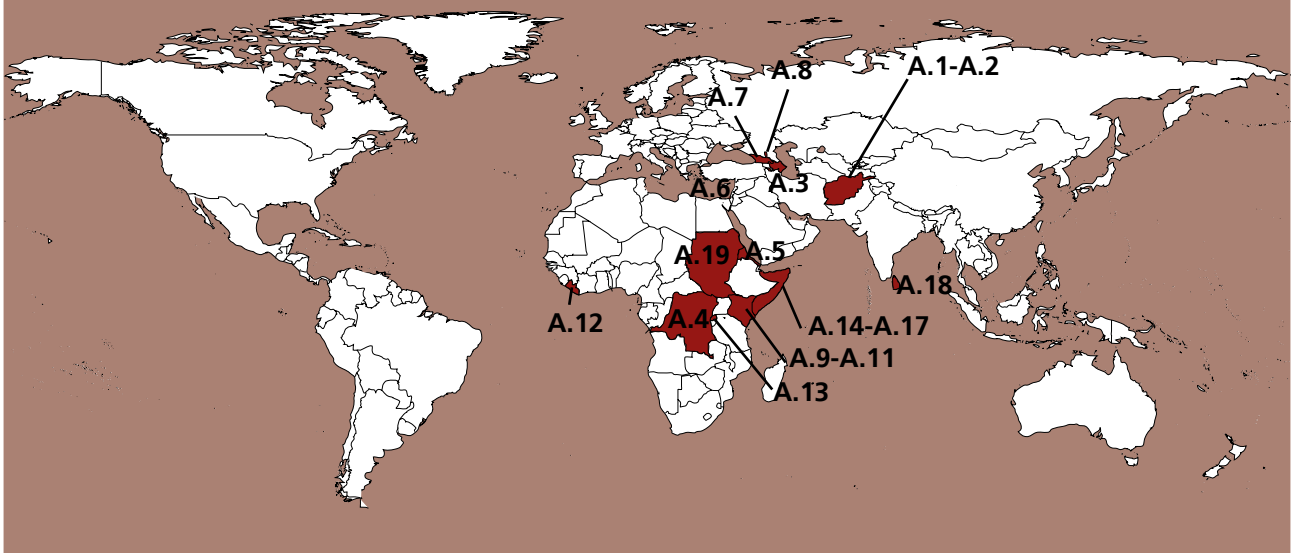


# SECTION A

## Conflict and Complex Disasters

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## A.1 Afghanistan - 2009 - Conflict returnees

### Case study: Winterisation

Full case study

#### Country:

Afghanistan

#### Disaster:

Afghanistan returns to Sozma Qala camp

#### Disaster date:

2009

#### Number of people displaced:

2002 - 2010 - over 5 million people returned to Afghanistan.

#### Project target population:

379 families

#### Occupancy rate on handover:

94%. 14 of the families completed 1 room mud brick shelters and used the shelters constructed by this project for general store and livestock.

#### Shelter size:

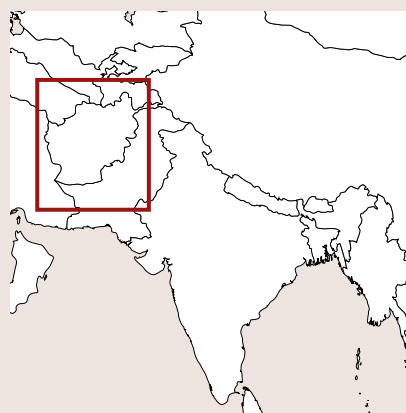
Covered area = 38.7m<sup>2</sup>

#### Materials cost per shelter:

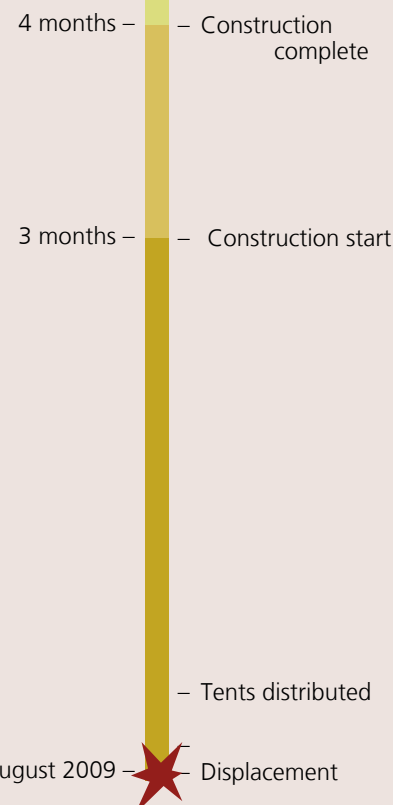
\$ 300

#### Project cost per shelter:

\$ 910 overall budget including all additional winterisation works, project staff, transport, office accommodation, administration, etc



#### Project timeline



#### Summary

An emergency team rapidly winterised a temporary transit camp. The site was for 379 families for refugees returned from Iran to their district of origin in northern Afghanistan. To improve the existing tents, a production line was set up in the camp to build bamboo and plastic sheeting shelters, which provided additional protection from severe winter weather. The structure was developed from a model implemented in Pakistan Administered Kashmir in 2006-2007

#### Strengths and weaknesses

- ✓ These shelters allow the the original tent to continue to be used by providing additional protection against severe weather conditions.
- ✓ The shelters could be constructed quickly using local semi-skilled labour.
- ✓ Since the shelters do not use materials that may be considered permanent they send a clear message that this is a temporary emergency provision. Existing agreements with local authorities and surrounding villages regarding the occupancy of the transit camp clearly stated that this location is a temporary facility.
- ✓ The relatively large covered area of the shelter allows for clothes drying and safe storage of belongings as well as catering for larger family units.
- ✓ Ongoing assistance programmes in the area allowed a degree of monitoring throughout the winter months.
- ✓ Staff from the organisation continued to engage with the community throughout the winter period.
- ✗ Early expectations of the community focussed on the provision of a permanent house rather than the extended provision of another form of temporary shelter.
- ✗ An extended delivery pipeline for bamboo poles stretching from Pakistan to northern Afghanistan, meant the program was vulnerable to delays caused by insecurity, border procedures and bad weather. Over a 6 week construction period, 12 days were awaiting delivery of bamboo.
- The organisation intends to adopt a similar deployment methodology for future fast-onset emergencies in the region.



Sozma Qala Transit Camp before winterisation  
Photo: Shaun Scales

## Background

After the closure of a camp in Iran that had been their home for 23 years, families were returned to the Sozma Qala area of Sar i Pul province of Afghanistan. As a result of the number of years of displacement, many of the original houses and water facilities were destroyed and there were issues regarding land ownership. For the majority of the returning families an immediate return to their village of origin was not possible.

Afghan authorities in Sozma Qala approved the development of a temporary transit facility on land near to villages of return. Families would be able to live on this temporary site until durable solutions were developed.

The original transit camp facilities were built to provide temporary support and were not intended for winter occupancy. Tents were provided as family shelters and a basic water delivery system had been developed.

By October 2009 it was clear that by the onset of winter only a limited number of families would have returned to their villages.

Inadequacy of the tents had led to the population in the camp being extremely vulnerable to the coming severe winter weather. The largest element of the winterisation program was the provision of additional shelter to ensure that families living in tents had improved shelter.

## Selection of beneficiaries

A relatively late decision by the Iranian authorities to close the camp occupied by these 379 families resulted in their spontaneous return to their area of origin. Previous returns tended to be pre-planned. This had allowed time for the mobilisation of resources to receive them and the construction of durable mud-brick shelters that could later be extended into permanent dwellings.

There were few opportunities for temporary hosting by the local community until permanent dwellings could be constructed were practically non-existent. These factors contributed to the decision to develop a temporary transit facility as the first step in the return process. Family units were largely maintained in line with

the households established in the Iranian refugee camp. There was some negotiation related to larger families, which was often resolved by providing of an additional small tent.

It is anticipated that Afghanistan will see more of this kind of spontaneous return throughout 2010.

## Technical solutions

Bamboo structures clad in plastic sheeting were built around existing tents. Sections of the structures were prefabricated by local carpenters in a warehouse tent within the camp. They were then passed to beneficiary assembly teams for shelter construction on designated family plots.

This approach to shelter was based on learnings from previous earthquake responses in Pakistan for the winter of 2006-2007

The Pakistan design was altered to simplify the construction process and allow semi-skilled and unskilled members of the beneficiary community to assemble the shelters.



Sozma Qala Transit Camp after winterisation  
Photo: Shaun Scales



Rapid construction process - materials were prefabricated in a warehouse and assembled on site  
Photo Shaun Scales



The shelters were known as 'Weather Mitigating Tent Shelters' (WMTS) and were provided as a temporary shelter suitable for winter.

The relatively large covered area of the shelters allowed for the maintenance of larger family units.

The assistance delivery process was streamlined by having raw materials delivered directly to site and then processed through the warehouse tent.

**Implementation**

The project was implemented by a mixed gender team of emergency focal points, engineers, field assistants and logistics personnel. Staff were seconded from other programs that were managed by the organisation elsewhere in Afghanistan.

- 1 expatriate coordinator
- 2 emergency focal points
- 1 team leader
- 1 logistics assistant
- 6 field assistants
- 2 drivers

**Site winterisation**

Ground water pipelines were dug deeper to prevent freezing and water storage bladders positioned on platforms and protected with insulating enclosures.

Mitre drains were built to divert future snow melt into a natural

gully before it reached the camp area.

A simple gravel road network allowed easier access for pedestrians and water tankers.

Additional drainage was built with the roads to divert rain and snow melt from within the camp.

Four insulated bathing enclosures (two male, two female) with 10 separate cubicles in each have been constructed adjacent to winterised tap stands.

All 379 families were issued with a local Bukari (solid fuel stove) and chimney kit with 90kg of coal as the first of four fuel distributions. These were intended to cover a 3 month period. Technical teams were active throughout the camp providing advice on the safe fitting of chimneys and the maintenance of fire breaks between shelters.

Additional winter clothing kits were also distributed to each family.

**Logistics and materials**

Bamboo and plastic sheeting were procured internationally and were subject to delays due to poor weather and insecurity. All other hardware materials and tools for the project were purchased locally in Mazar-I-Sharif.

**Materials list for one shelter**

Quantity	unit
10m bamboo poles	24pieces
Standard 5m x 4m plastic sheeting	7pieces
Plywood Sheet 6mm x 1525mm x 1525mm	4.6 pieces
Bolts - 6mm diameter 150mm long	84 pieces
Nuts for bolts	84 pieces
Washers for nuts	168 pieces
Nails – 100mm (4")	110 pieces
Small Nails – 50mm (for fixing tarpaulin)	1000 pieces
Washers for small nails (to make wide head)	800 pieces
Binding rope – 5mm cotton	60m



Finished shelter. The end wall has been covered by the occupants  
Photo Shaun Scales



“We came home hoping to receive a full house with brick and windows. All we received was a tent in a camp with no privacy and not on our own land. This organisation helped us to build shelters to save us for winter. The shelters are better than a tent but we hope to have a full house soon.”

Exterior and interior photographs of the completed shelters, showing the previously distributed tents inside.  
Photo: Shaun Scales