

CASE STUDY

PHILIPPINES 2018 / TROPICAL STORM KAI-TAK

KEYWORDS: Shelter kits, Links with recovery, Security of tenure / HLP, No-build zones

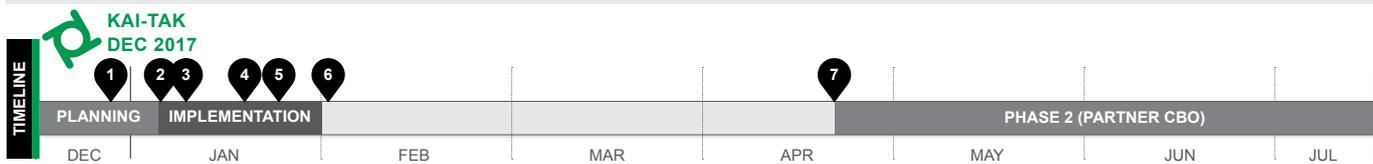
CRISIS	Tropical Storm Kai-Tak (Urduja), 16 Dec 2017
TOTAL PEOPLE AFFECTED*	435,220 households (1,852,900 individuals), including 94,675 households in 1,911 evacuation centres and 88,775 households with host families
TOTAL HOUSES DAMAGED	35,286 houses (2,748 totally destroyed and 32,538 partially damaged)
PROJECT LOCATIONS	Municipalities of Cairbiran, Almeria, Naval, Biliran, province of Biliran
PROJECT BENEFICIARIES	957 households (580 totally / 376 partially damaged. 28 HH with disabilities, 257HH with elderly, 62HH with lactating women and 3HH with pregnant women)
PROJECT OUTPUTS	900 shelter kits and 57 tents NFIs: 1,914 solar lights, 1,800 mosquito nets, 1,795 water carriers, 1,800 blankets
OUTCOME INDICATORS	76% / 100% of beneficiaries reporting that the assistance facilitated their return to a homesite / movement to a temporary relocation site
SHELTER SIZE	Shelter Kits: varied, based on original shelter / plot Tents: 16m ² , suitable for a family of 4–5 people
SHELTER DENSITY	Shelter Kits: varied Tents: 3–4m ² per person on average**
MATERIALS COST	USD 135 per household
PROJECT COST	USD 189 per household



PROJECT SUMMARY

To fill the gap between emergency shelter and permanent housing after displacement caused by Tropical Storm Kai-Tak, this project delivered shelter kits and non-food items to support the return of households to homes located on no-build zones. It recognized that it was preferable for affected households to repair storm-damaged homes located on restricted land rather than continue staying in collective centres, while they awaited the completion of the national government housing. This potentially contentious project was completed with support from local government units and the affected communities.

* National Disaster and Risk Management Council, as of 4 February 2018.
** Some households may have had more than five people.



In the short term, the project aimed to respond to the immediate needs in collective centres, but working on the knowledge that, in the long term, the targeted households would be provided with permanent housing (above).

- 1 27 Dec 2017: Decision to deploy a response team from the Headquarters.
- 2 4 Jan 2018: Decision to provide emergency shelter solutions.
- 3 8 Jan 2018: Distributions of shelter kits, NFI and tents start.
- 4 16 Jan 2018: Post-Distribution Monitoring begins.
- 5 20 Jan 2018: Distributions of emergency shelter finish.
- 6 1 Feb 2018: Team exits.
- 7 23 Apr 2018: Partner CBO begins temporary shelter project.

WEAKNESSES

- The training “cascading” approach initially left gaps in coverage and had to be adjusted.
- Lack of framing materials due to wrong assumption that affected people could easily access and use salvaged materials.
- Some of the pre-positioned tents degraded due to poor supply-chain management during the tents’ life cycle.

STRENGTHS

- + Rapid delivery thanks to pre-positioned stocks.
- + Successful partnership with municipal authorities.
- + Timeliness and effectiveness due to clear geographic targeting.
- + The project was implemented taking into account recovery pathways.

CONTEXT AND SITUATION AFTER THE STORM

Because of its unique geography, the Philippines is prone to earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, typhoons and floods. Typhoons occur on average 20 times per year. On 16 December 2017, Tropical Storm Kai-Tak affected the Eastern Visayas and brought 75km/h winds and heavy rainfall. The equivalent of two months of rainfall fell in just 48 hours. As the storm moved over the island of Biliran, flooding and landslides caused major damage to homes across the province. The worst-affected families found refuge in collective centres. Within two days of the storm, half of the evacuation centres were cleared, as people started to return to their homes. However, some people were unable to return, due to the damage sustained to their houses.

NO-BUILD ZONES AND NHA HOUSING SCHEME

Four years earlier, category 5 Typhoon Haiyan had devastated 36 provinces, displacing over four million people and damaging more than one million homes.¹ Across many provinces in the Philippines, the government declared areas at risk as no-build zones. Despite this ruling, people continued to live in these areas in the absence of other immediate solutions. Under a National Housing Authority (NHA) scheme, people occupying no-build zones became eligible for permanent housing located away from high-risk areas. In Biliran, work to complete the NHA housing scheme was still underway when Kai-Tak made landfall. Many of the households that suffered severe damage to their houses were living in areas designated as no-build zones.

PROJECT RATIONALE AND SHELTER OPTIONS

Although people from no-build zones were to be provided with permanent housing, the expected timeframe for delivery was thought to be around six months and the precedent was for these projects to be delivered behind schedule. The implementing organization recognized that providing families stranded in evacuation centres with an interim shelter solution was required. There was a need to bridge the gap between the planned closing of evacuation centres and the provision of permanent housing under the NHA scheme.

The organization suggested that the provision of emergency shelter kits to affected households would enable them to return to their homesites, to make temporary repairs to the houses that they had previously lived in. Materials to be included in shelter kits were easily available from regional pre-positioned stocks, guaranteeing prompt delivery.

¹ For information on the overall response and some specific project examples, see overview A.8 in Shelter Projects 2015-2016.



By stressing the temporality of the project and by explaining how it fitted to the long-term sheltering process, the project team was able to obtain the appropriate level of support from the local authorities. Most people received a kit to return to their homesites (left), while some families who could not return were provided with tents (right).

For 57 households in two municipalities, the option of returning home could not be envisaged, due to the high risk of further landslides in their area of origin. For these families, the plan involved the provision of tents and the temporary relocation to alternative sites on private land. Water and sanitation facilities on site were provided by local charities, local government or the landowner.

COORDINATION WITH OTHER ACTORS

The Shelter Cluster was not activated in response to Kai-Tak and there was no evidence that other actors were planning to respond in Biliran (other than the aforementioned NHA housing project). At the municipal level, the disaster response was managed by the Local Government Units (LGUs), the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (MDRRMC) and the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWD). The project team worked closely with the municipal authorities to ensure that they supported this intervention and recognized its temporary nature. Distributions were coordinated with and approved by the LGUs. Meetings were scheduled with mayors to discuss the planned response. Some initial concerns were raised regarding the provision of shelter materials to people located in no-build zones. Once it was clarified that the aid was a temporary solution which would facilitate the repair of existing houses in the short-term, enabling households to leave collective centres, all mayors offered their support for the project, knowing that the NHA scheme was unlikely to be completed quickly. The MDRRMC were also informed of the planned intervention and were willing to support the activities.

TARGETING

The project was initiated across four municipalities in Biliran Province. In addition to geographic targeting, the beneficiary selection was based on the level of structural damage, utilizing household-level needs assessment data provided by the MSWD. In two municipalities, all households with partially or totally destroyed homes were provided with shelter repair kits. Those unable to return to their homesites were provided with tents. In the other two municipalities, all households with a totally destroyed home were provided with shelter kits.

PROJECT TEAM AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The implementing organization comprised a team of four international staff who worked in direct partnership with a community-based organization (CBO), which was well placed to leverage support within the relevant stakeholders, such as the



municipal government. The MSWD provided around 40 local social workers to help with the distribution of aid at centralized locations, provide technical training to beneficiaries and undertake post-distribution monitoring (PDM). Sixty-five per cent of the beneficiary households were surveyed, a figure that speaks of the desire of MSWD to assist. The findings from the PDM survey were discussed with the entire project team and were then used to guide future distributions and training. An additional team of volunteers, made up of people from the target population (around 40 individuals), supported the training and distribution components of this project. Working in partnership with the MSWD and volunteers ensured that the connection between the organization and the affected population was mediated by members of the community, giving the recipient population a sense of ownership over the intervention.

MATERIALS AND SUPPLY

The shelter kits and tents were drawn from stocks pre-positioned in the country, leading to a cost-effective and timely delivery. Shelter items were available for distribution within two weeks after the storm made landfall. A three-day domestic supply chain ensured that materials could be mobilized and transported to the affected area in smaller consignments, enabling the project team to expand the area of operation swiftly and effectively.

An initial consignment of tents came from stocks that had been kept in storage for a considerable period, with the exact place of origin (prior to arriving in the Philippines) unknown. Although the tents were stored in a secure and robust warehouse – originally used for the storage of dry food – some degradation had occurred to the outer tent fabric (polyester with polyurethane coating), leading to the ingress of water. This consignment was subsequently replaced with tents of known origin.

To complement the kits, the project assumed that people could salvage construction materials from debris relatively easily. It later became clear that the use of some salvageable items was reliant on obtaining a permit from the municipal government. In some cases, a lack of suitable framing materials limited the quality of the shelters constructed, although the majority of households were able to retrofit existing structures or use debris from pre-existing shelters effectively.

CASCADE TRAINING MODEL

The technical shelter kit training was delivered using a cascade model. Staff from the organization delivered training on the use of the shelter kit to MSWD social workers and representatives from the affected community. Each of the trainers (around 80 in total) were asked to replicate the training to a smaller group of beneficiaries, with the expectation that they would provide further assistance if needed. Whilst this model was largely successful, through the PDM survey it was noted that in some cases the training had not been adequately cascaded to the targeted households, leading to the construction of poorer quality shelters. Because the PDM was conducted throughout the implementation period, the training strategy could be adjusted to address such gaps. However, it was often impossible to make changes to those shelters that had already been constructed.

WIDER IMPACTS

This project supported the closure of evacuation centres, enabling these facilities to return to their intended purpose (i.e. schools). By helping communities to function as normal following the event, this project supported wider post-disaster recovery.

SECOND PHASE OF THE PROJECT

Even if the project was implemented in a very short time frame, the strategy took into account the recovery needs and pathways of the targeted families. Initially, it was understood that all of them were to be provided with NHA housing within six months, but it later became apparent that some of the beneficiary population would be waiting significantly longer. One of the groups affected by this delay would be the 57 households residing in tents on the relocation sites. The partner CBO developed an intermediate solution for this caseload, so that they would not be left in tents for too long. The aim of the CBO was to construct more durable shelters for this group on two sites in the municipality. An usufructuary agreement also ensured that households benefited from security of tenure. The usufruct stated that recipients would have rights to the land and shelters free of charge for three years. This legally binding agreement, signed by the landowners, was negotiated by the CBO on behalf of the families. The expectation was that within three years, the households living in the temporary settlements would have received the NHA housing. However, a focus group conducted with households living in NHA housing uncovered some perceived issues related to size and thermal comfort, but also in terms of location, limiting their access to livelihoods. Considering the perceived disadvantages of the NHA housing, the CBO subsequently negotiated with the landowners to sell the land and shelters to the beneficiaries in affordable instalments. At the time of writing, both landowners were amenable to this suggestion, subject to more detailed plans being presented.

As plans for this second phase of the project were developed, the organization agreed to support it by donating goods in kind (including corrugated galvanized iron sheets), while the project was managed by the CBO. The LGU also supported this project through the provision of construction equipment. A project team of four staff from the organization later reviewed the technical specifications and confirmed that all essential services provided were in line with sector standards.



As it became clear that some beneficiaries would be waiting long to be allocated permanent housing, the project supported them with transitional shelters on private land that could be occupied through a usufructuary agreement.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- + The use of locally pre-positioned stocks of materials supported the **rapid delivery of emergency shelter items**.
- + **A solid working relationship with the relevant municipal authorities** enabled access to assessment data in a timely fashion, facilitating swift decision-making. **Utilizing staff from the municipal authorities** for training, distributions and monitoring ensured that the project was delivered by members of the affected community.
- + The decision to target a clearly identified geographic area enabled **better engagement with the affected communities and increased the timeliness and cost-effectiveness** of the intervention.
- + This emergency shelter project **was implemented swiftly, but with a view to recovery pathways**. It led to the development of a temporary shelter intervention, delivered by a partner CBO and supported by the organization. This ensured that **the emergency component was linked to the longer-term shelter needs** of a particularly vulnerable portion of the affected population.



A temporary settlement was established with water supply and sanitation services by the partner organization.



WEAKNESSES

- **The delivery of training using the cascade approach led to some gaps in coverage**. This was related to some community trainers not adequately cascading the shelter kit training to affected households in their designated area.
- **Some families identified a lack of framing materials to support repair or reconstruction as an issue**. This was partly due to the assumption that people could use salvaged materials, while in reality this was carefully controlled by the municipal authorities, with people requiring a permit to do so.
- **Some of the pre-positioned tents had degraded** prior to arriving in the Philippines due to the climate of the storage facility and/or the duration they had been in storage. Following this project, the organization adopted a global pre-positioning strategy with robust stock tracking. For old stocks or those with an unknown point of origin, detailed inspection must be conducted prior to distribution.



Technical shelter kits trainings were delivered using a cascade approach, thanks to the support of social workers and volunteers from the affected population.



Issues of size, thermal comfort and location were uncovered through focus group discussions about the national housing.

LESSONS LEARNED

- When the implementation of emergency shelter is **viewed in terms of long-term sheltering processes, the distribution of aid to households in no-build zones can be a suitable approach**. This should only be undertaken when support from the appropriate stakeholders (i.e. affected populations and relevant authorities) has been obtained.
- It is often assumed that affected communities will complement the items in a shelter kit by salvaging debris after a storm. However, in the context of this intervention this assumption did not hold true, as municipal authorities required a permit for the use of debris. For future projects, prior to the distribution of shelter kits, **the organization should understand the extent to which the affected communities are able to access suitable framing materials**, considering access to sustainable sources.
- **Training is a critical part** of the effective use of emergency shelter kits and is essential to achieving high-quality shelter outcomes. Whilst monitoring can reveal weaknesses in a training model, **after shelters are built it is difficult to make changes if materials have been used inappropriately**.