

# Shelter Cluster

# Information Management Services

provided by the Shelter Coordinaton Team (SCT)

## Background

The SCT is a flexible team, deployed by the IFRC to coordinate the Shelter Cluster in response to natural disasters during the emergency phase. Its composition varies upon the size and needs of a disaster, ranging from a 2 to 20 person team. The key roles of the SCT include the following:

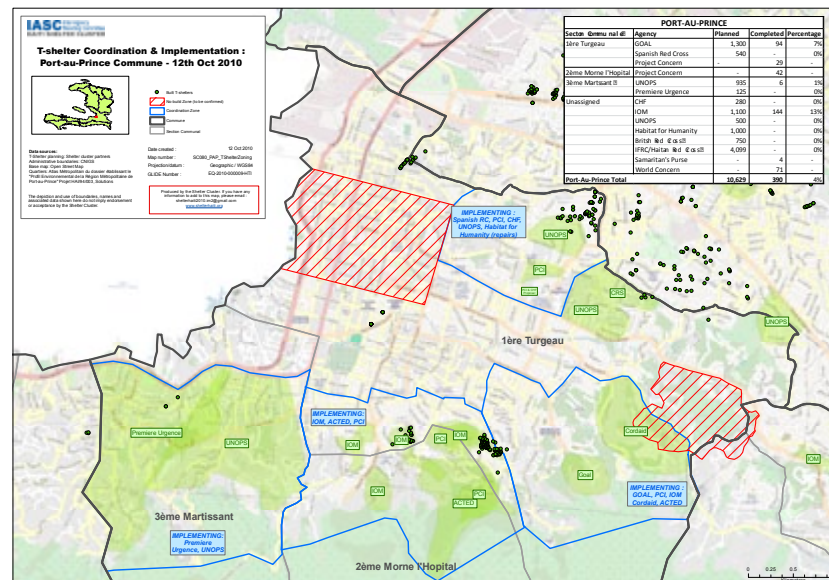
- Cluster coordinator
- Information manager
- Technical coordinator
- Recovery advisor

Additional roles can be deployed as required.

Information Management (IM) services are a key component to the coordination process of the shelter coordination team (SCT). IM is the collection of data from multiple sources, followed by the processing and delivery of analysed information in a various formats. IM services are provided by the SCT to shelter agencies on a regular basis in formats such as matrices, maps or graphs. The services provide a macro-level perspective on needs, capacities, or gaps in response, achievements and goals. Consequently shelter agencies use the materials to assist in defining their projects and make sure they are well coordinated with other agencies – enabling them to meet the needs of beneficiaries effectively and efficiently.

## Services

Figure 1



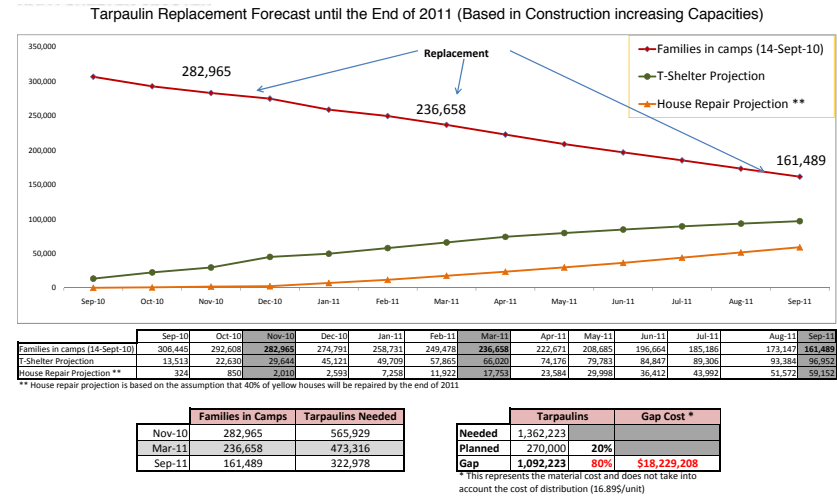
### Maps

Figure 1 – The map highlights areas for coordination and implementation by shelter agencies in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 2010.

Information management services such as maps enable agencies to gain a clear perspective on the implementation of their shelter programming. The maps are a critical element of coordination as they present an overview of the response, which then helps shelter agencies address gaps and avoid overlaps. The maps are created by IM staff in

the SCT who receive data (i.e., global positioning system coordinates, or other) on the location and number of shelters provided to beneficiaries. The centralization of information with the IM staff demonstrates the purpose and the effectiveness of the SCT.

**Figure 2**



**Projection of needs**

Figure 2 - Estimating the projection of shelter needs is a valuable service the information manager and IM management staff provide as part of the SCT.

Shelter programming is based upon the needs of beneficiaries after a disaster. Following the immediate aftermath of a disaster, basic needs can be assessed by the damage incurred. Yet it is necessary to continuously re-evaluate present needs, and estimate those for the future since it has implications on funding and programming. The IM staff aim to provide this information and present it in formats that are easily comprehensible.

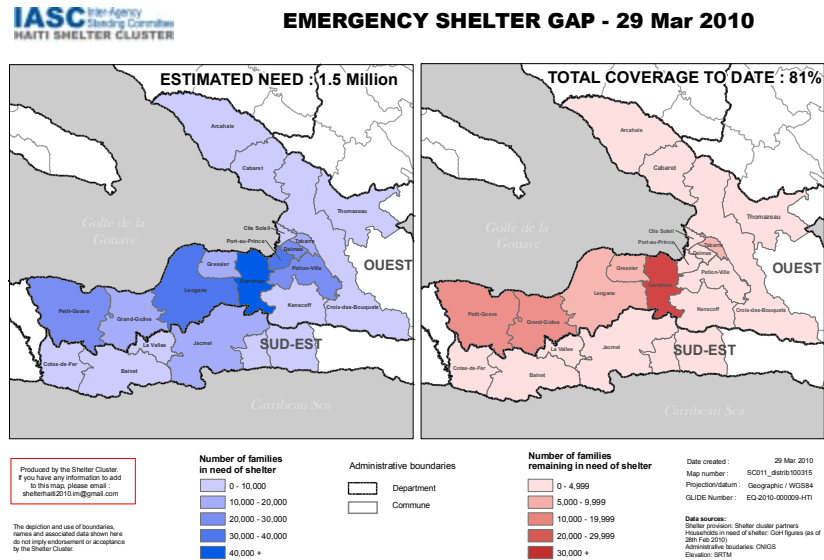
**Damage assessment**

Figure 3 - IM services help guide the shelter response by providing an overview on damaged caused by a natural disaster.

In order to determine shelter needs after a disaster, it is necessary to begin with an assessment of the damage. IM services are a critical element to this process as they centralize key elements for assessment; maps can outline the geographical areas of damage and the number of shelters affected, as well where agencies will respond, and the number of shelters they plan to provide. The SCT IM staff also provide other angles for assessment, such as population and household/demographic figures, which shelter agencies may not have the time or resources to evaluate, but is critical to meeting the needs of beneficiaries.



Figure 4

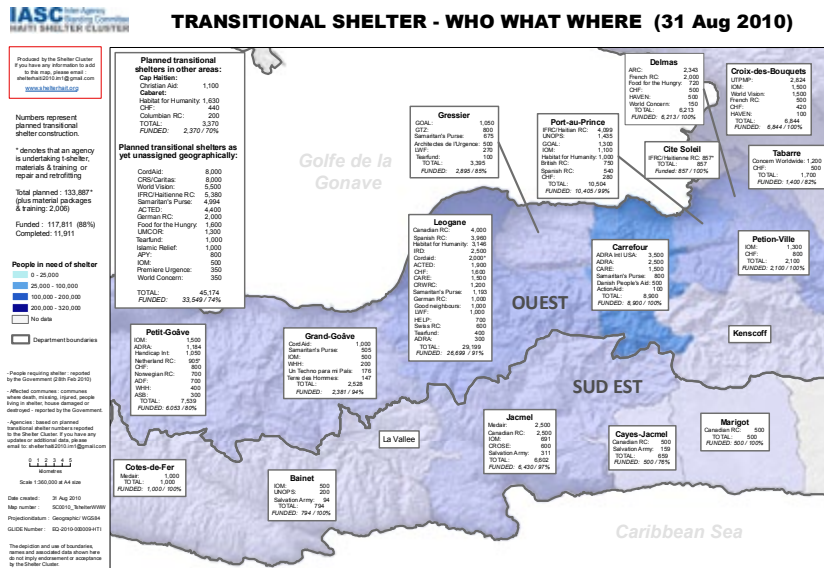


**Progress and Gaps analysis**

Figure 4 - IM services help to identify gaps in the shelter response by highlighting shelter needs compared to the coverage to date.

Analyzing shelter needs during a response includes an evaluation of progress and gaps. The IM staff in the SCT coordinate between agencies, gathering the necessary information in order to provide an overview. This overview can be presented in various formats such as tables, graphs, and maps.

Figure 5

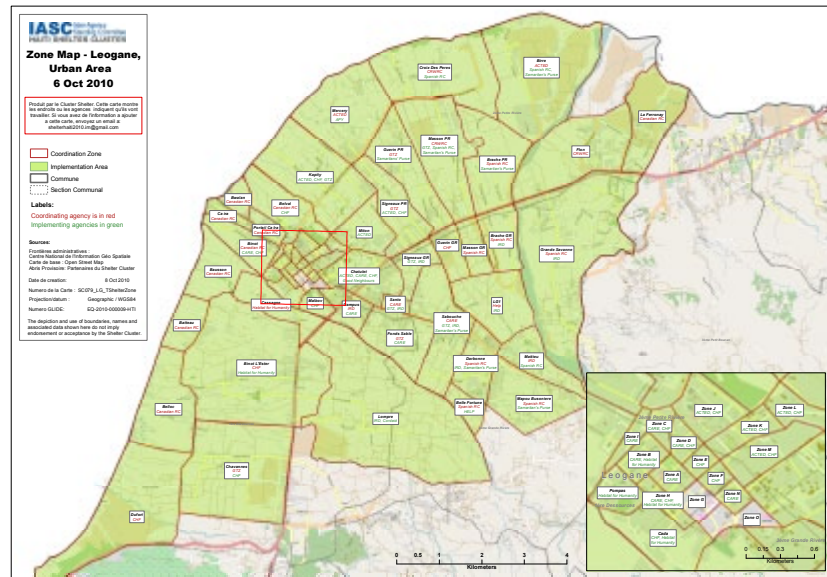


**“Who What Where” Matrices and Maps**

Figure 5 - “Who What Where” maps provide a global overview on the shelter response as shown above in Haiti, 2010. They allow the Shelter Cluster to monitor progress and identify gaps in construction as well as funding.

IM services such as the WWM map highlight where shelter agencies are implementing programmes, what they are planning to build, and which regions it will cover. It is a useful tool during the implementation process as shelter agencies coordinate their activities. It brings them from a micro-to-a macro-level for a general overview on the shelter response, and visually identifies how each agency is contributing and where.

**Figure 6**



### Coordination maps

Figure 6 - IM services such as coordination maps facilitate the shelter response by providing a clear outline for shelter agencies on areas of implementation.

During a response to a disaster, it is essential that shelter agencies have a clear framework for their operations. IM services such as coordination maps help outline boundaries for each agency, and who the lead agency is in their respective area. The maps provide a concise visual layout and framework for shelter agencies.

### Contact lists

The IM staff play a key role in managing contact information between all components of the Shelter Cluster. This is a critical element to the coordination process of shelter implementation. It reinforces the Shelter Cluster's aim of open communication and partnership, builds reliant and consistent communication, and assists in the timely distribution of information that is critical to effective implementation.



Information management coordinator in Haiti, 2010.

## Impact

- IM services are critical to the coordination process for the Shelter Cluster. They allow shelter agencies to easily and clearly obtain information on the needs of beneficiaries, progressing and gaps of the response, and projections to the future. IM services ultimately help agencies provide shelter needs more efficiently and effectively.
- IM services are a reflection of effective partnership between the SCT IM staff and shelter agencies. In order for information managers to effectively create these services, they rely upon the useful, consistent and timely sharing of information from shelter agencies, particularly when it comes to agencies' plans, capacities, and achievements.
- Information that is not well managed becomes a burden and not an effective resource. The IM staff of the SCT have the capacity to take critical information from shelter agencies, and interpret it with a specific skill set to produce IM services. The services they provide to shelter agencies are more than simple numbers and maps; they give a tangible, concise and clear overview on the shelter response, and the level of analysis provided ultimately makes coordination more effective.



For further information,  
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For more on the Humanitarian Reform, the role of the IFRC as convener of the Shelter Cluster and the SCT, please visit [www.sheltercluster.org](http://www.sheltercluster.org)