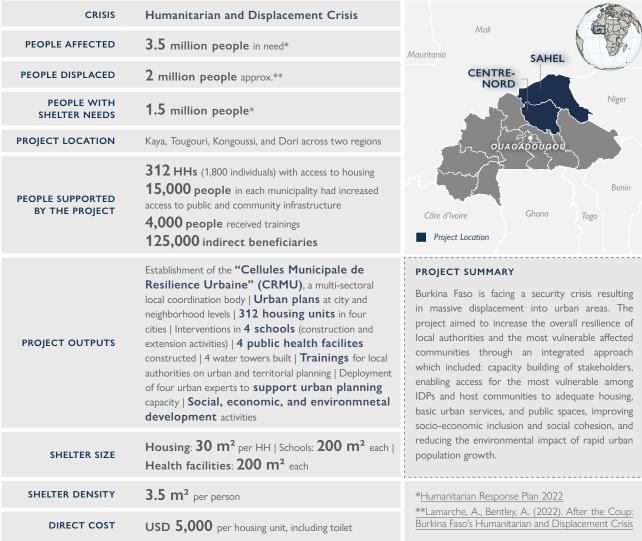
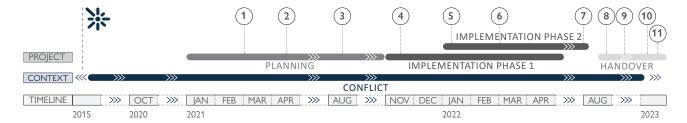
CASE STUDY

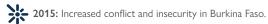
BURKINA FASO 2020–2023 / CONFLICT

KEYWORDS: Area-based approach, Core housing, Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, Social cohesion



Note: The Project Cost is not available, as the project costs include health, education, water and other facilities; as well as normative tools; training/capacity building, and social/economic/environmental development activities.





- 1 Feb Mar 2021: Participatory planning process and capacity development activities at local and community level including all stakeholders.
- (2) Apr 2021: Community consultations for deicison-making.
- (3) Aug 2021: Securing land; ensuring landownership regulations.
- 4 Nov 2021 May 2022: Starting of construction of public infrastructures.
- (5) Jan 2022: First coup d'état takes place, changing governance structures.

- (6) Feb Mar 2022: Follow-up on land allocations for validity.
- (7) June Aug 2022: Provision of access to water services.
- (8) Aug 2022: Handover of public infrastructures to government.
- 9 Sep 2022: Second coup d'état takes place, which impacted the period of construction.
- (10) Jan Mar 2023: Planned construction of housing units.
- (11) Jul 2023: Planned handover of housing units to the community.

CONTEXT

Since 2015, Burkina Faso has struggled with violence from non-identified armed groups (NIAGs) strongly impacting peace, development efforts, and social cohesion. This violence led to a large-scale displacement crisis with approximately 1.9 million people recorded as internally displaced as of January 2023, forced from their homes in search of safety, shelter, and livelihood opportunities (UNHCR, 2022). In the beginning, violence had centered on and increased in the North, Center-North, Boucle du Mouhoun, East, and Sahel regions, however it is now affecting most regions of the country.

When the project was designed. between March and September 2020, conflict and attacks had led to more than 1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). This massive wave of displacement had triggered a rapid urbanization process, particularly affecting small and intermediate cities, thus causing enormous urban planning and management difficulties to both national and local authorities. In addition, military coups d'état took place in January and in September 2022, leading to changes in nearly all governing positions, including the head of state, ministers, regional authorities, and mayors.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

Before the current crisis, Burkina Faso faced a myriad of development challenges as one of the world's least developed countries. In 2014, the country ranked 183 out of 186 on the Human Development Index (HDI), struggling with chronic vulnerabilities, food insecurities (1.3 million people in need), recurrent shocks (droughts, floods, epidemics, locusts, etc.) and challenges in responding to the needs of 34,000 refugees displaced from Mali due to ongoing conflict. Urbanization was advancing rapidly before the crisis, leading to accelerated growth of informal settlements and inadequate living conditions in terms of housing and service provision. However, while some of these dynamics were already pressing before the crisis, it was only after the large-scale conflict-induced displacement that national and international attention was drawn to these challenges and the need to develop specific "urban" solutions.

SITUATION DURING/AFTER THE CRISIS

As many IDPs fleed from their homes and areas of origin in urgent need, many arrived in urban areas without money, goods, or livestock. As a result, food security, access to water and shelter, and socio-economic development opportunities were among their major needs. These deprivations often forced IDPs to settle in the urban periphery or in informal, unplanned areas in inadequate shelters with limited access to basic services. As the displacement crisis in Burkina Faso has by now become protracted, competition for natural resources, land, services, and livelihoods is intensifying and contributing to the degradation of land and living environments while impacting social cohesion between host and displaced communities. Unsurprisingly, women and girls are among the most vulnerable to such impacts, thus increasing gender-based violence (GBV).

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

The government has identified national reconciliation and social cohesion as one of four strategic priorities for the transition period after the second coup d'état (Sept 2022). Among the priorities in the Action Agenda for the Transition is the support for emergency housing as part of the crisis response.

The current government shelter strategy prioritizes vulnerable populations, in particular female-headed households, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. The government is supported by humanitarian and development actors, who are working to ensure sustainable urban development and more durable shelter solutions. For their construction, changes in land use and enforcement of housing, land and property (HLP) need to be obtained in adequately located urban and peri-urban areas. However, due to the unforeseen dimension of the displacement crisis, the government agreed to the establishment of "SATs" (Sites d'Abri Temporaire – transitional shelter areas) in either peri-urban areas or at a certain distance from cities and towns. Many of the SATs are overcrowded, located far from basic services and from livelihood opportunities in urban areas and often don't provide adequate living conditions, e.g. inadequate shelter, insufficient water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, etc.



Inadequate living conditions of the IDPs in Kongoussi, one of the locations of the project.

PROJECT DESIGN

The project's approach and design were guided by the need to identify and implement durable solutions in four selected The project's approach and design were guided by the need to identify and implement durable solutions in four selected cities/towns – Kaya, Konguossi, Tougouri, and Dori – while fostering humanitarian-development-peace nexus through the construction of more than 300 adequate housing units for people in vulnerable situations, as well as basic and social services, such as access to safe drinking water, dignifying sanitation facilities, schools, health centers and green public spaces. The project was conceptualized to include development-oriented actions (inclusive governance, participation of displacement-affected communities, capacity building, increased service provision, access to HLP rights, etc.) implemented in humanitarian crisis contexts and fostering local integration of displaced people into urban communities by strategically selecting project locations that were close to city centers and could be densified and would allow a social population mix. The adequate location of the project sites favored more investments from public authorities, such as building an access bridge or bringing electricity in the case of Kaya. Displaced and host communities benefitted from the project's co-design elements, which included participation and decision-making on what services were needed in the selected neighborhoods, as well as joint skills development for increasing access to livelihood opportunities. As local authorities were key actors and would provide services such as water, energy, education and health in the long term, the project was developed and implemented in close cooperation with them and decentralized government authorities with aim to increase trust between populations and public authorities that were now seen as fulfilling their social contracts.

The overall objective of the project aimed to strengthen the capacity of local authorities to respond to challenges and issues raised by the displacement crisis and local urban development using an integrated area-based approach. This would be done by providing host and displaced populations in vulnerable situations with access to better living conditions, adequate shelter/housing, tenure security, basic social services including WASH and improved health and education facilities. Overall, these populations would



For increased ownership of the project, the new neighborhoods and housing units were designed in a participatory planning process, including all relevant stakeholders at all levels.

now thrive in an improved urban environment with better opportunities for their socio-economic development, thus fostering social cohesion between communities.

This approach was relevant as it responded to the need to empower local authorities, in particular municipal authorities, which are on the front line in these crises. However, authorities often lack the financial means or technical capacity to carry out needed participatory urban planning and crisis management processes to scale up housing and basic service provisions to timely and adequately address the impacts of massive internal displacement. Thus, it was considered essential to implement durable solutions that built on synergies with government priorities and logically addressed the ongoing humanitarian challenges. The project included four outcomes:

Outcome 1: Increased institutional capacity of local authorities for urban planning and management in selected urban areas impacted by massive displacement and COVID-19.

Outcome 2: Enhanced social cohesion by applying participatory planning approaches and consultations for awareness raising on land tenure rights, gender issues and improved urban environments.

Outcome 3: Improved access to adequate housing, basic services, and public space to people in vulnerable situations from both host and displaced communities, enabling them to live a dignified life and enhancing social cohesion.





In the city of Kongoussi, the project activities included the construction of 57 housing units, and water supply infrastructure (Left) Construction phase; (Right) Completed construction.

Outcome 4: Mitigated environmental impact of large-scale population movements in the targeted municipalities.

In accordance with these premises, the project was designed with the following methodological approaches and rationales:

- A whole-of-government approach with multi-level governance, multi-sectoral cooperation, and a specific focus on enhancing the capacity of local authorities from different sectors was utilized. Local authorities were key actors, while national actors supported the process led by the Ministry for Urban Development. This also included cooperation/coordination with the Ministry for Humanitarian Action, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry for Environmental Protection, Especially through their decentralised services in the targeted regions.
- The inclusion of all relevant local stakeholders in decision-making processes, including local and decentralised government officials, host and displaced community representatives, faith leaders, traditional leaders, the private sector, and academia through the establishment of Municipal Urban Resilience Cells (Cellules Municipales de la Resilience Urbaine, or CMRUs, led by the Mayor.
- Integrated area-based approaches including considerations for social, economic, and environmental development as well as cross-sectoral coordination. Area-based approaches focus on improving living conditions in a given geographical area (neighbourhood, village or town) rather than a sector or target group. Thus, project outputs, which include WASH, education and health facilities and public green spaces in addition to

- the houses, benefit all people in a neighborhood, i.e. local and displaced communities, thus helping to reduce tensions between them. Coordination through the CMRUs ensured that local mechanisms were set up to maintain services even after the crisis, thus increasing local ownership, including at neighborhood level.
- The project used integrated urban and territorial planning approaches, which are cross-sectoral by nature, as an entry point for promoting sustainable (urban) development. This approach is essential when housing, basic services, and strategies to foster social cohesion and livelihoods are needed.
- A strong emphasis was put from the very beginning on making land in the selected locations available for the project. Indeed, if unsolved, land issues create longerterm challenges, leading to secondary displacement or conflict and hindering further investments. Ensuring that HLP rights have been cleared with local and traditional authorities and transparently communicated with communities, is crucial for implementing durable solutions

The project builds upon the strategies developed by the government and works closely with the local authorities by utilizing development-oriented, long-term planning for urban population growth, acknowledging that the displacement situation is protracted and that [some] households or household members will not return quickly, but also aiming to improve living conditions for all people living in the selected neighborhoods. It was considered important to not only supply housing, but also increase the government's ability to provide additional services (education;



In the city of Kaya, the project activities included the construction of 100 housing units.

IMPLEMENTATION

With the purpose of ensuring an integrated multi-sector approach and providing local authorities with the necessary skills and knowledge, CMRUs were established in each project location. Existing coordination structures at the municipal level were accounted for, and a platform to share alternative viewpoints and jointly find solutions at local level was provided.

As the main decision-making and steering mechanism body, CMRUs consisted of representatives from relevant municipal services from different sectors, government structures at the provincial and regional levels, concessionary services (e.g. for water and electricity), local community leaders, and representatives of displaced communities. To help ensure a participatory nature, CMRUs were used for local consultations, as conflict resolution bodies (e.g., on land), and for ensuring local ownership of the infrastructure and improved neighborhoods. Through the project, CMRUs as well as local authorities benefitted from the support of four national Urban Experts from the implementing organization, one based in each targeted municipality.

To ensure that the project also led to and contributed to changes in policies and institutional processes (e.g., urban planning and approval procedures), a rapid review of the existing planning instruments was implemented using a participatory planning approach. Resulting recommendations included taking the crisis dimension into local development plans, fostering participatory and inclusive local processes, and identifying priority areas of interventions in the short, medium, and long-term.

LAND ALLOCATION AND TENURE

Acknowledging that questions on HLP rights are critically important and to avoid further conflict over the use of limited natural resources, the CMRUs were also crucial for conflict prevention and resolution, particularly on land tenure issues. Land for housing units was provided by the municipalities in three cities, while negotiations and compensation processes with traditional landowners (applying land value capture) were necessary in Tougouri, a municipality where the population had tripled in just two years because of displacement. Where applicable, landowners were compensated by the allocation of plots in upgraded areas; in most cases, plots were demarcated on municipal/public land.

Detailed urban plans were developed in each target location, building on consultations between the CMRUs and landowners. This participatory planning exercise allowed priority areas to be identified for housing interventions, service expansion, and public spaces. Criteria for sites included: (i) the accessibility and location within the urban fabric for fostering social inclusion and cohesion, as the project benefitted all people within the neighborhood); (ii) land tenure rights held by or transferred to municipalities; and where possible, (iii) sites already part of a planned neighborhood or planned city extension.



Four neighborhoods (communal housing estates) have been built in four cities of Burkina Faso, with a total of 312 housing units.

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The housing units, which were designed through participatory planning sessions with the CMRUs, were later built taking consideration of cultural and climatic specificities, as much as the budget allowed. The housing units built have toilets, (off-grid) electricity and were planned of a similar standard to homes in neighboring areas to avoid tensions between local and new residents. Each targeted neighborhood included access to water, a public green space and nearby health and education facilities which were built and improved.

TARGETING

CMRUs were responsible, in collaboration with the local government humanitarian coordination teams, for selecting beneficiaries for the houses (312 households, or 1,800



Extension building for Health Center in Dori, March 2022.

individuals in total in the project). Vulnerability criteria focused on economic and social situations, particularly supporting female-headed households. There was a quota for IDPs, but also for local populations in vulnerable situations to ensure a social mix in the new neighborhoods. Displaced and local communities were represented in the CMRUs, as a primary decision-making body at the local level of the project.

MAIN CHALLENGES

The coups d'état in January and in September 2022 changed the governance structures of Burkina Faso and impacted the project, as the head of state, ministers and mayors were dismissed. However, many technical actors belonging to the CMRUs remained in service and capacity-building activities have proven useful to strengthen long-term institutional capacity. While exchanges between mayors were not possible after the coups, decisions, where necessary, needed to be postponed until the mayors were replaced by local government bodies.

The declining security situation also heavily impacted project implementation. Rising incidents of violence have, by June 2022, restricted access to Dori and Tougouri, reducing the mobility of project staff. However, construction firms continued working while regular site visits for quality control were conducted by local partners, such as the team of architects and engineers, while project staff carefully supervised operations remotely mainly through video phone calls.

Despite the inclusion of landowners in the CMRU sessions and mediations, processes and conflicts surrounding land allocation, land rights and the demarcation of sites took

longer than expected. Given these delays, by the time construction was to begin – prices for construction materials had increased. As a solution to budgetary challenges, the overall number of homes was reduced from 500 to 312 units. Those houses provided families with adequate accommodation of a limited size (two rooms), toilets, off-grid electricity and a small courtyard.

CROSSCUTTING ISSUES

The project included activities for awareness raising on GBV, and a strong component on environmental care. The selection criteria of participants put a strong effort into gender balance for housing units and socio-economic activities.

TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

Toilets constructed used specific technology which was more ecological by allowing a lower frequency of emptying pits. These used a specific filter method to separate liquid from solid excrement. The septic tank is designed to be ecological, in the sense that it allows for the infiltration of water by decantation and filtration into the water table, after decomposition by enzymes.

EXIT/HANDOVER

Through CMRUs, the project put local actors at the center regarding its needs assessment, capacity-building, and ownership. By ensuring that the CMRUs, which included local authorities, had ownership and decision-making power – the local-level capacity to prepare for and respond



Each targeted neighborhood included access to water, a public green space and nearby health and education facilities which were built and improved.

to crisis and displacement was increased. It was clear from the beginning that public infrastructure would be managed and maintained in the long term by local actors, thus helping to ensure sustainability, including e.g. the provision of teachers for the schools or equipment and staff for the health centers.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

Outcome 1: The overwhelming feedback from participating authorities confirmed that the establishment of highly collaborative mechanisms for the coordination of decentralized government services, service providers, and populations through the CMRUs has proven to be successful and replicable in other locations. For example, Kaya and Dori are two regional humanitarian hubs where the CMRUs are now the official coordination bodies between local authorities and Humanitarian-Development-Peace actors. Overall, the selected municipalities have an increased understanding of the components needed for sustainable, inclusive, and integrated urban development, which will influence future development planning and enable the advancement of inclusive/participatory governance processes.

Outcome 2: Local government actors achieved a better understanding of engaging in participatory and inclusive urban planning processes, as the CMRUs are now institutionalized (by municipal law). For example, in Dori, the Municipal Development Plan has been formally approved, with the CMRU being consulted on its content, marking the first time IDP representatives have had the possibility to influence the development of a strategic plan at the local level.

Outcome 3: More than 1,800 people have now access to decent housing in the four project neighborhoods and many more to water, education and health services. There is a clear improvement in access to basic social and public services for IDP and vulnerable populations. The extensions of schools and health centers and drilling of water service points are benefitting 100,000 people in the four target cities/towns. They were handed over to government authorities, as well as 312 new housing units and public spaces in formally planned neighborhoods.

Outcome 4: The capacity and mechanisms for waste management where enhanced in the targeted neighborhoods, and alternative cooking methods introduced to reduce wood consumption. Awareness was raised of the importance of environmental care.



One of the four primary schools built through the project in the four areas of intervention.



Four water towers and 19 standpipes were built in the four neighborhoods to facilitate access to water for vulnerable populations.

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STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- √ The project reinforced the understanding of the roles and responsibilities of local authorities to be better prepared and able to respond to urban crisis contexts provoked by massive displacements, also advancing the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus in Burkina Faso.
- √ The project enhanced local government capacities for integrated urban and territorial planning and participatory urban development processes. Municipal and decentralized government actors utilized the tools and methodological approaches to urban planning based on spatial and cross-sectoral analysis. HDP nexus approaches will now be included in upcoming guidelines for future planning tools and the CMRU is established as an important mechanism for coordination.
- Living conditions for local and displaced populations in project locations have been enhanced through improved access to basic social and public services, and there was increased potential for mix-use and social mix in the neighborhood and public housing projects.
- √ The project enhanced coordination between humanitarian, development, and government actors at the city level by making the CMRUs the single interface for interactions between municipalities and humanitarian and development structures. As noted, an interest in integrated and inclusive approaches has emerged, leading to increased enthusiasm for coordination and partnership between actors.
- √ The project findings influenced the current development of the Durable Solution Strategy for Burkina Faso, now including consideration of integrated approaches and land questions in the currently ongoing processes for national-level strategies.
- √ Advocacy for durable and longer-term solutions to the IDP crisis increased through the project.
- √ Financial and technical partners have shown strong interest resulting in ongoing discussions on how to upscale the project's approaches and currently the project's approach is being replicated for a new initiative which includes housing and urban agriculture in displacement-affected municipalities.
- √ The participation and engagement of local partners who remained in service made it possible to continue implementation during and after the January and September 2022 coups d'état and throughout the continually declining security situation.

WEAKNESSES

- Context-specific solutions had to be found for clarifying land ownership and allocating suitable land to avoid major delays. Individual landowners challenged decisions regarding the plots and its usage, delaying construction processes in Kaya and Tougouri, while land allocation of suitable land in Dori took longer than expected where urban land available for construction was very difficult to find.
- x Land questions required several follow-up meetings and consultations with all relevant stakeholders, which was not originally accounted for in the given time frame and budget allocation.
- The process to demarcate land and plots is usually led and financed by the municipal authorities. It was therefore not factored into the project's budget. Due to the lack of capacity and resources of local authorities, more financial support and time from the project was needed than initially allocated.
- x The relevant procurement processes were lengthy and complex. Because these processes relied on available land for construction, there was a thin line between advancing procurement operations (and taking risks during the construction) or waiting for all stakeholders to be "in consent" until all challenges in the neighborhoods were resolved.
- The project's construction budget was relatively low. Considering that construction prices increased massively during the project's implementation phase, the situation didn't allow for building all originally planned 500 housing units or to innovate by using local building materials and implement designs for natural cooling, which could have advanced energy efficiency.
- x The project's budget did not consider the increased security restrictions for site visits and missions following the degraded security context in the country, putting challenges on mobility of project staff and members of the CMRUs, reducing the frequency and opportunities for exchanges between local actors of the four cities.
- x The original anticipated project timeline was too short.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

 On
 Burkina
 Faso:
 A.1
 / BURKINA
 FASO
 2019–2020;

 A.2 / BURKINA FASO
 2012
 B.2 / BURKINA FASO
 2009

On HDPN: A.3 / CHAD 2018-2020

On social cohesion: A.32 / TURKEY 2017-2018;

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LESSONS LEARNED

- The strategic choice of the locations for the project interventions (selected neighborhood in each city/ town) was crucial: all neighborhoods are located close to the city center and where the city is planned to grow. Today these neighborhoods are occupied by the most vulnerable (host and displaced communities); if tomorrow IDPs decide to return to their areas of origin, these newly built-up areas, which are managed by the municipalities (i.e. these are publicly managed assets for social purposes) will surely be occupied by others. Basically, the project has favored accelerated urban growth in a location where the city would have grown anyway. The project triggered important investments from central government in Kaya, for example, where a bridge was built to facilitate the access to the selected site and electricity was brought in through central government funds.-
- The area-based approach applied at both city and neighborhood levels allows for a spatially integrated and coherent intervention which leads to social cohesion between displaced and host communities, also thanks to the adopted participatory approach. It avoids spatial discrimination of IDPs, which is common when humanitarian actors set up camps or temporary resettlement sites are built 5-10 km away from the city, and favors economy of scale and livelihoods/job opportunities for all.
- Technical coordination groups like the CMRUs are valuable coordination bodies at the local level, enabling representatives of local and displaced communities to exchange and take decisions jointly, and encouraging local authorities and leadership fostered ownership and trust.
- The Urban Experts which were deployed during the project were important to increase the 'urban capacity' of local authorities as they were integrated with the local governance system, fostering coordination between different actors at the local level for building capacity on sustainable development approaches.
- The evaluation of existing planning tools and the analysis of how those can be adapted to crisis contexts is crucial.
- Identifying land for interventions and solving land rights and ownership challenges with the close collaboration of local authorities is vital.
- Working with a local partner for urban plans and applying participatory planning processes (including for needs assessment and housing) helped to ensure that structures were aligned with Burkinabe standards.
- Constant follow-ups with construction firms are important to ensure that the desired quality of construction is met, and timelines are respected.
- Awareness-raising activities are useful, but there is a need to further incorporate activities around environmental care, reduce inequalities and increase service provision capacity and resources in municipal strategies for longer-term impacts.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- The project provided more than 1,800 people access to safe and dignified shelter, and approximately 100,000 people can now access water, education and health facilities this high number of beneficiaries is mainly due to the water point drilled in Dori which is producing an exceptional high discharge for such an arid area, benefiting the whole city of more than 50,000 people. It also put local government and local actors, such as local and displaced communities in the center for decision-making process.
- Due to the scale of the crisis, it will be important to scale the project to different locations and in size, to increase the number of people, who's shelter needs can be met but also, who's needs regarding livelihood opportunities, education, health and other components, which need an integrated approach, can be met.
- The project's focus on Shelter as main entry point for increasing the opportunities for people in extremely vulnerable situations for their access to water, health and other services but also livelihood opportunities, clearly showcases the centrality of shelter, but also its "wider impact" on other their possibilities to live a dignified live.
- The area-based approach and proper decision-making on where to intervene are key aspects to foster durable solutions and promote the HDP nexus. There is a need to apply adequate spatial planning reasoning so that any project intervention can have multiplier effects. This was clear in the case of Kaya where central government basically decided to add funds to the project by building the bridge and bringing the electricity, which represent major investments.

10 www.shelterprojects.org SHELTER PROJECTS 9TH EDITION