh coordination is always a problem...we discuss it, but it is never fixed.....the level of coordination never goes beyond sharing information...making [the information we share] useful doesn’t happen... For example, there should even be a coordinated approach to submitting proposals so that coverage is ensured and duplication of effort doesn’t take place...the donors could assist by requiring this like ECHO does.”
(INGO Shelter Partner).

4.5 Relations between Dhaka and the Field

Some shelter partners pointed towards a disconnect between the coordination meetings in Dhaka and what was actually happening in those areas affected by the cyclone. While the coordination of strategic planning and resource mobilisation needs to take place in Dhaka, coordination at the field level enables local authorities, implementing partners and affected communities to be included.

Coordination meetings and field visits by the IFRC coordination team were seen as a valuable way to assist response. Still, some shelter partners would have appreciated a consistent coordination presence in the field that directly linked field activities with central coordination of the sector.

Most partners agreed that the ideal coordination structure would have dual coordination teams; a field level team providing information to implementing partners in order to close gaps and avoid overlaps. This could feed consolidated information up to a central coordination team in Dhaka developing a strategic approach to the shelter response, liaise with other sector groups, donors and the government and feed this information back to the field.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Within the limitations of their tenure in Bangladesh, the contribution made by the IFRC Emergency Shelter Team was appreciated by shelter partners including UNDP. A range of factors could have made this contribution more useful but these were outside of the control of the team.

An IFRC emergency shelter coordination team has experienced challenges on two recent emergencies (Sidr and Aila) in their emergency shelter coordination efforts in Bangladesh. In both cases the IFRC shelter coordination teams have departed at a time when most actors felt it was too early and their efforts needed to continue. Given a country context where the concepts of humanitarian reform have not been thoroughly internalized, but where disasters are frequent, there is a need for stakeholders to use the lessons from these experiences to attempt to ensure greater predictability in terms of the humanitarian response. Although the shelter partners have found the efforts of the coordination team positive, it is possible that the manner in which the deployment unfolded may have negative implications on how the shelter partners would view any future coordination efforts by the IFRC.

The coordinator of the IFRC team expressed his concern that;

“Implementing agencies saw the IFRC SCT arrive; then watched as we were blocked by the UNDP and Office of the RC; then leave six weeks later. I’m concerned this may have tarnished the reputation of the Emergency Shelter Cluster with local actors.”

To build confidence amongst shelter partners, the IFRC must be able to demonstrate comprehensive emergency shelter coordination services as well as a smooth transition to the coordination of early recovery at an appropriate time. Unfortunately the two recent most experiences in Bangladesh indicate that delivering key aspects of this responsibility is beyond the control of the IFRC.

Insufficient attention was paid by IFRC to ensure that support to the coordination of emergency shelter came within “an agreed coordination system”¹⁶. The need to reach a consensus on what this would mean within the Bangladesh context requires greater attention. For example, even though the review of the IFRC-led Shelter Coordination Group for cyclone Sidr stated that “[t]he Federation should aim to secure written agreement before deploying surge capacity”¹⁷ this recommendation was not followed in the response to Aila. Also with no active emergency shelter counterpart and no national ministry with a mandate for housing, the relation of IFRC to the government for shelter coordination was unclear.

One way to assist in conceptualizing the role of the government in coordination is to see the role of the government counterpart as one of *ensuring* that proper coordination of the sector takes place rather than managing coordination itself. This highlights the core role of government role of delegating and monitoring the coordination that is managed by the UNDP (for the SWG) and the IFRC (for emergency shelter).

In Bangladesh, a consolidated inter-agency emergency contingency planning process does not exist. Key ideas of humanitarian reform and the cluster approach have not been shared and this has resulted in a lack of inclusiveness, predictability and accountability in emergency response.

Future IFRC involvement in cluster leadership in Bangladesh should attempt to ensure commitment from the key stakeholders prior to the deployment of any team and this should be captured in writing from the officials at the highest level (RC). Given the experiences with the last two deployments, this appears to capture the current sentiments of both the UNRCO and the IFRC delegation in Bangladesh.

In spite of the challenges faced by the IFRC emergency shelter coordination team for cyclone Aila, the most obvious opportunity for IFRC appears to be in supporting consolidated disaster preparedness activities. Optimistically, the IFRC support for preparedness might be acceptable because there is no transfer of authority to the ERC (as occurs in a formal cluster roll-out).

Given that IFRC will be unlikely to be requested provide coordination assistance in the future (except in the most severe of emergencies) and with Bangladesh likely to experience an escalation of natural disasters on all scales, the IFRC could potentially make a significant contribution to the emergency shelter sector by actively support emergency shelter actors in preparedness activities.

¹⁶ See MoU between IFRC and OCHA, Article 6.4.

¹⁷ A Review of the IFRC-led Shelter Coordination Group for Cyclone Sidr, p5.

Appendix A

Review of the Cyclone Aila Response 2009; IFRC-led Emergency Shelter Coordination Group

Key Informants

Organization	Name	Contact through	Position
IFRC	Graham Saunders	Phone	Head of Shelter Department
IFRC	Miguel Urquia	Phone	Senior Officer, Geneva
IFRC/Canadian RC	Neil Bauman	Email	Global IM focal point
IFRC	Felix de Vries	Email	Asia Pacific Shelter Delegate
IFRC	Azmat Ulla	Email	Head of South Asia Regional Delegation
IFRC	Udaya Regmi	Meeting	Head of Delegation
IFRC/Spanish RC	Miguel Angel Gomez Candela	Email	
IFRC	Gregg McDonald	Meeting, phone	IFRC ESCG Coordinator
IFRC	Neil Brighton	Meeting, email	Information Manager
BDRCS	Mustafa Kamal	Email	Chief, Disaster Management
BRAC	Tanzeba Ah	Meeting	Program Manager
CARE Bangladesh	Abdul Wahed	Meeting	Coordinator ES
CARITAS		Meeting	Program officer
CARITAS		Meeting	Program Manager
Concern Worldwide	Krishna Bijoy	Meeting	Emergency expert
Concern Worldwide	Mizanur Rahman	Meeting	Technical specialist
ECHO	David Hill	Meeting	Representative
Habitat for Humanity	Bashar	Meeting	DM manager
Habitat for Humanity	Kelly Koch	Meeting	National Director
IFRC	Masud Ahmed	Email	Disaster Management Sr. Manager
IOM	Kristina Mejo	Meeting	
IOM	Rabab Fatima	Meeting	Regional Representative
MDM Architects	Ahmed Mukta	Meeting	Principal
MSF-Holland	Kristian Heen	Meeting	Logistician
Oxfam	Abdus Sobhan	Meeting	
ProAct Network	Charles Kelly	Email	Environment expert
Save the Children UK	Khodadad	Meeting	
SDC	Farid Ahmed	Meeting	
SUK	Mizanur Rahman Jewel	Phone	CEO
UNDP	Shakil Khan	Meeting	Information Management
UNDP	Steven Goldfinch	Meeting	Programme Officer
UNDP	Mozharul Huq	Meeting	Coordinator SWG
UNDP - CDMP	Shahidul Islam	Meeting	GIS Database Specialist
UNICEF	Tim Forster	Email	WASH Coordinator
UNRC	Usman Qazi	Meeting	Recovery Advisor
WFP	Maria Katajisto	Meeting	Programme Officer
WFP	John McHarris	Meeting	
WFP	Michael Dunford	Meeting	Deputy Country Director
Consultant for Norwegian Govt	Glyn Taylor	Meeting	
Consultant for Oxfam	Lewis Sida	Meeting	

Appendix B

Terms of Reference for: A Review of the Cyclone Aila Response 2009 IFRC-led Emergency Shelter Coordination Group

Background to the Cyclone Aila Emergency Shelter Coordination Group Review

Under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding between IFRC and UN OCHA¹⁸,

“subject to available resources, constitutional limits, and the rules and regulations of the Federation, the Federation will assume a coordination role for emergency shelter in specific emergency operations within an agreed coordination system”.

Cyclone Aila hit the country's south-western coast in the afternoon of 25th May 2009. Although the Aila's storm center struck West Bengal of India, it caused great damage to properties and loss of lives within Bangladesh. The wind-driven tidal surge inundated vast areas of land and washed away several thousand homes as many flood-control embankments and dykes were greatly damaged. Total 11 districts and 64 upazilas have been affected fully or partially. The Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM) Relief Control Room reported on 4th June 2009, a death toll of 180 people and 4.8 million people affected. The highest number of people taken shelter at nearby cyclone shelters and schools was approximately 829,000 as of May 27th. 610,000 houses have been damaged and households have lost their homes, assets, and income earning opportunities. 318,000 acres of crop land has been damaged fully or partially.

In Bangladesh there was a shelter Coordination Group in support of the Government of Bangladesh that was set up by IFRC after cyclone Sidr <http://groups.google.com/group/shelter-coordination-group-cyclone-sidr?lnk=src>. Once that the emergency phase was over, IFRC handed over the coordination of the shelter response to UNDP as agreed with UNHabitat, the focal point for early recovery at the Global Shelter Cluster. After Cyclone Aila happened, on the 16th of June, IFRC both at Bangladesh and Geneva level got in touch with the coordinator of the Cyclone Sidr Coordination Group and asked if they needed support to coordinate the shelter response to Cyclone Aila. The coordinator confirmed that the UNDP team was not going to coordinate the emergency response to Aila and that he welcomed the IFRC to send a team to coordinate this response. A team composed of a Coordinator from Netherlands Red Cross and an Information Manager from Canadian Red Cross arrived to Bangladesh on the 21st of June. They set up a coordination group under the umbrella of the overall existing coordination group. More information can be found on their website:

http://groups.google.com/group/shelter-working-group-bangladesh/web/information-management-products?_done=%2Fgroup%2Fshelter-working-group-bangladesh%3Fhl%3Den%26&hl=en

In accordance with the commitment of IFRC to coordinate emergency shelter and not transitional or permanent, discussions were held to agree the handover of coordination responsibilities from IFRC to UNDP on the 4th of August.

¹⁸ IFRC-UNOCHA Memorandum of Understanding, signed September 19th 2006

Objective of the Cyclone Aila Shelter Coordination Group Review

The objectives of the review are to:

1. appraise the service provided by the International Federation as shelter coordinator to shelter coordination group participants – Government, UN agencies, Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (Bangladesh Red Crescent, IFRC, ICRC as appropriate), NGOs both national and international, and other actors;
2. appraise the service provided by the shelter coordination group 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 Coordination Group, 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 coordination activities at both national and global levels.
5. examine if there were aspects of the Federation's coordination group leadership which potentially might have or actually did compromise the mandate and principles of the Red Cross/Red Crescent.
6. Review and analyse how the International Federation and UNDP worked together before and after the cyclone Aila to trigger the creation of a new coordination group for Cyclone Aila.
7. Provide recommendation on how the International Federation can work with UNDP to improve shelter preparedness for future disasters in Bangladesh.

Scope of the Review

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

- The activation of the coordination group 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 humanitarian country team, UNDP in Bangladesh, the IFRC country delegation, the region and Geneva;
- the impact of the Shelter Coordination Group on the Federation Delegation, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, and other operational Red Cross Red Crescent Societies;
- the design and implementation of the Shelter Coordination Group, including factors and determinants which provided the Shelter Coordination Group's strengths and weaknesses;
- the value of linking and/or separating the Shelter Coordination Group and the Red Crescent relief operation;
- the design and implementation of the exit/handover strategy;
- relations with other clusters or coordination groups, the UN system and the Government;
- the staffing of the Shelter Coordination Group and the support provided from the Secretariat;
- the equipping and funding of the Shelter Coordination Group.
- the involvement of the Shelter Coordination Group 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 Bangladesh;
- Review of available documented materials relating to the start-up, planning, implementation, and impact of the Shelter Coordination Group (reference to the Bangladesh Emergency Shelter Coordination Group website);
- Interviews with key internal stakeholders within the Secretariat in Geneva, (by 'phone) with IFRC Regional Representation in Delhi and Country Representation in Bangladesh, the IFRC Asia Pacific Disaster Management Unit in Kuala Lumpur, the Bangladesh 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, UNDP and the UN Resident Coordinator's office;
- Interviews with shelter agencies participating in the Emergency Shelter Coordination Group, 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 coordination mechanism 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 15th August 2009 and 15th October 2009, the date of the travel to Bangladesh subject to agreement with the IFRC Representation in Bangladesh.

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 Coordination Group ToRs
3. Email to Global Emergency Cluster informing on the deployment of the SCG
4. All documents (meeting minutes, strategy documents etc.) available from the Emergency Shelter Coordination Group website (http://groups.google.com/group/shelter-working-group-bangladesh/web/information-management-products?_done=%2Fgroup%2Fshelter-working-group-bangladesh%3Fhl%3Den%26&hl=en) or otherwise on request.
5. 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>

Appendix 3

Aila Response Timeline (approximate)

2009	Events/Activities	Field response activities
May 24	Early warning's from DMB	
May 25	Aila, a category 1 cyclone made landfall affecting a number of coastal districts.	
May 26	Oxfam met, decided on initial assessment over the next few days. Concern starts receiving information from the field.	
May 27	Concern assessment team including from Dhaka in the field. ECHO team in the field for initially assessment. This results in a funding decision of 4 million Euro to fund 8 partners from June-December 2009, shelter, food and sanitation. Habitat for Humanity (having office in Shatkira) have an assessment team in the field within 3 days. Government reporting there would be no need of international assistance.	CARE in the field with initial relief of food and NFIs within 3 days. Relief for 5,000 families.
	UNDP SWG meeting to discuss monsoon planning ends up being about Aila.	
1-3 June		Concern (1 st phase) initial distribution (dry food to 9000 families) Save the Children UK have by this time established 30 safe spaces for children using pre-positioned materials (post-Sidr preparedness) and local partners.
9 June	UNDP Shelter Specialist requested IFRC assistance to assist the Aila response.	
6-9 June	Visit to Aila affected areas by M. Huq, Disaster Response Adviser and UNDP Shelter Working Group Coordinator.	Oxfam initial distribution complete by mid June (emergency shelter to 7000 and then a further 2000 families)
11 June	UNDP request coordination support of IFRC for Aila at a technical meeting attended by Mr. Xavier Genot (IFRC Shelter Delegate for Sidr). Latest Government situation report specific to Aila released.	
	Phone calls between IFRC head of delegation, IFRC Shelter department in Geneva and UNDP Shelter Working Group Coordinator around the issue of a possible IFRC Emergency Shelter Team deployment.	
16 June	Field visit by Consultants in country for DFID review of Sidr area.	
22 June	IFRC coordination team deployed from Malaysia	
23 June	IFRC coordination team arrives in Bangladesh and arranges initial meetings with UNDP. UNDP Brief for the RC on conditions in the Aila affected areas by M. Huq, Disaster Response Adviser compiled and released based on visit of 6-9 th of June.	

24 June	IFRC coordination team attend UNICEF WASH cluster meeting where Usman Qazi (UNUNRCO) becomes aware of the role the IFRC team are to fulfill (coordination for emergency shelter).	
25-27 June	IOM Assessment Mission: Post Cyclone Aila	
29 June	Meeting between Mr Qazi, the RC (Renat Lok Dessallien), IFRC Head of Delegation and IFRC Shelter coordinator.	
30 June	Aila Shelter Coordination Group meeting (IFRC led)	
7 July	Aila Shelter Coordination Group meeting (IFRC led)	
14 July	SWG meeting	
17/18 July	Government met with donors.	
29 July	SWG meeting (UNDP led)	
30 July	Aila Shelter Coordination Group meeting (IFRC led)	
4 Aug	End of IFRC Shelter team deployment.	
15-17 August	IOM Assessment Mission: Post Cyclone Aila (Follow-Up to 25-27 June 2009 Mission)	
10 Sept	First meeting of UNDP led Shelter Working Group since departure of IFRC team.	