



UK Shelter Forum #28

**Humanitarian shelter and climate change:
Is the sector ready?**

Took place on 13th May 2022

@ukshelterforum
www.shelterforum.info





UK Shelter Forum #28

**Shelter and climate change:
Is the sector ready?**

Norwegian Refugee Council
UCL Institute for Risk and Disaster Reduction



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Global Shelter Cluster
ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter

DRC DANISH
REFUGEE
COUNCIL

Climate Charter

- 1:** Step up our response to growing humanitarian needs and help people **adapt to the impacts** of the climate and environmental crises
- 2:** Maximise the **environmental sustainability** of our work and rapidly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

climate-charter.org

Pre-event ARUP

Scaling-up the use of low-impact materials in humanitarian response

The UK Shelter Forum was preceded by a workshop on **scaling-up the use of low-impact materials in humanitarian response** hosted by Arup and a [UCL Humanitarian Institute](#)

Evening Conference on [Shelter and Climate Change](#).



Why must the Shelter Sector get 'ready'?



Photo: Tilly Alcayna from RCRC Climate Centre. Photo by Ilan Kelman.

The 28th UKSF kicked off with two Keynote Presentations by [Tilly Alcayna](#) from [RCRC Climate Centre](#) and [Paul Knox Clark](#) from [ADAPT Initiative](#).

Alcayna spoke of historical carbon emissions and responsibility for the climate crisis – how the vast majority lies with the US, Europe and the Global North. Even today, one American on average consumes as much as fifty Ethiopians. Therefore, reducing emissions needs to be targeted at those with excessive consumption, not the types of shelters provided to people in need. **Alcayna** emphasised that shelter

and settlement types need to be chosen based on their suitability for the living conditions, including weather events and extreme temperature variations (the likes of up to 50°C surface temperatures), as well as health, wellbeing, and access to livelihood. Moving forwards more should be learnt from nature-

Keynote Presentations RCRC Climate Centre

based solutions, such as biomimicry and regenerative-by-design building. Also, research needs to identify current practices which are flexible, local, and adaptable that could be applied more widely. **Alcayna** urged for acting now with speed, scale, and scope, as ultimately, “*the health of humans relies on the health of the planet*”.

[UKSF Blog Is the shelter sector ready for climate change?](#)

ADAPT

Knox Clark followed by painting the dreary picture of the climate breakdown, those who are and will be affected, and the subsequent challenges to the humanitarian system.

Knox Clark stated, "*We are now in an environment no human being has ever experienced before... For humanitarians, the consequences will be particularly stark*". He explained that humanitarians are responding to events which now have faster onsets, such as tropical storms that have developed in 24 hours instead of 72, as well as 'new' disasters such as extreme heat, wildfires, and glacial melting events. So, what does this mean for



Photo: Paul Knox Clark from ADAPT Initiative. Photo by Ilan Kelman.

Knox Clark called for a fundamental shift in response. The humanitarian challenge is on the *scale* of disasters and migration, *nature* being less predictable with new types of crises and complexity, and *contexts* with higher levels of vulnerability, degraded environments, and increased securitization and domestic focus.

[UKSF Blog Is the shelter sector ready for climate change?](#)

The role for shelter

- Not contributing to climate change / environmental degradation
- 'Future proofing' shelters and settlements
- Preparedness for shelter crises
- Adaptable responses with short supply lines
- New materials, logistics, SoPs, design
- More articulation with insurance / risk sharing and social protection





Humanitarianism and Environmentalism

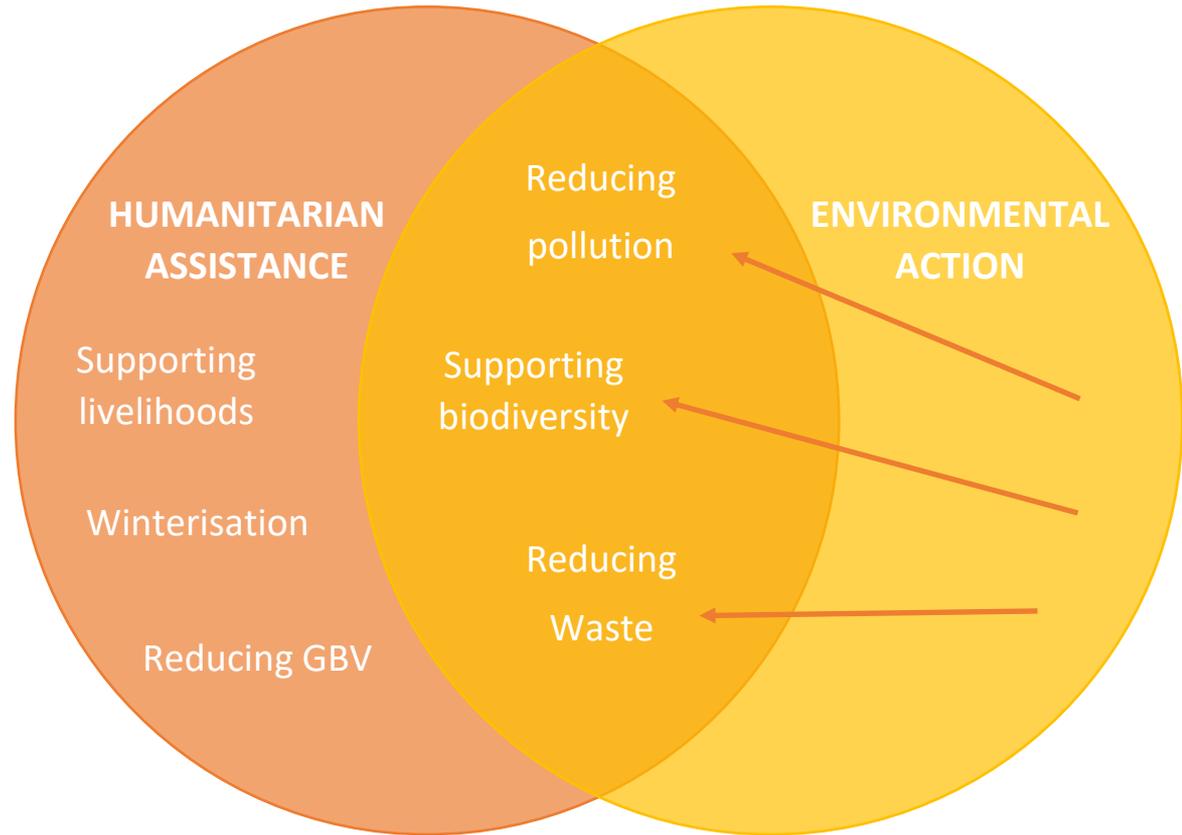


**Use helicopters or donkeys
to reach remote areas?**

A photograph of a makeshift refugee camp. In the foreground, a person wearing a dark jacket and sandals is crouching on a small mat on the ground. To their left, a large tent made of clear plastic and white fabric is visible. In the background, several other tents are set up, and laundry is hanging on a line. The ground is dirt and littered with some trash. The overall scene suggests a crowded and basic living environment.

**Cut down trees to expand a camp footprint,
or accept overcrowding and GBV?**

Budget Boundaries



Findings

“the answers are with the communities that we work with.”

“Humanitarians should focus on being facilitators and need to get used to being a minor partner – be humble”

“Greening the Response” and ‘Shelter and Climate Change’ should be dropped for ‘Climate and Shelter Justice’.

*“A climate justice and people-centred approach can present opportunities for the shelter sector to improve collaborations; **it can breakdown the silos across clusters, create partnerships, and potentially pull larger funds for both climate change and humanitarian work.**”*

Videos are available on the [UK Shelter Forum YouTube Channel](#)