

## SHELTER WORKING GROUP

Meeting Minutes 08 November 2025

### Participant Organizations:

|                                      |                                       |                                                               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| University of Technology,<br>Jamaica | DG ECHO<br>GEM                        | Jamaican Defense Force<br>Technology University of<br>Jamaica |
| All Hands and Hearts                 | Global Shelter Cluster                | Taraji Foundation                                             |
| Mercy Corps                          | PAHO                                  | UK Government, FCDO                                           |
| Red Cross<br>Core                    | Food for the Poor<br>Samaritans Purse | IOM                                                           |
| ShelterBox                           |                                       | International Red Cross and<br>Red Crescent Federation        |

### Action Points:

- Partners working in affected areas should inform JDF Brigadier Lloyd, especially if there are security concerns; they can provide personnel on the ground to support safe operations.
- Technical specialists are invited to join the debris removal WG and home repairs WG. Contact Jan Willem Wegdam: [jwegdam@iom.int](mailto:jwegdam@iom.int)
- Register your email in the Shelter Working Group mailing list: [Shelter WG Contact List.xlsx](#)
- Register your incoming NFIs to the control tower by filling out the [Control Tower Upstream Template](#) and sending to [alishah.jamal@wfp.org](mailto:alishah.jamal@wfp.org) and [dan.cemachovic@wfp.org](mailto:dan.cemachovic@wfp.org)
- If you would like to join the whatsapp Shelter group, you may do so by clicking here: [Join Group](#)

### Meeting Summary

### Methodology of damage assessment:

- Alexandra Bate explained the methodology used to get the house damage estimates per parish. (To access the preliminary results data, see PPT presentation)
- The damage analysis used a combination of data sources: Copernicus satellite imagery for certain communities in St. James and St. Elizabeth, Microsoft building footprint data for Westmoreland, and Map Action estimates.
- The team started with 2011 census data for the number of dwellings, as the 2025 housing census data was not yet available but expected soon.
- Damage percentages for each parish were estimated using these sources, and those percentages were applied to the census dwelling numbers to estimate how many homes need tarpaulins.
- The analysis is ongoing and being refined; more granular, community-level data will be available soon, including maps showing where damage is concentrated.

- The current figures present dwellings with partial damage (generally between 15% and 80% damage). Completely destroyed houses were excluded from the tarp needs calculation, as they are not suitable for quick repair.
- The assessment also excludes houses with zero to very minor damage that do not require repairs.
- The approach is to provide a planning figure for immediate tarp needs, which will be updated as more data becomes available.
- The team coordinates with Map Action and other partners to further refine the analysis and ensure the most accurate targeting of shelter assistance.

#### Important data on context displacement and affected buildings.

- Displacement is mostly localized: People are staying on site, salvaging what they can, or sheltering in any standing structures; there is no evidence for significant movements to larger urban areas.
- Concrete houses or those with concrete slabs have withstood the storm better, while wooden houses suffered the most damage or were destroyed.
- Current satellite data shows structural damage, but the extent of flooding is not yet clear and needs to be cross-referenced for accessibility.
- Roofs are the most affected part of standing structures, driving the urgent need for quick shelter solutions like tarpaulins.
- Two planning scenarios for tarpaulin needs were considered: one tarp per damaged structure or two tarps per structure, resulting in an estimated need for 135,000 to 270,000 tarpaulins.
- Approximately 55,000 tarpaulins are currently in country, with about 5,000 already distributed and 45,000 in stock; additional stocks are arriving from various agencies and donors.
- Local suppliers have contributed an estimated 2,000 tarpaulins (to be confirmed), but quality and quantity are concerns; tarpaulins must meet international standards for durability.
- There is a critical shortage of fixing materials (e.g., nails, roofing nails), and local hardware stores are running out quickly; every tarp distribution should include proper fixing kits and installation instructions.
- The government is monitoring the supply gap and considering procurement of additional materials if needed.
- Coordination is ongoing to avoid double counting of stocks and to ensure accurate reporting by agency, donor, and implementing partner.

- The [IFRC Emergency Item Catalogue](#) is the reference for tarpaulin and toolkit quality standards; toolkits should be multi-purpose, supporting both shelter repair and debris removal.
- Relief supplies are being tracked and updated as new information comes in, with a focus on careful management of limited resources.

#### Status of Shelter and Essential Relief Items:

- In addition to tarpaulins and fixings, the coordinator emphasized the importance of other non-food items (NFIs) for affected families, especially solar lamps in remote and marooned areas.
- Current or incoming NFI stocks include approximately 18,000 solar lamps, 8,000 blankets, and a limited number of plastic buckets and tents (about 80 in country).
- Kitchen sets and mosquito nets are in low supply compared to the needs; The Coordinator highlighted the importance of not overlooking these items.
- [Toolkits for shelter repair and debris removal](#) are available and should meet international standards. Coordination is ongoing to map which organizations are working in priority communities with damaged roofs, aiming for village-level coordination and progress monitoring.
- Jan encouraged organizations to review the list of affected communities and indicate where they can contribute, to ensure efforts are well-coordinated and gaps are addressed.

#### About debris removal:

- CORE highlighted its extensive experience in debris removal and expressed willingness to lead coordination efforts for debris management, including sorting, recycling, and proper disposal.
- There was a question about which government entities are involved in debris removal; Brigadier Lloyd clarified that municipal authorities and parish councils are leading a major cleanup campaign over the weekend, focusing on both community roads and household-level debris.
- IOM is planning to support debris removal at both the municipal (heavy machinery, main roads) and community/household levels (equipment, PPE, cash-for-work).
- A dedicated debris removal coordinator will be brought in to manage these efforts and support collective operations.

- The approach includes not only removal but also clean-up, salvage, reuse, and disposal, aiming to link emergency phase activities (like tarp distribution) with longer-term shelter repair.
- The biggest operational challenge currently is access—specifically, the need for trucks to transport debris out of hard-to-reach areas, especially in mountainous regions. This is the most frequent request from local workers.
- Several agencies, including UNDP, are expected to have funding available for debris removal activities.
- Donor awards and funding allocations are currently being finalized and confirmed.
- By early next week, there should be greater clarity on which agencies have secured funding for various activities, including debris removal.
- There are strong indications that considerable amounts of funding will be available for this purpose.

#### About House Repairs:

- Food for the Poor completed construction and repairs of 35,000 houses in Jamaica. Has strong knowledge of local building techniques and costs.
- It was proposed to create a group of key agencies for the reconstruction phase.
- University of Technology of Jamaica's engineering group was invited to participate in developing reconstruction modalities. Emphasis on combining international best practices with local experience.
- There is a need to review enforcement of Jamaica's building code and how to comply during early reconstruction. Recognized financial constraints for full compliance immediately after disasters. Suggested dialogue with government on a phased approach to meeting standards.
- Professor Archer stressed that land use codes must be considered alongside building codes. Before constructing permanent structures, relocation requirements should be assessed using land use data.

#### Partners' Updates:

##### Samaritan's Purse:

- The partner's strategy is to identify local leaders within communities and collaborate with them to distribute materials to the most affected populations.
- Efforts are focused on reaching communities that have been cut off by landslides or flooding, and the team has successfully accessed some of these hard-to-reach areas.

- Air assets have been instrumental in delivering aid, including a recent operation where U.S. government or military support enabled the airlift of supplies into an isolated community.

#### All Hands and Hearts:

- Distributed 1,435 Tarpaulins.

#### International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation:

- 2,523 Tarpaulins dispatched to branches in Kingston and Saint Andrews, St. Thomas, Manchester, St. Mary, Clarendon, St. Catherine, St. Elizabeth, Westmoreland, St. James, Hanover, Trelawny.

#### GEM:

- GEM team is in Savanna-la-Mar (Salvamar) this morning, coordinating with the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) to distribute tarpaulins, some of which are already on site.
- They are organizing a group called the Westmoreland Families and Friends group, which includes local stakeholders working to cover priority areas identified in the shelter coordination chat.
- Additionally, a group from Kingston called Citizens Response—experienced from COVID response—is bringing carpenters and electricians to assist with repairs, aiming to make as much progress as possible today with all parties involved.

#### Core:

- CORE has already secured a front loader (heavy equipment) and is working to obtain additional equipment and trucks for debris removal.
- In the Bottom Roundhill area of Saint Elizabeth, CORE has repaired over 5 kilometers of secondary (non-main) roads as part of their response efforts.

#### Next Steps:

- Next steps include coordinating activities with agencies in each parish; participants should inform which parish they will work in.
- A sheet will be compiled today with JDF listing communities, expected damage/workload, and agencies assigned or pending.
- Shelter sector working group meetings are planned every 2–3 days; next meeting expected Tuesday or Wednesday, avoiding overlap with WASH and logistics groups.
- Participants are encouraged to step up response efforts, mobilize teams, and deploy resources promptly.

Documents shared on chat:

- <https://itemscatalogue.redcross.int/>
- Debris management guidance: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/disaster-waste-management-guidelines>
- <https://unhcr-sheltercluster-static.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/public/docs/Quick%20Guide%20Post%20D...>
- list of recycling organizations based in Jamaica: [waste management and recycling facilities in country](#) (courtesy of the [WREC Project](#)).

WE APPRECIATE THE CONTINUED COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT OF ALL PARTNERS  
IN THE JAMAICA SHELTER WORKING GROUP.