

CASE STUDY

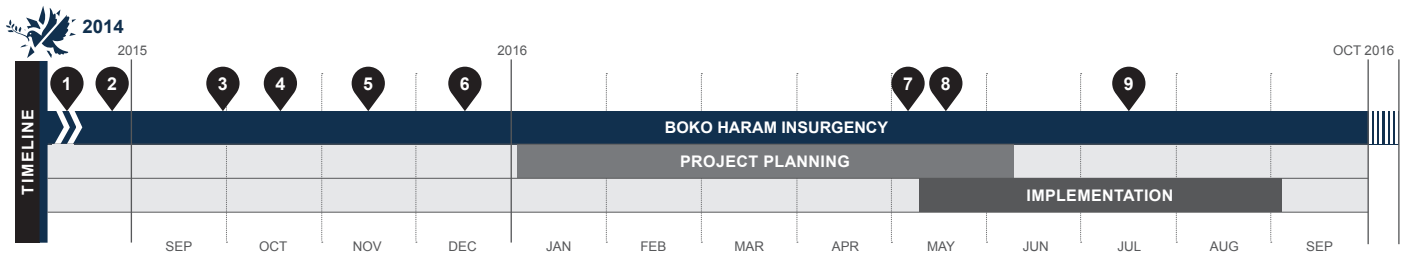
NIGERIA 2015-2016 / CONFLICT

KEYWORDS: Emergency shelter, Site planning, Collective centres, Infrastructure, Protection

CRISIS	Conflict (Boko Haram insurgency), 2014-ongoing	
TOTAL PEOPLE AFFECTED	14.8 million affected (HRP 2016) 1,878,205 displaced, mainly by Boko Haram (Source: DTM, Aug 2016)	
PROJECT LOCATIONS	Several displacement sites in Maiduguri, Borno State	
BENEFICIARIES	3,433 households (20,480 individuals)	
PROJECT OUTPUTS	1,000 Emergency shelters (Bama). 1,269 Reinforced shelters (Bakassi). 105 for one large family and 1,164 for two small families.	
SHELTER SIZE	16.2m² (4.5x3.6m – emergency shelters) / 28.8m² (4x7.2m – reinforced shelters).	
SHELTER DENSITY	3.2m² per person (Emergency shelters, maximum five persons per shelter). 4.1m² per person (Reinforced shelters, maximum eight persons per shelter).	
MATERIAL COSTS	USD 158 for Emergency shelters (including labour and transport). USD 845 for Reinforced shelters (including labour).	
PROJECT COSTS	USD 564 per household, on average.	

PROJECT SUMMARY

The project built emergency and reinforced shelters for over 3,000 internally displaced households across ten sites, using a common design that took into account the needs of different family sizes, cultural practices, as well as climate considerations. The shelter project was part of a broader coordinated effort of the humanitarian community to meet minimum standards while decongesting existing sites, particularly schools.



- 1 2014: Insurgency begins in 2009. It escalates seriously in 2014 when Boko Haram starts to seize territory, and spreads to neighbouring countries.
- 2 2015: Over 20 IDP sites formally established in Maiduguri and Jere. Nearly half of which are schools, occupied for over two years.
- 3 30 Sep 2015: High Powered Committee For The Re-opening of Schools Within State Capital approaches the UN and INGOs to assist with the relocation of IDPs to alternative sites.
- 4 Oct 2015: Humanitarian community commits internal funding to start the relocation process.
- 5 Nov 2015: CERF Proposal is made while mapping of available spaces for shelter constructions is carried out. A location is provided by the government for 2,500 shelters.
- 6 Dec 2015: Biometric registration starts.
- 7 May 2016: Existing IDP sites receive shelter upgrades, decongestions, and rainy season preparedness (i.e. drainage improvements).
- 8 Mid-May 2016: Shelter construction begins in Bakassi camp.
- 9 Jul 2016: Inter-Agency multi sector assessments reveal dire needs in new locations and the programme is adjusted. Emergency shelters are used to intervene in these locations.

STRENGTHS

- + The project enabled the reopening of schools.
- + Capacity-building of local contractors and labourers.
- + Climate and culturally appropriate design.
- + Various types and sensible allocation of shelters.

WEAKNESSES

- Construction began too close to the rainy season.
- Recruitment challenges.
- Lack of site planning technical expertise.
- Different pace of delivery across sectors.



The project took place in the context of major displacement into host community sites, most of which were spontaneous (left), and into temporary collective centres, including schools (right), which needed to be reopened for children to resume their education.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The north-eastern part of Nigeria has witnessed an **increase in violence since the beginning of 2015**, causing a major humanitarian crisis. The Islamic fundamentalist group Boko Haram initiated their insurgency in 2009, with attacks against government targets in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State. In 2014, the insurgency ramped up in scale and brutality, with Boko Haram capturing large swathes of the North-East and turning their violence to civilian targets. Massive displacement followed, and persisted throughout 2015-2016.

More than two years after the crisis began, **over 1.8 million people remained displaced** and would continue to be throughout 2017. Displacement was concentrated mainly in Borno State, with Adamawa, Yobe and Gombe States also hosting displaced people. The Nigerian Military regained territory but Boko Haram remained active, forced back into the use of terrorist tactics. The humanitarian response in 2017 would cover all four states, though access to large territories remained very limited, in particular in Yobe and Borno, with high security concerns.

Nigeria's North East has a predominantly tropical dry climate, and the rainy season spans between June and September, with heavy rain and high winds. The rest of the year is hot and dry, with temperatures climbing as high as 40°C. The Harmattan dry wind affects the region with fine dust from November through March.

SITUATION AFTER THE CRISIS

Before the crisis, people in urban and peri-urban settings in the North-East lived in concrete or block dwellings with roofs constructed of corrugated iron sheets or comparable material. In rural areas, mud and thatch dwellings were typical. **The majority of the IDPs found shelter within host communities**, sharing with relatives or friends, or renting. Around 9% of the total displaced people lived in camps or camp-like settings. **The camp populations were generally the poorest** among the affected communities, those who left only at the point of violence, because they lacked the resources or networks to find their own alternative accommodation.

Some sites were open fields where temporary shelter had to be erected, shelter conditions ranging from makeshift shelters (usually domes built of grass or other readily available materials in vernacular style) to tents and emergency shelters constructed with plastic sheeting provided by aid agencies.

The majority of the camps and camp-like settings were collective centres – pre-existing buildings such as **schools**,

government buildings, and unfinished construction projects. Usually, these were communal and high-density types of shelters, with overcrowding and persistent health risks. **The use of schools as displacement sites since 2014** severely hampered education in the area, especially in Maiduguri.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

The Shelter-NFI Sector Working Group, led at the time by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the implementing organization, defined several objectives in the Humanitarian Response Plan 2016:

- 1) **Raising shelter standards in formal and informal camps** to meet Sphere indicators through provision of reinforced emergency shelters.
- 2) **Maintaining an adequate pipeline of minimum emergency shelter kits and NFI kits** for distribution to the most vulnerable – in particular, newly or secondarily displaced people, including new arrivals in the camps.
- 3) **Extension of support into host community settings**, which had received little to no response at the end of 2015, by adding and/or repairing available covered space where there was severe overcrowding.
- 4) **Reinforced emergency shelter or repair upon return**, where conditions were conducive (e.g. security-wise), targeting the most vulnerable whose houses had been destroyed.

The strategy emphasized sustainability, including **benefit to local economies** through use and sourcing of locally available materials, and with cash and vouchers to be used wherever appropriate. The sector also sought to **mainstream protection**, including through the provision of solar lights and fuel-efficient stoves, and the prioritization of female-headed households.

SCHOOL CAMPS PHASING-OUT PLAN

Eight school buildings in Maiduguri were occupied by approximately 38,145 IDPs for more than a year and a half. **In late 2015, the government began to work towards the reopening of educational institutions**, and the Ministry of Education and the humanitarian community formed a Taskforce, which created timelines for phasing out the School Camps into relocation sites identified by local authorities. Once space in or surrounding existing displacement sites was identified, **the Taskforce worked with different sectors on site planning to expand and decongest such camps**, as well as upgrading and adding shelters in other sites.



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The agency worked on government-allocated land to build improved shelters. For the Bakassi camp, the land was next to housing estates for government workers.

PROJECT GOALS

The main goals of this project were to **establish new sites for the relocation of IDPs** hosted in schools and the decongestion of other overcrowded camps; and **support family reunification** (as displacement sites were often gender segregated). The shelter project was **part of a broader coordinated effort** of the humanitarian community to meet minimum standards, as most of the camps in Maiduguri had been quickly set up during the onset of the emergency as lifesaving centres. Amongst other issues the sector focused on the standardization of shelter designs, proper site layout for mitigation of fire risks, and ensuring access to a full range of basic services.

BENEFICIARY SELECTION

The bulk of the project firstly targeted the people living in schools in Maiduguri. The remaining shelter capacity was used to decongest the most overcrowded sites with worst shelter conditions.

Shelter needs, as well as other priorities and disaggregated demographic data, were collected through assessment teams, which developed site profiles for all school locations based on the following criteria: 1) family reunification; 2) site population; 3) family size. Biometric registration was used to identify and register families, and biometric cards were used for relocation, allocation of shelters and distribution of NFIs at household level.

PROJECT LOCATIONS AND SITE PLANNING

A government-owned undeveloped plot of land of over 650,000m² was initially allocated and agreed with local authorities for the extension of the existing Bakassi camp, next to housing estates which were being constructed for civil servants. Further government land allocations were then granted, including extensions of other existing camps. All proposed sites were assessed for hazards and risks, and were agreed in collaboration with humanitarian actors.

The main site planning considerations for the Bakassi camp expansion were to maximize the use of available space, mitigate against flooding risks, ensuring minimum standards and providing infrastructure and basic services. These included clinics, kitchens, drainage, water and sanitation facilities, schools, livelihoods spaces, as well as distribution, registration and camp management points. The whole area was occupied and no further evolution or phasing out plans were made at the time of project planning and implementation.

Additionally, seven other sites were upgraded, decongested

and drainage was improved. In informal camps, where displaced people had spontaneously settled (usually on private land), written agreements with land owners were sought and secured.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project was implemented with contractors to speed up site preparation, thus facilitating a swift relocation of the IDPs from the schools. The organization also benefited from a partnership with NEMA, whose contribution to the project comprised of roofing sheets, aggregate, cement and water trucking for about 1,000 shelters, through the different phases of the project.

The shelter team was composed of five members: one shelter manager, one shelter officer, and three engineers (WASH, shelter and site planning).

As implementation **started just before the rainy season**, road access to the building sites became almost impossible and all camps were flooded, slowing down construction significantly. Moreover, as soon as the initial relocations were carried out (as this was done in phases), **people began dismantling the unoccupied shelters** to use the timber for firewood. Coordination was undertaken to ensure sufficient access to fuel and security for unoccupied shelters, which were also being repaired in preparation for their coming occupants.

Shelters were **then handed over to NEMA**, and the allocation was carried out together with camp managers from the organization. NFI distributions were conducted by inter-agency relocation teams, and the NFI kit was part of the shelter package distributed when the families moved into the shelters.

During project implementation, the programme was adapted to provide an additional 1,000 emergency shelters to the affected population in newly accessible areas (Bama and Gwoza).

ENGAGEMENT OF AFFECTED PEOPLE

At the sector level, affected people were engaged in **focus group discussions, to define a shelter design** that would meet their needs, as well as being climate and culturally appropriate. Different designs, proposed by various organizations, were validated with the displaced families, to reach an agreement over one prototype to be used by all actors. **Two models were finally adopted**, one for emergency response and one with a longer life span of two years (reinforced shelters).

During this project, **affected people were further engaged**



The shelters were built by contractors, with the condition that they hired workers locally including IDPs, who received on-the-job training.

in a variety of ways, such as in beneficiary selection, flood mitigation measures and basic repairs at the household level, community messaging on relocation or available services.

Cash-for-work was also used to engage IDPs in the construction of the shelters and support households with a daily income to meet other needs. This was included as a condition in the contractual terms with the contractors, although one challenge faced by all partners in the area was the poor quality of local labour. **Locally hired workers required on-the-job training and constant supervision** to ensure use of proper techniques and consistency. The Sector Working Group produced infographics to support training, and the capacity-building component actually turned out to be one of the most successful outcomes of the project. However, the construction-related activities did not engage women, who instead were involved mainly in community activities and messaging.

SHELTER DESIGN AND ALLOCATION

The original design presented by the Sector Working Group featured a **raised roof and an open space under the eaves** for ventilation. The design had to be quickly adjusted to include concrete foundations and metal strips to lock all trusses to the beam, to **prevent the entire structure from being lifted by strong winds**. Backfilling in all shelters was also undertaken, to raise the plinth to prevent water coming into the shelter.

The design proposed **internal partitions** to allow for increased privacy, diversified use of space and adjustment to the needs of families. Following consultations with the communities, all polygamous families were given **one shelter per wife**, which was important to ease tensions and allow for family reunification. Shelter allocation was also based on the family size, primarily the number and age of children. **The different shelter sizes allowed to cater for different family structures** and respect minimum international standards.

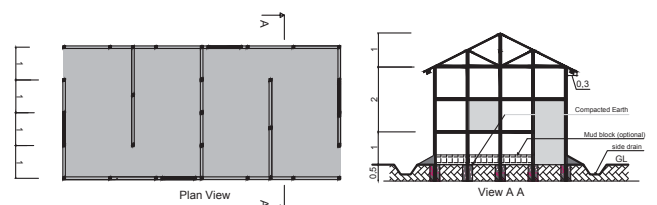
MATERIALS SOURCING

Almost all materials were purchased locally, for cost effectiveness and for the indirect benefit of the local economy. The only item brought from outside was plastic sheeting, as sufficient quality was not attainable in local markets.

Several actors were building shelters at the same time, resulting in a **serious shortage of building materials**, including timber, nails and roofing sheets, and slowing down the construction process significantly. For roofing materials, this was somewhat **mitigated by purchasing directly from local manufactur-**



Two models of shelter were agreed upon by all agencies: one for emergency response and one with a longer lifetime (two years anticipated).



Shelters were of different sizes and it was agreed that, for polygamous relationships, one shelter would be allocated to each wife.

ers (rather than vendors), though delays of up to two months were still experienced. This was not possible for timber, which was sourced from merchants around town. The high demand affected both availability and prices. Moreover, **the quality of timber decreased towards the end of the project** as there were too many actors buying from few vendors. Although those who benefited the most were larger vendors with the capacity to stockpile large quantities and source from neighbouring states, also small businesses profited, as large vendors would usually source materials from them.

Finally, both timber and firewood trade have had a **significant environmental impact**, with areas suffering desertification, and the risk of this spreading to former conflict areas that became gradually accessible for harvesting.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED



Shelters included specific details, such as mosquito nets in the open gap beneath the roof, which was intended for ventilation.



Shelters were numbered to facilitate the allocation process.

STRENGTHS

- + **The project enabled hundreds of children to go back to school** as a result of the relocation of IDPs from the school buildings.
- + **Capacity-building of local contractors and their labourers** in technical construction skills, many of whom were IDPs. There were clear and definite improvements in the contractor's skill and workmanship over the course of the project.
- + **Shelter design was climate and culturally appropriate.**
- + **Type and sensible allocation of shelters allowed families to be reunited** after living separated for more than a year. This was particularly relevant for polygamous families.

WEAKNESSES

- **Construction began late, too close to the rainy season**, causing problems. Delays were caused by multiple factors, including slow agreement on allocation of responsibility for different camps and locations between some partners.
- **Procurement challenges** also contributed to the delay on the project. At the time, Nigeria's emergency was under-recognized, which contributed to challenges in securing appropriate and timely human resources. Subsequent prioritization of the emergency through internal L3 designation by UN agencies (in October 2016) enabled to build up the capacity.
- **Lack of site planning technical expertise** across agencies, when it was most needed during the emergency.
- **Different pace of delivery across sectors**, such as shelter and water and sanitation.

LEARNINGS

- **Ground works must be initiated as early as possible**, and locations coordinated effectively amongst implementing actors; early procurement, warehousing and storage of materials are essential.
- **The construction of model shelters and trainings on construction techniques and skills are extremely valuable**, particularly where the local skills base is low. This is true both to check and adjust the climactic and cultural appropriateness of the design (prior to large scale implementation) and to identify common technical mistakes early.
- **A coordinated effort should be made to identify local and regional procurement and supply possibilities**, and to plan accordingly for maximum benefit to local markets, minimal delay, and adequate and consistent quality. This is especially relevant when the scale of the intervention is likely to saturate local market capacities.



Camp management staff, authorities, and community representatives were all involved in the shelter allocation process.