



SHELTER PROJECTS ^{9th} edition

CASE STUDIES OF HUMANITARIAN SHELTER AND SETTLEMENT RESPONSES 2021-2022



Global Shelter Cluster
ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter

SHELTER PROJECTS

9th edition

CASE STUDIES OF HUMANITARIAN SHELTER AND SETTLEMENT RESPONSES 2021-2022

Shelter Projects Working Group partners and supporting agencies for this edition



Shelter Projects 9th edition

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© Amber Christino / IOM Burundi. Burundi, 2019. *Two Burundian sisters who returned from the United Republic of Tanzania as orphans, celebrate their repaired mud brick home alongside members of their community. The repairs were done through a comprehensive programme designed to support returning migrants and their communities with shelter rehabilitation and income-generating activities.*

© Styliia Kampani / IOM Nigeria. Gubio camp, Borno State, Nigeria, 2021. *An inclusive cooking space constructed using local materials and simple construction techniques for easy upgrade and maintenance for persons with disabilities.*

© Xavier Génot / IFRC. Malagasy Red Cross Society, Madagascar, 2022. *Awareness session on improvement of traditional house construction, part of conditional cash for shelter program in response to the tropical cyclone Batsirai impact. This way to transmit knowledge and Building Back Safer key message was one of the dissemination vehicle used to sensitise households in the enhancement of the repairing of their damaged house, within communities with high level of illiteracy.*

© Sami Abdullah / IOM Iraq. Jeddah camps, Iraq, 2019. *A Cash-for-Work program involving women from vulnerable households provided solid motivation to rely on themselves in carrying out the daily maintenance of their shelters inside the camp, even when they return to their areas of origin. (Public voting winner)*

For more information on the Shelter Projects Photo Competition, see www.shelterprojects.org

FOREWORD

In 2021 and 2022, a multitude of factors like poverty, conflicts, and climate change-induced disasters triggered global crisis; and displacement reached unparalleled levels. Disasters like flooding in Pakistan, an earthquake in Afghanistan, cyclones in Mozambique, and the 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, have highlighted the continued need for robust humanitarian shelter and settlements responses.

Conflicts like the invasion of Ukraine, economic crisis in Venezuela, and protracted conflict in Syria also spurred mass displacement. Climate change has been a threat multiplier, intensifying political and economic instability.

Cities are increasingly becoming focal points for such crises, with displaced populations seeking better opportunities and services. However, the rapid, unplanned urbanization is posing risks to displaced and local communities alike, exerting more pressure on local authorities to provide housing, as well as basic services and livelihoods.

This daunting outlook represent a formidable challenge for the international community and for organisations working in this sector. The escalating need has consistently outstripped available resources and capacities, highlighting the importance of continuously adapting and innovating our approaches.

Affected communities stand as the primary responders in these crises, showcasing their capacity to actively participate in their recovery rather than being passive recipients of aid. This crucial recognition has underscored the successful strategies employed in our shelter projects.

Now, more than ever, we look to the past to guide us towards more effective responses in the future. This is

where Shelter Projects comes into play. A Global Shelter Cluster initiative, its primary aim is to document and share valuable lessons from past experiences, to continually improve our current practices and shape the strategies of the future.

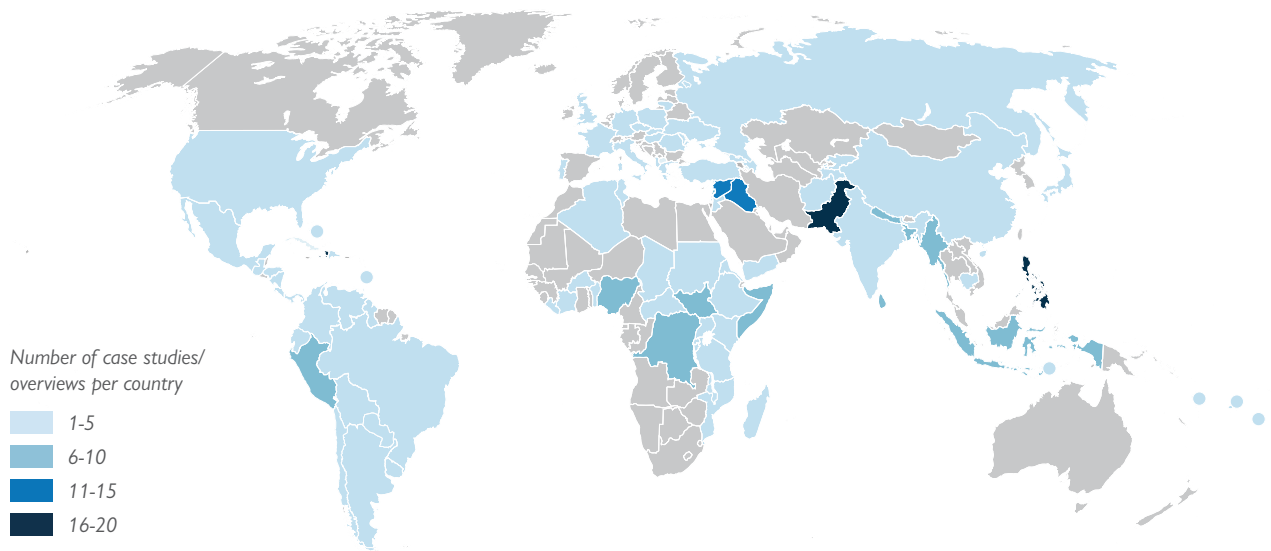
This publication, written by practitioners for practitioners, is a result of a collaborative and consultative process. It encapsulates the invaluable contributions of thousands of people – from those affected by crises, government workers, to members of supporting organisations. We are keenly aware that the primary actors in any recovery are the crisis-affected people themselves, and this understanding is reflected in the case studies featured.

Shelter Projects has been utilised globally as a vital tool for shaping response and recovery strategies, developing shelter proposals, and advocating for best practices in humanitarian response. It has served as a solid foundation for government strategies, discussions with civil protection agencies and local municipal authorities, and even for private sector organisations seeking to understand the process of providing shelter. Furthermore, it has been extensively used in humanitarian training and academic research.

We invite you to delve into this publication, to explore the wide range of implemented shelter and settlement programs. Each case study and response overview is designed to provide different perspectives on response options, offering a thorough analysis of the challenges faced, strengths and weaknesses, wider project impacts, and crucial learnings.

**The Global Shelter Cluster Shelter Projects
Working Group, July 2023.**

INDEX OF CASE STUDIES/OVERVIEWS BY COUNTRY PUBLISHED IN SHELTER PROJECTS (2008-2022)



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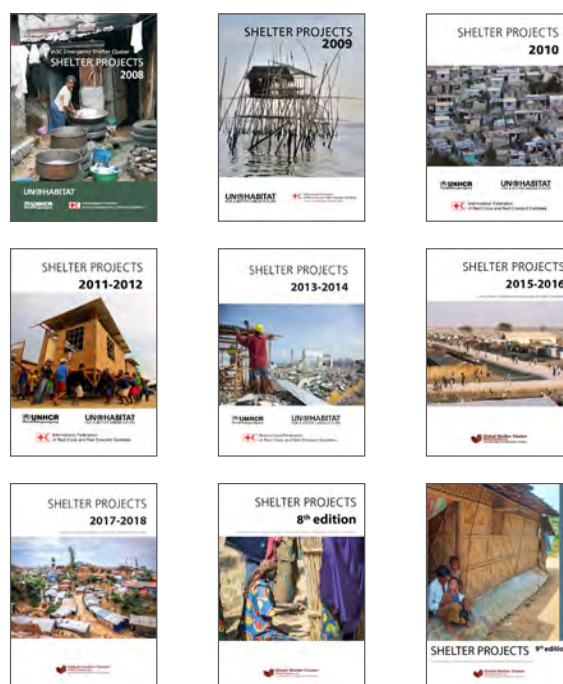
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- Shelter Box;
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Compiled, edited, and layout by IOM.



For comments, feedback or questions, please visit the website or contact

shelterprojects@sheltercluster.org

ACRONYMS

| | | | |
|-------------|--|----------------|---|
| AGD | Age, Gender and Diversity | IDP | Internally Displaced Person |
| AAP | Accountability to Affected Populations | IEC | Information, Education, and Communication |
| ABA | Area Based Approach | IM | Information Management |
| BBS | Build Back Safer | INGO | International Non-Governmental Organization |
| CBI | Cash-Based Interventions | IP | Implementing Partner |
| CCFS | Conditional Cash for Shelter | MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| CFW | Cash-for-Work | M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| CCCM | Camp Coordination and Camp Management | NFI | Non-Food Item(s) |
| CMRU | Municipal Urban Resilience Cells | NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| DMU | Disaster Management Unit | PDM | Post-Distribution Monitoring |
| DRR | Disaster Risk Reduction | SAG | Strategic Advisory Group |
| EVI | Extremely Vulnerable Individuals | SOP | Standard Operating Procedures |
| GBV | Gender-Based Violence | TPM | Third Party Monitoring |
| HLP | Housing, Land and Property | UN | United Nations |
| HRP | Humanitarian Response Plan | WASH | Water, Sanitation and Hygiene |

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

There has been much debate around terminology used in the shelter sector. The focus of these conversations has been held in the English language. As such the distinctions may not translate well into other languages.

There have been particular discussions in English language definitions used for different phases of assistance. For example, the terms “emergency shelter”, “transitional shelter”, “temporary shelter”, “semi-permanent shelter” and “incremental shelter” have all been used to define both the types of shelters and the processes used. Similarly terms have been used for Non food items (NFIs), Core relief items (CRIs), Household items. There are similar discussions related to the use of cash and vouchers in assistance.

Another example of terminology that has many variations is “camp planning”, “site planning” and “settlement planning”.

Sometimes these terms are used interchangeably, and sometimes they are used very specifically. This can be impacted for example by the political context (e.g. in contexts where “camps” are not allowed) or can be impacted by the degree of integration with existing settlements and wider urban and regional planning. In this book we use the terms used in-country and by the specific implementing organizations, which may vary.

The summary table within each case study includes sections showing the “Direct cost” and the “Project cost”. The direct cost refers to the value of assistance package directly received by households, this includes for example the costs of materials, of labor and/or the value of cash assistance provided. The term “Project cost” refers to the direct costs plus the indirect costs, for example taking account for staffing and overhead costs.



NFI distribution for new arrivals at a resettlement site for IDPs displaced by the violence in Cabo Delgado Province, Northern Mozambique.



Through knowledge and skills assimilated from Savings Groups and Study Circle Groups on Land and Housing Rights, Idah Mbewe managed to obtain her Occupancy License from the Kabwe Municipal Council in Makululu, Kabwe, Zambia.



Construction of new camps for IDP families in Northern Aleppo, Syria using sandwich panels and Cash-for-Work methodology.

© Malek Alwadi

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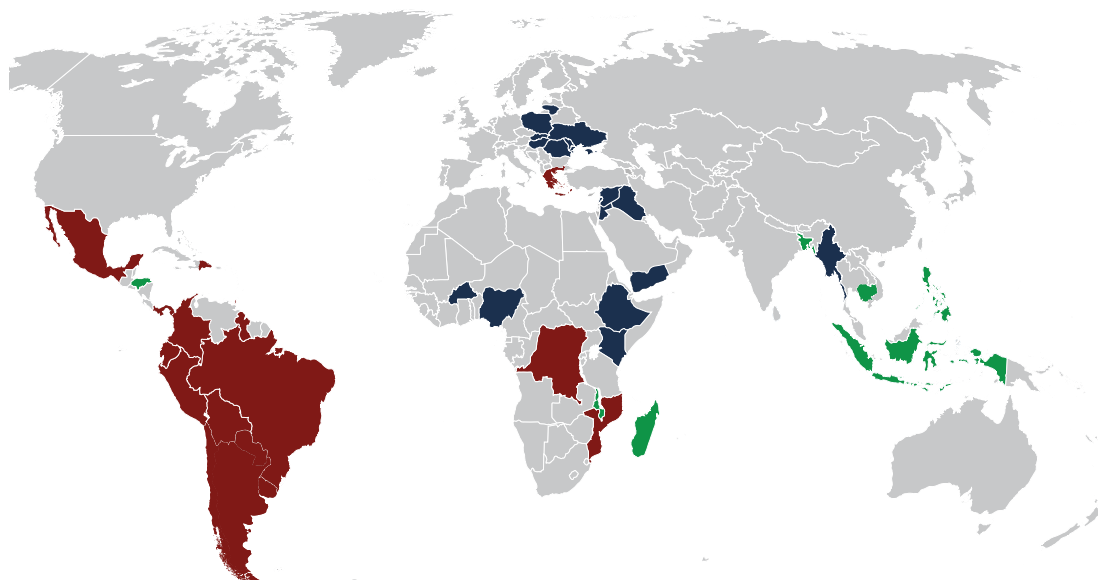
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INTRODUCTION

Woman builds on shelter frame with mud and bamboo in Kerala, India. Flood-affected communities used local materials and traditional techniques to build long-term shelters, 2020.

© Sameer Raichur



INTRODUCTION



Durable shelters in Malkohi, Adamawa State, Nigeria, 2022.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This edition of Shelter Projects contains 24 new case studies, and four overviews of humanitarian shelter and settlements responses during 2021–2022. Written by field practitioners, and coordination teams themselves who have been involved in each of these projects and responses, the pieces are all included in Section A of the publication.

In Section B of this edition, there are three Research Pieces, and a tribute to Dr. Teddy Boen for his contribution to seismic retrofits using ferrocement. The research pieces explore a range of topics including the relationship between shelter and settlements practices and the influences on the decision-making process to use cash assistance (B.1); supporting recovery from humanitarian crises using ‘constructive ambiguity’ (B.2); and a piece on addressing the challenges to adequate housing for Venezuelan refugees in Latin America and the Caribbean (B.3).

The case studies in this book deal with projects implemented by many different organizations, a full list of which can be found in the acknowledgements section. In order to allow strengths and weaknesses of projects to be openly shared, the case studies are not directly attributed to individual organizations. Since projects are implemented in diverse and challenging conditions, case studies illustrate both good and bad practices. From each one, there are lessons that can be learned, and aspects that may be repeated or avoided. A list of suggested ‘Further Readings’ from Shelter Projects on common themes can be found at the end of each case study as well.

The objective of this publication has always been to encourage the learning process, advocate for following good practices and avoid “reinventing the wheel”. If you wish to find out more about the specific projects, please contact shelterprojects@sheltercluster.org

CASE STUDY SELECTION

The case studies were selected using the following criteria:

- The project was a) wholly completed or, if not, b) solid learning elements could be gained from the project implementation by late 2022.
- Given the scale of shelter needs every year, case studies must have had large-scale impacts. Discontinued trials, pilot projects or design concepts were not included, unless a clear scale-up strategy was defined.
- Most of the project must have been implemented within the first year following a disaster, or over longer time frames for recovery processes. For conflict, chronic emergencies and return processes, longer time scales were considered. In this edition, there are also three case studies on permanent new-build housing construction.
- Accurate project information was available from staff or individuals involved in the implementation. In most cases, content was provided directly by project field staff and program managers.
- The case studies illustrate a diversity of approaches to meet shelter and settlements needs, as providing shelter assistance is more than simply designing architecturally impressive structures or constructing individual houses.

After a pre-selection based on the above criteria, each case study was further peer-reviewed by members of the *Shelter Projects Working Group*. The review enabled an additional level of critical analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each project, and pointed out what lessons to highlight and what aspects to expand upon, ultimately increasing the overall quality of each case study.

GLOBAL OVERVIEW OF DISPLACEMENT AND RESPONSE

In the course of 2021, 14.4 million new displacements within countries were reported, a stark increase from the estimated 11.2 million in 2020, with 1.7 million people crossing international borders to seek protection.¹ Conflict, violence, and disasters contributed to a total of 38 million internal displacements across 141 countries and territories – with 23.7 million displaced by disasters, and 14.4 million due to conflict and violence.²

By mid-2022, 9.6 million new internal displacements were reported, more than double the same period in 2021 – at least 7 million in Ukraine³.

CONFLICTS AND VIOLENCE

At the end of 2021, a total of 89.3 million were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations, or events seriously disturbing public order. This includes 53.2 million IDPs, 27.1 million refugees, 4.6 million asylum seekers, and 4.4 million Venezuelans displaced abroad, with 83 per cent hosted in low-and middle income countries.⁴

Similar to 2020, more than two-thirds (69 per cent) of all refugees and other internationally displaced people in 2021 came from the same five countries: Syrian Arab Republic (6.8 million), Venezuela (4.6 million), Afghanistan (2.7 million), South Sudan (2.4 million), and Myanmar (1.2 million). Increased to 76 per cent by mid-year 2022, Ukraine (5.4 million) was added amongst the list of the five countries.

While global data for returnees and non-displaced people (such as affected host communities) was not available,

projects in this book also include assistance to these groups of people.

The top five countries with the most internal displacements by conflicts and violence in 2021 were Ethiopia (5.1 million), the Democratic Republic of Congo (2.7 million), Afghanistan (723,000), Burkina Faso (682,000), and Somalia (549,000).⁵ This edition includes case studies and/or response overviews from Ethiopia (A.3), Democratic Republic of the Congo (A.2), and Burkina Faso (A.1).



Mekelle, Ethiopia, 2021.



Kongoussi, Burkina Faso, 2022.

1 UNHCR (2022). *Global Trends - Forced Displacement in 2021*

2 IDMC (2022). *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2022*

3 UNHCR (2022) Mid-Year Trends 2022

4 UNHCR (2022). *Global Trends - Forced Displacement in 2021*

5 IDMC (2022). *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2022*

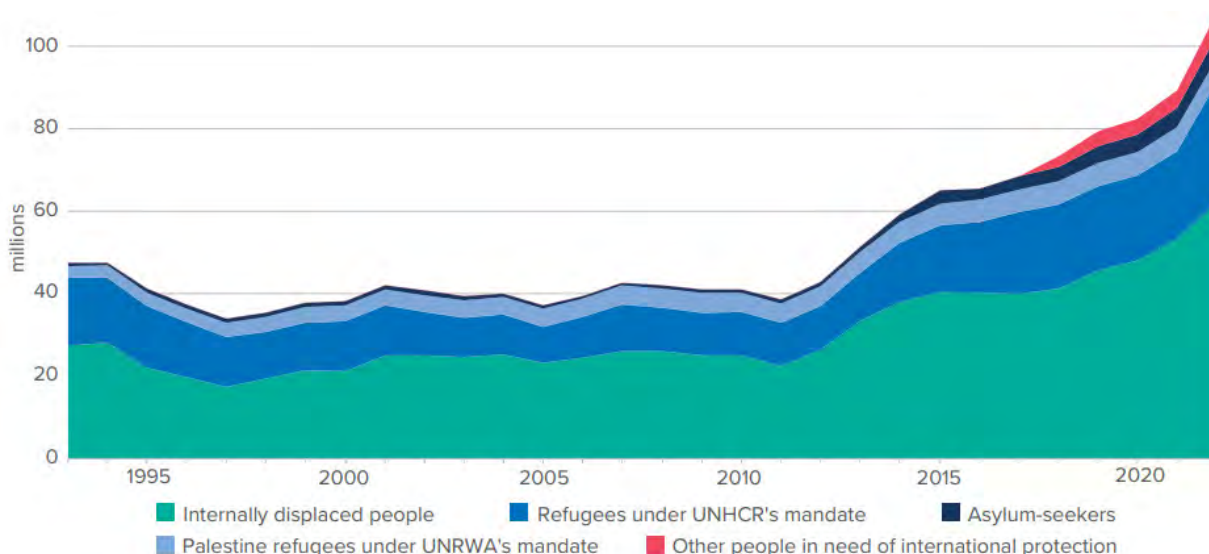


Fig. 1: Number of people forced to flee through the years from 1993-2022. Source: UNHCR Global Trends Report, 2022.

DISASTERS

In 2021 and 2022, disasters affected 101.8 million people¹, and 185 million people² respectively. 95 per cent of all internal conflict displacements in 2021 occurred in countries that are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and 78 per cent of new refugees, and asylum seekers originate from these same countries.³ However, the numbers of people affected do not necessarily mean that all had shelter needs.

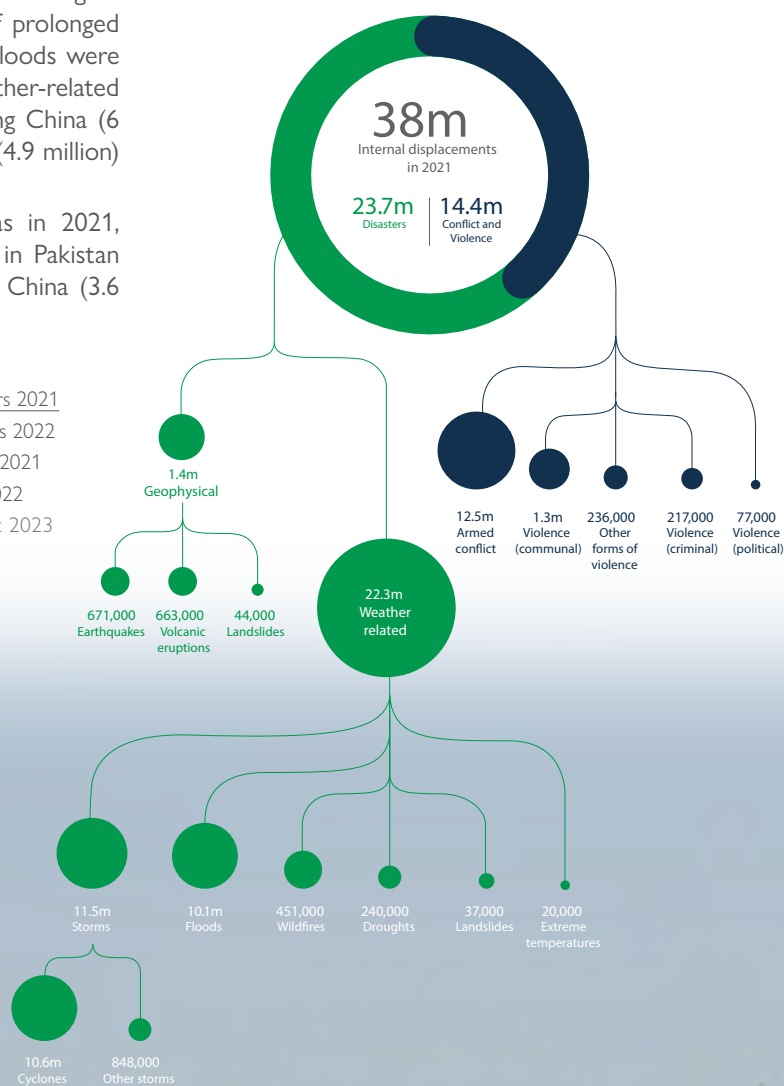
Most of the new and repeated displacements triggered by disasters in 2021 were recorded in East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia, which together accounted for about 80 per cent of the total. Many displacements were in the form of pre-emptive evacuations, but the extent of housing destruction in some of the disasters suggests that significant numbers of people face the prospect of prolonged displacement. Tropical cyclones, storms, and floods were the top three hazards that led to the most weather-related internal displacements during the year affecting China (6 million), the Philippines (5.7 million), and India (4.9 million) with the highest figures.⁴

In 2022, the top hazards were the same as in 2021, with the most internal movements recorded in Pakistan (8.1 million), the Philippines (5.4 million), and China (3.6 million).⁵

This edition includes multiple shelter responses to tropical cyclones, and storms: a housing retrofitting project following Typhoon Goli/Rolly in the Philippines (A.19), a response overview to the 2022 Cyclones Batsirai/Emanati in Madagascar (A.5), and a project linked to wider impacts in Honduras after the Eta/Iota Tropical storms (A.14). Flood responses include case studies from Cambodia (A.16), the Dili Floods of 2021 in Timor-Leste (A.20), and a flood response following Cyclone Ana in Malawi (A.6).

Other disasters featured in the publication are the 2020 Beirut blast (A.26), and the massive 2021-22 fire incidents in the Rohingya camps in Bangladesh (A.15).

Fig. 2: Internal displacements breakdown by conflicts, violence, and disasters in 2021. Source: IDMC, GRID, 2022.



In Mid-June 2022, Pakistan witnessed extreme flooding which damaged more than 1.14 million houses and over 765,000 houses have been destroyed across the country. An estimated 33 million people across the country have been impacted by the floods.

© Usman Ghani

SHELTER RESPONSES IN 2021 AND 2022

In 2021 and 2022, the Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) reported that 17.5 and 19.2 million people respectively had been reached in countries where a cluster or cluster-like coordination mechanism was active.⁶ It is important to note that this excludes, among others, some refugee responses such as the Rohingya crisis, or the responses in the countries around Venezuela and Ukraine. These figures represent an increase in people reached when compared to the three preceding years. (see Fig. 3).

Fig. 3 shows the total people targeted and reached with Shelter-NFI support since 2015. These figures should also be considered in relation to the overall number of people in need of Shelter-NFI assistance, which was 59.4 million in 2021 and 75.2 million people in 2022. Overall Shelter Cluster responses met 29.4 per cent of the total needs in 2021 and 25.5 per cent of the needs in 2022. In both years responses assisted 65 per cent those people targeted. The large majority of this assistance was in NFI only.

⁶ All data in this section is from the Global Shelter Cluster
<https://www.sheltercluster.org/operations>



Fig. 3: Total people targeted and reached with Shelter-NFI support from 2015 to 2022, in responses where a cluster or cluster-like mechanism was active.



Syrian Arab Republic (Northwest Syria), 2022.

Fig. 4 shows the combined total of people reached in 2021 and 2022 split by region. It shows that the majority of people supported with Shelter-NFI assistance were either in Africa (18.4 million people reached) or in MENA (9.9 million people reached).

The major humanitarian Shelter-NFI responses in 2021-2022 (Fig 5.) were in the Syrian Arab Republic (see A.27), Ethiopia (see A.3), Ukraine (see A.22 and A.23), Democratic Republic of the Congo (see A.2), Afghanistan, Yemen (see A.28), South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, and Venezuela (see A.11 and A.12). The majority of Shelter-NFI assistance in 2021-2022 was related to conflict and violence, in some cases combined by the additional damage and displacement caused by exposure to natural hazards.

Fig. 5 also shows the split between NFI assistance and Shelter assistance across these responses.¹ It is possible to note for example that some responses, such as the response in Ethiopia, have reached a relatively large number of people with NFI assistance but have reached a much smaller amount of people with more substantial Shelter assistance.

¹ Note that the overall number of people reached noted in Figure 5 is in most cases not equal to the sum of the breakdown of people reached with NFI assistance and people reached with Shelter assistance. This is because some people will have been reached with both NFI and Shelter assistance.

In 2021-2022, as per Global Shelter Cluster figures, the sector received 45 per cent of the funding required across all countries. Fig. 6 shows the regional breakdown of funding requested and funding received.



Makululu, Kabwe District, Central Province, Zambia.

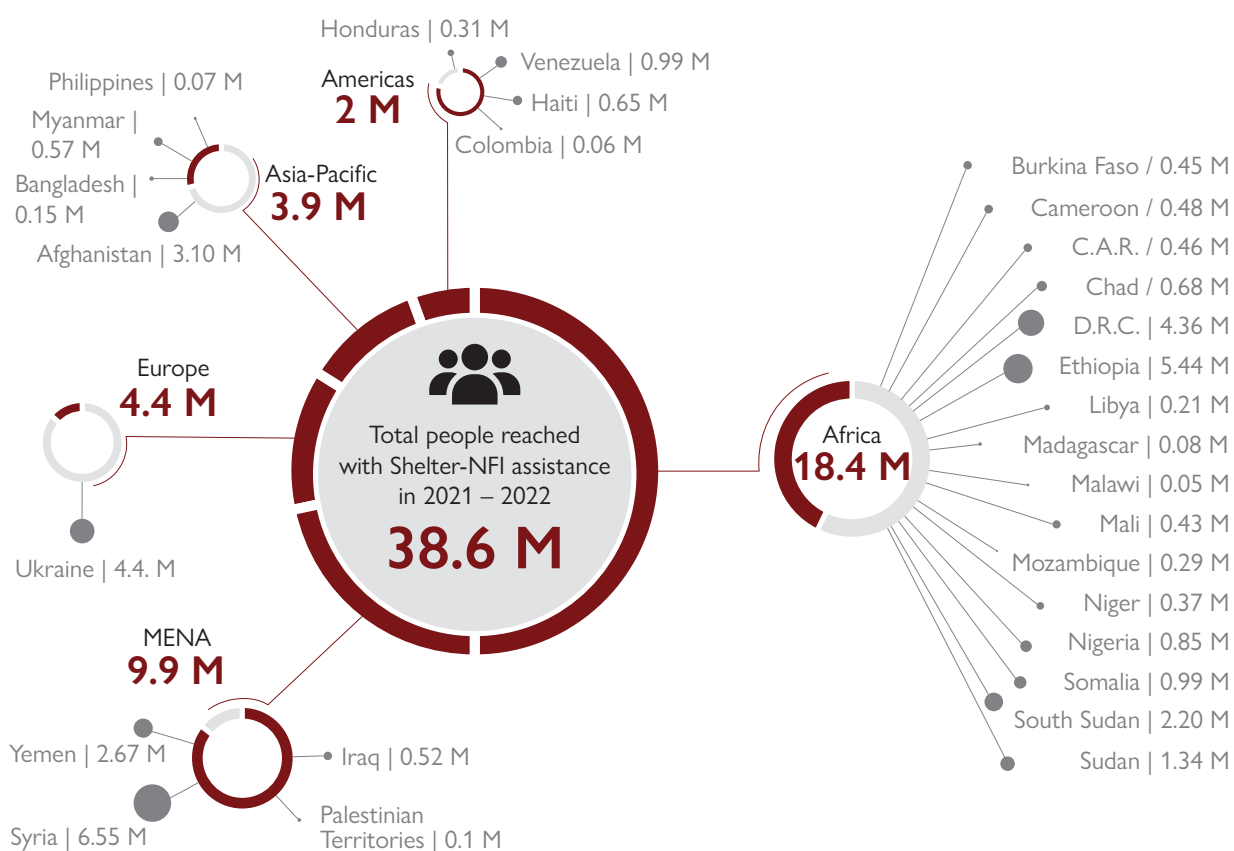


Fig. 4: Total people reached with Shelter-NFI support by region and country in 2021-2022, in responses with a cluster or cluster-like mechanism active.

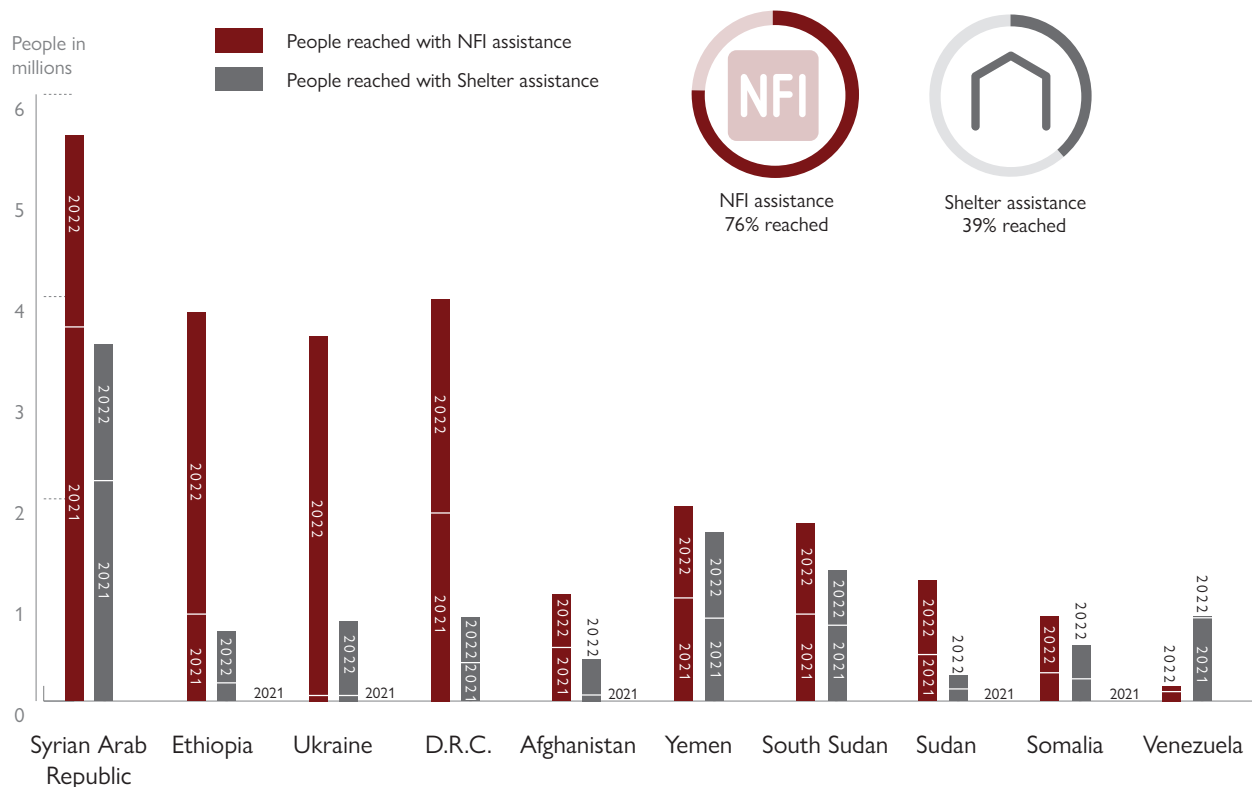


Fig. 5: Top ten responses by people reached in 2021-2022 with Shelter and NFI assistance in countries where a cluster or cluster-like mechanism was active.

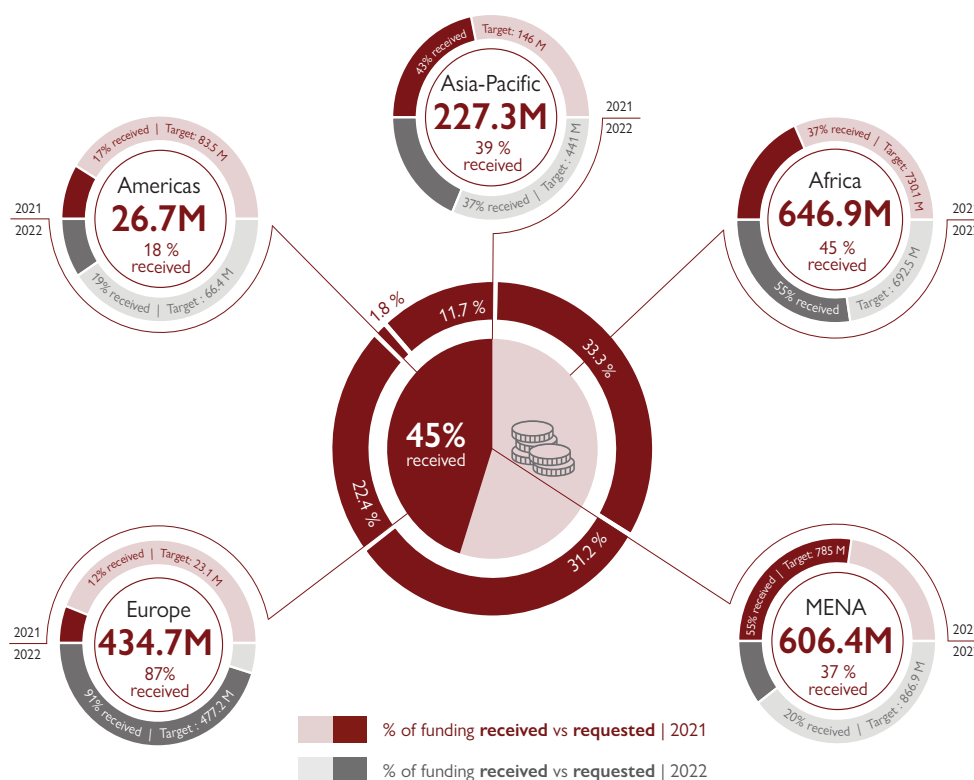


Fig. 6: Regions by funding received for Shelter-NFI in 2021-2022 in responses where a cluster or cluster-like mechanism was active.

OVERVIEW OF CASE STUDIES

DIVERSITY IN RESPONSES

Shelter and settlements assistance is part of a process and crisis-affected people are active participants in that process. How and where assistance is provided in an emergency can have long-term impacts on people's ability to improve their situation and eventually recover.

The case studies in this book show a wide range of approaches to providing shelter and settlements assistance. The approaches taken vary significantly due to a wide range of contextual factors, including the resources, needs, capacities, vulnerabilities, intentions, priorities and barriers faced by crisis-affected people, and due to the phase of response, organizational mandates and funding availability.

See the table on pages xvii-xviii for a full summary of the locations and settlement options, types of shelter assistance and support methods assistance methods and settlement typologies of the projects in this book.

TYPE OF CRISIS AND DISPLACEMENT

Six of the case studies are of projects that supported refugee populations: a case study in Kenya supporting refugees

from South Sudan (A.4), two case studies responding to the Venezuelan crisis in Latin America and the Caribbean (A.12, A.13), a case study from Greece responding to the Mediterranean crisis (A.21), another from Europe supporting refugees of the Ukraine crisis (A.23), and the last one from Syrian refugees in Jordan (A.25).

Ten case studies describe projects that were implemented in support of people internally displaced due to conflict or violence. These include case studies from Burkina Faso (A.1), Ethiopia (A.3), Mozambique (A.7), three case studies from Nigeria (A.8, A.9, A.10), Rohingyas in Myanmar (A.18), Iraq (A.24), Syrian Arab Republic (A.27), and Yemen (A.28).

Eight case studies showcase projects that responded to the impact of disasters (flood, storm, hurricane, earthquake). These include emergency responses in Malawi (A.6), a resettlement case study in Honduras (A.14), a case study on disaster preparedness in Cambodia (A.16), earthquake response in Indonesia (A.17), typhoons in the Philippines (A.19), and floods in Timor-Leste (A.20). A housing rehabilitation case study after the 2020 Beirut blast (A.26), and a case study on site planning after the 2021-22 fire incidents in the Rohingya camps, Bangladesh (A.15) are also included in the publication.



Marocani Resettlement site, Ancuabe District, Mozambique, 2021.

CONTEXT AND SETTLEMENTS OPTIONS/SITUATIONS

People assisted by the projects in this edition were reached with shelter support in different types of locations. This includes four projects that were implemented only in urban areas, and seven projects only in rural areas, and the rest of the projects were a combination of urban, peri-urban, and rural settings, though the definition of what is “urban” varies from one country to another. From a shelter perspective, the location and typology of settlement where people are can be considered amongst the main determinants in selecting appropriate response options.

Projects in this book were implemented for displaced populations in planned sites and settlements (A.1, A.4, A.10, A.12, A.14, and A.24); spontaneous camps where people self-settled (A.6, A.9, A.12, A.15, and A.28); and planned and dispersed resettlement sites designed to provide longer-term shelter solutions for people who had been displaced (A.6, A.7 and A.28).

Many projects also supported populations in dispersed locations, including people in rental accommodation (A.12, A.21, and A.23), people staying with host families (A.1, A.3, A.12, and A.23).

The projects collected also assisted people who were not displaced but whose homes had been damaged or destroyed – most of whom had to relocate in rented or informally occupied settings (A.14, A.16, A.17, A.19 and A.26).

SHELTER ASSISTANCE TYPES

The case studies in this edition show a range of different types of shelter assistance. Eleven projects offered support in providing materials for or directly constructing emergency shelters, and seven projects supported the construction of transitional or semi-permanent shelters (A.9, A.10, A.13, A.14, A.15, A.18 and A.28). Two projects supported host families (A.3 and A.16).

Seven projects supported housing repair, retrofit and/or rehabilitation in support of a combination of displaced people who were renting accommodation (A.13, A.19, and A.26), returnees and non-displaced local populations (A.14, A.16, and A.17), and vulnerable host community members (A.3).

Three projects from Europe and the LAC region provided direct rental assistance (A.13, A.21, A.23).

Five projects supported the construction of core and permanent housing: a project supported the permanent reconstruction of severely damaged or destroyed homes (A.19), and three projects built new permanent housing developments (A.1, A.4, A.7 and A.8).

One project (A.10), was specifically focused on shelter improvement interventions to persons with disabilities.

SUPPORT METHODS

Projects adopted a variety of support methods to deliver shelter assistance. These include the distribution of household items or shelter materials, tools and kits (e.g. A.1, A.7, or A.15), the use of cash-based interventions (CBI) for example through conditional cash transfers (e.g. A.3, A.13, A.16), and non-material form of assistance, such as capacity building (e.g. A.6, A.8, A.24), technical assistance (e.g. A.1, A.10, A.28) and advocacy and legal advice for example in relation to Housing Land and Property Rights (HLP) (e.g. A.7, A.8 and A.16).

Many projects also provided settlements-level support. Seven projects involved site or settlement planning including planning for the development, growth and upgrading of new and existing displacement sites and settlements (e.g. A.4, A.9, A.15, A.16), and supporting planning in existing urban and peri-urban areas (e.g. A.1). Nine projects supported infrastructure improvements, including improvements to roads, drainage, communal spaces, and access to local services and amenities. Site and settlement planning, and infrastructure support was often implemented with aims to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards, mitigate protection and health risks, and promote social cohesion.



Adamawa state, Nigeria.



Delhi, India.

SUMMARY TABLE OF SUPPORT METHODS USED BY THE PROJECTS DESCRIBED IN THE CASE STUDIES

| Crisis | CASE STUDY | CONTEXT | | | SETTLEMENT OPTIONS/SITUATIONS | | | | | | | | | SHELTER ASSISTANCE TYPES | | | | | | | SUPPORT METHODS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|--|----------|------------|-------|-------------------------------|--------|----------------------|--------|---------------|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------|--|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------|--|--|
| | | Location | | | Non-Displaced / Returns | | Displaced, dispersed | | | Displaced, communal | | | | Emergency shelter | Transitional/semi-permanent shelter | Host family support | Rental support | Core housing | Housing repair/retrofit/rehabilitation | Permanent housing | Cash-Based Interventions | | | | In-kind Distribution | | | | Advocacy / Legal assistance | Site / Settlement planning | Infrastructure | Training / Capacity Building | Tech. Assistance / Quality Assurance | Structural Assessment | Guidelines / Mass communication | Site Management | Debris / Rubble Removal | | | |
| | | Urban | Peri-urban | Rural | Owner occupied | Rental | Informally occupied | Rental | Host families | Spontaneous / Self-settled | Collective centres | Planned site / Settlement | | Unplanned site / Settlement | Planned resettlement sites | Dispersed resettlement | | | | | | Cash-for-Work | Conditional cash transfer | Restricted cash/voucher | Unconditional & Unrestricted | Loans / Micro-credits etc. | Household items | Shelter materials (incl. kits) | Tools/Fixings | WASH items (& kits) | | | | | | | | | | |
| ✱ | A.1 / BURKINA FASO / 2020-2023 / CONFLICT | 🏙️ | 🏘️ | | | | | 👨👩👧👦 | | 🏠 | | | | | A.1 | | | | 🏠 | | | | | | 📦 | 🔧 | 🚰 | | 📋 | 🏠 | 👨👩👧👦 | 📞 | | 📢 | | | | | | |
| ✱ | A.3 / ETHIOPIA / 2022 / CONFLICT | 🏙️ | | | | | | 👨👩👧👦 | | 🏠 | | | | | A.3 | | | 👨👩👧👦 | | 🏠 | 📦 | | | | 📦 | 🏠 | 🔧 | | 🚰 | | 📋 | 🏠 | | 📞 | | | | | | |
| 👉 | A.4 / KENYA / 2021-2022 / CONFLICT | | | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | | | 🏠 | | | | | A.4 | | | | | | | | | | | 🏠 | 🔧 | | | 📋 | | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | | 🏠 | | | |
| 🌿 | A.6 / MALAWI / 2022 / TROPICAL STORM ANA | | 🌿 | | | | | | 🏠 | | | 🏠 | | | A.6 | 🏠 | | | | | | | | | | 🏠 | 🔧 | | 🚰 | | | | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | | | | |
| ✱ | A.7 / MOZAMBIQUE / 2021-2022 / COMPLEX CRISIS | | | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | | | | | | 🏠 | | A.7 | | | | | 🏠 | | | 📦 | | 📦 | 🏠 | 🔧 | | ⚖️ | | 👨👩👧👦 | 📞 | | 📢 | | | | | | |
| ✱ | A.8 / NIGERIA / 2018-2021 / CONFLICT | | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | | | | | | | | | A.8 | | | | | 🏠 | | | 📦 | | | | 🔧 | | ⚖️ | | 🏠 | 👨👩👧👦 | 📞 | 🏠 | | | | | | |
| ✱ | A.9 / NIGERIA / 2021-2022 / CONFLICT | | 🏙️ | | | | | | 🏠 | | | | | | A.9 | | 🏠 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 📋 | | | | 📞 | | | | | | |
| ✱ | A.10 / NIGERIA / 2021-2022 / CONFLICT | | 🏙️ | | | | | | | 🏠 | | | | | A.10 | 🏠 | 🏠 | | | | | | | | 📦 | | | | | | | | | | 📞 | | | | | |
| 👉 | A.12 / VENEZUELA (REGIONAL) / 2019–2023 / CC | 🏙️ | | | 🏠 | 🏠 | 🏠 | 🏠 | 🏠 | 🏠 | 🏠 | 🏠 | 👨👩👧👦 | | A.12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 📋 | 🏠 | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | | | | | | |
| 👉 | A.13 / ECUADOR / 2020-2022 / COMPLEX CRISIS | 🏙️ | 🏙️ | | | 🏠 | | | | | | | | | A.13 | | 🏠 | | 🏠 | | 📦 | | | | 📦 | 🏠 | 🔧 | | 🚰 | | 📋 | 🏠 | | | | | | | | |
| 🌿 | A.14 / HONDURAS / 2020-2021 / HURRICANES | | 🌿 | 🌿 | 🏠 | | | | | 🏠 | | | | | A.14 | 🏠 | 🏠 | | 🏠 | | | | | | | 🏠 | 🔧 | 🔧 | | | | | 👨👩👧👦 | 📞 | | | | | | |
| 💧 | A.15 / BANGLADESH / 2021-2022 / FIRE RESPONSE | | 🏙️ | | | | | | 🏠 | | | | 👨👩👧👦 | | A.15 | 🏠 | 🏠 | | 🏠 | | | | | | 📦 | 🏠 | 🔧 | | 🚰 | | 📋 | 🏠 | | | 🏠 | 📢 | 🏠 | 👨👩👧👦 | | |
| 🏠 | A.16 / CAMBODIA / 2018-2021 / PREPAREDNESS | 🏙️ | | | 🏠 | | 🏠 | | | | | | | | A.16 | 🏠 | | 👨👩👧👦 | | 🏠 | | | | 📦 | | 🏠 | 🔧 | 🚰 | ⚖️ | 📋 | 🏠 | 👨👩👧👦 | 🏠 | | 🏠 | | | | | |
| 🏠 | A.17 / INDONESIA / 2021 / EARTHQUAKE | | 🌿 | 🏠 | | | | | | | | | | | A.17 | | | 🏠 | 🏠 | | | | | | | 🏠 | 🔧 | 🚰 | | | | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | | | | | |
| ✱ | A.18 / MYANMAR / 2021-2022 / CONFLICT | 🏙️ | 🏙️ | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | | | | | | | | A.18 | 🏠 | 🏠 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 🌿 | A.19 / PHILIPPINES / 2021-2023 / TYPHOONES | | 🏙️ | | 🏠 | 🏠 | | | | | | | | | A.19 | | | | 🏠 | 🏠 | | | | 👨👩👧👦 | 🏠 | 🔧 | | | | | | 👨👩👧👦 | 📞 | 🏠 | | | | | | |
| 🌊 | A.20 / TIMOR-LESTE 2021 / THE DILI FLOODS | | 🌿 | | | | 🏠 | | | | | | | | A.20 | | | | | | | | | | 📦 | 🏠 | 🔧 | 🚰 | | 📋 | 🏠 | 👨👩👧👦 | 📞 | 🏠 | 📢 | | | 🏠 | | |
| 👉 | A.21 / GREECE / 2019-2023 / COMPLEX CRISIS | 🏙️ | 🏙️ | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | 🏠 | | | | | | | A.21 | | | | 🏠 | | | | | | | 📦 | 🏠 | 🔧 | | | | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | | | | | |
| ✱ | A.23 / UKRAINE (REGIONAL) / 2022-2023 / CONFLICT | 🏙️ | 🏙️ | | | | | 🏠 | 🏠 | | | | | | A.23 | | | | 🏠 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ✱ | A.24 / IRAQ / 2019 / CONFLICT | | 🏙️ | | | | | | | 🏠 | | | | | A.24 | 🏠 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 👨👩👧👦 | 📞 | | | | | | | |
| ✱ | A.25 / JORDAN / 2018-2023 / SYRIAN CRISIS | 🏙️ | 🏙️ | | | | | | | | | | | | A.25 | | | | | | 🚰 | | | | | | | | | | 🏠 | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | | | | | |
| 💧 | A.26 / LEBANON / 2020-2022 / BEIRUT PORT BLAST | 🏙️ | | | 🏠 | | | | | | | | | | A.26 | | | | 🏠 | | | | | | 📦 | | | | | | 🏠 | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | | | | | |
| ✱ | A.27 / SYRIAN ARAB REP. / 2021-2022 / CONFLICT | | 👨👩👧👦 | | | | | | | | | 👨👩👧👦 | | | A.27 | 🏠 | | | | | | | | | 📦 | 🏠 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ✱ | A.28 / YEMEN / 2020-2022 / CONFLICT | | 🏙️ | 👨👩👧👦 | 🏠 | | | | 🏠 | | | 👨👩👧👦 | 👨👩👧👦 | | A.28 | | 🏠 | | | | | | | | | 📦 | 🏠 | | | | | 👨👩👧👦 | 📞 | | | | | | | |

This table shows the range of types of projects described in the case studies and the variety of contexts in which they were implemented. The table gives a summary of:

1. **Context:** whether projects were located in urban, peri-urban and/or rural contexts.
2. **Settlement options/situations:** the type of settlements in which people were assisted (or assisted to return/move to).
3. **Shelter assistance types:** broad categories of the kind of shelter assistance provided by the project.
4. **Support methods:** the methods and modalities through which people were assisted. This includes different forms of Cash-Based Interventions, in-kind distributions of a variety of shelter and household items, and a wide range of other support methods.

CASE STUDY ANALYSIS AND RECURRING THEMES

For this edition of Shelter Projects, the 24 case studies dealing with the operational implementation of programs (excluding overviews) were analyzed by subject experts. For each case study, the strengths and weaknesses highlighted were taken as the unit of analysis. Each strength and weakness was assigned up to two themes at the intervention/output level and up to two themes at the outcome level.

For example: engaging the community in the project (intervention/output) led to stronger social cohesion (outcome).

The strengths and weaknesses of each project were assigned themes from a list determined by the Shelter Projects Working Group, based on those used in the previous edition of Shelter Projects. In the case study

development and review phases, contributors were encouraged to discuss these themes in the data collection form, and peer reviewers provided commentary to make sure the strengths and weaknesses were justified in the project description. The results of the classification were validated and then analyzed to extract findings. These are presented below and in the table on pages xxiii-xxiv.

It is recognized that case studies have inherent biases due to each author's perspective and the varying scope of different case studies. Strengths and weaknesses are mostly self-reported, and due to the limited length and specific scope of Shelter Projects – case studies are not exhaustive and the reality can be more nuanced. Case studies are also very diverse because of the varying nature of the context in which projects take place. However, by classifying the strengths and weaknesses of each project, some trends may be observed.

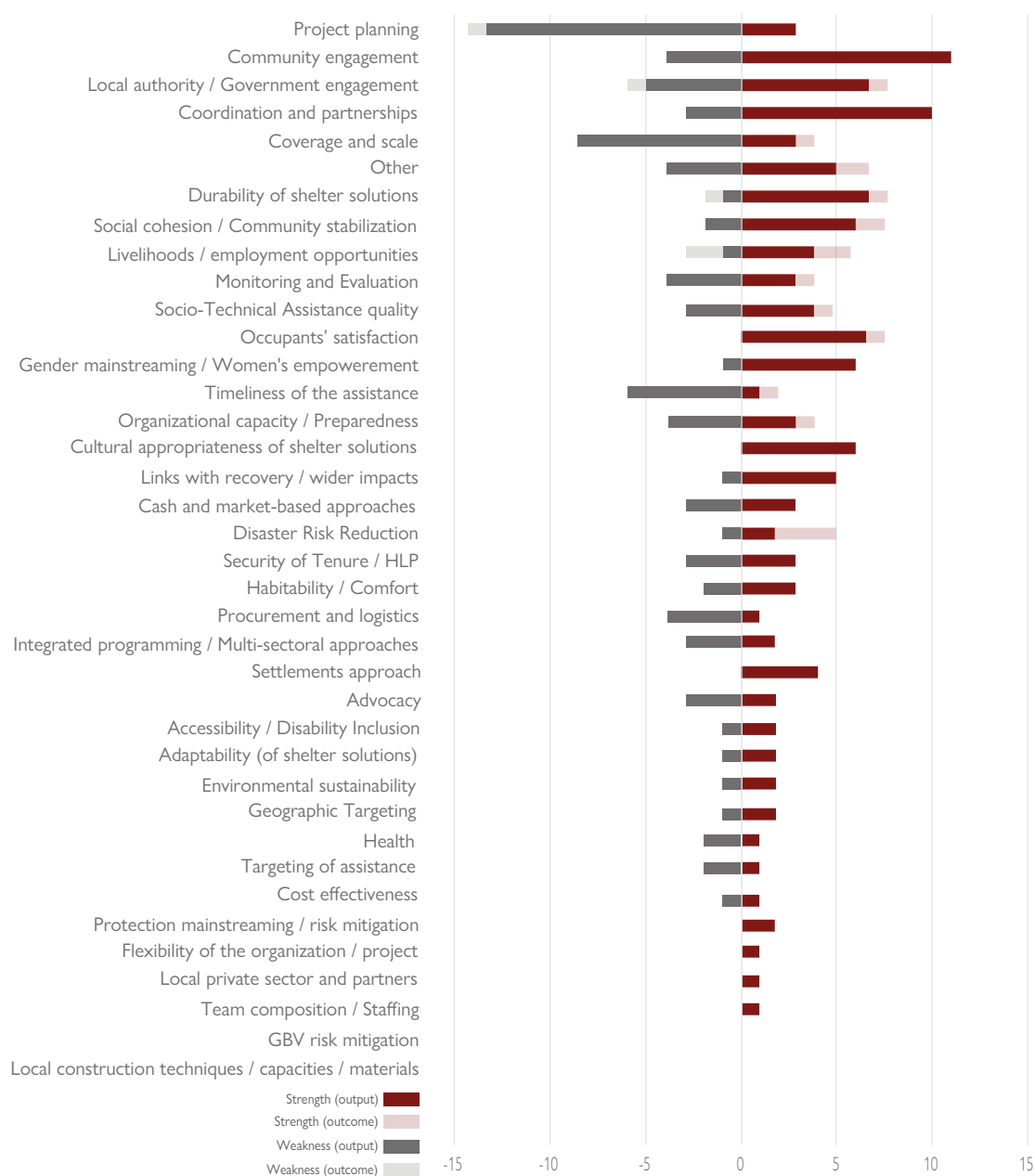


Fig. 7: Strengths and weaknesses reported in the case studies, by theme.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE ANALYSIS

| | |
|---|--|
| Top five strengths overall | Community engagement, Coordination and partnerships, Durability of shelter solutions, Social cohesion, Occupants' satisfaction |
| Top four weaknesses overall | Project planning, Coverage and scale, Local authority / Government engagement, Timeliness of the assistance |
| Top four strengths in conflict responses | Community engagement, Coordination and partnerships, Durability of shelter solutions, Social cohesion |
| Top two weaknesses in conflict responses | Project planning, Coverage and scale |
| Top two strengths in disaster responses | Community Engagement, Occupants' satisfaction |
| Top weakness in disaster response | Project planning |

From the analysis, the most reported theme was Project Planning (reported in 15 out of the 24 case studies). The next most reported themes were Community engagement (13 case studies), Coordination and partnerships (12 case studies), Coverage and scale (11 case studies), Local authority / Government engagement (12 case studies) and Durability of shelter solutions (10 case studies). The most recurring themes found through the analysis described above, are briefly expanded below.

PROJECT PLANNING

Project planning was much more likely to be reported as a weakness rather than a strength. It is the theme with the most weaknesses overall in the analysis. Time and timing were the most cited factor in the description of the weaknesses: in several cases the planned project timeline was too short (A.1, A.7, A.8) or parts of the project took longer than anticipated (A.12, A.27). Time planning was also seen as a weakness for not taking into consideration national festivals (A.17) or the importance of seasonality (A.9, A.25). An interesting weakness was noted in A.20 where there was a recognition that there was a missed opportunity to carry out evaluations which would have documented or captured impact. Where project planning was reported as a strength, as in A.12, the project structure was commended for the clarity of roles between local and regional teams, in A.21 the integration of technology to aid project planning was a success, and in A.23 planned flexibility in project implementation was positive.



Selection of beneficiaries with a local youth committee, Indonesia.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement was much more likely to be reported as a strength than a weakness. As a strength, benefits to the project were reported as putting people at the center (A.17), addressing issues at the ground level (A.3), and the engagement of vulnerable groups (A.24).

Community involvement helped with messaging (A.15), consultation (A.28), sustained participation (A.8), and taking community issues into account (A.6). Engagement moved further towards empowering beneficiaries in decision making in A.8 where transparency and accountability were encouraged, and in A.12 where the project gave rise to co-creation and co-design.

Longer-term benefits of participation included seeing better care for common areas (A.13) and more resilient shelters (A.18). A.16 saw significant benefits of participation using the PASSA tool and reported the 'empowering approach of PASSA through further mobilizing communities and rallying their participation, resources, and commitment as part of disaster risk reduction management and preparedness, and response'.

As a weakness, community engagement was difficult to organize (A.3, A.7) and was constrained due to access to marginalized groups (A.4) with negative relations with some parts of the community (A.12).



Transportation of bamboo poles for the construction of shelters in Cox's Bazar.



© Abubakar Saidu Garba

Malkohi, Yola South, Adamawa State.

COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Coordination and partnerships are also much more likely to be reported as a strength than a weakness. Collaborations are reported to have program benefits such as timely and quality implementation thanks to productive partnership between contractors and engineers (A.26), more complete understanding of context by coordinating with local NGOs (A.4), better communication with persons with disabilities (A.10) because of partnerships with the appropriate disability organization, and localized and culturally appropriate IEC materials due to partnership between engineers and illustrators (A.20). Appropriate collaborations with partners at different institutional levels was a common thread: A.1 saw project benefits due to links between humanitarian, development and government actors, A.14 reported program synergies where organizations at national, local and international level contributed according to their strengths and expertise, and multi-layered coordination with government authorities in A.14 facilitated a large scale rental scheme. Private sector partnerships in A.23 helped with data processing. A.19 presented an interesting partnership between diaspora and local organizations which offers new idea about how to benefit localization through the flexibility of diaspora engagement. Longer term benefits were seen in with sustained partnerships (A.28) and more enthusiasm for integrated approaches (A.1).

Where coordination and partnerships were reported as a weakness, A.24 detailed a lack of coordination with UN

organizations, A.14 described a missed opportunity for dissemination with local organizations, and A.1 said that negotiating with partners took up too much time.

COVERAGE AND SCALE

Coverage and scale is twice as likely to be reported as a weakness as opposed to a strength. The weaknesses included the small scale of the project compared to the need (A.3, A.28) and in A.28 this contributed to raised tension in some areas. Limited funding was the cause of limited coverage in A.4 and A.20, and high cost per household limited coverage in A.8. It was unclear how the project could be scaled up in A.10 and in A.19 the question was how scaling up could be done cost effectively. In A.23, market forces provided a barrier to coverage because the cost of accommodation varied at certain times, such as during holiday periods, making the cost of accommodation unsustainable. For strengths, additional partners provided a route to scale: in A.7 the number of partners increased, in A.1 technical and financial organizations provided a route to scale, in A.20 a partnership with a local magazine gave scale to the project, and in A.21 the project was implemented throughout the country.

LOCAL AUTHORITY / GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT

This theme is evenly balanced between strengths and weaknesses. Local authority engagement strengthened



Venezuelan migrants stranded in Panama city line up for aid distribution.

projects by promoting understanding of the roles and responsibilities of local authorities to better respond to security and humanitarian crisis (A.1), helping to rapidly establish targeting criteria (A.3), providing robust support for the project (A.6), helping with coordination (A.28), facilitating building permits (A.12), and increasing program synergies (A.14). In A.16 the PASSA process provided an effective platform to engage with local authorities to discuss DRR and HLP. At the outcome level, A.1 reported that the program enhanced local government capacities on integrated planning and participatory urban development.

The project weaknesses caused by local authorities included lack of participation in urban interventions (A.12), not addressing land allocation issues (A.18), constraining shelter modalities (A.20), delaying the project due to lengthy decision making on camp closures (A.24) and a general lack of commitment (A.25).

DURABILITY OF SHELTER SOLUTIONS

This theme is much more likely to be reported as a strength rather than as a weakness. Durability was reported as being longer lasting, stronger, safer, more private and more resilient. When mentioned as a strength, reasons for durability included appropriate construction methods (A.9), engagement of community leaders (A.12), the appropriate technology (A.17), quality of materials (A.26) and quality of foundations (A.27). Community participation in A.18 led to improvements in design which made the shelters more resilient. Longer-term durability was reported in A.13 where the participatory nature of the project led to better care for the shelters in the long-term. Maintenance was the reason given (A.10, A.25) for the lack of durability when reported as a weakness.

INTERESTING POINTS RAISED IN OTHER THEMES

Diaspora engagement was central to A.19: the project 'provides a clear example of the importance and impact of diaspora contributions towards disaster recovery and community

resilience and the benefit of recognizing and strengthening the role that diasporas can play as key partners in shelter response'. The case study highlights the role that diaspora can play in private sector engagement, offering 'unique roles that diasporas can play in partnership with other non-traditional actors towards the identification of alternative shelter financing and increased capacities for affected communities'. It also shows that the diaspora community can contribute to localization by making an impact at the local level.

Case study A.23 demonstrates that the rental market has become the location of several intersecting themes: protection, private sector engagement, transitional shelter and social cohesion. The project addresses directly the protection challenges of a market-based approach, and partners with private sector organizations to transform an e commerce structure into a protective network to support recovery. The project enables an exit strategy from collective centers by providing a transition to longer-term shelter. There is the concern that the individual approach offered by the market could have the consequence that people may not be able to relate to the community and therefore miss out on opportunities and services that contribute to integration and social cohesion.

Self-reliance and self-recovery are essential to the success of A.19. The project is based around a loan model with beneficiaries carrying out retrofitting themselves. This approach 'empowers affected communities to be directly involved in their own preparedness, response and recovery contributing to a sense of agency that can be translated into longer term buy in and adoption of (good BBS) practices'. Interestingly, diaspora groups were included in BBS standards and practices explanations which enhanced the sustainability of rebuilding through knowledge transfer.

A7 offers the HDP Nexus in physical form. The project 'materializes the humanitarian-development-peace nexus through the creation of resettlement sites with basic living conditions for the resettled families and an improvement of the services and development opportunities also for the surrounding communities'.

SUMMARY TABLE OF PROJECT STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES BY THEME

| Crisis | CASE STUDY | THEMES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | THEMES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---|--|---------------------|---|--|--|------------------------|--------|--|---|--|---|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--|---------------------------|------------------|--|--------------------------|----------------------|--|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|----|------------------------------|-------|
| | | Accessibility / Disability Inclusion | Adaptability (of shelter solutions) | Advocacy | Cash and Market-based approaches | Community engagement | Coordination and partnerships | Cost effectiveness | Coverage and scale | Cultural appropriateness of shelter solutions | Disaster Risk Reduction | Durability of shelter solutions | Environmental sustainability | Flexibility of the organization / project | | GBV risk mitigation | | Gender mainstreaming / / Women's empowerment | Geographic Targeting (project locations) | Habitability / Comfort | Health | Integrated programming / Multi-sectoral approaches | Links with recovery / wider impacts / durable solutions | Livelihoods / employment opportunities | Local authority / Government engagement | Local construction techniques / capacity / materials | Local private sector engagement | Monitoring and Evaluation | Occupants' satisfaction | Organizational capacity / Preparedness | Procurement and logistics | Project planning | Protection mainstreaming / risk mitigation | Security of Tenure / HLP | Settlements approach | Social Cohesion / Community stabilization / Resilience | Socio-Technical Assistance quality | Targeting of assistance (beneficiary selection) | Team composition / Staffing | | Timeliness of the assistance | Other |
| ✳️ | A.1 / BURKINA FASO / 2020-2023 / CONFLICT | | | S | | | SW | W | S | | | | | | | A.1 | | | | | | | S | | S | | S | | | | W | | W | | | | | | | | | S |
| ✳️ | A.3 / ETHIOPIA / 2022 / CONFLICT | | | | W | SW | | | W | | | | | | | A.3 | | | | | W | W | | S | | | | | | S | | | S | | S | | | | | | | W |
| 🏠➡️ | A.4 / KENYA / 2021-2022 / CONFLICT | S | | | | W | S | | W | S | | S | | | | A.4 | | | | | | | S | | | | | W | | | | W | | | | S | SW | | | | | |
| 🌿 | A.6 / MALAWI / 2022 / TROPICAL STORM ANA | | | | | S | | | | | | S | | | | A.6 | | | | | | | | S | | | | | S | S | | W | | | | S | S | | | | W | |
| ✳️ | A.7 / MOZAMBIQUE / 2021-2022 / COMPLEX CRISIS | | | | | W | | | S | S | | | | | | A.7 | S | | | | | | S | | | | | | | | | W | | W | | | | | | | | SW |
| ✳️ | A.8 / NIGERIA / 2018-2021 / CONFLICT | | W | | | S | | | W | | | | S | | | A.8 | W | | S | | | | S | | | | | | | W | | W | | | | | | | | W | | |
| ✳️ | A.9 / NIGERIA / 2021-2022 / CONFLICT | | | | | | | | | S | | S | | | | A.9 | | | S | | | S | S | | | | | | | | W | W | | W | S | | | | | W | | |
| ✳️ | A.10 / NIGERIA / 2021-2022 / CONFLICT | S | | | | | S | | W | | | W | | | | A.10 | S | | | W | W | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | S | | | | W | | |
| 🏠➡️ | A.12 / VENEZUELA (REGIONAL) / 2019-2023 / CC | SW | | | | | | | | | | S | | | | A.12 | | S | | | | | | SW | | | W | | | | | SW | | | S | S | | | | | W | |
| 🏠➡️ | A.13 / ECUADOR / 2020-2022 / COMPLEX CRISIS | | S | | S | S | | | | | | S | | | | A.13 | | | | | | | W | | | | S | | | | W | S | | | S | | | | | | | |
| 🔄 | A.14 / HONDURAS / 2020-2021 / HURRICANES | | | | | | S | | | | | | | | | A.14 | | | | | | S | S | | | | | | | W | W | | | | | | | | | | W | |
| 💧 | A.15 / BANGLADESH / 2021-2022 / FIRE RESPONSE | | | | | S | | | | | | | | | | A.15 | | | | | S | | | W | | | | | | | | | | | S | | | | | W | | |
| ☰ | A.16 / CAMBODIA / 2018-2021 / PREPAREDNESS | | | | | S | W | | | | S | | | | | A.16 | | | | | | | | S | | | | S | S | | | | S | | | | S | | | | | |
| 🏠 | A.17 / INDONESIA / 2021 / EARTHQUAKE | | | | | S | | | | | | S | | | | A.17 | S | | | | | | S | | | | | S | W | W | W | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ✳️ | A.18 / MYANMAR / 2021-2022 / CONFLICT | | | S | | S | | | | | | S | | | | A.18 | | | W | | S | | | W | | | | | | | | | | | | | | W | | | | |
| 🔄 | A.19 / PHILIPPINES / 2021-2023 / TYPHOONES | | | | | | S | | W | | | | | | | A.19 | | | | | | S | | | | | | S | | | | | | | | | | W | | | S | |
| 🌊 | A.20 / TIMOR-LESTE 2021 / THE DILI FLOODS | | | | | S | | SW | S | SW | S | | | S | | A.20 | S | | | | | S | | W | | | | S | | | W | | | S | | | | | | | | |
| 🏠➡️ | A.21 / GREECE / 2019-2023 / COMPLEX CRISIS | | | | W | | S | | S | | | | | | | A.21 | | W | | W | | | | | | | | | | | | S | | | S | W | | | | | | |
| ✳️ | A.23 / UKRAINE (REGIONAL) / 2022-2023 / CONFLICT | | S | | | SW | S | | W | | | | | | | A.23 | | | SW | | | | | | | | SW | S | W | | S | S | S | | SW | | S | | | | S | |
| ✳️ | A.24 / IRAQ / 2019 / CONFLICT | | | | | S | W | | | | | | | | | A.24 | S | | | | | | | W | | | | | | | | W | | | | | S | | | SW | | |
| ✳️ | A.25 / JORDAN / 2018-2023 / SYRIAN CRISIS | | | | S | | | | | S | | W | S | | | A.25 | S | | | | | | W | W | | | | | | | | | | | | | S | | | | S | |
| 💧 | A.26 / LEBANON / 2020-2022 / BEIRUT PORT BLAST | | | | | S | | | | | S | S | W | | | A.26 | | S | | | | | | | | | S | S | | | W | | | | | | W | S | | | | |
| ✳️ | A.27 / SYRIAN ARAB REP. / 2021-2022 / CONFLICT | W | | | | | | S | | | S | S | | | | A.27 | | | | S | | | | | | | W | S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ✳️ | A.28 / YEMEN / 2020-2022 / CONFLICT | | | | | S | S | | W | S | | | | | | A.28 | | | | | | | | S | | | | | | S | W | | | | | W | | | | | | |

A photograph of two young women standing in front of a wall made of red mud bricks. The woman on the left is wearing a yellow shirt and a long blue skirt with red star patterns. She is smiling and clapping her hands. The woman on the right is wearing an orange shirt and a long green skirt with colorful patterns. She is also smiling. The wall behind them is made of red mud bricks and has a wooden door and a small window. The ground is dirt.

SECTION A

CASE STUDIES & OVERVIEWS

Two Burundian sisters who returned from the United Republic of Tanzania as orphans, celebrate their repaired mud brick home alongside members of their community.

© Amber Christino

CASE STUDY

BURKINA FASO 2020–2023 / CONFLICT

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

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| CRISIS | Humanitarian and Displacement Crisis |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 3.5 million people in need* |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | 2 million people approx.** |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 1.5 million people* |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Kaya, Tougouri, Kongoussi, and Dori across two regions |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 312 HHs (1,800 individuals) with access to housing 15,000 people in each municipality had increased access to public and community infrastructure 4,000 people received trainings 125,000 indirect beneficiaries |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | Establishment of the “Cellules Municipale de Resilience Urbaine” (CRMU), a multi-sectoral local coordination body Urban plans at city and neighborhood levels 312 housing units in four cities Interventions in 4 schools (construction and extension activities) 4 public health facilities constructed 4 water towers built Trainings for local authorities on urban and territorial planning Deployment of four urban experts to support urban planning capacity Social, economic, and environmental development activities |
| SHELTER SIZE | Housing: 30 m ² per HH Schools: 200 m ² each Health facilities: 200 m ² each |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 3.5 m ² per person |
| DIRECT COST | USD 5,000 per housing unit, including toilet |



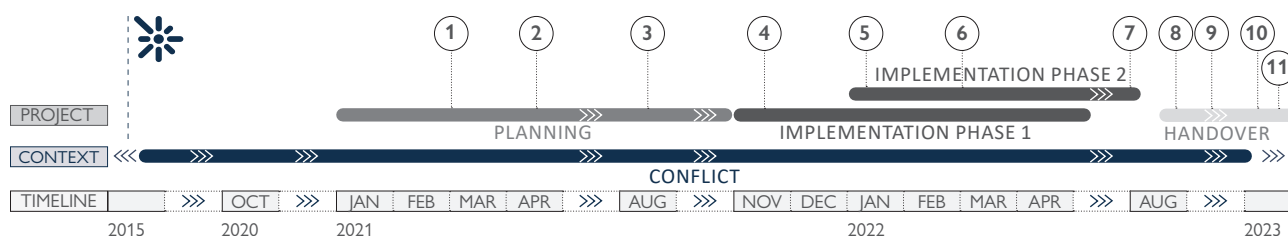
PROJECT SUMMARY

Burkina Faso is facing a security crisis resulting in massive displacement into urban areas. The project aimed to increase the overall resilience of local authorities and the most vulnerable affected communities through an integrated approach which included: capacity building of stakeholders, enabling access for the most vulnerable among IDPs and host communities to adequate housing, basic urban services, and public spaces, improving socio-economic inclusion and social cohesion, and reducing the environmental impact of rapid urban population growth.

*Humanitarian Response Plan 2022

**Lamarche, A., Bentley, A. (2022). After the Coup: Burkina Faso's Humanitarian and Displacement Crisis

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.



2015: Increased conflict and insecurity in Burkina Faso.

- 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 decision-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 fled 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 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 longer-term 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.

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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.

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.

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



© Stephanie Loose

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 were 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.

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.
- × **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.
- × **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.
- × **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.
- × **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;](#)

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.

OVERVIEW

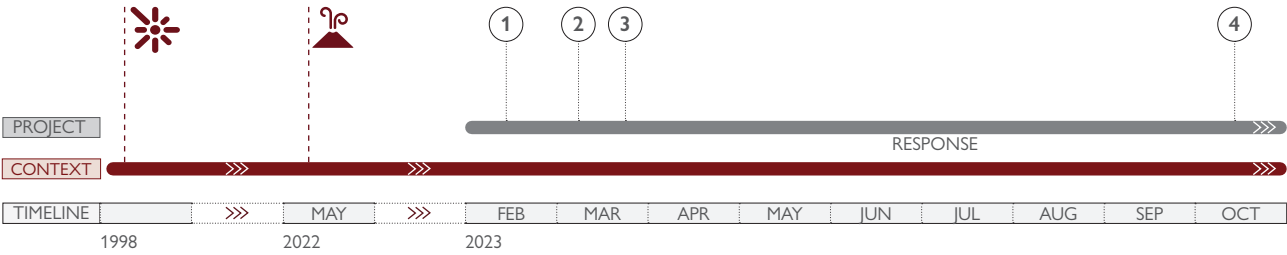
DEM. REP. OF THE CONGO 2022 / COMPLEX CRISIS

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| CRISIS | Persistence of armed and inter-community conflicts in the in eastern of DR Congo |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 27 million people in need 8.8 million people targeted in 2022* |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 4 million people* |
| LOCATION | Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu, Tanganyika provinces |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED IN THE RESPONSE | 460,475, among which 238,285 women |
| RESPONSE OUTPUTS | 75,077 shelters built 460,475 people assisted in shelter including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">185,000 people received transitional shelters138,000 people received emergency shelters56,000 people received light assistance kit in shelters (2 tarps)32,000 people assisted with rental support |

*Humanitarian Needs Overview, DRC, 2022

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSE

The Democratic Republic of Congo has been facing a complex and protracted crisis, or a crisis characterized by a continuous resurgence for the last 25 years. In 2022, the number of people in need of shelter was estimated at 4 million (HNO); of which 1 million were targeted within the response (HRP). By the end of 2022, only around 460,000 people had received some kind of shelter assistance.



- 1998:** The Second Congo War, also known as the Great War of Africa or the Great African War, began in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in August 1998.
- May 2021:** Volcanic eruption of Nyiragongo displaced 450,000 people in the region.
- 1 Feb 2022:** Strategic workshop with sectoral donors in Kinshasa.
- 2 Mar 2022:** Decline of the March 23 Movement (M23).
- 3 Mar 2022:** Establishment of the Environmental Protection Working Group.
- 4 Oct 2022:** Evaluation of the impact of shelter interventions on the environment in Tanganyika and South Kivu provinces.



Emergency response - Construction of emergency shelters on site.

CONTEXT

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the third most populated country in Africa, with over 100 million inhabitants. It shares borders with nine neighboring countries: Angola, the Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and Zambia.

The DRC is experiencing one of the most complex humanitarian crises in the world, with multiple conflicts affecting several parts of its vast territory. The country is home to the largest population of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Africa, with nearly six million people displaced to date. Since 2021, the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri have been under a state of siege, due to the resurgence of armed and intercommunal conflicts. In May 2021, the province of North Kivu experienced the volcanic eruption of Nyiragongo, displacing nearly 300,000 inhabitants of some neighborhoods in the city of Goma. During 2022, the security and humanitarian situation deteriorated further in the eastern provinces (North Kivu and Ituri) and the western province of Mayi-Ndombe. In addition, flooding affected the entire country, particularly the city of Kinshasa and the province of Equateur, between October and December 2022.

With the crisis-affected areas primarily accessible by air, logistic challenges and constraints remained throughout 2022 given the size of the country and the bad condition of its road infrastructures. Additionally, the cancelation and/or price increase in United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) flight services reduced the humanitarian actors' response capacity to assist in those areas. This problem led many actors to resort to private companies, despite persistent untimely cancellations of flights from their side too. In addition, the war in Ukraine affected as well import and transport activities and the costs of shelter and household items, which had an impact on operations and sectoral response.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

The situation in the DRC is that of a prolonged crisis, and thus it is difficult to describe the situation prior. However, according to [the study published in 2019 by the DRC Shelter Cluster with the support of CRATERRE](#) on local constructive cultures for sustainable and resilient habitats, populations lived in a variety of homes before the advent of the crisis. Inhabitants of different regions developed local solutions to adapt to their contexts and meet needs by using locally available resources for the construction of their housing. According to another survey on the perception of poverty conducted by the Unité de Pilotage du Processus d'Élaboration et de Mise en Oeuvre de la Stratégie de Réduction de la Pauvreté (Poverty Reduction Strategy Development and Implementation Process Steering Unit), 81 percent of households said they were not satisfied with their housing. According to the same source, 76 percent of households lived in overcrowded settings throughout the country. It is therefore in a context of underdevelopment and structural challenges. The country has 145 territories with a total of 339 communes, including 137 urban communes and 202 rural communes. The provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri account for 50 of the communes, 80 percent of which are in rural areas. In total, these three provinces are home to a population of more than 21 million people, or approximately 21 percent of the total population of the DRC (estimated at 106 million in 2022).

The context of North Kivu provides a better illustration of the situation before the onset of the crisis. Indeed, when the Nyiragongo volcano erupted in 2021 the population of Goma was approximately 400,000. Today, it is estimated to be over one million. The city has experienced waves of migration from the countryside. This demographic growth has led to a high demand for housing in the face of a limited supply due to seismicity and ground deformation in several zones, which often indicates the presence of magma under the urban area of the city of Goma.



View of a Transitional shelter.

© DRC Shelter Cluster

SITUATION AFTER THE CRISIS

The deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation has led to large-scale population movements. It has also led to the loss or destruction of essential household items, the partial or destruction of homes in towns or villages of origin, and the accommodation of displaced households in host families, collective centers, camps, or sites for displaced people with the risk of exposure to insecurity, overcrowding, risks of protection and GBV, the deterioration of health and epidemics, among other things.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

The Shelter Cluster promotes that any sectoral intervention must include exit routes or longer-term solutions to contribute to the recovery of affected households in a sustainable manner. But with the persistence of conflicts in the country, individuals or families are forced to remain on the move for extended periods. This justifies valuing transitional solutions alongside emergency responses as well as durable solutions, which are generally not implemented in the medium term.

The Shelter Cluster bases its response strategy addressing the following five scenarios, which consider various situations or locations of displaced persons and the needs of their host communities:

- Displaced persons in host families.
- Displaced in urban situations.
- Displaced in camps or collective centers.
- Returnees.
- Host Communities.

In addition, the diagram below (Fig 1.) represents the guidelines of the Shelter Cluster's operational strategy according to the location of the displaced persons and the support activities that can be provided to them, for each of the emergency phases /transitional/development.

NATIONAL SHELTER RESPONSE

In 2022, shelter actors assisted 446,000 people, including 238,000 women and 234,000 children – representing 44 percent of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2022 sectoral targets.

Prior to 2022, the funded shelter response represented a low proportion of the sectoral targets of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). As an indication, by the end of 2021, the shelter response only reached 19 percent of its target.

Against the backdrop of these poor results, Shelter Cluster partners set two objectives for 2022. First, to strengthen or improve the advocacy to raise the funds needed to meet the sectoral needs identified during the year. Second, to review the methodology for estimating sectoral needs as part of the 2022 humanitarian planning cycle (HPC).

Regarding the second objective in particular, the Cluster reviewed its sectoral indicators as well as the ratios used for the identification of people in need of shelter; and for targeting, including the sectoral budget estimate. The review focused on the following points:

- The integration of the IDP/host population ratio;
- The reduction of the host community rate to 10 percent of the sectoral persons in need;
- The reduction of targeting rates according to the operational or financial capacities of the actors;

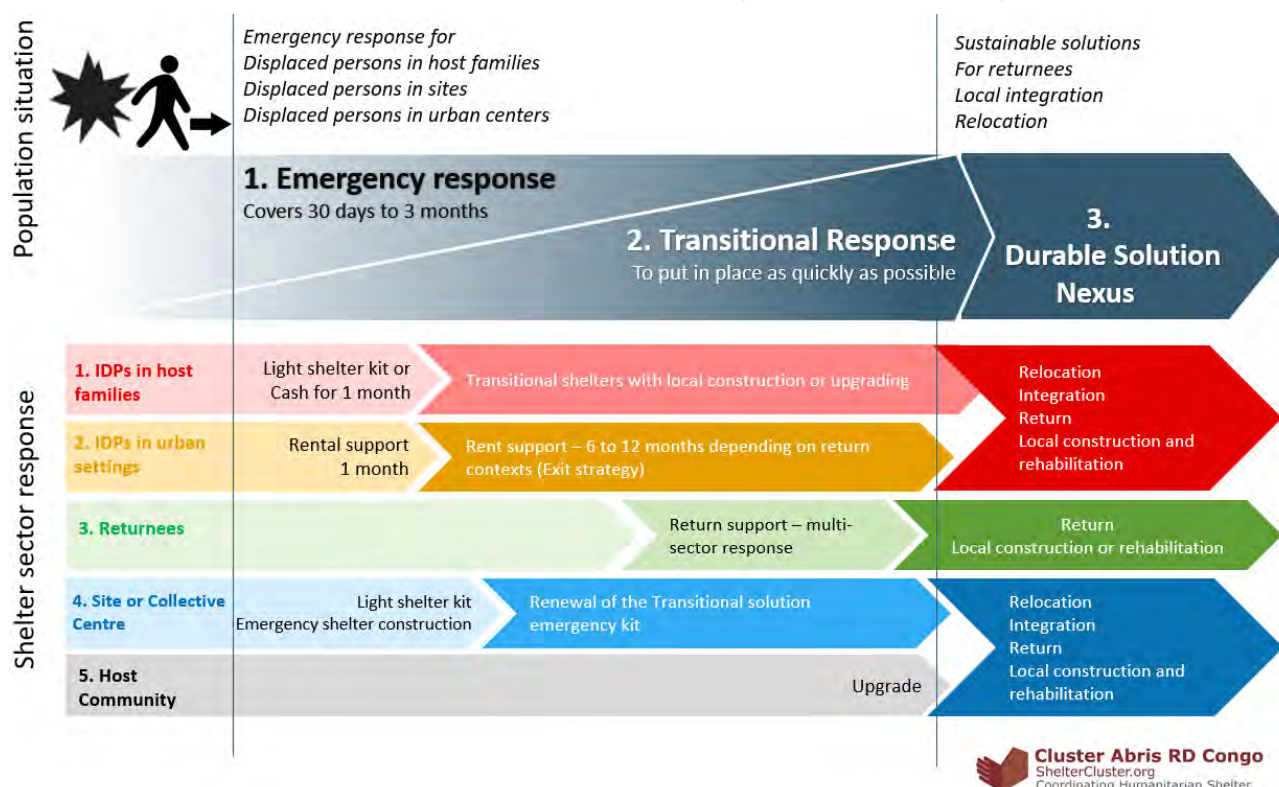


Fig 1. Guidelines of the Shelter Cluster's operational strategy.

the harmonization of the costs of intervention packages.

This also justifies the fact that the sectoral target for 2022 was one million people out of the four million identified as being in need.

In addition, since the HRP in DRC is activity-based, each cluster uses its methodology to identify the number of people in need and the targets for its sector. It then derives the costs from the list of standard activities. As an example, in 2021, out of the 89 percent of displaced persons hosted by a host family, the Shelter Cluster targeted 65 percent as participants in the response. In 2022, this methodology was revised by considering 25 percent, which was the percentage of final sectoral achievements reached in 2021 (see table below).

MAIN CHALLENGES

In 2022, major challenges included:

- The decrease in funds to cover sectoral needs, which explains why more than 50 percent of households in need were not able to benefit from adequate shelter.
- The lack of capacity to cover the needs of more than 100,000 people impacted by the eruption of the Nyiragongo Volcano in May 2021.
- The increase in population displacements following the resurgence of conflicts in the east of the country (M23 crisis, community conflict in Ituri, ADF crisis, etc.) as well as the emergence of conflict in the west of the country with the Kwamouth crisis between Teke and Yaka.
- The destruction of emergency shelters built in some IDP sites following the resurgence of armed clashes. This was the case in the Rwasa site (North Kivu), where nearly 4,000 emergency shelters were immediately destroyed by clashes between the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) and the 23 March Movement (M23, also known as the Congolese Revolutionary Army).

CLUSTER RESPONSE ACTIVITIES AND COSTING

| Individual Shelter | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|--|
| Types of activity | \$/HH | Details |
| 1. Lightweight Shelter Kit / MPCA | 50 | 2 tarpaulins, 1 roll of rope / HH - 1 collective tool kit / 10 max HH |
| 2. Emergency shelter | 122 | Emergency or cash for shelters |
| 3. Rent | 240 | 20-60\$/month/ HH |
| 4. Upgrading (Host Families) | 150 | Construction of family latrines, addition of a room, repairs, internal separation, etc.) |
| 5. Local construction | 350 | For the returnees, rehabilitation or construction of a new shelter |
| 6. Restitution of documents | 30 | +/- cost of a parcel card |

| Collective shelter | | |
|--|-----|---|
| 1. Upgrade of the collective center | 143 | Family latrines, repairs, internal separation |
| 2. Construction of collective shelters | 400 | Construction of a collective shed |



Transitional response - Collective transitional shelters.

METHODOLOGY FOR CALCULATING THE PIN AND SECTORAL TARGETS FOR HPC

| Consequence 1: Risk of life population movement of less than 6 months | | PIN 2021 & 2022 | TARGETED PEOPLE 2021 & 2022 | |
|---|---|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----|
| IDPs | Host families | 89% | 65% | 25% |
| IDPs | Site or camps | 89% | 85% | 25% |
| Returnees | Damaged house or secondary occupancy | 90% | 71% | 25% |
| Host community | High vulnerable households in need of shelter | 10% | 30% | 5% |
| Consequence 2: Living conditions population movement of more than 6 months | | PIN 2021 & 2022 | TARGETED PEOPLE 2021 & 2022 | |
| IDPs | Host families | 65% | 100% | 25% |
| IDPs | Sites or camps | 50% | 100% | 25% |

- The resistance of the authorities to grant sites to accommodate the move, disregarding that the site remains a last resort.
- The extreme disrepair of roads and infrastructure. Operational actors had difficulty delivering aid in most displacement areas.
- The need to allocate considerable resources to cover the delivery of kits by air, especially in landlocked areas or with markets with low absorptive capacity. This situation has impacted the deployment of assistance, also considering the limited availability or number of airlines.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

In parallel with the sectoral emergency response, shelter actors have met to discuss sectoral environmental protection and/or the identification of mitigation strategies necessary to reduce the risk of environmental deterioration following humanitarian interventions. Thus, in March

2022, a working group on the environment was set up, composed of five cluster members, including a United Nations agency, two international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), and two national organizations. The working group established an annual work plan, which allowed the following results to be achieved: Training of Cluster partners at the national and local levels on reforestation techniques and environmental assessment tools.

1. Development of the country's environmental profile.
2. An impact assessment of sectoral interventions on the environment in two provinces in the east of the country (South Kivu and Tanganyika), which made it possible to survey 2,000 households and reach 18 localities assessed using the NEAT+ (Nexus Environment Assessment Tool).

In addition, these environmental initiatives contributed to the capacity building of actors on environmental issues and will lead to the definition of an environmental protection strategy in the shelter sector.



Durable response - Shelters constructed for the returnees using local construction techniques.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

LESSONS LEARNED

In the context of multiple crises, the consideration of the principle of harmlessness (Do No Harm) is essential. Thus, the Cluster identified the following actions as those to be undertaken to minimize the risk of inadvertent harm:

- **Targeting:** The establishment of a joint committee with the community, and the prioritization of a community approach alongside the use of a Shelter Vulnerability Score tool. Clarity should be provided on the objectives of the project and of targeting criteria. Labor should be recruited locally and involve the community in the selection of participants. Verify land or shelter ownership in the context of targeting a project participant for shelter assistance. For rent support activities, provide participants with a rent payment tracking booklet alongside the written agreement.
- **Brick production:** Awareness of the requirements for mud-brick storage, to ensure their protection and avoid potential delays in future projects (using tarpaulins/straw, etc.).
- **Rainy season:** The rains affect the production of bricks in particular; and may also slow down shelter construction in general. It is important to set up a construction schedule that is adapted to the seasonal or agricultural calendar.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

In 2023, the Shelter Cluster will continue to achieve the goals assigned through the ten key principles outlined in its strategy:

1. Putting communities at the heart of the shelter response;
2. Seeking an equitable and efficient response;
3. Promoting accessibility through universal design;
4. Valuing local standards and practices;
5. Promoting greater household choice and autonomy while optimizing project costs;
6. Accompanying households in (re)construction; Supporting households in the (re)construction, rehabilitation or upgrading of their homes;
7. Taking into account land tenure issues,
8. Taking into account community dynamics and gender in the design of the project;
9. Mitigating the risks of negative impact on the environment and;
10. Promoting a multi-sectoral approach in the same area.

In addition, the Cluster plans to develop its environmental strategy to reduce the negative sectoral impact on the environment. Emphasis will be placed on cross-cutting issues and cross-sectoral synergies. Shelter responses will include gender and GBV issues by promoting gender equity in interventions and contributing to a protective environment for women and girls. Responses will be implemented following assessments to identify and understand specific household needs. Thus, responses will consider age, gender, disability, and the cross-cutting protection principles of dignity, do no harm, accountability, access, participation, and empowerment. In terms of location, Shelter and AME interventions will involve local structures or organizations to the maximum extent possible to achieve an optimal exit or sustainability strategy. The Shelter Cluster and AME Working Group will support collaborative initiatives between international and national or local partner organizations, including the transfer of knowledge and experience.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Dem. Rep. of Congo: [A.4 / DR CONGO 2019–2020](#); [A.2 / DR CONGO 2018](#); [A.17 DR CONGO 2008–2016](#)

On Africa: [A.1 / BURKINA FASO 2019–2020](#); [A.6 MOZAMBIQUE 2020–2021](#); [A.6 / SOUTH SUDAN 2018](#)

On coordination: [A.9 / SOUTH SUDAN 2018](#); [A.12 / ECUADOR 2016–2018](#); [A.7 / NIGERIA 2017–2020](#)

CASE STUDY

ETHIOPIA 2022 / CONFLICT

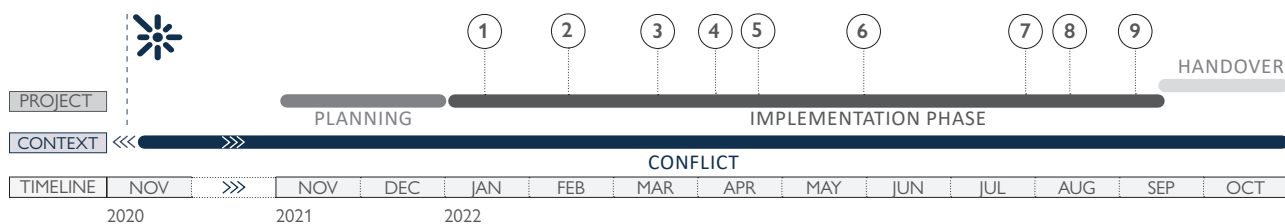
KEYWORDS: Host family support, NFI distributions, Social cohesion

| | |
|--|--|
| CRISIS | The Tigray War |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 5.2 million people* |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | Over 2 million people (432,358 individuals)* displaced within 1 to 26 June 2021 |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Mekelle, Tigray. |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 300 HHs (1,523 individuals) |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | Expansion of shelters of 75 HHs of host families Renovation of 135 HHs with upgrade to roofs, doors and windows Rehabilitation of 90 HHs with minor shelter repair through Shelter-related NFI and CBI Integration of IDPs in host communities increased for 76% of HHs in the project |
| SHELTER SIZE | 21.29 m ² on average |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 4.25 m ² per person |
| DIRECT COST | USD 200–250 for expansion, renovation and rehabilitation activities |
| PROJECT COST | USD 67,500, with average USD 225 per shelter |
| *Ethiopia - Tigray Region Humanitarian Update Situation Report, OCHA, August 2021 **Ethiopia - Emergency Site Assessment - Northern Ethiopia Crisis - Round 7 | |



PROJECT SUMMARY

The project targeted the displaced population who arrived to Mekelle city due to the conflict in Tigray region which started in November 2020, and particularly those living with host community families. The assistance provided included different shelter and NFI kits according to the category of the needs identified during the door-to-door assessments conducted (shelters in need of an extension, shelters in need of a major renovation, and shelters in need of minor works). The project aimed to improve the living conditions while increasing social cohesion among displaced and host communities.



Nov 2020: Tigray war, that lasted from Nov 2020 to Nov 2022.

- Jan 2022:** Project sensitization, awareness creation.
- Feb 2022:** Local authority, IDP and host community engagement.
- Mar 2022:** Intention survey that examined the readiness of both host families and IDPs.
- Apr 2022:** Beneficiary and HLP verification conducted.
- Apr 2022:** Conception of 3 typologies, based on the intention survey results, HLP assessments and response patterns, HH-level observation and technical classifications.
- May-June 2022:** Procurement of shelter materials from market.
- Jul-Aug 2022:** Distribution of kits and Cash-based Intervention.
- Aug 2022:** Supervision and monitoring.
- Sep 2022:** Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) conducted.



Renovation of roofing and porch in Kedamayweyane sub city, Mekelle.

CONTEXT

In November 2022, the Tigray regional government and the Ethiopian federal government entered into a conflict that resulted in more than two million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and approximately one million households (5.2 million people) in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. The capital city of Tigray, Mekelle, had a population of over 550,000 before the war. A large IDP influx to Mekelle occurred during and after the war from the western, eastern, central, and north-western zones of Tigray. The city lies at an elevation of 2,254 meters above sea level in a semi-arid area and is divided into seven local administrations or sub-cities.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

Before the crisis, Tigray specifically and Ethiopia in general experienced fast growth and development with remarkable average annual double-digit GDP growth. In Tigray, approximately 80 percent of the population lives in rural areas with agriculture as their means of primary economic activity.

The typical houses in Tigray are characterized by dry stone walls and flat mud roofs. The local vernacular architecture style is called 'Hidmo'. Rural settlements are dispersed locations across the villages without a clear pattern. In urban areas, buildings are commonly raised using stone, reinforced concrete, and glass. Due to the conflict, many typical vernacular homes as well as modern urban buildings have been damaged to varying degrees.

SITUATION DURING/AFTER THE CRISIS

Since November 2020, large numbers of IDPs arrived in cities and towns across Tigray and started to settle in collective centers, unfinished buildings, spontaneous camps, and also with host families. Surveys carried out by

the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster in Tigray in July 2021 evidenced that 7 percent and 20 percent of IDPs were still living in collective centers in Shire and Mekelle cities respectively, and a longer term solution was required.

NATIONAL SHELTER RESPONSE

Initially, a large part of the displaced population settled in makeshift shelters in spontaneous camps. Later, authorities and humanitarian actors set up planned camps and provided emergency shelter assistance to those staying also in unfinished buildings and collective centers.

The partners of the Shelter and NFI sub-Cluster in Tigray, in coordination with relevant authorities (relocation task force, disaster risk management office, and Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs), designed a program to support IDPs living with host families and the families hosting them, fostering family ties and cultural bondage, and aiming to decongest the collective settings such as camps and collective centers, as in those settings, protection risks were high and there were limited economic opportunities and access to services.

PROJECT DESIGN

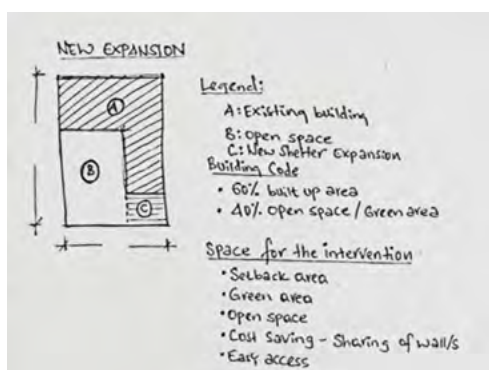
IDPs populations living with host families in urban areas significantly increased since the war erupted in Tigray in November 2020. The implementing organization undertook community engagement efforts at the neighborhood level across the seven sub-cities of Mekelle city, as well as needs assessments on the households hosting IDPs – which evidenced three categories of needs:

- Homes in need of an expansion;
- Homes in need of a major renovation;
- Homes in need of a minor renovation.

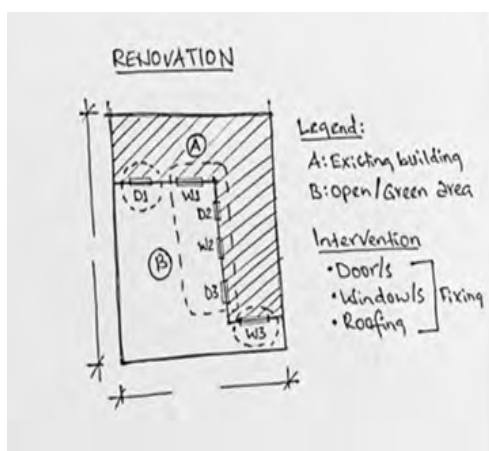


View of a traditional Hidmo house in the Tigray region characterized by masonry walls and flat mud roofs.

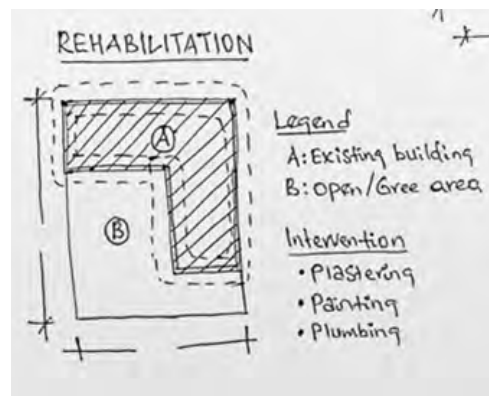
The modalities of assistance for the three scenarios consisted of the distribution of three different in kind kits of shelter items for each of the scenarios and a cash grant to implement the construction works.



Scenario 1: New expansion scenario.



Scenario 2: Renovation scenario.



Scenario 3: Rehabilitation scenario.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

A hybrid response including in-kind support and CBI allowed the host community to absorb IDPs through a neighborhood approach during the project. This was implemented through the following phases and milestone activities:

- Local authority, IDPs, and host community engagement.
- Surveys for both IDPs and host families.
- The conception of three typologies (expansion, major and minor renovations).

- Participant verification and HLP assessment, followed by participant sensitization and grouping.
- Distribution of in-kind kits and cash:
 - » Two in-kind kit distributions to the three scenarios and one installment of cash for the rehabilitation scenario.
- Construction works.
- Supervision and monitoring.
- Post Distribution Monitoring.

Other implementation activities included the establishment of a project master schedule, project diary, official letters communication with different bureaus, face to face and virtual meetings (with IDPs, Mekelle city administration, sub-city leaders, different organizations, and Shelter/NFI national and subnational Cluster), format/s (in Tigrigna and English), intention survey, Kobo tool (for data collection and analysis) and scenario analysis and development.

The implementing organization engaged shelter and WASH units during field assessments of homes, as well as the protection unit, who trained the staff involved in the distributions in mitigating GBV risks and participated in awareness campaigns during the distributions.

TARGETING

Door-to-door exercises were conducted to identify and assess eligible households as they were spread across the city. The criteria for inclusion in the program included:

- IDPs from areas in Tigray where the conflict is active.
- IDPs living within the host community with proof of a letter from a lower local authority.
- IDPs with different vulnerable cases were prioritized such as female headed households, separated or at risk children and foster families, pregnant or lactating mothers, Persons with Disabilities, those suffering from serious medical conditions, and the elderly.

Participant verification was conducted house to house jointly by the implementing organization with representatives from the local authorities from each sub-city and kebeles (small administrative unit in Ethiopia).



New expansion of shelter in Semen sub city, Mekelle. October, 2022.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The communities and local authorities were engaged at the commencement of the project for their involvement in the design of the response, the identification of gaps, defining of target pilot phase communities, and support in the sensitization efforts. Information sessions were held for authorities, IDPs living in collective centers, host communities, and local and international NGOs. Feedback and complaint mechanisms were put in place to assist participants throughout the process of upgrading homes.

Intention surveys were conducted to identify host families with the capacity to host IDPs and IDPs in need to find a hosting family for moving out from a collective center. The assessments of host families included the verification of their property with authorities' records, and HLP verifications were conducted based on Standard Operating Procedures defined within the cluster partners to prevent any situation of eviction.

During shelter construction, households were organized in groups of ten, by sub-communities, to encourage assistance between them during construction, repairs, and maintenance works. Supervision and monitoring activities were implemented by the organization's shelter unit during the construction process phase.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- Due to an embargo, there was a lack of fuel and cash which delayed the project. As a result, the original CBI cash amount was reduced by 60 percent to allow for the project to continue and the cash to be replaced by equivalent in-kind shelter kits.
- While each household initially preferred tailored solutions and kits on a case-by-case basis, to make the project scalable as a pilot it was determined to have three kits according to the identified category of needs.
- The three kits were limited to industrial material (nails, corrugated iron sheets, cement, etc.) as local material could not be procured due to the embargo. The material already available in the region increased in price significantly during the project, often to twice that of pre war prices.
- The budget for the three kits was created based on need, however, Kit 1 (expansion) was 18 percent more expensive than the other two kits/scenarios. This required strong sensitization at the start of the project to reduce conflict during distribution.
- Communication between dispersed locations of host family homes became a bottleneck for registration, verification, and PDM. In response, the organization clustered and grouped the households according to proximity.
- Poor quality of data from the sub-cities or local authority made verification difficult.
- The initial quota of IDPs targeted per sub city was altered, as original quotas were equal across sub-city, but the locations did not have the same levels of IDPs from western Tigray.
- Sub-city offices had limited distribution space and stores for in kind kits.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

From project inception, the targeting was based on vulnerability criteria, and special attention was given to women and girls. In each distribution phase, the organization's protection unit engaged vulnerable groups in creating awareness on how to handle gender based violence (GBV) cases. The risk of GBV was minimized as new spaces were created and secured through shelter expansion, boosting security and privacy in cases of reconstruction and rehabilitation scenarios.

MATERIALS AND SUPPLY

Due to the embargo, there was no access to industrial materials from the central market. As a result, drastic price increments and variations were inevitable, and the supply chain of the building materials market collapsed. Overhead costs such as material transportation to and from warehouses were high because crude oil was only available through illicit means.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

New shelter construction, renovation, and rehabilitation activities on existing shelters for urban IDPs living with host families provided additional safety, security, and dignity for vulnerable groups – particularly for women and girls at risk of gender-based violence (GBV) in collective centers. To increase social interaction and trust among the IDPs and the host families, partial NFIs were provided in addition to the in-kind shelter kits and CBI support. Industrial materials were purchased within the local market when financial institutions were not functioning, injecting additional cash into the market.



(above) NFI kits distribution in Adihaki, Mekelle, July 2022; (below) Cash distribution in Adihaki, Mekelle, August 2022.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ To address issues at the ground level, there was strong **involvement with affected communities and leaders** as well as coordination with local NGOs and government from the project's outset.
- ✓ **Intention surveys and HLP verification** supported the efficiency of the project process.
- ✓ **The response addressed and benefited both the IDPs and host families**, resulting in increased social cohesion between the two groups.
- ✓ **Targeting criteria for IDPs and host communities** were established quickly through collaboration with local authorities such as the Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs (BoLSA).

LESSONS LEARNED

- Community and local authority engagement were crucial in fostering ownership and social cohesion.
- The hybrid response of in-kind distribution and CBI allowed for increased flexibility throughout implementation.
- Urban IDPs are often the most neglected and have the highest levels of need, especially in shelter circumstances.
- A thorough participant registration and verification process can help avoid a conflict-of-interest type situation.
- Family ties and cultural bonds between IDPs and host community families can be utilized to enhance project effectiveness.
- Industrial material procurement processes should start as early as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- The project observed that the provision of cash enhanced the flexibility of the user, and thus may be more impactful than in-kind support.
- The three scenarios (expansion, major and minor renovation) were designed to tailor assistance to household needs. However, most of the families in the PDM surveys reported the need for more flexibility in the kit's composition.
- A multidisciplinary approach should be utilized if the project is replicated (eg. The integration of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) activities).

WEAKNESSES

- × **The project couldn't address holistic needs** within the defined community outside of the scope of the project.
- × **The project lacked multisectoral and multidisciplinary components** that could have complemented the project's impact.
- × **Slight difference among the kit and cash distribution** according to each scenario.
- × The partial NFI was only provided to **10 percent of vulnerable host communities**.
- × **Due to the lack of cash availability**, CBI activities were conducted after two phases of in-kind kit distributions were completed.
- × **Focus group discussions (FGDs) were difficult to organize** due to the dispersed nature of the host community families.
- × **Demand and need for shelter support varied drastically among IDPs**, making it difficult to understand the needs of the entire population.



Distribution of shelter items, July 2022.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Ethiopia: [A.5 / ETHIOPIA 2019–2020](#); [A.26 / ETHIOPIA 2014–2016](#); [A.8 / ETHIOPIA 2011](#)


On host family support: [A.16 / BENIN 2010–2011](#); [A.30 / SYRIAN ARAB REP. 2015–2016](#)

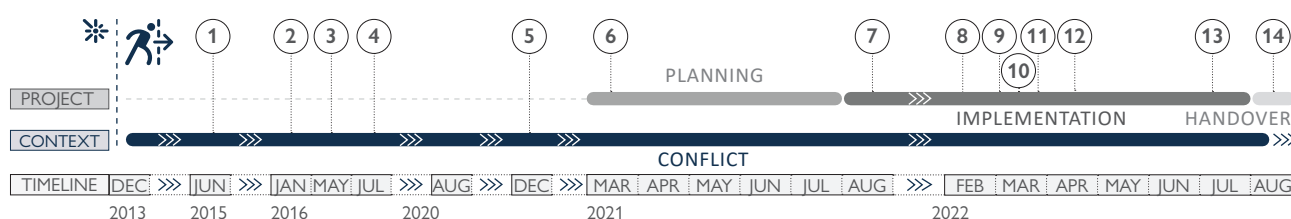
On social cohesion: [A.32 / TURKEY 2017–2018](#)

CASE STUDY

KENYA 2021–2022 / SOUTH SUDAN CRISIS

KEYWORDS: Coordinations and partnerships, Disability inclusion, Permanent houses

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| CRISIS | Conflict and Violence (South Sudan Crisis: Refugees in Kenya) |  |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER/NFI NEEDS | 3,435 persons with specific needs in Kalobeyei settlement* | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Kalobeyei Settlement, Turkana County, Kenya | |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 20 HHs with persons with specific needs (11 families with their members living with disability and 9 families with child-headed families and GBV survivors; 50% male, 50% female) - 18 refugee HHs and 2 HHs from host community (Turkana) 55 masons/artisans from both host and refugee communities with trainings and casual labor | |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 20 individual permanent shelters and latrines (Natural Turkana stone blocks and Hollow blocks) 55 masons/artisans trained on how to construct the shelters and use of the locally available materials | |
| SHELTER SIZE | 25.6 m² per HH | PROJECT SUMMARY In the newly established Kalobeyei settlement near Kakuma camp, the project targeted households with vulnerable individuals such as persons with disabilities, GBV survivors, as well as elderly and children, for the provision of inclusive shelters adapted to their needs, which had previously been overseen within the humanitarian response. The project participants were engaged from the early stages of the process, throughout its completion. Masons and artisans were trained in the construction techniques considered for the shelter design, which used locally available materials. |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 5 m² per person | |
| DIRECT COST | USD 4,254 per HH | |
| PROJECT COST | USD 5,952 per HH | |
| *UNHCR, Kakuma-Kenya | | |



Dec 2013: South Sudanese civil war, movements to Kenya.

- ① **Jun 2015:** Land allocated for development of new integrated refugee and host community settlement in Kalobeyei.
- ② **Jan 2016:** Establishment and spatial Planning of Kalobeyei new settlement to host approximately 45,000-60,000 persons.
- ③ **May 2016:** Emergency response activities began in Kalobeyei new settlement after crisis erupted in South Sudan.
- ④ **Jul 2016:** The Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plan (KISED) Framework MoU signed.
- ⑤ **Dec 2020:** Population in Kalobeyei settlement reached over 40,000 persons, majority being from South Sudan 29,778.
- ⑥ **Mar 2021:** Funding approved and allocated.

- ⑦ **Aug 2021:** Planning of activities, local partners engagement and signing of agreement of corporation.
- ⑧ **Feb 2022:** Beneficiaries' selection.
- ⑨ **5 & 11 Mar 2022:** Two community engagement forums.
- ⑩ **Mar 2022:** Project planning and shelter design.
- ⑪ **Mar 2022:** Training on the basic construction skills, tools and planning.
- ⑫ **Apr 2022:** Construction commenced.
- ⑬ **Jul 2022:** Full construction of all the shelters.
- ⑭ **Aug 2022:** Selected beneficiaries are issued their shelters.

CONTEXT

Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement is located in Turkana, the second largest of the 47 counties in Kenya, covering an area of 71,597.6 km² (County Government of Turkana, 2016). The county is in the Northwest of Kenya and borders Uganda to the west and South Sudan and Ethiopia to the north and northeast respectively. The main town that serves the settlement of Kalobeyei is Kakuma Town, whose economy and growth is mainly linked to the refugee support system – active for many years in the region. In addition, Kakuma is home to Kenya's second-largest refugee population, (as the camp was established in 1992 following an influx from Sudan, then later from Ethiopia and Somalia, among other origins), which represents a unique human settlement and economic system that requires policymakers to strategize on how to build resilience and support sustainability and socio-economic development (UN-Habitat, 2018)

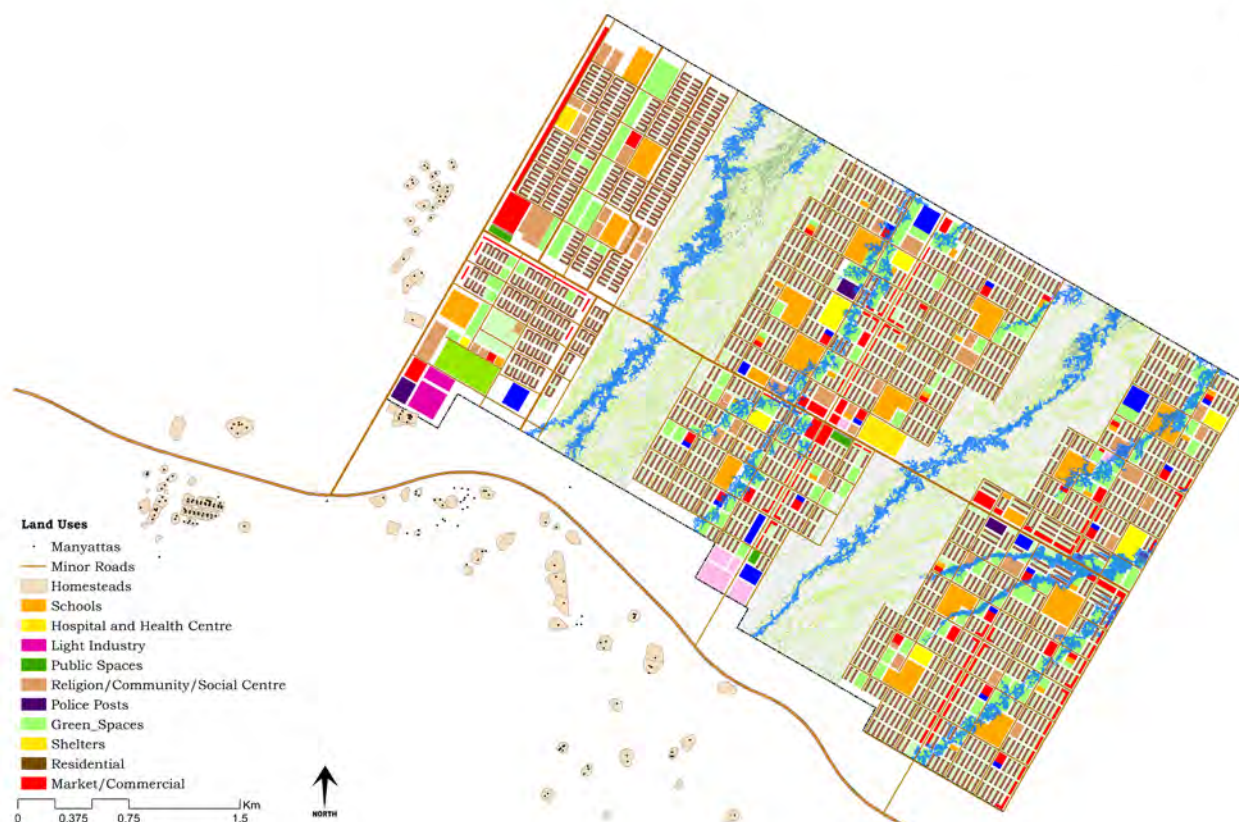
Turkana County is generally characterized by a hot and dry climate with temperatures ranging between 15°C and 35°C. While precipitation in the area is highly variable, the 'long rains' occur between April and July, and the 'short rains' between October and November. The Kakuma-Kalobeyei region is susceptible to both flash flooding and drought. Heavy rains cause seasonal river flooding, blocking roads and leading to the loss of agriculture, infrastructure, and sometimes human life. Protracted droughts impact the ability of refugees to farm, increasing their dependence on humanitarian aid.

Following the South Sudan Civil War in 2013, and the consequent arrival of refugees to the area, Kakuma camp was extended, and a new camp named Kakuma 4 was set up to receive the new influx. The land was initially bare, with no existing infrastructure, and had just the presence of local shrubs. The collapse of the South Sudan peace deal in 2015 exacerbated the arrival of refugees to the new settlement.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

In 2015, the Government of Kenya and the County Government of Turkana, in collaboration with the United Nations and partners, officially established Kalobeyei Settlement with the aim to reduce the population burden on Kakuma camps, improve the living conditions of the refugees and facilitate a shift towards an area-based development model that addressed the longer-term prospects and needs of both refugees and host communities (UNHCR, 2019). This was made the core of the Kalobeyei Integrated Social Economic Development Program, a 15-year, comprehensive, multi-sectoral, and multi-stakeholder plan. As the plan was aligned with the Turkana County Government objectives, the program was also integrated into the Turkana County Integrated Development Plan.

The plan proposed the construction of permanent and durable shelters with local materials. Key to the improved assistance was innovative cash-based intervention (CBI) programming, where refugees received cash on special ATM cards to purchase cement, sand, stone blocks, and the rest of the materials to build shelters and latrines.



Land use map of the Kalobeyei settlement with zoning of the different services.



Images of the site construction activities. (Left) Excavations carried out by an artisan and two helpers for 2-3 days depending on the nature of the ground. (Right) Dressed stones were used for the walling of the superstructure.

PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

The project covered in this case study was designed aiming to assist in the recovery and to enhance the integration and self-reliance of Persons with Disabilities, and those with special needs through the provision of a more durable and accessible shelter. Additionally, the project sought to promote skills development and knowledge dissemination as well as capacity building for both host communities and refugees, particularly for those who were involved in the design and construction of the shelters. In doing so, this project promoted social cohesion between the two communities and encouraged peaceful coexistence.

Kalobeyei Settlement hosted refugees with disabilities and special needs, but these individuals' needs were not fully mainstreamed in shelter planning and design. Thus, these refugees were living in an environment that did not meet their unique standards. This project aimed to address these identified basic components and gaps. Most refugees transitioned their shelters from the T-shelter (Transitional Shelter) to more permanent and durable shelters constructed of Natural Turkana Stone Blocks.

IMPLEMENTATION

The organization adopted a community led approach in planning, design, beneficiary selection, and activity implementation. The participants and community members were given priority to comment on the design and to suggest their preferred location, and all feedback was incorporated into the final plan.

SHELTER DESIGN

The shelter was designed considering the need of privacy for improving the dignity of the users while maintaining a reduced footprint. The shelters measured 8m by 3.2m and accommodated an average household size of five. The components include a partitioned bedroom, a kitchen, and a sitting room accessible for people with reduced mobility. Ramps were provided accordingly, and adequate openings and wide windows were incorporated to ensure adequate ventilation.

The internal height was increased to reduce room temperature. Security and safety needs were incorporated using strong reinforced steel doors and windows. Sanitation blocks were also provided, detached from the shelter.



3D view of the shelter design.

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | The floor lined with concrete to ease mobility inside the shelter. |
| 2 | The kitchen has its walling made of fabricated steel sections to allow ease circulation of air and also located on one of its gable side to allow access to the room especially during night and when its raining. |
| 3 | Hollow blocks used to help control maximum temperatures inside the shelter. |
| 4 | A ramp to help access the shelter which is raised to help prevent flooding water. |
| 5 | Door and windows increased in size to enable accessibility. Quality of material for the window and door strengthened to guarantee security. |

SKILLS TRAINING

Construction workers were selected in coordination with relevant stakeholders within the settlement i.e., village and neighborhood leaders as well as organized community based organizations. For gender inclusivity, female members were considered and trained as well to become skilled laborers. The project involved a one day skills training for all selected artisans and masons on how to construct the shelters. Both refugees and host communities were included in the selection of workers for the project.

TARGETING

PARTICIPANT SELECTION

Participant identification and selection for the provision of new shelters were carried out through a collaborative approach with partners working in shelter and protection programs, particularly those involved in activities with persons with disabilities and those with special needs (older persons at risk, children at risk, GBV survivors and LGBTQI+ individuals). Criteria for selection were based on specific physical disability or medical conditions as well as other factors including impairments and the degree of impairment and special protection required. The assessment and verification of people supported by the project were implemented in collaboration with community leaders from different nationalities in the camps as well as in the host community. Community leaders assisted in the identification and tracking of selected participants. A final assessment verified their location, taking into consideration alternative areas in the settlement where they expressed their interest to be resettled.

PLOT IDENTIFICATION

All partners, specifically those in charge of site planning in the settlement, were involved in the identification of appropriate and safe plots for shelter construction, following the Kalobeyei Settlement Advisory Plan, a master plan governing land use and allocation in the settlement. Other factors considered in site/plot selection were, among others, proximity to close relatives, caregivers, essential basic facilities, plot adequacy, and availability as well as flood risks, involving the different communities living in the area.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Cross-coordination with all village and neighborhood leaders as well as host community representatives was enhanced to reduce any chance of tension during the project. Moreover, the involvement and participation of community members, particularly those with special needs, led to strengthened ownership and understanding of the project. Communication was addressed involving the relevant protection actors in the settlement as well as the community leadership and case workers employed

for the project throughout the settlement. Mobilization for community meetings was done door-to-door by the settlement case workers. The organization promoted the participation of both men and women and ensured age, gender, and village representation in community forums.

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Flood risk areas were identified in the settlement-wide integrated planning, as the land of Kalobeyei Settlement had recurrently experienced flash floods during the rainy season. Additionally, efforts were made to construct nature-based water retention facilities to reduce the surface run-off of the rainwater. Some delineated areas were converted to green spaces while others near the streams were used as agricultural plots. Considering the flood risks, shelters were built with deeper foundations and raised the ground floor slab incorporating a ramp. Drain channels using sandbags were also implemented around the shelters.

MAIN CHALLENGES

COVID-19: The COVID-19 crisis directly impacted the implementation and delivery of the project, as work was meant to begin in mid 2021 but – due to the prevailing conditions and government restriction protocols – engagement and planning were delayed significantly.

Inadequate project resources: The initial planning and programming of this project, unfortunately, omitted one critical aspect required to make shelters highly inclusive and accessible for people with disabilities. That critical facet was accessible sanitation blocks. This resulted in changes in implementation with recommendations to source extra funding and material support from partners to include the construction of the WASH blocks. This resulted in the delayed completion of sanitation blocks and increased pressure from participant complaints that were already settled while construction was ongoing.

Logistics involved in the construction: Plots identified during a joint assessment spread across the entire Kalobeyei settlement. This resulted in major challenges, especially when delivering construction materials and supervising the project.



Community engagement forum attended by the project participants.



Camp officer training the masons on the inclusive shelter design.



(Left) A view of the completed shelter. (Right) After relocation, refugees took ownership of the shelters and some evidence of it were the external painting added or the shaded space over the entrance.

LINKS WITH RECOVERY

Selected participants had lived in the camp for some time before the project started. , despite the lack of adequate shelters or having to live with relatives or caregivers. Selected households were also allowed the shelter design to better satisfy their needs. For example, some participants painted their shelters and others added extensions such as an outside overhang for shading. These alterations required minimal supervision and were built at their own expense. The shelters as constructed were durable and flexible, with adequate partitions – aiming to provide adequacy, safety, security, and privacy.

MATERIALS AND SUPPLY

The stone blocks, sand, and aggregate were sourced locally. Iron sheets, reinforcing steel, cement, and timber were supplied by locally authorized contractors and suppliers. All materials were delivered to the site using trucks. The storage of hardware material was off-site, while construction materials such as quarry stones and sand were

delivered and stored on-site for ease of access and use. Delivery was done in phases depending on the work plan and construction areas. The use of local materials, building techniques, and local skills and capacities (including labor) was cost-effective and contributed to the local economy. The construction tools purchased under this project were handed over to trained masons/carpenters to enable them to continue with their daily activities.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

Effective community engagement fostered meaningful interaction, ownership, and understanding within both communities. The project also aimed to ensure the sharing of resources through the provision of shelters to the host community, in support of peaceful coexistence and reduced potential conflict. The project provided a very simple all-inclusive, durable, and easy-to-construct model shelter for people with disabilities that can easily be replicated in other parts of the settlement. Partners involved found it acceptable for scaling up in future interventions.



Families await the completion of their shelters. Passive cooling methods such as the use of natural turkana stone blocks and hollow blocks used in the construction controlled the temperatures inside the shelters.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Inclusive shelter planning and design:** The planning and design of the shelter was done in close consultation with community members as well as relevant organizations taking into consideration the specific needs of all households. This included protection issues and specific requirements for PWDs.
- ✓ **Coordination:** Working through local NGOs helped to ensure an enhanced understanding of the local context, the prevailing circumstance for persons with special needs, and areas in need of intervention.
- ✓ **Shelter durability:** The shelter will enhance safety and privacy for participants.
- ✓ The **availability of locally sourced raw construction materials** increased opportunities for employment for the local population.
- ✓ **Enhanced livelihoods**, skill development, training, and income generation for the artisans and masons who were selected from the host and refugee communities.
- ✓ **Skills development and training** were carried out prior to the commencement of the construction works, which greatly contributed to skills and knowledge enhancement for both communities and increased social cohesion.
- ✓ The design and construction of shelters **were appropriate for the settlement and the host areas** and were relatively easy to construct using local knowledge and skills.
- ✓ **Community integration:** Enhanced social integration and cohesion between the host and refugee communities through working and training together.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- The project intended to model and use the existing 20 shelters to mobilize funding from the donor for future upscaling of the project. The planning phase failed to establish the importance of sanitation blocks to be constructed concurrently with the shelters, resulting in a delay in filling the gap and resourcing for additional funds. Sanitation blocks and accessibility to all existing amenities are vital factors in adequately addressing the needs of persons with special needs.

WEAKNESSES

- × **Many participants required modified shelters to fit their specific needs:** The organisation had no plan to support or intervene for the majority in terms of new or full construction due to budget constraints.
- × **Limited scale of the project** due to limited donor funding.
- × Shelters constructed were located across the community and **difficult to monitor**.
- × No training was provided on **repair or maintenance of the shelters**.
- × Engagement of the participants during construction work was **constrained** due to various factors such as their current living location and the type of disabilities.

LESSONS LEARNED

- There is a significant gap in shelter inclusion for PWDs, as well as those with special needs and lack of involvement of people with disabilities and special needs during the planning stages.
- Coordination with other agencies already working for people with special needs is imperative and was strengthened.
- Communication and community engagement is paramount in shelter project provision: Many people with disabilities are open and willing to participate in planning and designing of their shelter, and the organization intends to engage more with these participants and stakeholders in the future.
- Effective community engagement and shelter allocation.
- It was imperative for partners to continuously promote community project programming and the inclusion of persons with special needs in their projects.
- Promoting the use of locally available materials, especially earth materials, reduced costs and promoted social economic cohesion for the host community.
- The alignment of the project with Kalobeyei Integrated Social and Economic Development Program (KISDEP) objectives was achieved.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS


On South Sudan: [A.9 / SOUTH SUDAN 2018](#); [A.23 / SOUTH SUDAN 2013–2016](#); [A.26 / SOUTH SUDAN 2012](#)

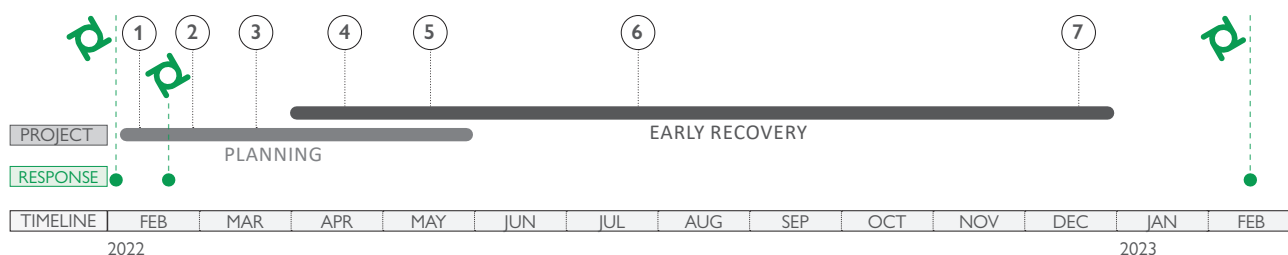
On permanent houses: [A.22 / SOMALIA 2011–2013](#); [A.14 / PHILIPPINES 2016–2020](#); [A.11 / DOMINICA 2017–2018](#)

On Disability Inclusion: [A.21 / LEBANON 2018–2021](#)

OVERVIEW

MADAGASCAR 2022 / TROPICAL CYCLONES

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| CRISIS | Madagascar Tropical Storm and cyclone 2022 Batsirai (Feb 15) and Emnati (Feb 22) cyclones |  |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED AND DISPLACED | 423,800 individuals affected* 61,489 individuals displaced* | |
| HOMES DAMAGED/ DESTROYED | 11,163 homes destroyed** 33,226 homes damaged** | |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 35,000 HHs (210,000 individuals) | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Atsimo Atsinanana, Vatoavy and Fitovinany regions | |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE RESPONSE | 18,356 HHs (82,606 individuals) | |
| RESPONSE OUTPUTS | <p>9,786 HHs supported with emergency shelter materials and essential household items</p> <p>17,564 HHs supported with Cash-for-Shelter assistance to repair, retrofit or rebuild</p> <p>14,736 HHs supported with technical support, safe shelter and building back safer awareness</p> <p>1,693 HHs supported with in-kind house reconstruction</p> <p>71 HHs supported with Cash for Rent Shelter assistance****</p> <p>3,333 HHs supported with emergency assistance in evacuation centre</p> | <p>SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSE</p> <p>Madagascar has been hit by six tropical weather systems from January to April 2022. Two category 4 Tropical Cyclones Batsirai and Emnati in February impacted three regions on the east coast. This overview refers to the response implemented at sectoral level, especially around the conditional Cash-for-Shelter, that was implemented at scale in peri-urban and rural areas. The coordinated inter-agency response supported shelter self-recovery through owner-driven repair and reconstruction, while disseminating safe shelter awareness and building back safer principles at community level. Moreover, the tools developed, and the experience gained on Cash-for-Shelter programming aimed to allow faster and more effective assistance to the communities affected by Tropical Cyclone Freddy that landed in the same regions one year after Cyclones Batsirai and Emnati.</p> |
| <p>*BNGRC – National Office for Risk and Disaster Management, Madagascar</p> <p>**Multisectoral Rapid Assessment February 2022</p> <p>***Flash Appeal 2021-2022, revised version June 2022, p.14</p> <p>****Dashboard, Madagascar Tropical Storm and Cyclone 2022, Global Shelter Cluster</p> | | |



05 Feb 2022: Tropical cyclone Batsirai; landfall on East Coast.

1 Feb 2022: National Shelter Cluster meeting; Decision to host discussions around CCCM and NFIs within Shelter Cluster coordination structure.

22 Feb 2022: Tropical cyclone Emnati, landfall on East Coast.

2 Feb 2022: First reported distribution on NFIs.

3 Mar 2022: Presentation of the National Shelter Response Strategy.

4 Apr 2022: Validation of the Cash for Shelter Strategy by BNGRC and Shelter Cluster Lead and co-Lead.

5 May 2022: Validation of the Cash for Shelter implementation modalities by BNGRC and Shelter Cluster Lead and co-Lead.

6 Jul 2022: First reported cash for shelter and in kind reconstruction.

7 Dec 2022: Last reported Cash for shelter distribution.

21 Feb 2023: Tropical cyclone Freddy, Landfall on same area than Batsirai.

CONTEXT

Madagascar is the world's fifth largest island, situated in the Indian Ocean off the coast of southern Africa and prone to various shocks such as earthquakes, cyclones, floods, droughts, epidemics, fire, malnutrition, and locust infestation. The country boasts a unique ecosystem, with many species of plants and animals found nowhere else. Tropical cyclones are common in the southwest Indian Ocean region, and Madagascar often experiences multiple landfalls each year with up to Category 4 events like Tropical Cyclone Enawo in 2017 – when the National Shelter Cluster was activated for the first time.

The country has faced challenges to its socioeconomic development, and in recent decades, it has experienced stagnation in per capita income and a rise in absolute poverty. The country has the fourth-highest rate of chronic malnutrition, and its nascent social protection system covers only six percent of the extremely poor. Safety net spending is extremely low – only 0.3 percent of Madagascar's GDP – compared to the average 1.2 percent across sub-Saharan Africa.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CYCLONES

Coupled with the socio-economic impacts generated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the fragility of households was exacerbated. By December 2021, more than 1.6 million people in southern Madagascar were estimated to have been suffering from high levels of food insecurity, with hundreds pushed to leave their homes and migrate in search of more secure livelihoods. Environmental degradation and climate change have aggravated prolonged drought consequences, which in combination with other complex social drivers, pushed the region into a humanitarian crisis.

In Madagascar, the government leads response operations through its national disaster risk management agency (BNGRC) in close collaboration with humanitarian partners. The Shelter Cluster is led by the Ministry of Population, Social Protection and Women (MPPSPF) and co-led by one national humanitarian agency with the support of one of the two Global Shelter Cluster Leads.

SITUATION AFTER THE CYCLONES

Six tropical weather systems hit Madagascar from January to April 2022. In January, Tropical Storm Ana brought heavy rainfall and flooding that affected approximately 131,500 people and killed 55 – primarily in the central and northern parts of the country. Subsequently, Tropical Cyclone Batsirai made landfall near Mananjary city on 5 February – affecting the regions of Atsimo Atsinanana, Vatovavy, and Fitovinany. These were the same areas that were later impacted by tropical Cyclone Emnati, which made landfall in Manakara town on 23 February. According to Meteo-France, the cyclonic impact in this area of the island had not reached this level for over 25 years.



Shelter assessments were carried out for the houses damaged by the impact of the cyclones, March and August 2022.

The two Category 4 cyclones (Batsirai and Emnati) affected 423,800 individuals, including 136 people killed. It is estimated that 11,163 homes were destroyed and 33,226 were damaged. Assessments conducted at the regional and national levels identified enormous damage to basic infrastructure, especially within rural and peri-urban communities. This led the Malagasy government to declare a “state of national disaster” already on January 28, 2022, when the two cyclones were yet to arrive.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

The collective impact of the 2022 storms left 21,922 people displaced across 68 emergency relocation sites. While Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) was not formally included within the national cluster's mechanisms, it was decided to host collective center management issues and discussions within Shelter Cluster coordination, as there were high-level needs for both displaced and non-displaced populations.

The Shelter Cluster strategy was adapted from the one implemented for the response to Tropical Cyclone Enawo (2004), with three key objectives:

1. To ensure the health, safety, privacy, and dignity of women and men, girls and boys affected by the Cyclone by providing emergency shelter and NFI assistance.
2. To support sustainable solutions for protracted displacement (while avoiding the creation of camps and facilitating the exit of families in collective centers).

3. To promote rapid self-recovery through a community participation approach integrating WASH, health, livelihoods, and protection, with support for owner-driven recovery processes and standardization of partner approaches.

Key response activities were defined, with targeting criteria:

- **For emergency:** Standardized NFIS kits for people displaced in relocation sites and not displaced people with houses damaged or flooded, with two installment of 100,000 AR (23 USD) unconditional cash, to be coordinated through the Cash Working Group according to the Minimum Expenditures Basket.
- **For recovery for the most vulnerable non displaced people living on site of their damaged or destroyed house:** Assisted reconstruction in line with guidance from the Secretary of State in charge of New Cities and Housing (SEVNH), and support to self-reconstruction including training, distribution of difficult material to find on market and distribution of cash grant with light conditionality for products easily available.
- **To assist recovery of most vulnerable tenants:** Cash for rent support for 3 to 6 months and for an amount not exceeding the cash for shelter one, linking with other sectors to identify complementary assistance as for income generating activities.
- **For all affected communities:** Appropriation and awareness raising of construction techniques at the local level (community and authorities), and training for masons, carpenters, authorities and community members involved in support to self-reconstruction programs.

Response options were established with an agreed vulnerability and selection criteria scorecard for households targeted by NFI distribution, with a minimum score to be included. This approach aimed to address transparency in accountability to the affected population and equity in an under-resourced response.

NATIONAL SHELTER/NFI RESPONSE

The first phase of the response focused on providing emergency shelter and household items to displaced people in emergency relocation sites and for non-displaced communities that started to recover. A total of 8,901 households received shelter assistance in July 2022. The Conditional Cash for Shelter (CCFS) response option was the most suitable to meet the affected shelter recovery needs at scale for the second phase of the response – to support communities that have started to repair or rebuild. A “Cash Strategy for the partial reconstruction of homes following the cyclones Batsirai and Emnati” was finalized and validated by the BNGRC. Implementation modalities were developed through the dedicated shelter Cluster technical working group and were validated by BNGRC and all partners involved.

To help ensure that recipients used cash for agreed-upon purposes, payments were made in several installments and monitoring activities occurred between each. As traditional homes can be built in five to seven days, a distribution in two installments supported this rapid approach. The first condition for support was the attendance of an awareness session on Building Back Safer (BBS) principles and a cash book training on registering and monitoring expenditures. The second condition was the verification of the use of the first installment to purchase materials, tools, and/or labor commitments in addition to the application of housing improvements presented during the BBS training.

The maximum amount of AR 350,000 (USD 80) for the partial reconstruction per household was decided in agreement with the BNGRC, the MPPSPF, and the shelter sector partners. This amount was calculated as approximately 25 percent of the materials needed to build a house of 3x4m plus labor. The improved dwelling hut proposed would resist cyclones according to the SEVNH guide. The amount corresponds to the minimum amount necessary to start essential elements of the house and has been calculated on the assumption that the households that will benefit from this amount, following the BBS sensitization given, will be able to support part of their reconstruction.



Shelter partners' training on Build Back Safer, March 2022.



Safer building awareness, Cash for Shelter program, August 2022.

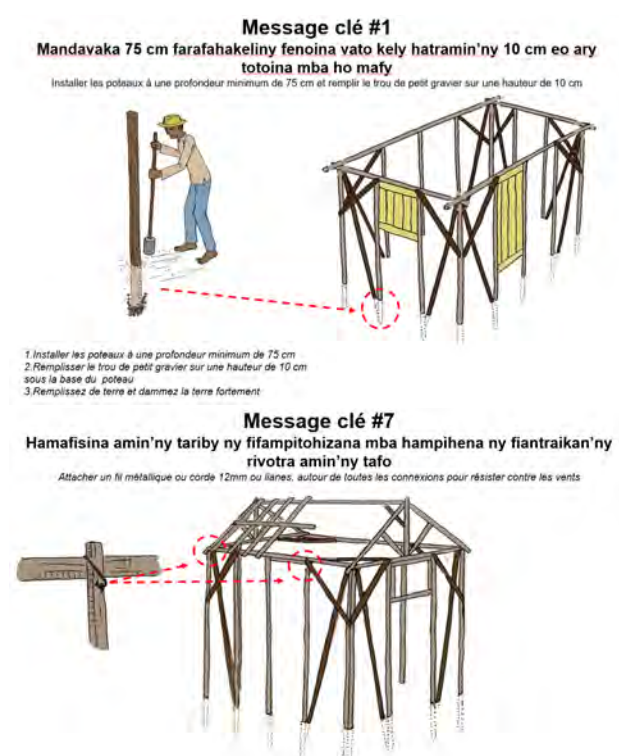
A complete set of programming, management, and monitoring tools were developed and circulated to support partners and participants in their programming. Tools were made available in both French and Malagasy languages so that each document could allow for a common understanding between all interlocutors.

The seven BBS principles were identified through the capitalization of past projects in Madagascar, with graphic support to ensure equal awareness through all self-reconstruction (through CCFS) projects implemented for this response.

Key messages included in the improved construction awareness session:

Introduction to improvements to traditional houses in south-east Madagascar

| # | Build Back Safer Messages |
|---|--|
| 1 | Install the posts at a minimum depth of 75 cm and fill the hole with small gravel to a height of 10 cm |
| 2 | Fix diagonal bracing at all corners |
| 3 | Fix horizontal bracing between the bottom and top rails at the 4 corners |
| 4 | Install trusses on each side of the house |
| 5 | Attach diagonal braces between the truss spike and the ridge purlin |
| 6 | Nail purlin supports to the rafters |
| 7 | Tie a 12mm wire or rope or vines around all connections to resist the wind |



IEC materials for building back safer awareness used for Cash for Shelter programme.

The initial vulnerability and selection criteria scorecard for households was adapted to CCFS, understanding that it could be adapted in consultation with communities where the approach would be implemented. For community mobilization and participation, a targeting and reconstruction committee was developed with appropriate complaint mechanisms through various channels. To support BBS principle dissemination for the entire community, at least one model house was built for each project, and community carpenters were trained for households involved in CCFS projects.

It was recommended to create groups of ten to fifteen eligible households based on their location to support each other by electing a skilled treasurer and a chairperson to mitigate high levels of illiteracy within targeted communities. Through this methodology, households would supervise each other and would be more likely to support each other to ensure collective progress during reconstruction and repair works. The grouping also allowed participants to jointly track expenditures against funds received or jointly order and purchase the necessary materials to reduce transportation costs. It also aimed to encourage and nurture community solidarity mechanisms, and to ensure that the most vulnerable were helped by others.

CCFS projects were implemented by most partners, with some to repair or rent through CERF funding. Ten months after the cyclone impact, approximately 17,564 households received Cash for Shelter assistance to repair, retrofit or rebuild their homes, 1,693 households were supported through in-kind house reconstruction, and 71 households were provided with Cash-for-Rent shelter assistance.

MAIN CHALLENGES

Access to affected communities was often difficult due to logistic constraints, as some villages were only accessible by sea or river with no road to reach the most dispersed and remote settlements. This also caused delays in delivery and implementation. The response was also under-resourced, with only 26 percent of the required funding received and only seven active humanitarian partners. Initial assessments and monitoring of needs were challenging due to resources and access issues.

The first phase of the response was delayed due to the succession of cyclones. The CCFS approach's implementation also suffered from delays in decision-making from authorities regarding an agreement to raise the initial amount from AR 100,000 to 350,000 (USD 23 to 80) and the validation of strategy and implementation modalities, which put partners funded through the CERF allocation, particularly under pressure. While this approach supported households in repairing damaged or flooded homes, the amount was not sufficient to enable total support for those who lost their homes entirely.

It was also challenging to define fair targeting criteria and scoring benchmarks, due to the high level of extreme poverty of affected communities, exacerbated by the low level of resources available to respond to their shelter needs.

WIDER IMPACTS

The CCFS approach used to rebuild or repair traditional housing considering BBS principles improved the knowledge of the community and local workers on safer construction techniques. Participants sensitized could cascade knowledge within the community. Because some households started to repair homes before CCFS activities started, the new inputs assisted them in retrofitting efforts.

knowledge, but instead were aimed to reactivate, replicate and improve local construction practices and indigenous knowledge. The CCFS approach was also used for rental assistance in some urban settlements. Tools, experience, and learning from this part of the response should be helpful to meet urban shelter needs for other parts of the country.

The CCFS approach was culturally adapted to affected communities, as most settlements were homogenic in the typologies of homes built. These structures followed a mortise and tenon joint type of structure. None of the BBS disseminated messages contradicted local traditional knowledge, but instead were aimed to reactivate, replicate and improve local construction practices and indigenous knowledge. The CCFS approach was also used for rental assistance in some urban settlements. Tools, experience, and learning from this part of the response should be helpful to meet urban shelter needs for other parts of the country.

"We learned many things, including how to choose wisely in terms of where to rebuild our houses and how to make them resistant to strong winds, while also using local materials. The shelter we built together confidently withstood the strong winds we heard last night!," said Tsoto. "Now, the community can see that our techniques are working. I am willing to encourage and support them with the actual rebuilding of their homes."

- Tsotso, a carpenter involved in a 'build back safer' shelter programme in Madagascar interviewed after the impact of TC Freddy in February 2023.



Shelter kit received by household, repacked to allow transportation for long distance walk.



The community is trained on the use of tarpaulin for the shelters.



House repairing process with Conditional Cash for Shelter approach.



Training of the community carpenters.



Building of a model house with trained carpenters, Conditional Cash for Shelter program.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Conditional Cash for Shelter programming, on top of emergency shelter assistance, was an appropriate approach to support the self-recovery of affected populations** while enhancing Building Back Safer message dissemination. The amount of cash distributed should be re-assessed each time to reflect the actual budget needed to repair or rebuild homes without hampering the implementation of BBS measures. Further advocacy to authorities would be necessary to increase the amount, with an additional 25 percent as the baseline for future responses to allow reconstruction at scale.
- **Cash for shelter programming might have an adverse impact on the environment**, as the timber used to repair or rebuild homes was often purchased in areas close to the project's locations from landowners who were not registered as official suppliers. This was notably due to transportation costs that were unbearable for targeted communities too distanced from markets. Additional supply chain support for timber should be explored for the next response.
- **Literacy levels and the absence of participant documentation** such as identity cards, birth certificates, or land certificates in rural areas created challenges in participant capacity to receive cash installments. An analysis of alternative means of identification should be explored, if possible, to fast-track access to this type of cash assistance.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- **The coordination of the response benefited from enhanced participation of authorities** at the national and regional level, with strong engagement of humanitarian partners for standardization of response modalities. The capitalization of the CCFS experience, tools and methodology during this response would allow for a faster response in future post-cyclone and other relevant contexts.



Model house built at the centre of main settlement to enhance safe shelter awareness at community level. It was used for training of volunteers before assisting eligible households.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Madagascar: [A.18 / MADAGASCAR 2012 TROPICAL STORM](#);

On tropical cyclones/hurricanes: [A.8 / BAHAMAS 2019–2020](#); [A.21 / PHILIPPINES 2016–2018](#); [A.5 / DOMINICAN REP. 2012](#)

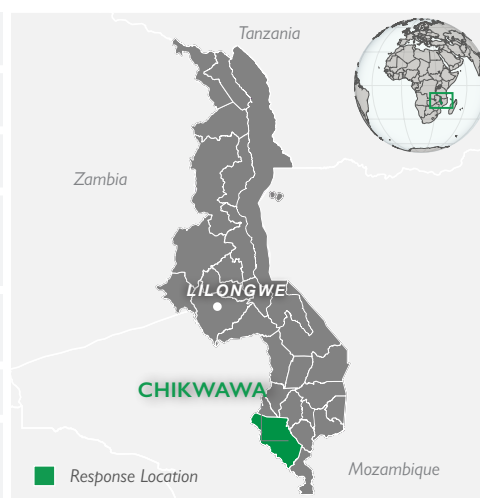
On capacity building: [A.19 / NEPAL 2017–2018](#); [A.11 / DOMINICA 2017–2018](#); [A.21 / MALAWI 2015–2016](#)

CASE STUDY

MALAWI 2022 / TROPICAL STORM ANA

KEYWORDS: Community engagement, Emergency shelter, NFI distribution

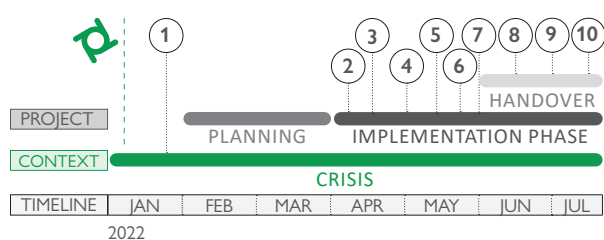
| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| CRISIS | Tropical Storm Ana, January 2022 |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 221,127 HHs (995,072 individuals)* |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | 32,935 HHs (152,786 individuals)* |
| HOMES DAMAGED/ DESTROYED | 59,860 homes completely destroyed 135,941 homes damaged |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 190,429 people* |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Chikwawa district, Southern Malawi |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 730 HHs (3,432 individuals) 4,257 individuals reached with Build Back Better messages |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | Distribution of ESKs and NFI to 730 HHs Construction of 730 temporary shelters Community awareness and trainings on Safe Shelter construction |
| SHELTER SIZE | 20 m² (Using 6*4 canvas as roof, considering some inclination and folding) |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 4 m² per person (average of 5 persons per HH) |
| DIRECT COST | USD 208 per HH (Includes procurement of ESKs, NFIs, labor, and training on the use of ESKs.) |
| PROJECT COST | USD 251 per HH |



PROJECT SUMMARY

In response to the effects of Tropical Storm Ana, this humanitarian project focused on meeting the emergency shelter needs of the affected population in the Chikwawa district, focusing on supporting self-recovery pathways. The area of intervention was selected based on a multi-sectoral needs assessment and analysis, with the project implemented in coordination with other stakeholders at the district and national level. The affected communities were the central actors throughout the project implementation, receiving support through shelter construction and NFIs.

*Malawi Floods Flash Update No. 2, February 2022



Jan 2022: Tropical Storm Ana caused floods, destruction, and fatalities in Malawi.

- 1 **Jan 2022:** Multi-sector Needs Assessment.
- 2 **Apr 2022:** Project inception meetings with District Civil Protection Committees and District executive committees.
- 3 **Apr 2022:** Project inception meetings with Local structures.
- 4 **Apr - May 2022:** Beneficiary selection and verification exercise.
- 5 **May 2022:** Safe house construction (BBB) awareness meetings.
- 6 **May 2022:** Training on how to use the emergency shelter kits.
- 7 **May 2022:** Emergency shelter training for staff.
- 8 **Jun - Jul 2022:** Distribution of Emergency shelter kits and NFIs.
- 9 **Jun - Jul 2022:** Construction of 730 temporary shelters.
- 10 **Jul 2022:** Project monitoring and post-distribution survey.



In the months of June and July, 730 HHs were assisted with temporary shelter construction.

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CONTEXT

Malawi is one of the world's least-developed countries. The economy is based on agriculture and has a largely rural and growing population. The country faces challenges in building and expanding the economy, improving education, healthcare, and environmental protection. The climate is hot in low-lying areas in the south of the country. Several languages are spoken, and there is an array of religious beliefs. Malawi has a low life expectancy and high infant mortality.

Tropical Storm Ana lashed the southern and central districts of Malawi in January 2022, bringing strong winds and heavy rains. Within hours of landfall, communities were faced with significant flooding. Some of the storm-affected areas were already suffering from floods due to the ongoing rainy season. According to the Government of Malawi – Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA), by 31 January 2022, 37 people were reported dead, 22 were missing and 158 were injured. Over 193,558 households (948,434 individuals) were affected, and 740 hectares of crops were destroyed. Before the disaster, the areas impacted were already under Integrated Food Security Phase Classification 2 (stressed) and 3 (crisis).

Bridges were washed away by swollen rivers, while livestock drowned, and fields were submerged – destroying the livelihoods of rural families. Damage to public infrastructure (health facilities, churches, and schools including damage to teaching materials) was also reported.

More than 140 emergency camps were set up to deal with thousands of displaced and injured people. 22,364 households (109,359 people) were hosted in these camps, and displaced households sought refuge in designated open areas, churches, schools, and other public structures.

Some IDPs were hosted by relatives and friends. Most displacement sites were overcrowded, with limited access to basic services such as water, sanitation, and hygiene – raising concerns over possible disease outbreaks, including the spread of COVID-19. Protection concerns were raised, particularly gender-based violence (GBV). Additionally, there were increased vulnerabilities of people with disabilities, people living with HIV, and persons with albinism.

A state of disaster was announced across 15 districts in the southern and central regions of Malawi, and an appeal for humanitarian assistance was made by the government to support displaced people in the camps with food and essential household items (EHI), to provide healthcare to injured people through the deployment of mobile clinics, and to provide water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) activities.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

In February 2022, the national government released a consolidated four-month response plan targeting 166,000 households (747,000 people) with immediate survival needs, the restoration of essential socio economic services, and transition support to early recovery. A total of USD 70 million was required to implement the plan, with USD 4 million for Shelter and Camp Management. The Shelter Cluster's overall response objective was to facilitate the provision of safe, adequate shelter and to collect and manage data for people and institutions affected by the disaster, whose homes were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable. According to the UN Flash Appeal for Malawi (February to May 2022), 159,000 individuals required emergency shelter support – of which approximately 96,000 were living in camps.



The Government of Malawi led the humanitarian response, through the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA), with support from humanitarian partners, including NGOs, the UN and donor agencies.

PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

Project Objective: The project aimed to support the most vulnerable affected populations in the Chikwawa district regarding temporary shelter needs and accompanying them on their pathways to recovery in safe areas.

Output 1: Communities in the Chikwawa disaster-affected areas were supported in terms of their needs for emergency shelter and household items in IDP camps.

Activities included:

- The distribution of 730 emergency shelter kits (ESK), including a supplementary timber supply (eight pieces of timber – 16 feet long and 75mm x 75mm or 3 inch x 3 inch section).
- Community training on the use of shelter kits and how participants can build temporary shelters with the materials provided.
- Distribution of non-food item (NFI) kits and kitchen sets to 730 households.

Output 2: Communities in Chikwawa disaster-affected areas were supported in their voluntary request to resettle in safer areas.

Activities included:

- The provision of awareness raising guidance and technical support in safe shelter design and settlement planning.
- Training on improved construction techniques.
- Community support to secure land tenure in relocation areas.

“Emergency Shelter Kit” content:

| Item | Quantity/kit |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Rope | 1 x 30m |
| Handsaw | 1 |
| Nail for roof sheets | ½ Kg (1lb.) |
| Shovel | 1 |
| Hoe | 1 |
| Machete | 1 |
| Nails (Large) | ½ Kg (1lb.) |
| Nails (Small) | ½ Kg (1lb.) |
| Claw Hammer | 1 |
| Woven Sack | 1 |
| Tarpaulin (4m x 6m) | 2 |

“Household NFIs kits” content:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Blankets (Light type) | 2 |
| Sleeping Mats (Plastic style) | 2 |
| Jerrycan 20L / Bucket with lid 20 L | 1 |
| Laundry Soap (Start-up Kit) | ½ Kg/HH/month |
| Personal Hygiene Soap | 3/HH/month |

Regarding assistance modality, the in-kind distribution was preferred over the provision of cash, based on the

implementing entity's experience in the field and coordination within the Cluster partners. Cash modalities were considered not effective in this context because individuals often used cash support on non-shelter related expenses.



Families received relief items including NFIs and kitchen sets.



Distribution of Emergency Shelter Kits to construct temporary shelters.

IMPLEMENTATION

The affected community requested a government-supported relocation to a safer area, due to deteriorating conditions in the camp. In coordination with the affected communities, the Shelter Cluster, and civil protection committees, it was agreed that Emergency Shelter Kits (ESKs) would be provided to construct temporary emergency shelters in their original location, and the camps would be dismantled. In the second stage, once the government could finalize the procurement of new land in a safer area and support the relocation, participants would use the same tarps and timber in the final location. Such a double-step path re-using the ESKs was followed by 292 households, while the other 438 moved directly from the camps to the final allocated plot – for a total of 730 HHs supported by the project.

The project was run by a team of eight staff, of which three were construction supervisors. The discussions held with relevant government authorities facilitated the provision of land tenure documents for the IDPs on the final relocation plots (25x20m for each HH). Land ownership documents were temporarily granted to the community leadership until the individual land tenure titles were processed.

TARGETING

Vulnerabilities considered during beneficiary selection are as follows:

- Individuals directly impacted by the disaster.
- Child-led households.
- Elderly-led households.
- Household members with chronic illnesses.
- Children receiving supplementary feeding.
- Female-led households.
- Households with orphaned children.
- Household members with disabilities.
- Households with pregnant and lactating mothers.
- Recovery capacity: Households with low self-recovery capacity and those who haven't been able to rebuild a safe shelter.
- Displaced families living in camps, collective centers, transitional centers or host households.
- Families living in unsafe structures, threatening their own safety.
- Level of damage to household.

Following an inception meeting conducted with the camp management committee, Village Civil Protection Committees, and Village Development Committees where

selection criteria were agreed upon – the registration of participants for the project took place at the camps. A preliminary list was submitted to the organization, who together with the District Civil Protection Committee, and the Protection and Camp Management committees conducted a door-to-door verification while assessing household vulnerability.

Once verifications were complete, the 730 HHs were selected from 1,500 visited, and the final list was endorsed by the community and the rest of the stakeholders engaged. Complaint and feedback committees (of at least three people) were established in different locations, and a complaints desk was established at distribution sites.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The pre-existing community committees played a key role in the identification and selection of the project participants, but also in the safe shelter awareness campaign that the project promoted. A total of 70 local leaders were trained and replicated the training within several communities, reaching over 4,200 people with messaging and a construction manual on how to improve the disaster resistance of new construction considering site selection, house design, construction materials, and techniques. The committees were also trained in quality control and provided daily reports on the progress of the shelter construction.



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The response included community awareness and trainings on Safe Shelter construction during distributions.

COORDINATION

The Shelter Cluster was led by the Ministry of Housing, co-led by the Malawi Red Cross, and was established at national and district levels. The strategy of the project was based on multi-sector assessments promoted from the Cluster, and also the contents of the ESK packages were agreed upon at a Cluster level. District civil protection meetings were also held, where local stakeholders and the Disaster Management Affairs Department were kept informed on project activities, challenges, and lessons learned.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- Procurement was impacted by market volatility, as the country was affected by an increase in inflation rates resulting in higher prices and delivery delays. It was decided to procure all the relief items and building materials at once, instead of small purchases, to secure fixed prices.
- Fuel scarcity affected the mobility of staff to supervise and monitor the project as required and had to be sourced from neighboring districts.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

To discourage deforestation during the construction of the shelters, the project provided timber purchased through a nationwide open bidding process, to which qualified suppliers from different districts applied.

LINKS WITH RECOVERY

The project provided useful tools like hoes, shovels, and machetes to support households with livelihood activities. The tools enhanced beneficiary capacity to return to work in the construction and agriculture sectors, both key to Malawi's economy.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

- This was the only shelter response project in the district that incorporated issues related to safe house construction. Therefore, the project posed a learning opportunity for other stakeholders doing similar interventions.
- The project raised awareness about Safe Shelter Construction among over 4,000 people. Thus, the project indirectly encouraged more families to build their homes following the safe house construction guidelines.
- The project supported the government and the communities in the resettlement process, doing advocacy on land tenure issues.



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This was the only shelter response project in the district that incorporated issues related to safe house construction.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Robust support.** The project received robust support from affected communities and other stakeholders, such as district government agencies (Civil Protection, Public Works, and Housing) and Shelter Cluster partners.
- ✓ **Participatory approach.** A participatory approach to community engagement allowed the project to address issues raised by affected communities, as opinions and preferences were seriously considered – enhancing beneficiary ownership of the project.
- ✓ **Increased resilience.** The project increased community efficacy and resilience to disasters through skills training and information sharing (i.e., site location, erecting temporary shelters, and community organizing to share key disaster messages).
- ✓ **Learning from past experiences.** The implementing entity, a national civil society organization, had previous experience in disaster risk reduction and response shelter projects.

WEAKNESSES

- × **Financial resources.** The entity, a national civil society organization, did not have the financial resources to respond immediately and needed to mobilize external resources. This delayed the initiation of response activities on the ground.
- × **All needs not covered.** Kitchen utensils were not provided through the project, which was a major gap according to post distribution monitoring. The provision of tarp, timber, tools, and fixings could not cover all needs, since most of the project participants had lost everything.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Malawi: [A.19 / MALAWI 2015](#); [A.20 / MALAWI 2015](#)

On cyclones: [A.15 / FIJI 2016](#); [A.18 / MADAGASCAR 2012](#)

On emergency shelter: [A.4 / NEPAL 2015](#); [A.15 / KENYA 2011](#)



In-kind distribution was preferred over the provision of cash, based on the implementing entity's experience in the field and coordination within the Cluster partners.



Over time, families built their permanent houses after securing land tenure in the new safe location.

LESSONS LEARNED

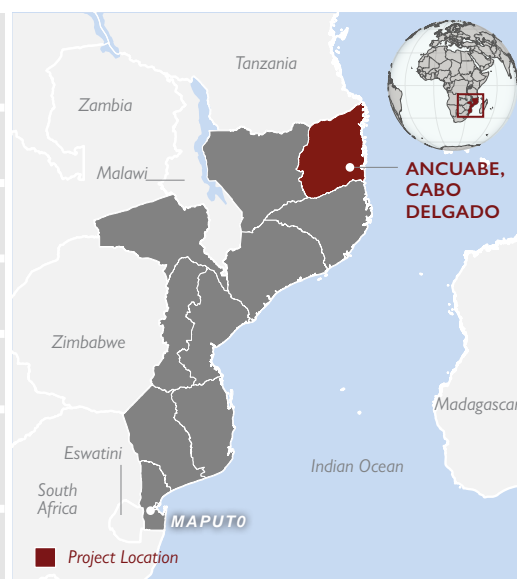
- **Coordination with district-level structures demonstrated the importance of strong and effective partnerships** – as evidenced in the response efforts – which resulted in the decommissioning of camps in the district, among other benefits.
- **Community empowerment** is vital in reaching out to larger masses with Build Back Better messages.
- **Prepositioning of relief items.** There was a need to preposition all relief items prior to a disaster to assist affected communities as soon as possible and save lives.
- **Need for resilient temporary shelters.** Emergency shelters (tarpaulin shelters) have been home to most affected families for over seven months due to different vulnerabilities – demonstrating the importance of building resilient temporary shelters.
- **Self-led household recovery was hindered due to the financial crisis.** It would be convenient to combine the distribution of ESKs and NFIs with cash grants to enhance recovery.

CASE STUDY

MOZAMBIQUE 2021-2022 / COMPLEX CRISIS

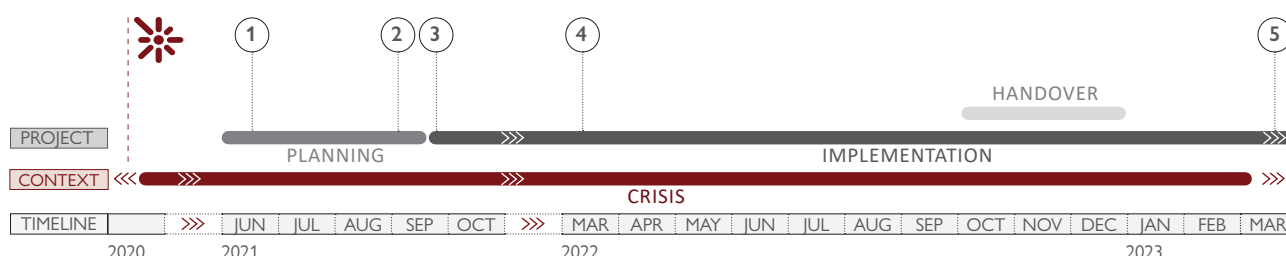
KEYWORDS: Community engagement, Gender mainstreaming, Local construction techniques, Permanent houses

| | |
|--|--|
| CRISIS | Conflict-Induced Displacement in Cabo Delgado |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 2,267,715 people affected* |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | 946,508 people displaced** |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 30,333 HHs (120,227 individuals)*** |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Marocani Resettlement Site, Ancuabe District |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | Total of 250 direct beneficiaries (50 women and girls headed households) |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 2 typological executive projects for resilient and gender sensitive housing solutions for IDPs 50 permanent housing units built 40+ women trained in resilient construction 67 local artisans trained in resilient housing construction 3 local associations reinforced |
| SHELTER SIZE | Model 1 (3 bedrooms): 42 m² Model 2 (2 bedrooms): 36 m² |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 4.25 m² per person for both model types |
| DIRECT COST | Model 1: USD 2,000 Model 2: USD 1,500 |
| PROJECT COST | Model 1: USD 2,750 Model 2: USD 2,250 |
| * Total population of Cabo Delgado - Census 2017, INE ** IDP Baseline Assessment Round 16 , IOM-DTM, June 2022 *** CCCM, June 2022 | |



PROJECT SUMMARY

This project serves as a pilot initiative targeting one of the actual 26 sustainable villages where the displaced population is resettling across the region, impacting directly in the improvement of the quality of life of the 4500 inhabitants of Marocani sustainable village. The main objective of the project was to strengthen the mechanisms for the protection of displaced women and girls, from the first accommodation to the definitive resettlement, through their empowerment and inclusion in the process of recovering their livelihoods and in the design and construction of their housing so that they are adequate, accessible, resilient, and safe. The adopted models and implementation approach has been entirely co-designed with the national and local authorities responsible for the management of the displacement crisis, engaging the beneficiaries from the design phase (with participatory design workshops) up to the construction, to be at the same time to be “gender sensitive” and “cyclone resilient”.



2020: Escalation of the security incidents in Northern Mozambique, which were ongoing since 2017.

1

Jun 2021: Housing models planned and designed through a participatory process with the involvement of displaced women and girls.

2

Sep 2021: A technical training and community engagement to ensure women's participation.

3

Sep 2021: Construction of adequate, affordable, safe, and resilient housing model with community participation, until Mar 2023.

4

Mar 2022: Continuous monitoring, documenting, and assessing the impact on beneficiaries to document good practices.

5

Mar 2023: Scale-up phase, with support from other shelter partners, replicating the model.

CONTEXT

Mozambique has been chronically affected by disasters (floods and cyclones in particular) and conflict-induced displacement, almost since its independence. More than a decade of civil war (1964-1974) shaped its settlement's geography, leading to an increase in the urbanization rate and the gradual transformation of a previously rural model of sparse settlements with limited connectivity and availability of public services and infrastructures. Since the beginning of 2020, the ongoing conflict in northern Mozambique between government forces and Non-State Armed Groups (NSAG) intensified and increased attention at the international level, followed by the provision of humanitarian and development interventions.

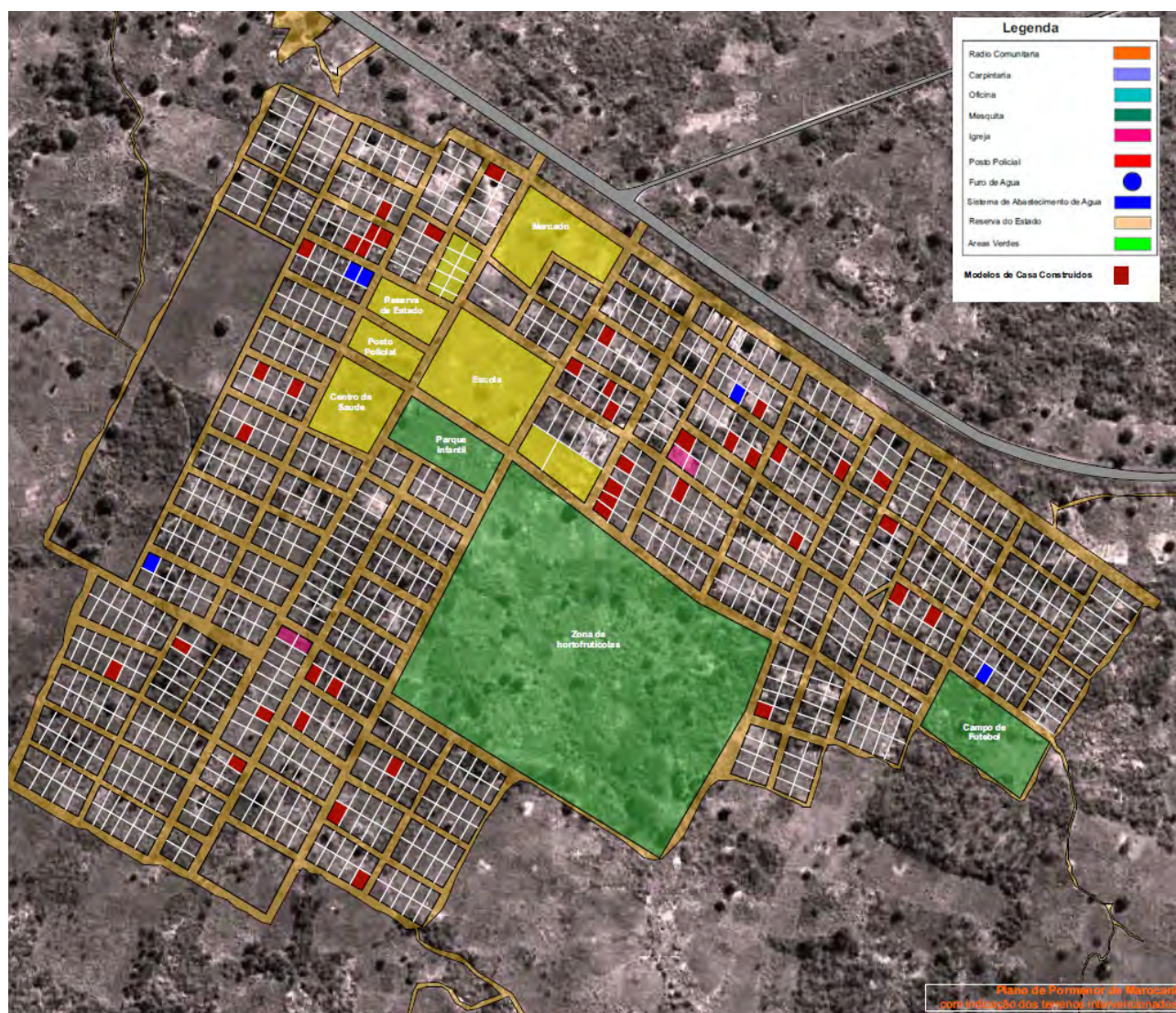
as mentioned, the region registered extreme climate events in recent years, such as the landfall of Cyclone Kenneth in April 2019, affecting approximately half a million households, who saw their homes partially or totally destroyed. Approximately 90 percent of housing units are built with traditional or mixed materials, using natural resources available in the surroundings of the human settlements, and often having corrugated metal sheets for improving the roofing. The primary construction modality is self-construction, with households relying on local artisans for specific jobs such as carpentry. Families in Cabo Delgado used to build according to the Swahili tradition, on small plots, fenced for enhanced privacy and with the housing unit facing the street side – connected to the public space, and keeping the backyard private.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

Cabo Delgado, despite being rich in natural resources, high biodiversity, and environmental capital – has the second highest rate of chronic malnutrition and child marriage. As well as the highest rate of illiteracy and multidimensional poverty in the country, which overall ranks 180 out of 189 in the Human Development Index. In addition to that and

SITUATION AFTER THE CRISIS

The conflict and resulting massive displacements, combined with the effects of previous disasters and high socio-economic vulnerability, had profound impacts on land use and tenure in recipient urban settlements (larger towns such as Pemba had a significant 30 percent increase in size within



Site plan of Marocani, with indication of the different land-use interventions developed by the organization.

months), challenging the local authorities' capacity to respond. This resulted in a lack of access to basic services (water, sanitation, waste management, schools, health centers, electricity, etc.) and the improper use of natural resources (e.g., deforestation, leading to land degradation). Additionally, the IDP food security levels were also inadequate. Numerous cases of conflict between IDPs and host communities were registered, as well as violence within individual households – especially gender based violence. 189 in the Human Development Index. In addition to that and as mentioned, the region registered extreme climate events months), challenging the local authorities' capacity to respond. This resulted in a lack of access to basic services (water, sanitation, waste management, schools, health centers, electricity, etc.) and the improper use of natural resources (e.g., deforestation, leading to land degradation). Additionally, the IDP food security levels were also inadequate. Numerous cases of conflict between IDPs and host communities were registered, as well as violence within individual households – especially Gender Based Violence.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

The Government of Mozambique, supported by humanitarian and development partners, addressed the crisis in Cabo Delgado to help ensure protection and livelihoods for the displaced persons – both in resettlement areas and within host communities (primarily in the main urban areas). This also included those returning to pacified conflict areas, through integrated plans for recovery and development, resulting from the joint assessments conducted. The government created the Agency for the Integrated Development of Northern Mozambique (ADIN), which has among its responsibilities to promote integrated local economic development as the overall coordinating body for crisis response and recovery. ADIN elaborated and presented the strategy to assist and implement durable solutions for conflict-affected populations, including the creation of new settlements for around 70,000 households. Within government plans, housing had a central role, together with an increase in livelihoods, employment opportunities, and sustainable development for youth, all set as key elements towards peace building.



Local carpenters under training on reinforced roof structure connection, November 2021.

PROJECT DESIGN

The project aimed to strengthen the mechanisms of protection for displaced women and girls, from the phase of first temporary accommodation to final resettlement, through empowerment and inclusion in the process of recovering their livelihoods and building their housing to be adequate, accessible, resilient, and secure. Throughout the implementation of the initiative, displaced women and girls were at the center of the transformation process, being actively involved in all phases of implementation from assessment to decision-making. This approach aimed to improve their technical-constructive skills and livelihoods while also contributing to self-employment and entrepreneurship.

The Government of Mozambique advocated for durable solutions to housing and sustainable settlements in general, setting up mechanisms of support of self (re)construction, providing construction materials to displaced families in permanent resettlement sites – where plots of land were distributed to IDP households and basic services, and infrastructure were under construction and improvement. With its extensive experience in resilient and gender-sensitive housing in Mozambique, the implementing organization supported the government at all levels in creating a model that could be replicated and scaled up, serving as a pilot approach in the region.

IMPLEMENTATION

During the first phase, a project support technical committee was established to ensure engagement with the government at various levels (provincial directorate for Land and Environment, Public Works and Housing, and Gender and Social Action, as well as district authorities) and their endorsement of the process. The project was structured to strengthen an already existing mechanism of assisted self-construction that was functioning through the delivery of permanent housing within the framework of the PREDIN (Programme for the Resilience and Integrated Development of the North) – where the housing component had a very relevant role, absorbing around 25 percent of the total budget. The participatory design



More than 40 women were trained in resilient construction techniques. They were trained in plastering techniques using local mud, December 2021.

phase contributed to diversifying housing models, introduced elements of resilience to extreme events in roofing (cyclones and strong winds in particular), and promoted a gender sensitive approach within the housing space.

The implementing agency ensured technical and operational support on-site, creating teams of skilled and unskilled workers within the displaced community, and engaging with families for the provision of local construction materials available in the surrounding areas (wood, bamboo, gravel, sand, etc.). The implementing organization's local team of architects and engineers developed a multi-stakeholder training program, targeting local authorities, community members, NGOs, and CBOs engaged in reconstruction, to help ensure the enhanced knowledge sharing and institutionalization of the approach. A team of three national architects (a Project Manager and two field supervisors) was engaged in the implementation of the project (on a routine of weekly field visits, with increased frequency in key construction phases). A gender and an environment specialist were also deployed to support the participatory design phase, the definition of stories and awareness materials, as well as in the definition of an Environmental and Social Safeguard Screening Framework.

An analysis of the use and needs of natural resources around resettlement sites was promoted by a partner organization, to be taken in consideration to implement mitigation actions, above all on reforestation.

The land was provided by the provincial government with a partial settlement plan. The definition of plots and a community cadaster were handed over to local authorities. To strengthen the security of tenure of target women and girls, the project supported the process of emission of official and personal land use rights. Latrines were designed with the project contribution, using models provided by the WASH Cluster and partners who supported families on the WASH component (including the 50 housing units targeted by the project).

The kitchen of the home was left as a flexible element, where families had the opportunity to decide where to locate it in the plot – inside the home or outside under the veranda. The majority of participants used the previous emergency shelter provided – readapted and improved – as an external kitchen. The majority of the households were also provided by other partners within the Food Security Cluster with improved charcoal cooking stoves, which allowed them to save energy.

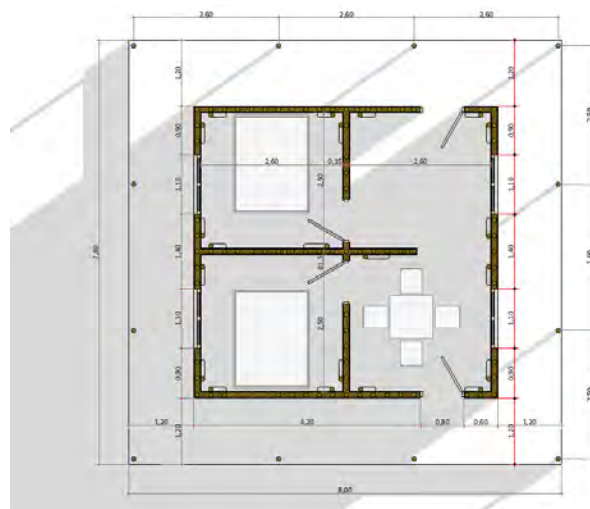
TARGETING

The site where the project was implemented was pre-identified by the government to become a pilot and demonstrative case to develop an integrated and durable settlement establishment, with the support of humanitarian and development partners. Marocani is one of the 70 new sustainable settlements planned to be built by the ADIN in the Northern Region. The location has also been selected by the implementing organization for its proximity to the capital of the province (around two hours) and for its

safety conditions (which unfortunately deteriorated during project implementation, when NSAG attacks targeted the Ancuabe district).

Beneficiaries for the housing units were selected through an integrated and multidimensional survey targeting women and girls living in the site, promoted directly by the implementing organization's gender unit and with the support of the Ministry of Gender Youth and Social Action (MGCAS) and UN partners. The three main criteria used in the profiling of participants were as follows:

- Being a displaced woman or girl (with priority on the single head of the family and the elderly).
- Have a degree of disability in the family.
- Household size.



Floor plan of the 2-bedroom model house, measuring 36 m².



Longitudinal section of the 2-bedroom model house.



The housing model was widely accepted by the community, being an improved version of the traditional home built in the region.

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A total of 40 women and 67 local artisans, belonging to the displaced and surrounding host communities, were trained on resilient housing construction and engaged in the process. Many participants replicated what they learned to provide support to other families in building permanent homes with the support of the government. Thanks to the project, small carpentry services, masonry teams, plastering teams, and local material providers have grown locally – resulting in a more dynamic socio-economic environment and a conducive production chain for improved housing.

COORDINATION

A Technical Implementation Group (working group) composed of the Provincial Infrastructure Service (SPI), Provincial Environmental Service (SPA), National Institute for Disaster Management (INGD), National Institute for Refugee Support (INAR), and the Provincial Social Affairs Service (SPAS) was established with the primary task of carrying out monitoring and supervision activities during project implementation. ADIN endorsed the approach and proposed it to other humanitarian and development partners. In Marocani, the process of housing construction moved forward with the main support of UN partner, who assisted the community with the construction of 200 housing units. The implementing organization provided pro-bono advice and technical assistance to other NGOs engaged in shelter support, to spread the housing approach in other resettlement sites.

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

As mentioned, Mozambique in general, and Cabo Delgado in particular, are geographic contexts highly vulnerable to climate-related shocks. The implementing organization included a strong DRR transversal approach to all its project activities. The homes described in the case study were built following mixed materials construction best practices widely tested and institutionalized in previous projects like the Coastal Cities Adaptation program and the Safer Schools and Safer Hospitals approach, developed together with a UN partner which resulted in new national resilient building codes for public infrastructures, such as hospitals and schools.

MAIN CHALLENGES

The project encountered many challenges throughout the implementation process, above all related to the volatile security situation, the limited availability of skilled labor, the difficult initial engagement of participants, and the complicated logistics for the provision of conventional construction materials.

Due to the security situation and limited and non-continuous access to the project site, the implementing organization decided to set up an assisted self-construction process

where continuous engagement of implementing partners (NGOs) was not required and strong coordination with the community and local authorities could help ensure implementation even with periodic supervision. In the approach, capacity development, with frequent on-the-job training and the use of simple and traditionally accepted construction techniques, counterbalanced the limited availability of skilled labor within the IDP and hosting community of Marocani. Participant engagement increased along the implementation process thanks to efforts in community mobilization and the definition of implementation modalities that could provide participants with clear comparative advantages resulting from their engagement in construction. To cope with the limited availability of conventional materials in the local market and long and costly transportation, the project developed a model of permanent housing that was based on the traditional Swahili house, with some technical improvement and the reduced use of commercial materials in comparison with other permanent housing typologies.

OUTCOME AND WIDER IMPACTS

The simple and recognizable approach to providing durable solutions in permanent resettlement settings was widely accepted at the government level and with high potential for replication and scale-up. The “Marocani model” was presented in various thematic coordination meetings also with development partners such as the Shelter Cluster, and the Multi-stakeholder Platform (MSP) and inspired housing reconstruction initiatives all over the Northern Region. The gender-sensitive and resilient housing solution was appreciated in terms of cost-benefit, adaptability to the local context, and simplicity in implementation. The constant engagement of local labor, including from local women, served as an instrument of local empowerment, a moment of social cohesion, and an example of gender balance and inclusion.



Two typologies of houses built (Model 1 and 2) side by side serving as a community gathering place.

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STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **The housing model was widely accepted by participants** (in particular women and girls), being an improved version of the traditional home built in the region.
- ✓ **The creation of a local environment for the improvement of socio-economic activities**, job creation, and skills development beyond the shelter provision.
- ✓ **Alignment with government priorities and ongoing plans**, promoting the nexus approach for durable solutions and using the housing need as a central element.
- ✓ **Inclusion of gender and resilience perspectives** into the housing development.
- ✓ **Scalability of the approach** through the engagement of additional partners promoting the Marocani model (from the 50 homes included in the project, now more than 500 units have been built on the site with the same approach).

WEAKNESSES

- × **The project underestimated the time needed for the construction** of this model considering the local capacities of skilled and unskilled labor.
- × **There were initial difficulties in reaching a solid level of engagement with participants** and communities in providing support to the construction with local materials (wooden poles, sand, water, etc.).
- × **It was costly to respond to a such wide target of households in need**, hence necessary to improve the fundraising strategy and the alignment of other partners to the same model.
- × **There were challenges in having definitive land titles attributed to the participants**, combined with productive land for livelihood means (land issue remained under discussion among the government and partners).

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Enabling the role of the government at various levels** in transforming camps into permanent sustainable villages contributes to social cohesion and peacebuilding.
- **Putting housing and communities at the center of the recovery process** allows the project to intervene in an integrated and sustainable way, towards durable solutions.
- **Training and capacity building is a key aspect of the construction process**, to increase resilience, durability, and quality of units, providing knowledge to local stakeholders to replicate activities without external support.



The project participants were included in the design and construction of their housing so that they are adequate, accessible, resilient, and safe.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

A project that proposes such an integrated and long-term approach to housing should be commissioned for a mid-to-long-term implementation period, considering the possibility of interruptions due to increases in insecurity and challenges to seasonal accessibility. Resettlement sites closer to big cities that are more integrated with settlement networks could be prioritized for scaling up, aiming to ensure easier implementation modalities and lower costs (in terms of transport, supervision, and monitoring).



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Mozambique: [A.18 / MOZAMBIQUE 2007](#); [B.14 / MOZAMBIQUE 2007](#); [A.6 / MOZAMBIQUE 2007](#)

On permanent houses: [A.14 / PHILIPPINES 2016–2020](#); [A.22 / SOMALIA 2011–2013](#)

On local construction techniques: [A.5 / ETHIOPIA 2019–2020](#); [A.2 / DEM. REP. OF CONGO 2018](#); [A.19 / NEPAL 2017–2018](#)

CASE STUDY

NIGERIA 2018–2021 / CONFLICT

KEYWORDS: Permanent houses, Restricted vouchers, Trainings, Wider impacts

| CRISIS | Boko Haram and Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP) Insurgency (Armed Conflict) |
|---------------------------------|--|
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | 2,197,824 individuals displaced as of June 2022* |
| HOMES DAMAGED/ DESTROYED | 5,095 houses completely damaged** 4,845 houses partially damaged |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 2.95 million people*** |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Bama and Gwoza Local Government Areas, Borno State. |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 650 HHs (5,533 individuals) Over 700 local skilled and unskilled laborers 58 locally hired shelter field supervisors. |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 650 permanent shelters with micro solar systems |
| SHELTER SIZE | 25.92 m² for 2 single rooms covered area per shelter |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 4.32 m² per person for an average household size of 6 |
| DIRECT COST | USD 1,932 per HH |
| PROJECT COST | USD 2,206 per HH |



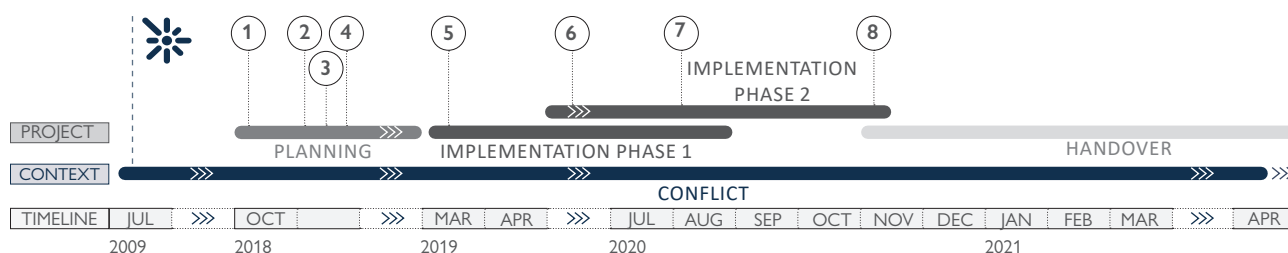
*IOM Nigeria Displacement Report, Round 41, Baseline Assessment in Northeast Nigeria

**Assessment done by the organization, November 2020

***Humanitarian Response Plan, Nigeria, 2022 (February 2022)

PROJECT SUMMARY

650 permanent shelters installed with micro home solar systems were constructed to the most vulnerable households with completely damaged shelters in Bama and Gwoza local government areas of Borno State. The local communities were directly engaged and trained on shelter construction skills to design and build back their shelters which has contributed to increased sense of ownership of the beneficiaries to their shelters. Based on learnings from implementing transitional shelter programming in Damboa, Dikwa and Ngala Local Government Areas, a cash-based approach to shelter construction was employed in the project which ensured household participation in the shelter design process, thus building towards better ownership and links to recovery of the affected population.



Jul 2009: Boko Haram uprising began, now in its 14th year.

- 1 **Oct 2018:** Needs and Housing Typology Assessment in Gwoza.
- 2 **Nov 2018:** Inception Meeting in Gwoza.
- 3 **Nov 2018:** Mapping of damaged houses in Gwoza.
- 4 **Nov 2018:** Shelter design workshop with the local communities in Gwoza.
- 5 **Mar 2019:** Pilot shelter construction in Gwoza.
- 6 **June 2020:** Pilot shelter construction in Bama.
- 7 **Aug 2020:** Completion of 325 permanent shelters in Gwoza.
- 8 **Nov 2020:** Completion of 325 permanent shelters in Bama.



View of a completed shelter with micro solar installation.

CONTEXT

In 2022, the conflict in northeast Nigeria entered its 13th year since Boko Haram launched operations in the region, which experienced brutal attacks on civilians and the massive destruction of infrastructure. The conflict has claimed the lives of tens and thousands (including women and children) while displacing millions across the shores of Lake Chad through Niger, Chad, and Cameroon – some moving as far as the Central African Republic and Sudan. The threat of potential attack by armed groups and military restrictions also negatively impacted trade, livelihoods, and markets – leaving many civilians dependent on humanitarian assistance.

Although major military campaigns from 2015–2016 succeeded in reducing the group's territorial control, Boko Haram has proven remarkably adaptable in its tactics. The end of 2018 once again saw a rise in attacks in Nigeria's Borno State, and by March 2022 in northeast Nigeria, approximately 2,171,652 individuals (446,740 households) were displaced.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

The Bama and Gwoza local government areas are peri-urban areas, with most homes primarily built with concrete blocks and corrugated galvanized iron roofing sheets. Some households also used mud bricks for walls. In remote areas, individuals live in thatch homes, which accommodate both people and their cattle, as most individuals are farmers and herdsman.

Following the crisis, roads were closed and accessed only by military escort until March 2018, when they were reopened by the state government for free access. This enabled markets to reopen and encouraged displaced people to return home.



A completely damaged shelter in Bama Local Government Area, Borno State.

SITUATION DURING/AFTER THE CRISIS

In Bama, an initial camp was set up to accommodate returnees in the government general hospital. Due to its quick congestion, the camp was later relocated to the Government Senior Secondary School. Shelter capacity and other services were overstretched, as the number of returnees continued to increase. Flash floods during rainy seasons became a recurrent hazard, damaging and destroying shelters across the camps regularly. The Gwoza local government established a camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) after communities were secured by the Nigerian military. However, rural areas under the two local government zones remained uninhabitable due to the activities of non-state actors in the region.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

The national shelter strategy in 2020 aimed to ensure the sufficient, coordinated, and adequate delivery of emergency, transitional, and permanent shelter solutions to respond to the immediate and long-term needs of the affected population (displaced, returnees, and host communities) in the different areas.

PROJECT DESIGN

A 36-month multisectoral project was designed with the objective of increasing social cohesion and resilience to economic, social, and climate-related shocks for up to 200,000 men, women, boys, and girls from conflict-affected communities in Borno State. Four intermediate outcomes were established to contribute to achieving the objective, including:

- i. Improve rural livelihoods in an ecologically sustainable way by enabling households to take advantage of existing and new agricultural market opportunities.
- ii. Adolescents and youth empowered as economic actors in their communities through access to employment and diversified livelihood opportunities, financial services, vocational training, and business development initiatives.
- iii. Improved access to social protection and community-based services for women, youth and adolescent breadwinners, and other at-risk groups.
- iv. Social cohesion will be strengthened within and between conflict-affected communities and environmental resource management improved in areas of displacement and return.

A component of the third outcome was the construction of 650 permanent shelters for the most vulnerable returnees, IDPs, and host community members.

Although the project initially considered the engagement of a contractor for the construction of 300 shelters, the idea was later abandoned based on the learnings from the implementation of transitional shelters in other Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Borno state. A community-led

approach was established, which reduced the unit cost of the shelters and allowed the caseload to be increased to 650 units within the same overall budget.

The organization collaborated with local communities and involved participants during each stage of the process. Communities led in the mapping of damaged homes, designing of shelters, and pre selecting the most vulnerable people based on agreed vulnerability criteria. A final draft design was agreed upon by the communities during a design workshop, which was later finalized based on recommendations and approval of the Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (MRRR).

IMPLEMENTATION

Skilled and unskilled laborers from the communities were trained, engaged, and paid on daily rates to construct the shelters, while the construction materials were redeemed by the project's participants at pre-selected vendor shops using an e-voucher system.



Meeting with local laborers before the implementation phase.



Design workshop with the local community in Bama.

As most of the targeted participants were returnees, the shelters were built on the same land plots where their previous homes had been destroyed once the property was verified in coordination with the local government. For cases where the participant's land was not accessible due to security issues, some were able to prove the ownership of another land plot within the community, and others were authorized to build on land belonging to relatives.

For each land plot, a land access and use authority (LAUA) agreement and a memorandum of understanding were signed between the organization and all landowners, aiming to ensure security of tenure prior to the commencement of construction works. Both documents were registered

with the desk office of the local government areas by the organization's Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) Officer and each participant household.

Together with the mentioned HLP Officer, the organization's team was composed of a Shelter Manager and a Shelter coordinator overseeing all shelter programming in Borno State, as well as a dedicated team for the project, which included a Senior Program Officer, two Officers and four Assistants: a combination of engineers and community mobilizers in charge of both technical issues and the relation with the community. The organization hired 58 field supervisors from the communities, with technical backgrounds for day-to-day monitoring of the construction work of 10-12 shelters each.

TARGETING

A total of 650 vulnerable households were selected for permanent shelter construction in Bama and Gwoza LGA. A community-led shelter design was adopted and finalized based on recommendations and approval of the Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, and Resettlement (MRRR).

The first stage of the participant selection process consisted of engaging the communities to conduct a mapping of completely damaged homes. After that, each community was asked to draft the vulnerability criteria. A vulnerability vetting session was organized with representatives of all the communities (men, women, boys, girls, and persons with disabilities per community), and the final criteria were agreed during the session.

Sensitization sessions were then conducted across all the communities on the agreed vulnerability criteria, and the participant lists were developed by each community accordingly. The organization then verified the lists using the agreed criteria and selected the final 650 HHs. Community feedback mechanisms were installed to receive complaints from the communities. The agreed vulnerability criteria included:

- Households with completely damaged homes.
- Families with no economically productive head of household due to gender or other proven cause.
- People with permanent disabilities living with a family.
- Women-headed households were given priority, for widows who lost their husbands due to recent conflict.
- Large families (7+) with more minors under 5-year age (4+), or living in the camp who have a damaged house and cannot rebuild, or living in destroyed mud house(s) and have no capacity to rebuild them.
- Large families (7+) Elderly (+65 years) headed families, living alone and/or elderly with a household or elderly with a household.
- Households sheltering separated children.
- Child-headed or Chronically ill head of household household.
- Large families (7+) with more women and girls (4+), who are dependent on the household.



Sensitization activity before distributions of materials.



Construction of the permanent shelters using blockwork.



Distributions were carried out using vouchers. (Below) Members of families queue to receive shelter materials from a local vendor.



COORDINATION

The organization is an active member of the Shelter Cluster, Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster, and Non-Food Item (NFI) Sector working groups in Borno State. It uses these platforms to discuss, assess, analyze, plan, develop technical standards, and monitor project implementation. It also participated in state and national-level coordination mechanisms at both government and humanitarian organization levels. Activities were coordinated with Shelter Working Group members in target areas to avoid duplication and further harmonize approaches. It also worked closely with all stakeholders at both LGA and field levels to ensure effective coordination and the sharing of information from periodic needs assessments and identification of risks to humanitarian operations.

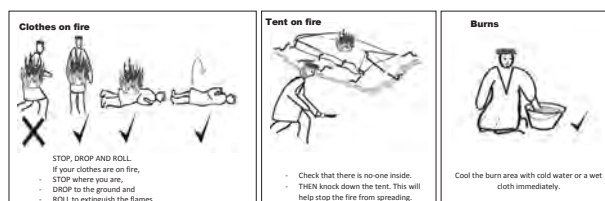
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The project was coupled with Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) sensitization activities. Specifically, orientation sessions were organized on fire safety prevention and mitigation for the 650 direct participant households, community groups, and field supervisors. Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials were also distributed to shelter participants covering: fire safety and sensitization in site and settlement, best practices of building a safe kitchen, and the utilization of fuel-efficient stoves.

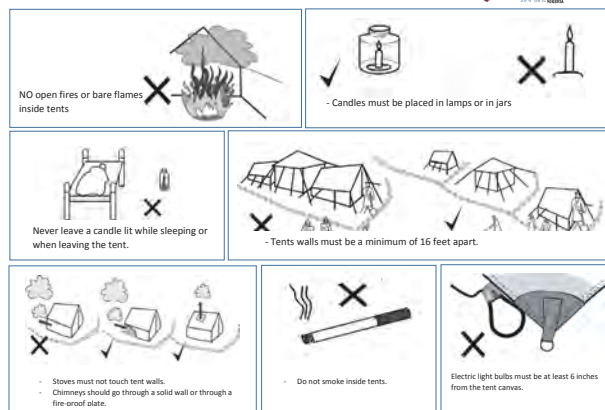
PREPAREDNESS



IN CASE OF FIRE



PREVENTION



IEC materials on fire safety (Preparedness and Prevention) were distributed to the community, both in English and Hausa.



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A view of a permanent shelter after construction. The project removed a major source of anxiety and risk for vulnerable households, allowing them to focus on other long-term needs such as education and vocational training, health and livelihoods.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- Lockdowns resulting from COVID-19 contributed to delays in the progress of shelter program implementation. The project quickly adapted by formulating COVID-19 mitigation measures on construction sites to proceed with activities.
- An attack on a humanitarian helicopter by insurgents led to the suspension of flights to all deep field locations within Borno State for over a month, which resulted in the delay of activities by skilled/unskilled labor due to difficulties in transporting cash for payments.
- Delays were also experienced in securing approvals concerning the movement of cash to deep field locations for labor payments in Gwoza, disrupting the smooth progress of construction activities.

TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

During project implementation, micro-home solar power systems were installed in the 650 shelters. Local volunteers were trained on the repair and maintenance of solar power systems for sustainability. Existing techniques were adapted for the construction of shelters.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

- Through collaboration with the LGA and the organizational HLP unit, participants now have legal documentation for their land
- At the design stage of the project, local stakeholders and community members were engaged – resulting

in enhanced community acceptance of construction activities and heightened social cohesion and community ownership of the project.

- Before the inception of the activities in Bama and Gwoza, there were very few local vendors who could supply construction materials due to the insurgency. Engaging local vendors who had shops before the advent of the insurgency helped in empowering them and boosting the local economy. The number of vendors increased in both locations.
- The construction of permanent shelters for 650 households provided privacy, safety and security to the most vulnerable community members and helped to enhance dignity and well-being. The project removed a major source of anxiety and risk for vulnerable households, allowing them to focus on other long-term needs such as education and vocational training, health, and livelihoods.



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Over 700 local skilled and unskilled laborers were trained in technical trainings.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Participatory approach to community engagement:** The organization collaborated with local communities and took a transparent and accountable approach, involving participants in every stage of the process. The communities led in the mapping of damaged homes, designing of shelters, and pre-selecting the most vulnerable people based on agreed vulnerability criteria.
- ✓ **Local labor engagement and livelihood support:** Local skilled and unskilled laborers were engaged and trained to construct shelters in their communities. Local field construction supervisors with technical backgrounds were also engaged and trained to support the on-site supervision of construction works.
- ✓ **Clean Energy:** A local partner was engaged to install micro-home solar power systems in permanent shelters, which provided the participants with clean energy for lighting and small home appliances.

WEAKNESSES

- × **The project's high cost** per household and the modest number of individuals assisted (3,900) does not meet the massive need in the region.
- × **Preparatory stages for this project took longer than expected**, as this was the first project of its kind for the organization in Nigeria – impacting the delivery timeline.
- × **Once designed, shelter construction was not flexible to meet additional needs.** No allowance could be made for large families, who would ideally have received an expanded shelter. The specific needs of vulnerable individuals and groups were not directly addressed.
- × Although the project took a community-focused approach, more could have been done to design project activities in a way that better supported **women's involvement**.
- × Time needed for project implementation was underestimated and should have included adequate contingency time for **unforeseen circumstances**.
- × **Laborer payments** upon completion of construction work took longer than anticipated (more than a week) due to internal organizational processes.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The cost of permanent shelter was not affordable to low-income individuals from the project communities.
- Active community engagement throughout the project cycle helps to increase a sense of shelter ownership and contributes to the recovery of the affected population.
- A market-based approach to shelter construction using local materials, local vendors, and local laborers instead of a traditional contractor reduced the cost of construction and increased the target caseload from 300 to 650 households.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- Different shelter options should be considered for Persons with Disabilities.
- The organization invested in shelter applied research and studies aimed at improving local technologies and practices to enhance the sustainability of humanitarian assistance in Borno state in collaboration with local academic institutions and government agencies. An early outcome of this ongoing research was mud brick stabilization, leading to improved quality of locally produced mud bricks (water resistance and compressive strength) using local materials. The organization will use the stabilized mud bricks for low-cost housing in its future programs, expecting to reduce the cost of permanent shelter construction by more than 50 percent.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Nigeria: [A.4 / NIGERIA 2017–2018](#); [A.7 / NIGERIA 2017–2020](#); [A.18 / NIGERIA 2015–2016](#)

On permanent houses: [A.21 / MALAWI 2015–2016](#); [A.22 / SOMALIA 2011–2013](#); [A.20 / PHILIPPINES 2015–2017](#)

On vouchers: [A.7 / SOUTH SUDAN 2017–2018](#); [A.27 / IRAQ 2017–2018](#)

CASE STUDY

NIGERIA 2021–2022 / CONFLICT

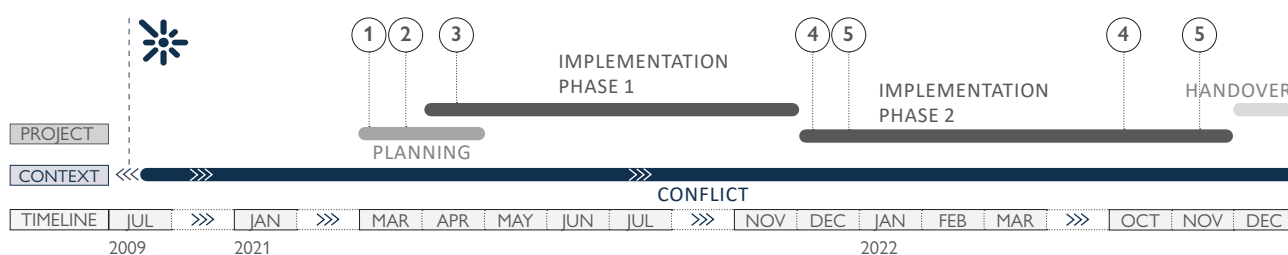
KEYWORDS: Coordination and partnerships, Livelihoods, Recovery, Transitional shelter

| | |
|---|---|
| CRISIS | Boko Haram Crisis, Northeast Nigeria |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | 2,197,824 individuals displaced June 2022* |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 2.95 million people (589,169 HHs)* |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Yola, Mubi, Gwoza, Pulka (Borno and Adamawa) |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 1,500 individuals (3,000 HHs) |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 340 durable mud shelters (165 Yola, 25 Mubi, 75 Gwoza, 75 Pulka) 300 NFI kits distributed 60 sanitation facilities constructed 60 local labor construction trainings 60 local labour Cash-for-Work program |
| SHELTER SIZE | Type A: 21 m² (3.4m x 6.4m) Type B: 18 m² (3m x 6m) |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 3.6 m² per person |
| DIRECT COST | USD 700 |
| PROJECT COST | USD 1,000 |
| *IOM Nigeria Displacement Report, Round 41, Baseline Assessment in Northeast Nigeria **Humanitarian Response Plan, Nigeria, 2022 (February 2022) | |



PROJECT SUMMARY

Durable solutions have been provided through mud shelters modalities which is a pilot idea in the Northeast Nigerian context, welcomed by displaced persons, host communities and the government, especially as it aligns with the government long term policy on displaced persons. The project aimed to provide settlement planning and durable mud shelter solutions as an alternative to emergency shelter options. The mud shelters were designed through consultations with the community through prototyping and discussions, and were based on local shelter typologies and construction methods, which were improved upon previous models built by other shelter partners in the region. One of the main objectives was to provide livelihood opportunities by employing members of local communities through cash-for-work programs.



2009: Boko Haram uprising began in 2009, now in its 14th year.

- 1 **Mar 2021:** Trainings of local technicians.
- 2 **Mar 2021:** HLP arrangement with landowners.
- 3 **Apr 2021:** Pilot FGDs with women.
- 4 **Dec 2021, Oct 2022:** Construction of the mud shelters.
- 5 **Dec 2021, Nov 2022:** Distribution of NFI items.



The project supported the construction of 320 mud shelters across four locations in Northeast Nigeria.

CONTEXT

Nigeria is a country located in West Africa with a population of over 200 million people. The weather and climate in the country vary depending on location, but generally, the country has a tropical climate with two distinct seasons: the wet season and the dry season. The northeast region experiences a hot and dry climate, with temperatures reaching up to 40°C during the day. Nigeria is also home to a diverse range of ethnic groups, with over 250 different languages spoken throughout the country. Most of the population is either Muslim or Christian, with a small minority practicing other traditional religions.

The northeast region of the country has been affected by a long-standing conflict, primarily due to insurgency by the Boko Haram armed group, which began in 2009. The conflict led to the displacement of millions of people and has had since a significant impact on the socio-economic development of the region. Given this context, in 2021 there was a significant need for shelter solutions for displaced households.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

Like in most cases in Nigeria, the target population lived in communal settlements primarily made of mud shelters and a small number of concrete buildings in rural communities. Families usually live in private spaces sometimes enclosed by light fencing made either of mud walls or grass mats, sometimes with no fencing at all. For individuals that had the space and financial ability, more than one building was built to better accommodate their large families. Roads were wide and undeveloped with no clear provision for drainage, causing considerable access challenges during the rainy season. There was a limited electricity supply, making households rely on kerosine lamps, flashlights, and on firewood for cooking fuel. For utilities, small cooking spaces were primarily separate from the main homes and in some cases fitted into a small attachment to the house. WASH utilities were also placed separately as a standard cultural practice for better hygiene.

SITUATION DURING/AFTER THE CRISIS

Due to the conflict and violence, individuals were forced to flee, leaving their homes behind in damaged conditions and having to seek emergency/temporary shelter provisions often provided by humanitarian actors or by the government. As the conflict became protracted, shelters were often used beyond their expected lifespan – causing a need for periodic repair or replacement and putting the affected population in recurrent vulnerable conditions. While having to deal with privacy, protection, and eviction issues, people often had to seek accommodation in host communities or planned/spontaneous settlements, depending on the presence of humanitarian or government actors in the location.

Displaced communities had to supplement aid provisions with local materials (often grass mats) to address their shelter needs as the assistance was limited and not always adequate. Unfortunately, sourcing those materials sometimes forced them to access unsafe territories, and have to be again exposed to non-state actors such as Boko Haram. The potentially fatal consequences highlighted the need to provide adequate and durable shelter solutions in safe locations.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

The National Shelter Strategy/Response was developed in coordination with various Clusters and sectors, and aimed to address the shelter needs of displaced persons across the country, through different shelter solutions, including durable solutions, to displaced persons.

The plan included the provision of land for resettlement, the construction of affordable and sustainable housing, and the promotion of livelihood opportunities. The overall shelter response was coordinated within the SNFI cluster, together with other sectors to address the different components of the shelter response, including planning, construction, and delivery.



A view of the site with the mud shelters. 340 shelters with two different sizes of 18 m² and 21 m² were constructed.

PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

The main goal of the project was to provide a durable mud shelter solution in a planned settlement as an alternative to recurrent emergency shelter options for displaced households in the northeast region of Nigeria. The project was designed based on local shelter typologies and construction methods and aimed to continue building upon the experience of previous models built by other shelter partners in the region. The project also aimed to provide increased security of tenure through long-term land-use agreements to targeted households who had informally resided in makeshift shelters on private lands.

The construction activities were implemented using a cash-for-work methodology to provide livelihood opportunities to members of local communities through the production of mud bricks and constructing shelters, as the intended outcomes of the project were to provide durable solutions to displaced persons and improve their living conditions while supporting their long-term resettlement.

The intervention filled critical gaps in the ongoing response by not only alleviating the suffering of the affected population but also by enhancing participants' dignity and protection from various vulnerabilities that arose from the lack of privacy due to a lack of shelter during the period of displacement.

In addition, capacity building to the affected population on construction methodologies and habitability conditions prior to and during implementation was aimed to strengthen the knowledge and skills of the affected people to maintain alternative options for their recovery.

The use of mud for the construction of the shelter walls was also motivated by the aim to mitigate the environmental impact of the project, as temporary emergency solutions required a high demand for wood and the use of other manufactured materials would have required procurement and transportation, with a negative impact to the environment through the different processes for the production and the sea shipments.



The project ensured that women were actively involved in the decision-making process and were provided with equal opportunities for employment and participation in the project activities.



Around 60 construction trainings were provided for capacity building.

IMPLEMENTATION

The project was implemented through a community-based approach, which involved community members in the design of the project, and further engaged the community through:

- Consultations with IDPs to help ensure that the shelter design was culturally appropriate and relevant to the household needs.
- Capacity-building activities provided to local communities on shelter construction methods and good maintenance practices, as well as awareness sessions on fire safety, environmental sanitation, and flood mitigation.
- The construction of a prototype shelter for the confirmation of the design through focus group discussions.
- The training of local workers, including IDPs and members of the nearby host community who were also employed in the project through the local contractor commissioned with the production of the mud bricks.

TARGETING

Project areas were selected through detailed site profiling which included the location and conditions of existing makeshift shelters and household demographic structures. The households targeted by the project were those who resided in informal makeshift shelters on private lands and were assessed as the most vulnerable. The project provided two or more shelters to families with five or more members.

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The project had Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) components aimed at addressing hazards and threats faced by the affected population. The mud shelter solutions provided were designed to be resilient to the harsh climatic conditions in the northeast region of Nigeria. The project also included training for the community on DRR measures such as environmental planning, flood mitigation measures, and fire safety.

MAIN CHALLENGES

The project faced significant challenges related to seasonality, market conditions, and currency fluctuations, which were addressed through various measures such as reducing delivery time, increasing communication with local authorities and communities, and adjusting the project budget and timeline to account for the challenges.

While mud shelters face challenges such as off-season mud brick sourcing, the comparison with the cost of other short-term solutions, and the difficulties of carrying out the construction during the rainy season, they prove to be viable long-term solutions if done with adequate planning and management of the implementation process. However, the provision of mud shelters was limited by issues related to the availability of land with secure tenure agreements, especially in garrisoned areas where land is scarce due to increased shelter needs caused by new arrivals and the demands of private landowners. Addressing these challenges required ongoing collaboration with the Information, Counselling, and Legal Assistance (ICLA) team within the organization, relevant sector working groups, and the government.

CROSSCUTTING ISSUES

The project considered and addressed crosscutting issues such as security of tenure and environmental impact. One key issue was gender, and the project ensured that women were actively involved in the decision-making process and were provided with equal opportunities for employment and participation in the project activities.

LINKS WITH RECOVERY

The mud shelter project in northeast Nigeria aimed to link relief and recovery phases by providing durable shelter solutions that could integrate support to displaced households in the short-term through the livelihoods opportunities generated within the construction activities, in the long-term with the land use agreement that ensured the security of tenure, and throughout the phases with the provision itself of a long-lasting shelter.

Moreover, capacity-building activities were provided to the affected population on construction methodologies and habitability measures before and during the implementation, which enhanced participant knowledge and skills in maintaining alternative options for their recovery.

The project also had wider impacts, such as aligning with the government's long-term policy on displaced persons and providing a model for scaling up a response to support durable solutions for the IDOs. Unexpected or unintended consequences were not documented.



Distribution of NFI items were carried out in two phases – in the month of December 2021, and November 2022. 300 NFI kits were distributed.



Focus Group Discussions with the women in the community, April 2021.



Coordination with the WASH sector for provision of latrine facility.



The community was included in the design phase of the mud shelters, ensuring engagement throughout the project cycle.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **The development of a shelter design based on local typologies** and construction methods, and building upon the experience of previous models built by other shelter partners in the region.
- ✓ **The project maximized the use of land space by conducting detailed site profiling** to map the location and conditions of existing makeshift shelters and designing Shelter Clusters based on the size of households and the location of makeshift shelters. Families with five members were given two or more shelters, which provided them with exclusive and demarcated footprints for external space.
- ✓ **The mud shelters provided longer lasting and more durable solutions in comparison to temporary shelter construction.** This was a significant improvement, especially for displaced households who had informally resided in makeshift shelters on private lands without long-term security of tenure.
- ✓ **The mud shelters provided improved privacy and protection from weather elements,** which helped to address critical gaps in the ongoing response. This not only saved lives and alleviated the suffering of the affected population but also promoted their dignity and protection from various vulnerabilities that may arise due to lack of privacy resulting from inadequate shelter.
- ✓ **The project provided livelihood opportunities** by employing members of local communities through CfW programs for making mud bricks and constructing the shelters, contributing to wider impacts.

WEAKNESSES

- × **The project faced significant construction challenges during the rainy season,** which impacted delivery time and increased pressure on the project team and artisans.
- × **The cost of constructing durable mud shelters was higher** compared to temporary shelter options, which posed a challenge in budget management.
- × **Negotiating access to private land for shelter construction** was a significant challenge that required more time and resources than anticipated.
- × **Sourcing mud bricks during the rainy season presented an additional challenge** that could have been mitigated through better planning and preparation.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Optimal construction can be achieved during dry seasons.
- Temporary tarpaulin covers can help mitigate rain-related setbacks during construction.
- The use of 9-inch mud blocks instead of 6 inch blocks improves structural stability.
- The internal use of 3 by 3 inch timber posts can anchor roof systems to the ground and prevent damage from strong winds.
- Increased use of bitumen and engine oil in mud plaster sand can enhance durability and reduce leaching.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- Construction during the dry season helps to ensure top-quality delivery while reducing the risk of potential losses in project delivery time and construction materials – a constant challenge during monsoons. Construction in the dry season also removes the additional cost of protective covers. The covers are not absolute protection against driving rain, but only mitigate the impact to a small degree. The associated monitoring of the use of these covers by artisans are an additional challenge best avoided by constructing in the dry season.
- Construction during this season also helps to avoid the bending of mud walls at later stages of construction. This challenge is notable during the rainy season, as mud walls are constructed in three levels, with break intervals to allow the walls set properly. Strong winds and rains during such intervals affect the setting time of the walls causing a bend. Consequently, the walls will either need corrective work or reconstruction, which will impact all project parameters negatively.
- For project planning, the delivery time and the work plans must be developed in a way as to allow for construction before and/or after the rainy season period which spans about five to six months in the northeastern Nigerian context. It is also the peak period to produce mud bricks, taking advantage of abundant sunlight for proper curing.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On transitional shelters: [A.24 / SRI LANKA 2017](#); [A.10 / JORDAN 2013](#); [A.13 / INDONESIA 2018–2020](#)

On recovery: [A.19 / NEPAL 2017–2018](#); [A.4 / NIGERIA 2017–2018](#); [A.3 / KENYA 2018](#)



A locally-made fence around the mud shelters, which ensures privacy and protection.

CASE STUDY

NIGERIA 2021–2022 / CONFLICT

KEYWORDS: Community engagement, Coordination and partnerships, Persons with disabilities

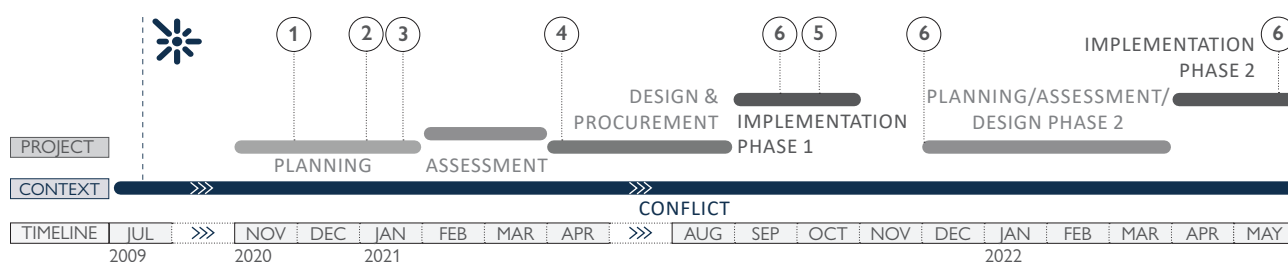
| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| CRISIS | Boko Haram Crisis, North-East Nigeria |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 0.5 million persons with disabilities in the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe* |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Assessment conducted across 14 IDP sites; Pilot interventions conducted in Gubio camp (Konduga LGA) and GSSSS camp (Bama LGA), Borno state |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 221 persons with disabilities and their families (965 individuals) |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | <p>221 persons with disabilities (and their families) received shelter improvements</p> <p>Development of one catalogue of shelter improvements</p> <p>40 project participants of the Shelter Improvement Project received NFI kits</p> <p>1 person with disability involved in production of shelter improvement materials</p> <p>22 staff members trained on improvements of shelter for persons with disabilities</p> <p>23 staff members trained on health referrals, community engagement, MHPSS and Child protection for persons with disabilities</p> <p>Community engagement using drama, music and dance to communicate the key messages of the project to the camp population</p> |
| DIRECT COST | USD 276 per HH on average |
| PROJECT COST | USD 430 per HH on average |

*Nigeria Humanitarian Response Plan 2022, OCHA



PROJECT SUMMARY

Following a qualitative assessment of the shelter needs of people with different types of disabilities living in various types of shelters in IDP camps, the team, based on consultations with the people themselves, developed designs and bills of quantity for around 50 individualized improvements to cater for a variety of needs and challenges in accessing or using shelters and their immediate surroundings. The interventions were piloted across two locations in two subsequent phases building on an incremental learning process. Partnerships were developed with local organizations of people with disabilities as well as physical rehabilitation service providers for referrals. Several community engagement and communication mechanisms were used, which ensured that the project was understood by the participants and the wider camp community, facilitated the individuals' choice for the preferred shelter upgrades, and improved their quality of living.



2009: Boko Haram uprising began in 2009.

- Nov-Dec 2020:** Research and strengthening of partnerships with relevant stakeholders, establishing referral pathways.
- Jan 2021:** Staff training on shelter for persons with disabilities.
- Jan 2021:** Qualitative data collection, including FGDs.
- Apr-May 2021:** Development of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials and catalogue for all improvement types.
- Oct 2021:** Lessons learned workshop.
- Sep, Dec 2021 / May 2022:** Community engagement and socio-cultural events.



A raised wooden bed with rail support was one of the improvement types for persons with lower body physical impairments.

CONTEXT

For more background information on the Boko Haram crisis see the “Further Reading” section on Pg. 63.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

Before the crisis, northern Nigeria was the least developed region in the country regarding education, socioeconomics and structural development. Many lived in rural areas in mud houses and makeshift tents. Poverty, lack of opportunities and social inclusion were the pervasive norm. Prior to the crisis, record shows that the North-East had a high number of persons living with a disability. While accessibility to housing, basic services and livelihoods were a visible challenge to persons with disability, most of them and their caregivers had modified and adapted their houses and mobility aids to cope with their disability. Prior to the displacement, crafted stools, ramps, walking sticks, raised beds, rails, etc were made with moulded clay and timber poles to aid persons with disability in their day-to-day life.

SITUATION AFTER THE CRISIS

Displaced persons with disability are the most marginalized, facing increased barriers to accessing shelter, food, education, and livelihoods. Due to the emergency and spontaneous nature of most camps, persons living with disability were greatly affected because of limited resources to create more friendly environments by improving access, shelters and mobility aids. The constant influx of new arrivals, inadequate resources and the various magnitudes of disability made them more vulnerable within camps.

After several years of the crisis, a variety of shelter types were found in camp settings, broadly ranging from emergency tarpaulin shelters, shelters made of zinc sheets, mud shelters, and makeshift shelters built with fabric, nets, and local materials.

IMPLEMENTATION

The project was implemented by a team of 17 staff which included 1 consultant, 10 staff from the shelter team, 3 people with disability engaged within the camps, and 3

members of a local organization for persons with disabilities who participated during the assessment stage, while leveraging on the support of site management team members.

Staff training was an essential component and included a wide range of topics, from communicating with caregivers and mental health and psychosocial support to community engagement, referral pathways and child caregiver engagement.

Fourteen sites were selected for the initial assessment to capture different variables, such as type of shelter models, settlement types (both planned and spontaneous), population sizes, congestion levels and disability types.


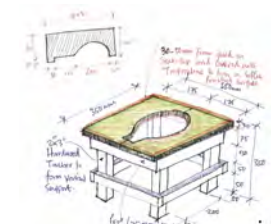

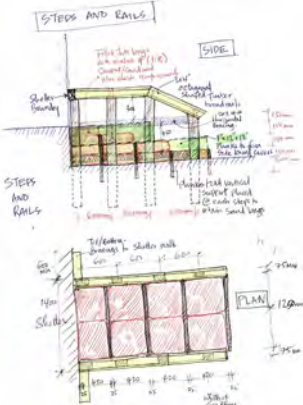

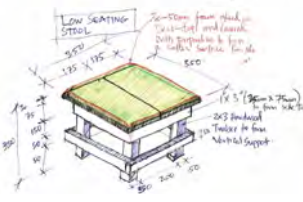

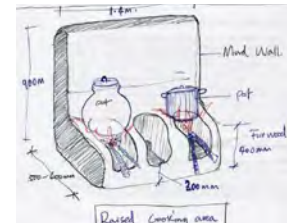

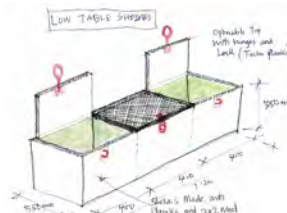
Assessment: Questionnaires were finalized following field trials and a gender-balanced team was formed for each site to carry out stages of assessments. The first stage involved focus group discussions with some persons with disability within each camp on daily challenges encountered within the camp. The second stage involved shelter visits and key informant questionnaires to persons with disability and their caregivers. To maintain diversity in the type of disabilities and shelters assessed, a “shelter-disability” matrix was used giving a daily overview of the gaps in the data that the teams would need to focus on in subsequent days. The shelter visits involved direct questions, observations and sketches of the shelter and surrounding environments, the barriers people encountered and possible solutions. Thirdly, focus group discussions were conducted with some caregivers in the sites, to figure out the challenges they faced due to caregiving and other day-to-day tasks.

Improvements: Persons with disabilities respond to their immediate environment in distinct ways based on their impairment and shelter typology. Five major types of disability were observed in the assessment: Lower body physical impairment, Upper body physical impairment, Visual impairment, Cognitive impairment, and Hearing impairment. Following shelter visits, the 20 most common needs for improvements were compiled and designs were developed for each. Some of the improvements are discussed in the following section.


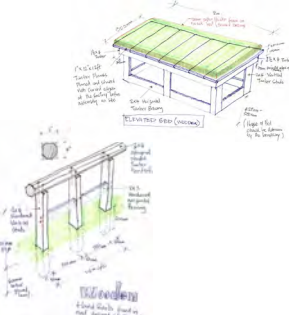


Some of the different typologies of shelters in camp settings include emergency shelters, makeshift shelters, and shelters built with local materials, amongst others.


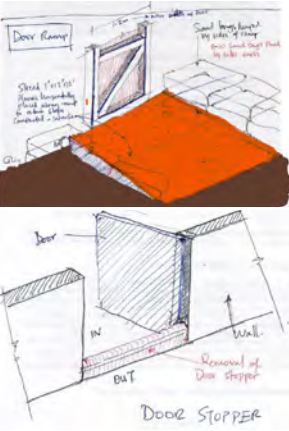
| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Type of disability | Lower body physical impairment |
| Challenge | Using the squat toilet type; Climbing upstairs for shelters that are significantly elevated above the ground level |
| Improvement | A wooden toilet seat which the person can sit comfortably to use the toilet without having to exert body weight on weak limbs; Steps and ramps with handrails made from locally available materials like stitched jute bags filled with sand and rails made from octagonal-shaped timber for easy handling; Wooden seating stool; Raised cooking area; Lower storage unit |


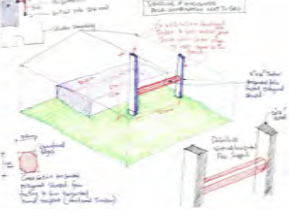
| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Type of disability | Upper body physical impairment |
| Challenge | Getting into and out of bed |
| Improvement | A raised wooden bed with rail support was designed, which the person can lean upon/pull on to get out of bed |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Type of disability | Wheelchair users |
| Challenge | Inaccessibility |
| Improvement | Door widths were increased at entrances, door stoppers were removed, as well as ramps for unfettered wheeling either by their caregivers or themselves |

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Type of disability | Visual impairment |
| Challenge | Lack of sight to properly navigate around shelter |
| Improvement | Octagonal shaped wooden handrails were introduced as a tactile directional guide around the shelter |

| | |
|---|--|
| Type of disability | Other improvements |
| Challenge | Persons with lower body impairment, the aged and people with limited mobility spend long hours in a stationary position and indoors due to their condition |
| Improvement | The raised wooden chair was conceived to ease the long hours spent in a stationary position |
|  |  |
| Improvement | External shaded area |
|  |  |
| Improvement | Additional windows to enhance the indoor space quality |
|  |  |
| Improvement | Covered shower space to increase privacy when nearby spots are used for showering |
|  |  |



Extended shaded area between two shelters.

Improvements were designed to use locally available materials to facilitate maintenance or upgrades. The costs of improvements varied based on the needs of the persons with disabilities living in the targeted households, and the average cost was approximately USD 276. The maximum budget per household of persons with disabilities was USD 500, to ensure that the value of improvements did not exceed the cost of a new shelter nor potentially cause tension within the household or with other camp residents. This was also aimed at making it scalable to reach more participants in the future.

Standardized, flexible Bills of Quantity (BoQs) were developed for each of the improvement types, to make the procurement and implementation processes easier. A local vendor was selected following competitive bidding, extensive discussions, and guidance by the project team.

Construction process: To aid site navigation, a map was shared with the contractor, and team members introduced the contractor's representatives to participants. Some improvements were implemented as standard modules while others were adapted to fit specific situations. To enable continued access to their living spaces, only works that required loose materials were executed within and around the shelter, while fabrication and assembly works were done in a centralized location in the camp.

During the second phase of the pilot, some standard improvements were mass-produced at an external workshop and taken to the site, and one of the participants were also engaged to produce some of the local materials (e.g., traditional grass mats) which were used for the improvements.

Handover: To ensure a comprehensive and accurate handover, a detailed form was developed. This form included live photos and detailed drawings with indicated dimensions of the improved design and its location in relation to the shelter. The form was carefully reviewed and signed by the participants themselves to validate that the improvements met their needs. For participants who were mentally impaired, their caregivers were engaged to confirm the receipt of the assistance on their behalf. The results of the handover process were positive, with 94.7 percent of participants expressing satisfaction with the improvements they received.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Formation of persons with disabilities committee: A “persons with disabilities committee” was set up consisting of 11 members (4 women and 7 men). Overall, the committee was particularly useful in creating a sense of ownership in the project and a medium for engagement and communication with the community of persons with disability and the camp governing structure.

Camp community and stakeholder engagement: Recognizing that engagement with persons with disabilities alone was insufficient, the team understood the importance of involving the entire community. Focusing on structures such as community leaders, camp committees, camp security, etc, the team embarked on a series of meetings. However, they soon realized that meetings were not enough to effectively convey the message regarding the needs of persons with disabilities and why they required specific assistance.

This realization emphasized the necessity for additional tools to further explain and solidify the idea within the community. Consequently, the team developed several IEC materials with the aim of providing a comprehensive understanding.

Community engagement event: To maximize the impact of the above-mentioned IEC materials, sociocultural engagement activities were carried out in the camp including cultural dances, songs and drama performances. In addition to providing an innovative communication medium that included inscriptions on T-shirts, banners, pamphlets, and amplified audio recordings for the entire audience, the event also served as a channel to strengthen social cohesion. This provided a platform for persons with disabilities who featured in the performances to showcase their talent during the event which also had media coverage, and propagated information and awareness on the project.

COORDINATION

During the implementation, various components of coordination were set up with the camp management, committees within the camp, OPDs such as the Joint National Association of Persons living With Disability (JONAPWD), as well as the Physical Rehabilitation Centre at the University Teaching Hospital in Maiduguri. In addition, the project team worked together with WASH, health, MHPSS, and Non-Food items teams. A clear referral pathway was established in addition to a responsive complaints and feedback mechanism.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- Delay in response to referrals in other sectors such as WASH and health delayed the holistic realization of the project rationale, which was clear to participants that their quality of living will be impacted upon when the objectives are achieved.
- The contractor and his team took a long time to grasp the concept of the project leading to errors and corrections during the pilot.

- Due to the high number of shelter projects running concurrently with deadlines approaching, having dedicated staff on the project for extended periods of time was challenging. This resulted in excessive time constraints in bringing new staff up to speed on the ongoing project.
- Some of the local materials used in the improvements took longer time to mass produce and so, controlling inventory was difficult.

WIDER IMPACTS

- Encouraged inclusion of persons with disabilities in project locations by actively engaging the dedicated committee in the camp governing structure.
- Persons with disabilities gained recognition in the selected site as a result of the project, most notable was the effect of the sociocultural event in the camp which was publicised in audio and print media. This led to more focus on the inclusion of considerations on needs of persons with disabilities within camps in respect to participation, and access to other assistance.
- Consequently, the chairman and secretary of the persons with disabilities committee were included in the camp management committees of the concerned camps which is the governing structure of every camp. This gave them access to advocacy on decisions concerning persons with disability within the camp population.



Qualitative data was collected during the assessment phase, which included FGDs, individual shelter visits, and working with other actors on the site.



Door-to-door sensitization on the key messages of the project was carried out by community volunteers to reach all groups in the camp.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Individualized shelter visits and improvements.** The individual shelter visits provided participants with an avenue to state their distinct shelter needs and proffer possible solutions to make their shelters and surroundings more accessible. All persons with disabilities, regardless of the type of disability, have distinct needs. Paying exclusive visits for each of them gave them the liberty to choose which improvement best suits them and participate fully in decisions that would affect their lives, leading to high beneficiary satisfaction.
- ✓ **Use of Information, Education and Communication materials.** The use of multiple IEC materials helped in reaching various groups of persons with disability during the project. The flyers with pictorial representation and radio broadcast of the key messages were used during the sensitization and awareness campaign, including the event. The catalogue was used during the shelter visits at the second phase of the project.
- ✓ **Gender balance.** The gender balance of the teams facilitated effective communication with the persons with disability and their caregivers, as they felt more comfortable talking about their living conditions. Having a gender-balanced committee further strengthened their participation and provided a sense of representation among them.
- ✓ **Participation of Organization of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs).** The involvement of JONAPWD during the assessment was particularly useful and made communication with the persons with disability easier.

WEAKNESSES

- × **Preparatory stages took time as it was a pilot and novel project.** This would not have been possible without dedicated efforts from many team members and the support of an external consultant with experience on the subject. Hence, this type of project is not easy to conduct or replicate in all contexts.
- × **Some of the project participants needed much more improvements than others** but that could not be achieved due to limited funding.
- × **Referrals to other sectors for critical services often took long time.** A multisectoral approach or a stronger synergy with other units or partners from the start could have reduced this issue.
- × **There was no mechanism in place to equip the persons with disability and their caregivers** with basic maintenance skills so that they could maintain the improvements made.
- × **Referrals for physical rehabilitation in Maiduguri was limited to specific aspects.** No partner or sector was willing to handle corrective surgeries for persons with disability who needed such services. Following the completion of this pilot, more funding was received by the CCCM Unit to complement some of these identified gaps.
- × **The project was small scale and required a significant time and human resource support.** It remained unclear, following the end of the second stage of the pilot, how to scale up the project going forward.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The integration between Shelter and WASH teams could have been improved with joint planning, funding, and implementation to enable both teams to support various improvements. Joint proposals could better address the barriers faced by persons with disability within IDP camps. During the second phase of the pilot, more partners in the WASH sector were engaged through referrals to complement the assistance provided.
- A child-friendly questionnaire would have been very useful to administer to child caregivers during the data collection stage. This was not contemplated initially; but was found to be the case in many instances.
- Due to the individualized nature of the improvements, the contractor needed to be trained by the team to fully understand the concept of the project and the proper way to communicate with persons with disabilities.
- The sociocultural event conducted in the camp where persons with disabilities showcased their talent helped in breaking barriers and creating a sense of acceptance. Persons with disabilities, who before were often in hiding, came out to identify themselves. During the second phase of the pilot, following lessons from the first phase, this event was conducted much earlier in the process.
- Pre-fabrication and assembling of all the standard improvements significantly reduced delivery time. This can be considered for future projects to scale up this type of intervention.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- At the proposal stage, multi-sectoral components need to be integrated to achieve wide reaching impact on the living and economic status of persons with disabilities.
- It is recommended to build the capacity of persons with disabilities and their caregivers on technical skills relevant for basic maintenance and to ensure durability of their improvements.

FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Disability inclusion: [A.21 / LEBANON 2018–2021](#)

On Nigeria: [A.7 / NIGERIA 2017–2020](#); [A.4 / NIGERIA 2017–2018](#)



Awareness session on improvement of traditional house construction, part of conditional cash for shelter program in response to the tropical cyclone Batsirai impact.

© Xavier Génot



OVERVIEW

VENEZUELA (REGIONAL) 2019–2023 / COMPLEX CRISIS

| | |
|--|--|
| CRISIS | Response to the situation of refugees and migrants from Venezuela |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | 7.24 million Venezuelans in the world* 6.10 million Venezuelans in the LAC region* |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 6.63 million people , including host communities** |
| LOCATIONS | Argentina, Aruba, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Curaçao, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guyana, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, The Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED IN THE RESPONSE*** | <p>2022 Total supported: 215,540 people Temporary Collective Shelter: 175,423 people Individual shelter solutions: 78,232 people Settlements: 4,341 people Household NFIs: 87,022 people</p> <p>2021 Total supported: 284,879 people Temporary Collective Shelter: 255,341 people Individual shelter solutions: 86,736 people Settlements: 8,002 people Household NFIs: 147,438 people</p> <p>2020 Total supported: 122,400 people Collective Shelter: 175,551 people Individual shelter solutions: 63,973 people Settlements: 26,891 people</p> |
| <p>*The Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants (R4V), online dashboard. **The Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants (R4V), Shelter sector. ***These figures represent the sum of the beneficiaries of the activities in each month, so there are duplications among people who received assistance for more than one month.</p> | |



SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSE

The complex crisis that Venezuela has been experiencing since 2015 has triggered the departure of more than 7 million people. More than 6 million of them have arrived in Latin American and Caribbean countries, which has forced governments and humanitarian organizations in the region to coordinate to provide adequate and timely assistance to the Venezuelan refugee and migrant population. The regional shelter sector of the Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants in Venezuela (R4V), together with the national and sub-regional shelter sectors (multi-sectors) present in 16 countries, coordinate the humanitarian response of the different actors in each country to the needs for shelter and NFIs.



© Gemma Cortés/ICM

Migrants disembark from a boat in Lajas Blancas, Panama, after walking across the Darien Gap from Colombia. Thousands of migrants from three continents converge in the Darien Gap looking for a better future.



2015: First migratory movement recorded outside Venezuela.

- 1 **Apr 2018:** A sharp increase in population outflows from Venezuela is recorded.
- 2 **Apr 2018:** Activation of the Regional Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela by the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN).
- 3 **Sep 2018:** First R4V coordination meeting takes place in Panama.
- 4 **Oct 2018:** Increased UN response inside Venezuela.
- 5 **Dec 2018:** 2019 Strategic Response Plan for Refugees and Migrants in Venezuela (RMRP).
- 6 **Oct 2019:** International Solidarity Conference.
- 7 **Jan 2020:** Creation of the Regional Multisector for Shelter / NFI / Humanitarian Transportation.

Mar 2020: WHO pandemic declaration of COVID-19.

- 8 **Apr 2020:** Formal definition of the Multisector Shelter / NFI / Humanitarian Transportation.
- 9 **May 2020:** First Donors Conference in Solidarity with Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants.
- 10 **Dec 2021:** Division of the multisector into Shelter and Humanitarian Transportation, with separate co-leaderships.
- 11 **Dec 2022:** Strategic Response Plan for Refugees and Migrants in Venezuela (2023 - 2024).
- 12 **Mar 2023:** International Conference of Solidarity with Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants and their host countries and communities.

CONTEXT

Millions of Venezuelans fled their country in pursuit of safety and better living conditions during 2014 and 2015 as a result of the drop in oil prices, economic, institutional, and political turmoil, and a lack of commodities and services. Since then and until the end of 2022, more than seven million Venezuelan migrants and refugees have departed – most of them on foot and facing dangers such as abuse, assault, and obstacles to access basic necessities. More than six million of them have settled across Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), with Colombia, Peru, and Ecuador serving as the primary recipient countries. The region was forced to adjust to the situation and act to effectively manage one of the largest humanitarian and integration crises in recent history.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

In the LAC – since the middle of the last century – housing assistance initiatives undertaken by governments and international organizations have mainly focused on a development support response. In most countries of the region, large state programs of a social nature were carried out to facilitate access to adequate housing for the most vulnerable populations. Likewise, efforts were made for the improvement of the most marginal neighborhoods or settlements, which lacked comprehensive urban planning. Emergency responses linked to shelter, the delivery of essential Non-Food Items (NFIs) and the setup, management and coordination of collective shelters were typically linked to one-off disasters – such as earthquakes or hurricanes. In these cases, short term assistance was prioritized and concentrated at the time of the event. An exception



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Former Lobitos Temporary Collective Shelter in Iquique, Tarapacá region, with capacity for about 300 people in individual and collective tents. Managed by a private company, financed by local authorities in Tarapaga, Chile.

to that would be the case of the internal armed conflict in Colombia, for which the humanitarian Cluster coordination system was activated in a timely manner, under the regional coordination of REDLAC (Regional Group on Risks, Emergencies and Disasters for Latin America and the Caribbean).

SITUATION DURING/AFTER THE CRISIS

Given the political, economic, and physical disparities in each country in the region, the condition and needs of the displaced Venezuelans vary to some extent depending on where they settled after a journey through waterfronts, rainforest, jungle, and hazardous mountains. In some host countries, there is no established migration policy for regularization and the host populations experience severe shortages recurrently. Since there are so many different shelter-related requirements and needs throughout the region, humanitarian organizations are required to consider a wide range of response initiatives.

The impact of COVID-19 reduced people's capacity to access means of livelihood for covering housing costs or basic food basket items. Family debt escalated alongside the risks of eviction, to the point where the population often settled in unsafe places or became homeless. Likewise, pandemic prevention and mitigation measures by governments and response partners forced a reduction in the number of available spots in collective shelters and the relocation of funds for the fight against COVID 19. Additionally, discrimination and xenophobia in the host countries have also increased following the influx, adding additional challenges for refugees and migrants in accessing adequate housing.

COORDINATION

The Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V) was created in 2018 by the United Nations Secretary-General, who designated the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as the entities in charge of coordinating the response to the Venezuelan population. A regional coordination mechanism was consolidated, organized in thematic sectors, and working groups.

The first response plan was drafted in 2018 focusing on four areas of intervention, including direct emergency assistance, protection, socio-cultural integration, and capacity building for host governments. Regional sectorial groups were formed based on the existing capacities of the partners. Between 2019 and 2020, a first Shelter, NFI, Collective Shelter Coordination and Management (CCCM), and Humanitarian Transport sector group was established, splitting later in 2021 from Humanitarian Transportation, and currently covering Shelter, CCCM and NFI. The sector has since coordinated an average of 70+ implementing partners who implemented activities in 16 of the 17 countries in which R4V is active (not including Aruba).

The regional sector structure has been reflected at the subregional, national, and, in some cases, local levels in which the Shelter/CCCM/NFI sector is generally unified into a multi-sector of basic needs for greater resource efficiency.

REGIONAL SHELTER/NFI STRATEGY

Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFIs) have ranked within the top three needs of the Venezuelan refugee and migrant population living in the 17 R4V countries regularly since 2019, as per the needs assessments conducted by various partners. In 2022, shelter and NFI needs increased, and ranked first in terms of humanitarian priorities in Uruguay, and second in Ecuador, Argentina, and Bolivia. The sector strategy is reflected in the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP) and focuses on the following four objectives:

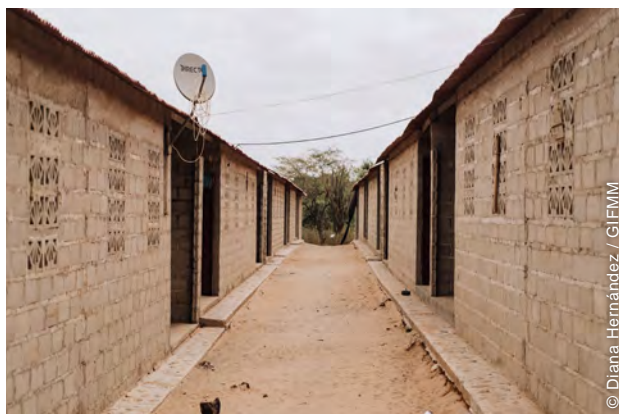
Objective 1: Temporary Collective Shelter.

The number of people in transit in the region has continued to increase since 2018. With COVID-19-related movement restrictions, border closures, and the economic crisis, travel conditions for refugees and migrants from Venezuela have deteriorated. As a result, the number of people crossing borders irregularly, traveling with very limited financial resources, and prioritizing survival needs such as food increased significantly. The Temporary Collective Accommodation response consisted of the creation of a network of humanitarian infrastructures that provided short-term shelter for people in transit or who had recently arrived at a destination. Due to COVID-19, the collective shelters decreased their capacity and had to house people for longer periods (up to 3 months in countries such as Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru).



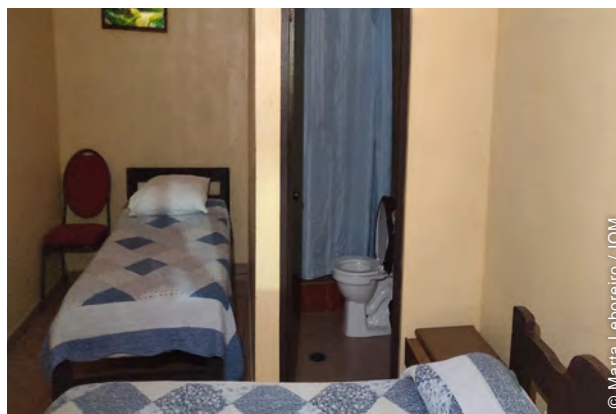
Centro de Atención Integral (CAI), Maicao, La Guajira, Colombia. The center was closed in September 2022.

The main activities linked to the first objective were: staff training, the management and coordination of centers (CCCM), and the opening and improvement of infrastructure. These centers served as places of rest and recovery for families, and offered comprehensive care, ranging from the delivery of NFIs to the creation of savings plans, legal assistance, and exit strategies for integration into the community.



© Diana Hernández / GIFMM

A host community in El Pasito, Riohacha, Colombia, gave part of its land to a group of organizations to build these houses, used as individual accommodations for the displaced Venezuelan Wayuu population.



© María Leboeiro / IOM

A view of a hotel room for the refugee and migrant population in Iquique, Tarapacá, Chile.

Objective 2: Individual Shelter Solutions.

Activities in individual shelter/housing solutions focused on achieving durable solutions for refugees and migrants who were at their destination. Likewise, specific support was offered to family groups in transit in areas where there were no Temporary Collective Shelters or where they were oversaturated. In the latter case, the response consisted of booking hotel rooms/hostels for 1 to 15 nights. In exceptional cases, as in Chile, certain hotels/hostels were rented in their entirety by humanitarian organizations, which was considered part of Objective 1.

As part of the R4V strategy to support the integration of the refugee and migrant population in host communities since 2021, the sector sought to strengthen and increase programs that facilitate access to adequate housing, particularly through rental assistance. The activities proposed in the strategy, among which is the delivery of cash transfers, are based on the global framework of access to housing. This includes issues and actions such as: Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) awareness campaigns, the rights and duties of landlords and tenants, a focus on avoiding situations of abuse and/or exploitation, conflict resolution, and housing improvement interventions, among others.

Objective 3: Community improvement in infrastructure and basic services.

The response itself has demonstrated in recent years the need to reinforce a territorial approach (Area-Based/Settlements) for a better integration of refugee and migrant populations in host communities. These approaches promote social cohesion by improving infrastructure and services collectively, with the aim of boosting socio-economic revival and security in marginalized neighborhoods. In 2021, sector partners reported an increase in informal settlements in the region, particularly in countries such as Colombia or Peru.

Objective 4: Distribution of NFIs.

This objective included the delivery of NFI kits and safe transit kits adapted to the climate of the place of transit (e.g., sun protection or warm clothing) at border points, along the migratory route, and in temporary collective shelters. The kits included items for COVID-19 prevention. In countries where the rental support programs had a longer trajectory, furniture, and other household items were also provided for the individual accommodation.



© Paula Vásquez / IOM

Delivery of safe transit kits to refugees and migrants in transit through humanitarian trucks in Huaquillas, Ecuador (border with Peru).

IMPLEMENTATION

From the regional level, the response primarily focused on coordination tasks, working hand in hand with the national and subregional structures that make up R4V. The work of this structure is reflected in the development of regional coordination meetings, workshops, and specific training, the compilation and dissemination of lessons learned and good practices, support and technical guidance to sectors and partners upon request, and advocacy and fundraising, among others. These activities made it possible to adequately monitor strategy implementation and identify new needs or changes in the context while enhancing the visibility of the housing situation for the Venezuelan refugee and migrant population.

Operationally, despite funding limitations, the Shelter sector was able to successfully carry out specific activities, focusing mainly on two areas:

- i. Capacity building for the partners managing temporary collective shelters, as well as technical support in the creation of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials.
- ii. Development and delivery of tools and technical guidelines for a better articulation of rental assistance programs in urban areas, and awareness of the importance of accessing adequate housing.

To acquire a holistic look at the shelter and NFI response for Venezuelan refugees and migrants, the sector sought to strengthen intersectoral work – particularly with Communication with Communities (CwC) / Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Health and WASH and Integration.

MAIN CHALLENGES

Remote work and geographic scope. Regional sector coordination work has covered 16 countries and more than 79 partner organizations, which primarily required working virtually with limited travel to allow for individualized follow-up in different countries. This created certain barriers between the local and regional levels. While technology has helped to minimize challenges, much work remains to be done to achieve light and fast communication between the various levels of coordination and with partners in the field.

Diversity of cultural contexts. The LAC region brings together different cultures, ethnic groups, and contexts – mainly determined by the geographical variety and historical background of the region. Defining a shelter strategy that can capture all characteristics of the context has been a major challenge, particularly to reflect the needs of minority groups such as displaced indigenous populations and culturally adapt the response in each local context.

Exit strategies. Sector partners consistently reported that one of the largest challenges at the programmatic level is the sustainability of the programs, heavily impacted by COVID 19 and the reduction of funding in recent years. This implied, for example, that in Temporary Collective Shelters and settlements in Brazil, the indigenous population was stranded for more than three years. Or in Ecuador, where it was required to accept re entry into temporary collective housing for people who had already left and were renting housing. Or also in Peru, where it has been necessary to design rental programs that assume previous payment debts to the landlords.

Coordination. While humanitarian coordination mechanisms have been set up in many countries dealing with conflicts, disasters, or complex crises – the R4V is not a traditional Cluster system and was first set up at the regional level. A lack of understanding of the coordination architecture and procedures for fundraising and reporting



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Informal settlement in Alto Hospicio (Tarapacá, Chile), which houses Venezuelan, Colombian and Bolivian migrants, as well as Chileans.



The town of Canaan Membrillo, Darien, Panama. First community to welcome Venezuelan migrants and refugees upon their arrival in Panama, hosting the Emberaa Wounan indigenous population.

posed major challenges for partners, and for the sector co-leaders who worked to define their role within the structure – linking the field level with the strategic and more political aspect of the response.

Lack of funding for coordination and operations. Funding gaps have severely limited the scope of the response. In 2021, only 21 percent of the funds required by the shelter strategy were received. This was reflected in the lack of available quotas in collective accommodation settings and the difficulties in the sustainability of individual housing programs. Due to funding constraints, it was also difficult for the project to acquire appropriate staffing expertise at various levels of the coordination structure – including in Shelter and Information Management.

Diversity of response phases. The continuous movement of the population, mixed flows, pendular flows, and coexistence among affected people who are at very different stages on their way to achieve durable solutions, emphasized the need for a greater diversity of activities in response proposals.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

The strategies defined within the Shelter sector guided activities implemented by partners, allowing a transition in the response focus through phases. In 2019, the work focused on emergency assistance – mainly through the delivery of kits. In 2022, efforts were focused on programs to promote access to adequate housing through a territorial lens such as initiatives linked to the evaluation of the rental market or the strengthening of landlord networks and HLP programs.



A temporary collective shelter in Brazil, led by the Brazilian government.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Adaptation to urban contexts.** The traditional humanitarian emergency response of planning camps and delivering tents has lost sense in urban settings, where emergencies are increasing. It is required to update programs and assistance modalities to approaches that would transition from emergency shelters to adequate housing, based on markets through an urban lens.
- **Crosscutting synergies.** Joint solutions should be explored between shelter, HLP, CwC, AAP and integration thematic areas to achieve greater social cohesion and security in marginalized areas hosting vulnerable and crisis-affected populations. For example, access to shelter with the registration of a postal address allows for better socio-economic integration of refugee and migrant families, as it gives the possibility to access regularization, documentation and schooling.
- **Inter-agency coordination.** The work developed in Temporary Collective Shelters is just one of the examples that helped to reflect how coordination mechanisms are operationalized in the field. These are comprehensive assistance centers for refugee and migrant individuals and for the community in which they are established. There are shelters where up to 11 partners work on different response types, as is the case in Ecuador.
- **Local coordination structures.** Mirror structures between the regional, national and local levels help to elevate and raise the awareness about the needs from the field, while allowing the correct operationalization of the response following humanitarian standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

The Regional Shelter Sector looks into 2023–2024 with the hope of continuing to strengthen the response at the urban level, in areas of destination of the refugee and migrant population while gradually reducing the need for emergency response for those in transit.



Children play in a temporary collective shelter in Tapachula, Mexico, 2022.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Venezuela: [A.10 / VENEZUELA 2020](#)

On Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Region: [A.4 / HAITI 2010](#); [A.39 / ECUADOR 2016](#); [A.3 / HURRICANE SANDY 2012](#)

On coordination: [A.17 / NEPAL 2015–2019](#); [A.16 / UKRAINE 2016–2021](#); [A.7 / NIGERIA 2017–2020](#)

CASE STUDY

VENEZUELA (REGIONAL) 2019–2023 / COMPLEX CRISIS

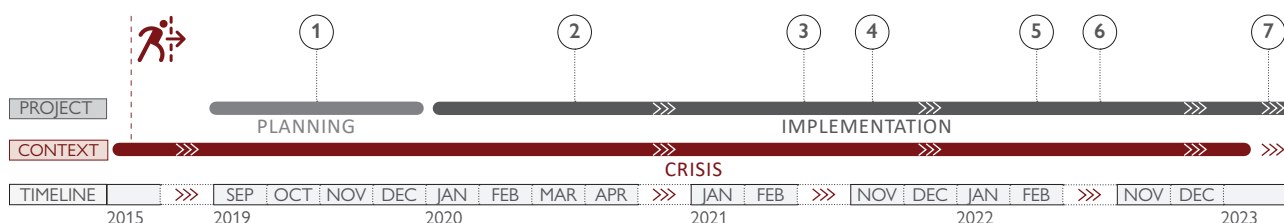
KEYWORDS: Community engagement, Infrastructure, Local authority engagement, Settlements approach

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| CRISIS | Response to the situation of refugees and migrants from Venezuela | |
| LOCATIONS | Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Panama, and Trinidad & Tobago | |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED IN THE PROJECT | 800 direct and 1,300 indirect beneficiaries* (average of 30 direct and 50 indirect beneficiaries for each of the 26 tactical urbanism actions) | |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 26 tactical urbanism actions (2 to 4 interventions per each of the 10 targeted cities) | |
| DIRECT COST | USD 4,000 per intervention* | |
| PROJECT COST | USD 6,000 per intervention* | |

PROJECT SUMMARY

The project aimed to formulate strategies to support the integration of refugees and migrants with host communities in neighboring countries of Venezuela. A key component of the project has been 26 tactical urbanism actions: strategic interventions in public spaces aiming to transform the physical conditions to promote the use of the space and the social cohesion of the users, strengthening community bonds and sense of belonging. The case study focuses on a particular intervention in Bucaramanga, Colombia, consisting of a poor-quality and polluted alley around a waterway, which was then transformed with the active involvement of the community into an open space classroom for children in the community without access to formal education.

*Note: The present case study focuses on the tactical urbanism actions implemented within a wider-scope project, and the above-mentioned figures of beneficiaries and costs refer only to those activities. The overall project's budget was 16 million Euros (USD 17.6 MN), and the outcomes were developed around five expected results: 1. Analysis, data, and evidence for decision-making; 2. Formulation of co-created solutions and plans; 3. Social Cohesion and Conflict Prevention activities (including tactical urbanism actions); 4. Capacity building; and 5. Community of learning. The project developed information tools for decision-making, urban plans to strengthen territorial conditions, activities to promote economic integration, and training for territorial stakeholders.



2015: First migratory movement recorded outside Venezuela.

- 2019–2020:** Methodological definition of medium and long-term integration of refugees and migrants at the territorial level.
- 2019–2020:** Baseline assessment to identify the opportunities and constraints of Venezuelan human mobility and host communities to access opportunities and rights in target cities.
- 2021–2022:** Co-creation workshops at the neighborhood level that allowed for the identification of differentiated access to opportunities and services for Venezuelans in comparison to local populations.
- 2021–2022:** Formulation of the intervention plan for target cities.
- 2022:** Implementation of actions to boost integration at the neighborhood level.
- 2022:** Co-creation and co-design of tactical urbanism actions.
- 2023:** After the co-creation process, participatory processes were conducted to implement the interventions, with communities being encouraged to participate in the construction process.



Venezuelan refugees and migrants cross the Puente Internacional Simón Bolívar, the busiest border point connecting Venezuela and Colombia.

CONTEXT

Since 2015, more than 7.2 million people have left Venezuela due to political and economic crises. Approximately 84 percent of those emigrated to neighboring countries in the Latin American and Caribbean regions. These figures do not include Venezuelan returnees, making the Venezuelan diaspora the most acute human mobility crisis in the region. The crisis has added pressure to the national and local governments, considering the already precarious social support systems and employment markets. Most Venezuelans have sought refuge in cities, which often could not accommodate this rapid influx in an adequate manner.

Due to the socioeconomic vulnerability of most of the migrants, flows have shifted from formal to informal. Crossing borders irregularly impacts access to employment and social support systems in the short- and middle-term, also increasing the overall poverty levels in host countries. Thus, governments face significant pressure and high costs for the provision of humanitarian assistance, public services, and employment opportunities while Venezuelans deal with constraints related to their widespread irregular status within host country economies already impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

Although Venezuela could be considered rich from a natural resource perspective, the country has a high dependence on oil – representing 99 percent of the country's exports. The drop in oil prices in 2014 gave place to a deep socioeconomic crisis that impacted access to services, goods, and the job market, resulting in the migration of millions of Venezuelans across the region.

Moreover, the economic and political situation generated a security crisis, with recurrent episodes of social unrest.

At the regional level, Latin American cities were subject to inequality before the influx of the Venezuelan diaspora. According to the Development Bank of Latin America, 23 percent of the people in the region live in settlements with inadequate housing conditions. Additionally, before the COVID-19 crisis, poverty rates reached 24 percent of the population while in 2021 this number increased to 26.5 percent.

For more background information on the context of Venezuela, see the [Regional Overview in Pg. 66](#).

SITUATION AFTER THE CRISIS

Available information shows that Venezuelan communities in host cities have most often settled at or near existing urban centralities (areas that concentrate on economic activities, services, and employment opportunities). In the Latin American context, urban spatial structure often limits access to fundamental rights (housing, basic services, education, health, employment, as well as culture and recreation) due to the presence of massive transportation systems, which impacts opportunities for Venezuelan and host communities living in areas disconnected from the main service networks.

Regarding access to livelihoods, refugees and migrants are predominantly employed in the informal sector – also concentrated in urban centralities. On a substantially higher degree than the host communities, Venezuelans are subject to unfair conditions (including lower revenue,



(Left) Target public space around the waterway in Bucaramanga pre-intervention; (Right) Resulting tactical intervention on target public space during the night.

longer hours of work, and no formal contracts) as well as a lack of access to social security. Regarding housing and affordability, Venezuelans live predominantly in rental units, often overcrowded, lacking access to a bathroom and/or a kitchen, and other basic services. Venezuelans also face constraints to rent properties at fair prices and are often rejected by landlords due to widespread xenophobia and discrimination.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

In the culture of Latin America, public spaces use to facilitate social and economic relations while providing opportunities for cultural, political, and religious events. Venezuelan refugees and migrants with access to public spaces can eventually build relations and bonds with locals to enhance their economic and social inclusion.

Different governments across the region have implemented efforts to promote access to adequate living conditions for the Venezuelan community. Colombia took a holistic approach intending to facilitate their access to housing but also to improve neighborhood conditions, investing efforts in the provision of social support infrastructure including schools, healthcare facilities, parks, and cultural spaces (among others).

PROJECT DESIGN

The project proposed a territorial approach, integrating multiple sectors and intervening at different levels, to promote the effective medium- and long-term integration of Venezuelan and vulnerable host communities across the region, developing an action agenda to be consolidated in Territorial Intervention Plans. These plans consider integration challenges at the city, neighborhood, and community levels and propose actions aiming to increase the potential of inclusion in urban areas.

These activities consider the location and situation (spatial, physical contexts) of Venezuelans in host cities, and identify challenges regarding their access to opportunities and adequate living conditions for the overall population of those neighborhoods and differentials in their access by Venezuelan communities. The plans collect those designed through participatory processes to improve prosperity conditions and access to the right to the city at the city, neighborhood, and community levels. Among them, the so-called 'tactical urbanism' interventions are included to transform spatial conditions while promoting social integration.

THE EXPERIENCE OF BUCARAMANGA (COLOMBIA)

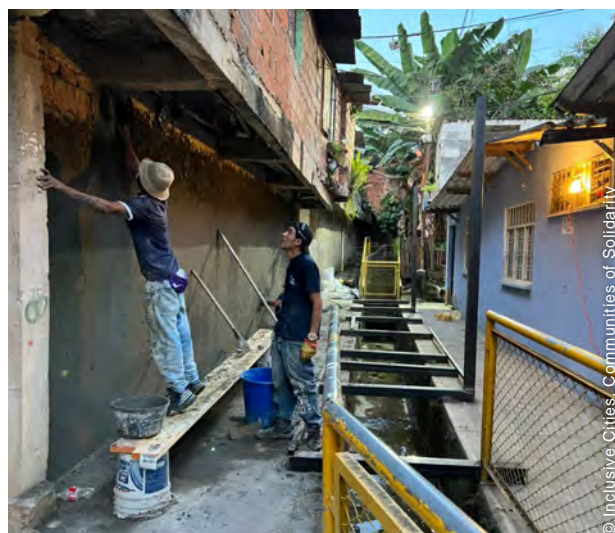
This intervention aimed to obtain a high impact with a low budget. It focused on a poor-quality and polluted alley around a waterway, which was then transformed into an open space classroom for children in the community without access to formal education. Lighting was also introduced together with sitting areas. The space started to be used daily by different community groups, at different

moments of the day, and for different activities. Children use the space for recreation with a community-based organization, while adults use it during non-school hours for social encounters and exchanges. Moreover, the intervention transformed the public space and its surroundings into a dynamic area (busy during the day and night) and consequently displaced criminal and anti-social practices related to drug dealing and consumption conditions and access to the right to the city at the city, neighborhood, and community levels. Among them, the so-called 'tactical urbanism' interventions are included to transform spatial conditions while promoting social integration.

IMPLEMENTATION

The intervention in Bucaramanga was implemented through the following steps:

1. Identification of potential public spaces through participatory processes developed with project participants, local government, and other stakeholders at different levels.
2. Action prioritization for the selected public space: through a participatory exercise (workshop) with the community, the project aimed to identify the primary needs and demands for the public space and territorial assets that could be seen as advantages during the intervention.
3. Co-design of interventions with participants (Venezuelan and host community members) according to their primary needs and demands.
4. Socialization of intervention proposal for community approval.
5. The physical construction with community participation – this was planned for approximately seven days, according to the complexity of the intervention.
6. Activation of the public space to promote the appropriation of the community by cultural and recreational activities.



Intervention process at target public space.

TARGETING

Considering that the overall project had a multi-scale approach, it included actions at the city, neighborhood, and community levels. Tactical urbanism actions were implemented at the community level in public spaces that complied with the following criteria:

1. **Ownership:** The area must be the property of the local government or the community to ensure that the action will be implemented strictly on public or community property.
2. **Risk condition:** The public space could be in an area with risk only when it does not imply vulnerability or healthy concern for users.
3. **Location:** The public space is located at a strategic and central point at the neighborhood level.
4. **Presence of Venezuelan community:** The public space must have the potential to be used by host and Venezuelan communities in equal conditions.

The selection of the public space in the Granjas de Provenza neighborhood was based on the above-mentioned criteria. The waterway crosses the entire neighborhood and is a center point for everyday activities. Moreover, the selection of the space was supported by the presence of Venezuelan and host communities considering that several Venezuelan households are living around the waterway. Finally, Venezuelan children are the most affected by the lack of access to education. Hence, Venezuelan children represent a significant percentage of the “Open Street School” participants, which after the intervention started to operate in the public space.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement was a vital aspect of the design and implementation phases of the project. Neighbors, children, and parents of the “Open Street School” participated. The engagement of the community helped to ensure the timely completion of the work.

A fundamental part of community engagement was the link and support of community leaders and the relation of the project focal point with community members in the neighborhood. Thanks to the proximity of participants, community engagement during the intervention helped to guarantee the sustainability of the action. As soon as the intervention was finalized, children utilized the public space and gave life to an open-street classroom. The last step of the intervention, the public space activation, was led and conducted by the project participant community.

COORDINATION

Although tactical urbanism was approached as an on-site intervention, the project designed and coordinated the action through a regional team (architects, urban designers, and an acquisition team) that organized the activities with

a focal point on-site. While the regional team was responsible for the design, technical details, and the provision of materials, the field focal point was responsible for the participation of the community during different phases. The intervention was facilitated by the support of local leaders, who contacted community members and promoted their participation. In addition, they also provided safe locations for materials storage during the construction process.



The co-creation of spaces contributed to social cohesion among the host and Venezuelan communities.



Members of the Open Street School at the intervention site.

MAIN CHALLENGES

The most pressing issue during the intervention was time. Considering that tactical urbanism consists of soft interventions (not civil engineering infrastructure), actions were not planned to take more than seven days. Longer interventions were considered not cost-effective. In the case of Bucaramanga, the team was able to complete 80 percent of the work on time. Challenges in material delivery caused slight delays in activity implementation. The community took charge of the remaining actions and finalized the intervention. Another relevant challenge was to provide technical direction to the community after the departure of the regional team, flagging the importance of counting on a technical person on-site to lead the preparation and implementation of actions.

Additionally, to facilitate community participation during the construction phase, the project organized its construction according to the availability of a specialized labor force. Hence, activities that did not require training were implemented at the times of the day when the community could collaborate most effectively. Considering security conditions, the presence of criminal gangs added pressure during the construction phase. The participants mitigated security threats and facilitated the full development of the intervention.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

Women and LGBTQI+ communities were considered a priority within the overall project. The intervention in Bucaramanga proved to be effective in the transformation of the physical space through the provision of furniture, lighting, and signs, promoting the space's use by all groups in the community. It did not consider the construction of civil infrastructure such as roads, retaining walls, or other similar items.

Within that scope, the action indirectly benefited the entire population of the Granjas de Provenza neighborhood through the transformation of the public space, the mitigation of environmental pollution, and the reduced risk of exposure to criminal gangs.

Moreover, the intervention directly benefited at least 20 children that were part of the community-based group and 20 households (around 80 people) living in the surrounding area of the intervened public space. Regarding Venezuelans, they are counted as both direct and indirect participants in the activity. As a result of the action, the surrounding waterway was transformed into a space for community encounters and recreation.



As soon as the intervention was finalized, children utilized the public space and gave life to an open-street classroom.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **The territorial integration approach was effective** to promote the inclusion of mobile communities while linking humanitarian assistance with effective integration and development.
- ✓ **Community participation** helped guarantee that proposed actions were responding to needs in accessing fundamental rights and opportunities (housing, employment, healthcare, education, recreation, cultural expression, and community participation).
- ✓ **Co-creation of spaces** strengthened the relationship between host and Venezuelan communities and boosted integration processes.
- ✓ **The support of community leaders and the municipal government** helped guarantee the sustainability of tactical urbanism interventions.
- ✓ **On-site teams oversaw the relationship with the community**, participatory processes, and general implementation. A regional team oversaw the coordination and provision of technical and specialized assistance.
- ✓ **Agreements with the local government** facilitated the obtaining of building permits.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

The project promoted the effective integration of refugees and migrants with tools flexible enough to be adapted for a differentiated approach for any vulnerable community. In that context, as improvement opportunities, the following conditions were identified:

- Establish a strong monitoring baseline at the city-level with the location of refugees and migrants that guide all project activities on the ground.
- Ensure the active participation of local governments in the design and implementation of tactical urbanism actions.
- Implement community actions (related to culture and recreation) from the beginning of the project to promote community engagement during next phases.
- Strengthen local stakeholders' participation in the project to sensitize participants on the advantages that migration could bring to the community and neighborhood.

WEAKNESSES

- ✗ **Limited budget and scope of interventions:** The challenges identified exceeded the reach of the project, security-, socioeconomic- and spatial-wise.
- ✗ **A lack of monitoring tools** to effectively measure the integration of participants.
- ✗ **The proposed methodology did not consider Venezuelans' limitations to participating in workshops** and community activities, especially related to time availability.
- ✗ **Difficulties in the relation with some stakeholders** (not considering community and community leaders) that influence public space dynamics, including criminal gangs, municipal officials, and private actors.
- ✗ **The municipal government provided permits but did not participate in the intervention**, due to their limited capabilities.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Tactical urbanism activities must be planned, designed and implemented with communities to enhance the sense of belonging and ownership.
- Community engagement activities are key to strengthening local bonds and facilitating participatory processes towards the interventions.
- Co-creation and participatory workshops should include activities for children so the entire family can attend, including parents (especially single mothers).
- Xenophobia can result from the sense of competition between host and vulnerable communities, collaborative projects can help mitigate this.
- Host and Venezuelan communities have the same expectations from their neighborhoods and public spaces, and both were willing to contribute to improvements.
- Future interventions should more heavily consider the availability of communities with a predominant share of work in the informal sector.
- Co-design and co-creation workshops generate expectations in the community. It is important to plan all phases within a short timeframe to adequately manage them.

FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On local authority engagement: [A.19 / IRAQ 2019–2021](#); [A.8 / BAHAMAS 2018–2019](#); [A.16 / UKRAINE 2016–2021](#)

On community engagement: [A.14 / PHILIPPINES 2016–2020](#); [A.18 / NEPAL 2016–2017](#); [A.23 / SRI LANKA 2010–2016](#)

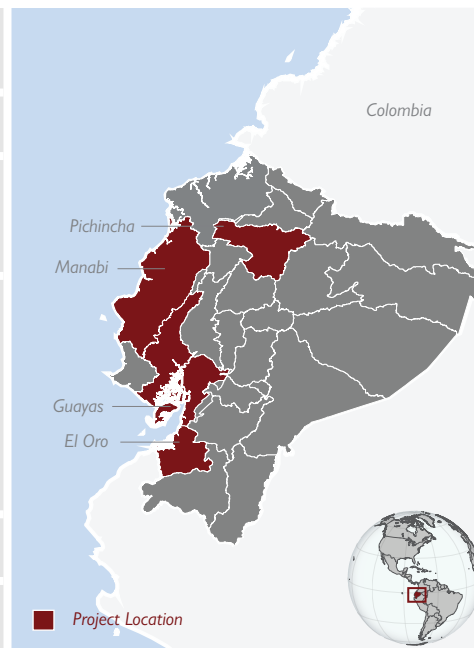


CASE STUDY

ECUADOR 2020–2022 / COMPLEX CRISIS

KEYWORDS: Host community integration, Local authorities engagement, Rental assistance, Security of tenure, Social cohesion

| | | | |
|--|---|---------------|---------------|
| CRISIS | Response to the situation of refugees and migrants from Venezuela | | |
| LOCATIONS | Guayas, El Oro, Manabi, Pichincha | | |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 13,358 individuals - 7,533 individuals from organization 1 - 5,825 individuals from organization 2 | | |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | Activities | Org. 1 | Org. 2 |
| | Repair and upgrade of collective shelter/housing | 54 | 24 |
| | Distribution of NFI | 675 HH | -- |
| | Cash-for-rent | 800 HH | 550 HH |
| | Training and grant support | 404 HH | |
| DIRECT COST | USD 4,142 per HH (Organization 1) | | |
| PROJECT COST | USD 7,300 per HH (Organization 1) | | |



PROJECT SUMMARY

The organization 1 designed a project with 3 components: 1) Protection - Connecting vulnerable families to the national protection network, supported with a multipurpose cash-based intervention (CBI) and non-food item (NFI) habitability kits; 2) Shelter - Providing shelter solutions by helping migrants and refugees move out of short-term shelters into long-term housing, building a trusted landlord network, and making infrastructure upgrades in single & multi-family housing units and community centers, and 3) Livelihood - generating capacities for self-employment and entrepreneurship.

The organization 2 designed a project focusing on infrastructure improvements of collective housing buildings (emphasizing durability and functionality), the establishment of new temporary accommodation centers, and the construction of community integration centers, aimed to provide spaces for workshops, learning activities, recreation, and protection(multi-sectors) present in 16 countries, coordinate the humanitarian response of the different actors in each country to the needs for shelter and NFIs.



Recreational area for children in a community centre.



Temporary accommodation centres.

CONTEXT

The Republic of Ecuador is in the northwestern region of South America, bordering Colombia to the north, Peru to the south and east, and the Pacific Ocean to the west. In 2019, the country registered an influx of more than 1,850,000 million Venezuelans, most of whom have transited through its territory toward third countries. It is estimated that approximately 417,285 of these individuals remained in Ecuador (R4V, June 2020). Approximately 70 percent of them were living in highly vulnerable conditions in spaces below the minimum habitability standards without access to infrastructure and basic services.

In March 2020, a border closure process began to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, a situation that evolved into social confinement measures and limitations on access to public space and to public services like health and education. This scenario also had an enormous impact on the livelihoods of the Venezuelan and Ecuadorian population, paralyzing informal income-generating activities to cover basic needs and the cost of rent for housing – adding to the strong impact in terms of mental health due to confinement and uncertainty about the future.

The pandemic exacerbated vulnerabilities caused by the difficulties of accessing decent housing and the absence of spaces for community integration that would support processes to strengthen protection networks and peaceful coexistence. The precarious conditions of accommodation had an impact on the increase in exposure to protection risks such as physical and sexual abuse, discrimination, exploitation, and human trafficking.

Despite difficulties, the Ecuadorian State managed to keep the Public Asylum System operating virtually. However, access barriers to housing were identified for comprehensive care and response to priority groups that were reflected in the continued assessments conducted in borders and main strategic cities on the South-North route. Refugees and migrants often found themselves constantly moving from one place to another in search of more affordable or better accommodation, as evictions increased significantly due to difficulties to pay the rent – leading to an increase in homelessness.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

Needs assessments conducted in Colombia and Ecuador identified shelter as the second greatest need for refugees and migrants from Venezuela. The regional Venezuelan migrant response network (known as R4V), identified the reinforcement of temporary collective shelter options, rental assistance as an individual option, and Area-Based Approaches as its main priorities.

For more background information on the context of Venezuela, see the “Further Reading” section on Pg. 85.

The sector response and related procedures were harmonized to support a complementary multi sectoral approach. Protection was to be mainstreamed to contribute to the mitigation of risks, including evictions and gender based violence (GBV). The Shelter Sector continued to work alongside the WASH, Health, and Food Security sectors to ensure access to services and assistance including COVID-19 mitigation activities. Additionally, the link with the Support Spaces Working Group was strengthened to provide timely information regarding adequate shelter



Migrants crossing Tufiño Bridge, one of the main gateways between Colombia and Ecuador.

options available across the region. Close collaboration was ensured with the Integration Sector to encourage the transition from emergency assistance toward durable solutions. The Shelter Sector response strengthened collaboration with the regional Cash Working Group, prioritizing the Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) modality for rent, temporary accommodation in hotels, and the provision of essential household items.

PROJECT DESIGN

This case study reports on the experiences of two organizations in Ecuador, which worked on similar projects with the general objective of improving the well being and integration of the most vulnerable people in Ecuador – including Venezuelan migrants and refugees – for the benefit of all people. This was addressed through three specific components: shelter, protection, and livelihood:

The shelter component focused on improving the housing conditions of Venezuelan migrants and refugees through the identification and adaptation of spaces for decent and dignified housing. This component aimed to facilitate access to adequate long term housing to enhance the welfare of the participant population and support the process of integration. To achieve this, the project focused on five activities:

- The articulation of (collective) shelter exit strategies.
- The implementation of Cash Based Interventions (CBI).
- The identification and creation of safe accommodation maps.
- The facilitation of guidance on the rights to housing and tenants.
- The identification, improvement, and adaptation of family homes.
- Improving community infrastructure and equipping common and individual spaces.
- The distribution of non food items.

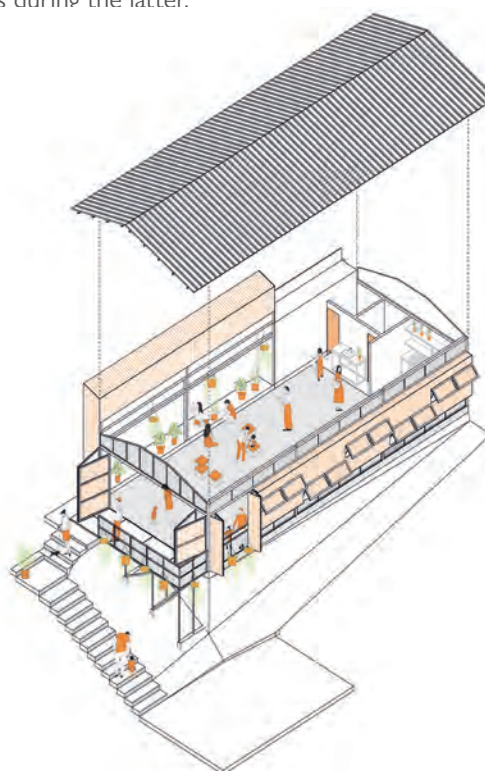
The protection component aimed to guarantee the fundamental rights of migrants and refugees, such as protection against eviction, exit strategies from collective centers, support for the homeless, the incorporation of project participant families into local protection networks, and the strengthening of community-based protection networks. These activities were approached from a gender perspective where women's unique needs were considered and prioritized.

The livelihood component aimed to strengthen economic support mechanisms through tools and training courses, with a focus on autonomy and the development of business schemes. It aimed to expand the income generation of participants through training and support for self-employment.

The project was designed with a comprehensive protection approach. Infrastructure adaptations through direct

implementation were complemented by direct assistance mechanisms through the delivery of cash and non-food item kits, training, and seed capital to generate means of self employment. This was done to enhance access to basic goods and services, aiming to enhance the sustainability of the intervention in the long term.

A two-year project was deemed necessary to better address the needs of full integration and economic independence of migrants. Integration can be a protracted process and most people encountered setbacks along the way – especially those with special needs. The project continued to assist participants throughout the first and second years of implementation while adding new participants during the latter.



The construction of community integration centers counted with differentiated adaptations for women, men, and children. The centers were equipped and furnished to accommodate various activities.

IMPLEMENTATION

The conceptual framework of Human Rights and Community Protection was holistically integrated with the project through the lens of Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) and other parameters proposed by the Sphere Manual.

YEAR 1

During the first year of the project, work teams in each territory were made up of three individuals: a protection officer, a social promoter, and an architect. The humanitarian assistance materialized through CVA, was initially delivered to homeowners as rent payments for the population of interest. Adaptations and interventions of infrastructure were directed primarily to multi family and single family housing spaces. Through the livelihood component, the project offered workshops and provided seed capital grants to participants who developed business plans, in addition to other activities that created opportunities for income generation.

YEAR 2

In the second year, a social worker was incorporated in each location to follow up on interventions carried out during Year 1. Regarding infrastructure, the implementation of friendly spaces for children and adolescents began in Year 2. These spaces promoted the right to education and play, generated safe spaces for the care of the little ones, and helped to optimize the time of adults responsible for their care. During the second year, interventions in Community Development Centers were addressed with greater force – generating greater impact on community well-being, starting from spaces already active in vulnerable areas of each city and improving homes within the parameters of decent housing.

Additionally, work continued within the protection component through the direct provision of assistance and the referral of cases to/from other institutions. Activities under the livelihood component consisted of the continuation of employability activities, training, the delivery of seed capital, and support for entrepreneurs.



Friendly space for children in the multifamily Callejón Solís in Portoviejo, Manabí.

TARGETING

The criteria for potential housing space and household selection were based on studies carried out by various organizations and the field experience of personnel who were working in the territory.

From the perspective of shelter, the selection criteria for dwellings were:

- Low cost rental living spaces managed, generally, by the owner, and that were rented long-term by vulnerable families.
- The owner or person in charge expressed sensitivity towards migratory issues and towards the population of interest and who showed a commitment to take part in the project.
- Minimum conditions of shelter and safety (without structural risk and with basic services).
- No evidence of rights violation for the tenants.

From the social point of view, the criteria for the selection of families were:

- Single-parent home with the presence of one or more family members with catastrophic or chronic illnesses.
- Single-parent household with the presence of one or more children or adolescents.
- Pregnant or lactating women.
- Single/widow women.
- Persons with disabilities.
- LGBTQI+ individuals.
- The elderly.
- Victims of trafficking, persecution, or torture.
- GBV survivors.
- Victims of domestic violence.
- Homeless individuals.
- Those in informal or formal temporary shelter.
- Those at imminent risk of eviction.



The making of a vegetable patch by community work with the people of the multifamily Carcelén in Quito, Pichincha. Manabí.

For the selection of dwellings and families, the intersectionality and sum of vulnerability factors were considered, and interviews were conducted by the social team to reduce possible risks and identify specific needs.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Neighborhoods with lower rental costs – and therefore the most common for vulnerable Venezuelan families – often have fewer public services and the community plays a key role in ensuring people's safety. To enhance community engagement efforts, support was provided by neighborhood leaders who helped facilitate access to the selected project locations. Without these support networks, it would have been impossible to complete activities.

The community protection strategy focused on the continuous monitoring and coordination of activities within dwellings and community centers, also contributing to the visibility and presence of other organizations of the protection network and local governments in each city.

COORDINATION

Coordination of this project was carried out at various levels. Internally, a coordinator was appointed for each of the three components (shelter, protection, and livelihoods). In the field, a project manager was appointed to coordinate the project with key actors (such as NGOs and government stakeholders) in response to the Venezuelan situation. This distribution helped to maintain a close accompaniment of activities by the field teams – optimizing resources, managing appropriate solutions, and planning the indicators in an organized manner.

Additional coordination mechanisms took place in specific sub-localities considering that the work and protection tables for refugees and migrants at the national level are present in each locality of the project.



Workshops on participatory design and social construction of the habitat.

MAIN CHALLENGES

Due to the complexity of each territory, particular challenges were identified in each of the provinces. A summary of the most relevant can be found below:

| Main challenges | Responses |
|--|--|
| Recurrent emergency dynamics at the border | Constant monitoring and evaluation of implementation modalities |
| The ability to call people of interest to participate in workshops was limited if there were no material resources to distribute | Planning of the delivery of humanitarian assistance with material resources was coordinated with other institutions to carry out workshops jointly |
| WASH infrastructure in the dwellings was old and deteriorated | Renovations were conducted within WASH infrastructure |
| Access to quality water was limited | Provision of water purification devices. Talks and workshops on good use and management of water |
| Waste management was inefficient | Talks and workshops on waste management |
| Structural problems in homes and community centers | Structural reinforcements |
| Humidity and fungi due to lack of ventilation or construction defects | Improvement of ventilation and sanitation of walls and ceilings |
| Lack of sustainability in the livelihoods component | Training and job placement supported by other organizations were reinforced |
| Gray water disposal | Interventions in sanitation infrastructure |
| Overcrowding caused by poor spatial distribution | Spatial redistribution |
| Very large territory | Strengthen and support the team with a greater number of people, coordinated with the team of other projects from the organization |
| Poor electrical installations | Improvement of electrical installations |

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Gender was the primary cross-cutting issue in project design and implementation. Across infrastructure, protection, and livelihood activities the specific needs of women and girls were considered at every stage.

Within infrastructure interventions, privacy considerations through the repair, replacement, and/or installation of doors in private spaces and sanitary batteries were prioritized. Bathrooms in common areas were also sectorized by gender. Spaces shared between several family nuclei were separated by internal divisions.

The asymmetric distribution of childcare efforts increased responsibilities and decreased free and productive time, especially for women. The target population lived in homes that, prior to the intervention, did not have friendly spaces set up for educational and recreational activities aimed at children and adolescents. From a shelter component, suitable and safe spaces were created for this social group where they could access their right to play and multiple learnings that affect their comprehensive development. For this, safe spaces for children's games were identified within homes for children and adolescents. It was verified that the spaces did not have any infrastructure risk and that they were accessible to all the people who lived in the home. The project also set up small booksellers that allowed the provision of literature, encyclopedias, and reference books to children and adolescents.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

Among the most important outcomes of the project were:

- In relation to housing access for one of the projects, 126 refugees and migrants were supported with the improvement of their homes, while 444 families benefitted from legal advice on accommodation and housing options. Additionally, 832 families received rent support for the first time and 827 families received rent support recurrently. Of the second project, a total of 615 families (2,422 individuals) were relocated into safe housing units and granted cash-for-rent.
- A total of 686 families improved the conditions of their homes through the reception of non food item (NFI) kits.
- Approximately 97 percent of families who received cash and in kind support indicated in post-activity monitoring that they successfully met their family's basic needs.
- A total of 36 community development workshops were held.
- Concerning infrastructure interventions: six community centers (common space), three informal shelters, and 45 multi family homes were upgraded. Additionally, 61 safe spaces for children and adolescents were designed and built within care network plans. The implementing organization also provided 197 tablets and 499 sim cards for connectivity and enhanced access to education.
- Seventy seven families were relocated from informal shelters to safe dignified and secured accommodations previously assessed and mapped and that have benefited from program improvements and upgrades.
- Reactivation of 24 neighborhood committees using a strengthening process in coordination with local organizations and governments.
- A total of 71 WASH plans were implemented and 68 COVID 19 prevention and hygiene plans were completed. Additionally, 1,011 bio health and hygiene kits were distributed.
- Access to safe water was improved for 1,907 individuals.

- Workshops to raise awareness of GBV were held in shelter spaces nationwide as a strategy for GBV prevention programs – having implemented 358 GBV programs to date.
- Within the livelihood component, 216 people completed skills and entrepreneurship training and received certifications, 192 business plans were assessed and 60 seed capital grants were provided.

Wider impacts related to the project include:

- The organization's habitability strategy was developed together with the main Shelter actors in Ecuador in 2019. The project provided improvements to the methodology, integrating income-generating activities for the supported families.
- The good practices and improvement of housing for the population in human mobility that emerged from this project were presented to the Ministry of Housing of Ecuador as an option to cover housing needs based on a methodology of housing improvement and protection. This allowed the organization to engage in meetings for the construction of the country's new public housing and urban planning policy, where much emphasis was placed on considering the specific needs of the population in terms of human mobility.
- This project also showed that it is important to cover the wider scale needs in terms of habitability and access to decent housing through infrastructure improvements, but with a focus on facilitating income-generating activities in the house. This has led the organization to propose an improved habitability strategy based on productivity, focused primarily on mothers who are heads of households who cannot leave their homes because they do not have a support network to care for their children. The organization is currently carrying out this strategy in another project.



Within the livelihoods component, participants completed skills and entrepreneurship training.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **An effective needs survey system** contributed to tailoring the emergency response to the assessed needs in each territory.
- ✓ **A participatory process was promoted** to strengthen space acquisition. This enhanced the sustainability of family stability to inhabit spaces and increase a sense of belonging and care for the space in the long-term.
- ✓ **Community and common spaces were strengthened** to support peaceful coexistence and integration between project participants and the host communities.
- ✓ **The protection and livelihood approaches complemented shelter programming** and enhanced sustainability from a more comprehensive and effective long-term sphere.
- ✓ **The assistance through MPCA** was calculated to exceed the cost of the rent, so that the project participants could also cover food, health, and education expenses.
- ✓ **Through this project, the existence of informal shelters was revealed**, which are hostel type spaces with costs of between USD 5–10 per night which have serious protection problems because they are frequently used as spaces of sexual exploitation. Newly arrived families with small children are often accommodated in these spaces. A continuous monitoring and follow up mechanism was established together with partners to provide information and services within these spaces in the province of Pichincha, which allowed some families to better understand the context and their options and ended up being relocated to safe spaces.



The community orchestra using the main room after the infrastructure intervention of the Art Center Picoazá in Portoviejo, Manabí.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Venezuela: [A.10 / VENEZUELA 2020;](#) [A.11 / VENEZUELA \(REGIONAL\) 2019-2023](#)

On coordination and partnerships: [A.19 / IRAQ 2019–2021;](#) [A.11 / BANGLADESH 2018–2021](#)

On social cohesion: [A.32 / TURKEY 2017–2018](#)

WEAKNESSES

- × **Inadequate staff planning by the executing agency led to delays** in the identification and selection of homes to be repaired and subsequent disagreements with owners. The technical shelter component should also have been involved during the first contact with homeowners and project participants.
- × **Within the livelihood component, it has been a challenge to enhance sustainability** within enterprises considering that the monitoring of each case ends with the project.
- × **It was a challenge to achieve sustainability among families** so that they could generate income once the CBI payment deadline is over, especially for the families that were taken out of the shelters with this payment. Exit strategies in that regard should be included in the design of the project.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

On the implementation of similar projects moving forward, the organizations have identified four main points:

- Implementing organizations should be highly selective concerning potential landlords to work with. This should be done to ensure that landlords will not mistreat the target participants after improvements have been made to their properties.
- An individualized approach in each territory should be followed from the beginning, understanding that the dynamics are different in each place.
- Accountability system and protocols should be prioritized. At times, the implementing entity's accountability to the project participant population was weak, and they did not know how to communicate with the implementing organization or submit a complaint. A new comprehensive protocol was designed that will be implemented going forward.
- Livelihood programming should be connected more closely with shelter assistance, to take advantage of the productive activities that occasionally may emerge naturally from neighbors in proximity and to enhance options for income generation. Through this, participants can pay the rent after project support ends. In the next phase of the project, "productive housing" activities will be conducted by providing USD 2,500 grants for training and equipment in ten multifamily housing units.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Multiple feedback channels should be opened with the participants as the project covered different aspects within the assistance. For example, for staff in the territory, it was important to establish lines of communication with individuals who use the same technical language in the search for solutions to unexpected problems.
- Within the context of Ecuador, there must be separate implementation strategies for each territory and not a general one, considering that the needs of each locality vary. For livelihoods, this relates to an openness to the different skills/trades that are in demand and the opportunities for training in each place.
- Inter institutional work is key to articulating and strengthening protection networks. Without a mapping of stakeholders linked to the project, aid to project participant families is inefficient.
- There are risks involved in outsourcing livelihood training because trainers might not know the target population well and might not be flexible to their unique needs.
- Implementing building upgrades from a gender perspective has been essential in the building of care spaces, especially spaces for children and adolescents.
- It is essential to understand and streamline the connectedness between habitability and protection to provide a more comprehensive response to many of the identified needs.
- A margin of adaptability within the project to different scenarios was essential for the success of the activities.
- This project showed that the primary selection criteria for a selected dwelling to function as a long-term safe space for assisted families revolves around landlords who show sensitivity and empathy towards the families' situation. In some dwellings where this selection criterion was not strict, families were evicted once the adjustments were completed. This situation did not happen as the project progressed because the implementing organization was more selective with owners and dwellings.
- The project provided several important lessons including the importance of building a strong relationship with host-community landlords in the shelter response, the potential of multipurpose cash transfers as a protection practice when it is properly monitored for ensuring the intended outcomes, and the increasing need to short stay shelters for new arrivals or people in transit.



The improvements implemented in the collective housing included recreational spaces for children.

CASE STUDY

HONDURAS 2020-2021 / HURRICANES ETA AND IOTA

KEYWORDS: Emergency shelter, Training, Transitional shelter, Wider impacts

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| CRISIS | Hurricanes Eta and Iota |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 4 million+ people* |
| HOMES DAMAGED/ DESTROYED | 82,307 homes damaged** 9,315 homes completely destroyed** |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 88,000 people in need of temporary shelter** 35,000 people in need of house repairs** |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Departments of Atlántida, Colón, Copán Cortés, Gracias a Dios, Santa Barbara, y Yoro. (24 municipalities in total) |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 3,208 HHs (14,264 individuals) |



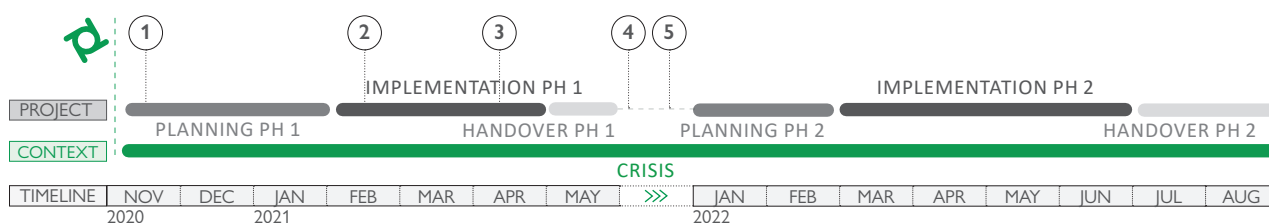
| | |
|-----------------|--|
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | <p>Emergency Phase and Early Recovery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3,208 HHs received Emergency Shelter Kits - Provision of Shelter Kit training at household and community levels to support repairing local housing and building transitional shelters with local materials through a self-recovery approach - Build Back Safer training and support to target households <p>Reconstruction phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resettlement of 26 HHs, to evolve from a temporary shelter to permanent housing |
| SHELTER SIZE | Temporary shelters were 18m² (3 x 6m) or 12 m² (3 x 4m) depending on resources available. |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 3.6 m² per person (average of 5 persons per HH) |
| DIRECT COST | USD 130.50 per HH |
| PROJECT COST | USD 218.20 per HH |

PROJECT SUMMARY

This project is part of a coordinated regional intervention in Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, led by three national entities of a global housing network, which worked in each country in partnership with the governments, and other local and international organizations. In Honduras, the housing agency partnered with an international NGO specializing in emergency shelter, a local branch of a civil society entity, and some local government agencies (municipalities). With this support, the project participants with damaged homes carried out housing repairs and extensions. Others whose houses were destroyed received support for their reconstruction processes through emergency and transitional shelter, and some of the most vulnerable with core housing.

*Weekly Situation Update, LAC, OCHA, Nov 2020.

**Factsheet, Honduras Hurricanes Eta and Iota, Global Shelter Cluster, Dec 2021.



Nov 2020: Hurricane Eta (Cat 4) and Iota (Cat 5) caused severe damage in Central America and the Caribbean.

- Nov 2020:** Agreement signed between the three partners.
- Feb 2021:** Arrival of the kits to San Pedro Sula from Panama.
- Apr 2021:** Distribution of emergency shelter materials completed.
- Jun 2021:** Relocation project completed.
- Jul 2021:** Envisioning a resettlement project.



Hurricane victims take refuge under a bridge in San Pedro Sula, Honduras.

CONTEXT

Honduras is the second largest country in Central America, with a population of more than 9.4 million as of 2021. According to the National Institute of Statistics (INE) as of 2020, 48 percent of its population is male, and 52 percent is female. The urban population is comprised of 5,157,115 (55 percent) inhabitants. The economically active population represents 43.8 percent of the working-age population, of which 23.4 percent is employed in agriculture, 18.7 percent in commerce, and 16.2 percent in industry. Financially, Honduras remains one of the poorest and most unequal countries in the Western Hemisphere.

Honduras is also a country vulnerable to various hazards, which generated 82 hazards between 1970 and 2019 – of which, 67 had hydrometeorological or climatic causes. The disasters generated by hurricanes Fifi in 1974 and Mitch in 1998, which caused 8,000 and 14,000 deaths respectively, stand out. Storms have become increasingly frequent in the country. Between the two hurricanes, there were six storms, and between Hurricane Mitch (1998) and Tropical Storm Eta and Hurricane Iota (both occurring in November 2020), there were 11 tropical storms. Before the two 2020 impacts, 25.2 percent of the Honduran population lived in extreme poverty and almost half (4.4 million people) lived in poverty, according to official poverty lines.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

The housing deficit in Honduras reached a total value of 1,366,691 housing units, of which 522,076 are new homes and 844,615 are improvements. About 11.5 percent of households do not have access to potable water, and 23 percent of homes have earthen floors.

Approximately 11.5 percent of the population in the Sula Valley Region resides in irregular settlements. Most of these irregular or informal settlements are in areas of the city without infrastructure (peripheries), on riverbanks, on the sides of old railroad tracks where train companies have not operated for decades, or in other areas at risk of flooding and landslides. These communities lack access to basic services such as water, energy, and sanitation. Poor socioeconomic conditions compound the disaster risk in the area.

SITUATION DURING/AFTER THE CRISIS

Tropical Storm Eta and Hurricane Iota affected at least 5 percent of the country's 1.8 million housing units. The most affected departments were those in the Sula Valley: Copán, Cortés, Olancho, and Yoro. These departments represent 37 percent of all occupied housing units nationwide but experienced 82 percent of the damage and destruction of homes with a total of 27,856 homes affected.

Over 71,000 individuals (among which 11,700 children) were displaced and accommodated in collective emergency shelters. A total of 93 schools, churches, and other buildings were used for this purpose.

Despite the efforts of communities, governments and NGOs, there was not enough space in evacuation centers for all displaced people following minimum standards of habitability. The lack of alternative temporary solutions (rental or hosting families), or available safe spaces for vulnerable population groups (pregnant women, nursing mothers, infants, children, etc.) exacerbated the overcrowding of the emergency shelters available, increasing the risk of gender-based violence and the spread of COVID-19 and seasonal diseases, such as dengue, chikungunya, and Zika.



Survey reports suggested that shelters faced challenges in implementing COVID-19 prevention measures and lacked access to water and sanitation, waste storage, power, non-food items (NFI), food kits, etc.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

The damage and needs assessments were conducted by the Office of Risk Management and National Contingencies of the Government (COPECO) with support from the Honduran Red Cross and other agencies of the Humanitarian Network (led by OCHA). In coordination with local and national institutions and authorities, and within the framework of national and municipal strategic plans, the shelter and settlements technical working group proposed the following response strategic lines:

- Support for the safe and dignified return of affected communities, with housing solutions designed for the short, medium, and long term.
- Support for interventions with a territorial approach, rehabilitation of infrastructure and community facilities in settlements, paying particular attention to the conditions of people with special needs and in circumstances of vulnerability due to gender, age, disability, etc.
- Identification of housing solutions to meet the population's needs in uninhabitable (unfit and high-risk) areas, considering context situations and special needs of groups with high levels of vulnerability and special needs.

PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

The intervention's objective was to assist vulnerable households impacted by the Eta/Iota storms in the north and west of the country. During the emergency phase, they were provided with tarpaulins and tools to repair damaged houses or set up temporary shelters for displaced people. They also welcomed technical guidance. Families living in high-risk areas who requested relocation to safer places received support in the recovery phase through transitional shelters that later became permanent.

IMPLEMENTATION

The project focused on:

- The distribution of 3,208 emergency shelter kits (comprised of tarpaulins and basic tools) and household items such as solar lamps, mosquito nets, kitchen sets, water filters, and rugs.
- Shelter kit training was provided at the household and community levels. The training was carried out by the technical staff of the national housing entity (who were previously trained virtually by its partner international emergency shelter NGO), which included information on the proper use of shelter kits and Build Back Better and Safer messaging.
- Building materials (timber and roof sheeting) were distributed to 130 households in the areas of greatest vulnerability and impact of the storms.
- Training and technical advice to support self-recovery was conducted for families and masons (the Municipal Emergency Committee, or CODEM) who accompanied families to help repair homes or build temporary shelters.
- The relocation of 26 households to safer areas with

basic services was conducted. Two municipalities offered land for families who were living in damaged homes in high flood-risk areas. From the planning of these new settlements, coordinated with the government housing institution (Comisión Nacional de Vivienda y Asentamientos Humanos de Honduras "CONVIVIENDA") and local municipalities, permanent homes were considered. First, transitional shelters were set up which had concrete foundations and the footprint of a future permanent home, tarps for walling, and Aluzinc sheets for roofing (plus a timber frame). The families lived in their temporary shelters for approximately one year, the time needed to get all the preparations for permanent homes, including financing. Then, families moved their temporary shelters to the back of their plots and participated in constructing permanent dwellings, with an area of 36 m² covered space.

TARGETING

Target communities were selected with the support of local governments, following the criteria of greatest need for temporary housing. A technical team visited all selected communities to collect data that informed the assignment of the type of shelter kits. In target communities, leaders were contacted to identify households in the most precarious and affected conditions, considering the following vulnerability criteria: social-economic vulnerability, age, marital status, and gender.

Additionally, the selection of households was based on need and shelter kit potential and adequate use, so that participants could either properly repair, adapt and rebuild their homes or build a temporary shelter in a safe and secure manner and location. Selected communities were clustered in villages or settlements. However, due to individual choice, level of damage, and family social-economic



(Left) Old man carrying a distributed shelter tool kit, March 2020. (Right) A woman and her son carrying distributed shelter and household non-food items, March 2020.



A view of transitional housing built in a resettlement site. Trainings at household and community levels enabled self-recovery of the targeted population. June 2020.

their homes or build a temporary shelter in a safe and secure manner and location. Selected communities were clustered in villages or settlements. However, due to individual choice, level of damage, and family social-economic conditions, some internally displaced households moved from collective centers back to their damaged homes.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Community leaders coordinated and participated in the selection of participants, the mobilization of the targeted population, and in the distribution of kits. The approach applied was mainly community visits, which were adjusted for each of the municipalities, in which measures to prevent the spread of COVID 19 were considered.
- Prior to shelter kit distribution, selected community members were trained and replicated the training further in their communities.
- Direct communication with the affected community took place during training sessions and when kits were delivered. Indirect communication was also carried out through community leaders who socialized in more detail with each of the participant families.

COORDINATION

Project partners actively participated in the activities of the Emergency Shelter Coordination Board, which was key to reaching those in need and avoiding duplication of attention to communities. In each municipality, work was coordinated with the relevant Municipal Emergency Committee (CODEM), who previously received support

from the government and other NGOs and supported the mitigation of activity duplication. In some municipalities, coordination with other NGOs took place, also led by CODEM which enhanced the response further through integrating WASH Solutions, hygiene kits, shelter kits, food, water, and other NFIs.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- No significant disasters occurred in the country in recent years, and the housing national organization had no longer staff with experience in humanitarian response efforts.
- Project planning took longer than anticipated, and implementation began months after the impact of the storms. The shipment of goods could not proceed until all parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding.
- The project faced challenges in transferring disaster response knowledge to local municipalities (i.e., in some cases, local authorities built 12m2 shelters that did not meet Sphere minimal standards).
- Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, local and national authorities had insufficient funds to respond to the storm disaster, and there were restrictions on staff movement and the implementation of community activities during the response period.
- Lack of sufficient funding for sustainable reconstruction phase due to the institutional context of the country.

LINKS WITH RECOVERY

The intervention followed the global housing network-designed approach, which aims to place affected families on a path that enables incremental progress toward achieving permanent and durable housing and settlements solutions. This focuses as much on the process of sheltering and risk reduction as it does on the factors that may support it. Thus, the activities implemented responded to priority short, medium, and long-term shelter needs to enable households to recover.

MATERIAL AND SUPPLY

- The shelter kits were brought by truck from Panama, where the international NGO specialized in shelter-prepositioned material in a regional warehouse.
- Roofing metal sheets and timber were purchased locally.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

- The response to this disaster was a learning process for the national housing organization, which prepared the organization better to respond to future humanitarian crises.
- The project was also fundamental in advocacy on land tenure, response capacity, risk reduction, affordable and proper housing conditions for the most vulnerable people, as well as with the national government institution CONVIVIENDA, to make possible the two resettlement projects that began with temporary shelters and transitioned to permanent homes.
- This response project involved several municipal governments and NGOs, collaborating with distributions and transportation in a coordinated and effective manner which set up a positive basis for any future response needed.



A view of the permanent dwellings built in a resettlement area. Following the global housing network-designed approach, progressively allowed to relocate affected families from flood-prone areas to safer plots.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Effective collaboration among partners increased programme synergies.** The national housing organization led the response at both the programmatic and implementation levels, with technical and financial support from the network. The international emergency shelter NGO provided shelter kits and expertise in this activity. The civil society local branch provided the availability of facilities, volunteers, and relevant contacts within target municipalities.
- ✓ **The international NGO specialized in emergency shelter** focused on the initial response, while the **housing national entity developed strategies** and built relations to facilitate the process to long-term housing and settlement solutions.

WEAKNESSES

- × **This was the first humanitarian response by the housing network national entity in many years.** Thus, its current staff lacked humanitarian expertise. After this experience, the organization has been positioned in the national humanitarian network as an actor with knowledge and experience in housing solutions, which also permitted the organization to be part of the Honduran WASH Cluster and work on other responses after Eta and Iota.
- × **The delivery of the goods was delayed** due to inefficiencies in the logistics management processes, resulting in slower-than-expected shipments.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Partnerships at various levels during implementation reduced costs and intervention times. Building alliances with social organizations working in the affected reduced logistics costs, as they may provide information on pre-existing needs and the relief distribution system.
- A prior socialized and signed MOU could help earlier project implementation.
- Local volunteer support was beneficial for the response (a group of approximately 40 people collaborated in the storage center to receive, unpack, assemble, or group and load the kits that were being dispatched to the communities).
- Prepositioning the shelter kits in Panamá anticipated the supply shortage that occurred a few months later for some items, such as tools and water filters.
- The involvement of participant families is crucial as it generates long term sustainability.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- Where project teams consist of multiple organizations and individual volunteers, a process of induction should be considered for ensuring the commitment of all the partners in meeting humanitarian minimum standards.
- For further replication of the activities, additional training for implementing teams to conduct distributions would be recommended, as well as training for partners and participants on how the shelters should be better located.
- Provide letters of guidance to local government that include clauses relating to the prohibition of politicization of aid. Further to this, the project team found that the more communities and civil society partnerships involved, the less likely distributions will be used as political tools.
- Logistics issues:
 - i. It would be worth tracking the full shipment of emergency shelter kits at the same time since this is a much cheaper option – if warehouse capacity is available to receive.
 - ii. Logistics scoping should incorporate diminished capacities of warehousing facilities due to COVID 19 mitigation.
 - iii. Deploying international teams (particularly logistics specialists) would have added additional capacity and should be considered where COVID 19 mitigation restrictions allow.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Honduras: [C.1 / HONDURAS 1998](#); [C.8 / HONDURAS 1974](#)

On transitional shelter: [A.7 / FIJI 2012](#); [A.27 / TANZANIA 2016–2017](#); [A.28 / GAZA \(PALESTINE\) 2014–2016](#)

CASE STUDY

BANGLADESH 2021–2022 / FIRE RESPONSE

KEYWORDS: Community engagement, Disaster Risk Reduction, Site planning, Transitional Shelter

| | | | |
|--|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| CRISIS | Major fire incidents in Kutupalong-Balukhali Expansion (KBE) Camps in March 2021 and January 2022 | | |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 10,473 HHs (50,037 individuals in total)* - 10,100 HHs (48,300 individuals), March 2021 - 373 HHs (1,737 individuals), January 2022 | | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Kutupalong-Balukhali Expansion (KBE), Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh (Camps 9, 8E, 8W in Mar 2021, Camp 16 in Jan 2022) | | |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 10,473 HHs (50,037 individuals directly supported); 895,515 individuals indirectly supported | | |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | Activities | Fire incident Mar 2021 | Fire incident Jan 2022 |
| | Shelter plots re-planned | - | 373 |
| | Slope stabilization | 77,444 m ² | 4,450 m ² |
| | Drainage construction | 12,546 l.m. | 206 l.m. |
| | Improvement of access | 8,388 l.m. | 250 l.m. |
| | Increase in WASH facilities | - | 19 % |
| SHELTER SIZE | 13.9-18 m ² (As per govt. guidelines on max. shelter size) | | |
| SHELTER DENSITY | Shelter density: 3 m ² per person Site density: 9-15 m ² per person | | |
| DIRECT COST | USD 1,091 per shelter USD 364 per HH for site development | | |
| PROJECT COST | USD 1891.5 per HH | | |
| *Fire Incident Initial Rapid Joint Needs Assessment Report, March 2021, ISCG | | | |
| *C16 Fire Situation Report, January 2022 | | | |

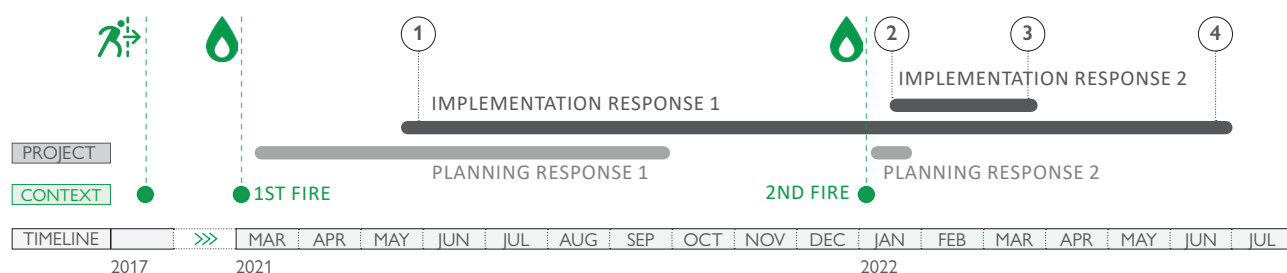


PROJECT SUMMARY

The densely populated settlement of Kutupalong-Balukhali was developed on hilly terrain, prone to recurrent landslides and floods particularly during the monsoon season; and also using flammable materials such as bamboo and tarpaulin for both shelter construction and site development works, as the settlement is considered temporary by the authorities. This case study analyses the responses implemented after two fire incidents which occurred in 2021 and 2022, reflecting on the (re)planning approach incorporated in the post-fire reconstruction. Addressing contextual challenges, the scale of the fires, and the social and political complexities, the response incorporated lessons learned from different approaches, and focused on a strategic, adaptive, and participatory planning process to address local priorities, sticking to the pre-fire layout.



A view of the affected area in Camps 9, 8E, 8W, the day after the fire in March 2021.



25 Aug 2017: Violence in Rakhine State which drove an estimated 655,500 Rohingya across the border into Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

22 Mar, 2021: The fire broke out in one of the densest areas of the camp, destroying over 10,000 shelters.

1 May 2021: Government issued an instruction on the allowed modality of Shelter support, i.e. to be built by agencies following an agreed footprint. By this time, the community had rebuilt temporary shelters on their pre-fire plots, in effect largely 'cementing' the pre-fire site plan.

9 Jan, 2022: The second major fire incident. The fire source was unique, and fire was contained relatively quickly.

2 Jan 2022: Government approval for planning approach in C16 reconstruction and allocation of shelter partners responsibility.

3 Mar 2022: Reconstruction of 2nd fire affected structures (with dedicated funding).

4 Jun 2022: Completion of the reconstruction of the area affected by the first fire in March 2021.

CONTEXT

Since the 1970s, multiple waves of Rohingya have fled from Rakhine State in Myanmar to Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. The largest influx occurred in August 2017, with more than 745,000 Rohingya seeking safety from violence – leading to the establishment of densely populated camps on hilly and flood-prone terrain. Five years later, around 920,000 Rohingya refugees are solely dependent on humanitarian aid to survive and remain in five nearby locations – including the world's largest refugee settlement.

Due to deforestation and the loss of green coverage caused by rapid self-settlement in 2017, shelter construction – as well as access and slope stabilization efforts – utilized flammable material such as bamboo, tarpaulin, and geotextiles in congested areas with limited access routes or fire breaks. Since 2017, more than 404 fire incidents of a varied scale have occurred; among which two significant fires occurred in March 2021 and January 2022 affecting 48,300 and 1,737 individuals respectively.

For more background information on the Rohingya crisis, see [A.11](#), [A.12](#) (Shelter Projects 8th edition), and [A.14](#), [A.15](#) (Shelter Projects 2017-2018).

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

Government restrictions against expanding the camp area or allowing the construction of two-story shelters limited any possibility to decongest the most overcrowded zones, and created significant challenges to providing fire breaks or improving emergency access. The presence of a major market in the relevant area also made households reluctant to be relocated – even to areas with significantly better conditions and lower risks.



Debris removal started immediately in the initial phase of the response in both the fire incidents, involving many community volunteers and laborers.

Fire response tasks in the camps were assigned to the Disaster Management Unit (DMU) Rohingya volunteers, who were regularly trained to act as the first line of responders to fire incidents. The DMUs established available fire points (drums filled with water) scattered across the camps and supported in extinguishing small fires or containing larger fires by demolishing structures and creating fire breaks until the national fire service would arrive (which could take over an hour). Additional systems such as small vehicles equipped with mobile water tanks, a network of water reservoirs with easy-to-access hydrants, and fire stations within the camps were implemented gradually to complement existing mechanisms for fire response.

SITUATION DURING/AFTER THE CRISIS

The fire incident in March 2021 spread across 63,590 m² in Camps 8E, 8W, and 9, impacting 48,300 individuals directly (including 11 fatalities) and destroying 10,100 shelters and all major facilities in one of the most highly congested areas of the camps. Slope stabilization in the area was largely affected, and accessibility, drainage networks, and solar streetlights were also damaged. Despite generous funding dedicated to reconstruction, gaps remained in infrastructure coverage in the fire-affected area more than one year after the incident.

A later fire incident in January 2022, while considerably smaller than the previous event, still affected 15,425 m² in Camp 16 – impacting 1,737 individuals and destroying 373 shelters and communal facilities. As before, slope stabilization, stairs, pathways, and drainages were heavily damaged. Dedicated funding was again provided, and since the area was much smaller, the reconstruction of most of the affected infrastructure was possible in a timely manner.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

In the immediate aftermath of each fire, United Nations agencies, NGOs, and partners – in coordination with the government – began providing life-saving services and emergency support (including food, NFI distribution, and temporary shelter items such as bamboo, tarpaulins, rope, or tents). This was followed by the reconstruction of shelters, public facilities, site development works, and WASH blocks during a second phase.

After the first big fire incident in March 2021, prolonged negotiations with the authorities regarding the prescribed shelter sizes for varying family sizes delayed the start of shelter reconstruction and prevented substantial replanning, as families had already rebuilt on their pre-fire shelter footprints.

In addition, advocacy efforts from humanitarian actors coordinated at the cluster level to maintain minimum standards of shelter size were unsuccessful, as the government-approved shelter for households of up to six members (13.9 m²) was smaller than the previous design used as a reference in the replanning exercises (18 m²) – which entailed reiterative community consultation.

During the fire incident of January 2022, quick instructions were provided by the government to all partners to hold reconstruction until a site plan was prepared within seven days and clear guidelines on shelter size were already available from the previous event in 2021. This ensured shelter partners' commitment to contribute to the development site plans and effectively guided the reconstruction of slope stabilization and shelters on time.

PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

After the March 2021 fire incident, the replanning of the fire-affected area aimed to build back safer through the identification of new roads, fire breaks, landslide risk areas, priority areas for replanning, and rationalized facilities. While the first two actions were successful, the comprehensive replanning and redevelopment of these priority areas was rendered impossible by delayed confirmation of the mandated shelter design, as the community had already largely rebuilt on their existing plots before it was even possible to discuss site plans with them.

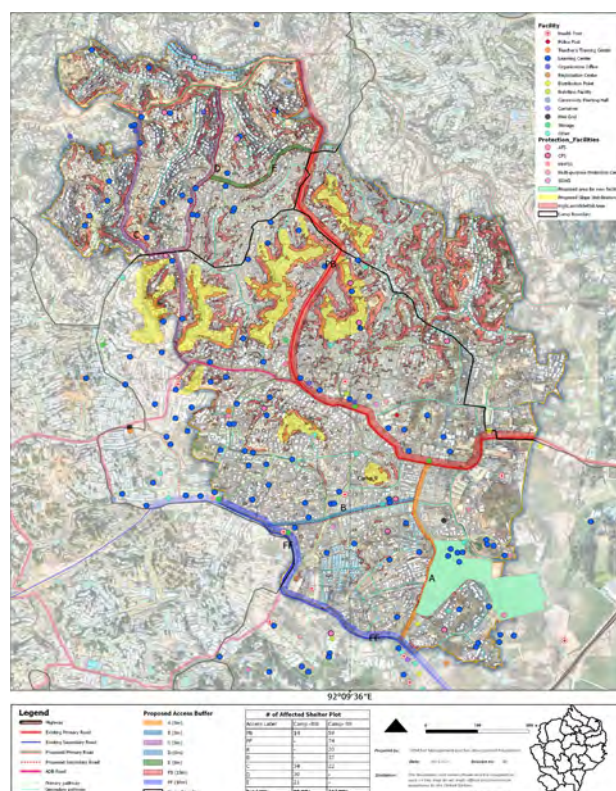
Instead, the initial comprehensive replanning approach changed to a 'row-by-row' approach, which set out a series of steps and indicative plans for shelter partners to develop localized site plans with groups of 5 to 15 families living in consecutive shelters (shelters are often placed in rows along terraces considering the hilly topography). This included discussions with the community and the aim to closely follow the existing layout while trying to secure local improvements (uniform plot sizes, additional WASH facilities, wider pathways, etc.).

Following the approved shelter design, a sample was built in a central location of the affected area to be explained to the community for households that would agree to

replace their recently rebuilt shelter with the government-approved design. The households were registered, and community members willing to take part as labor for camp reconstruction were trained on the techniques used. During the following months, more than 90 percent of the affected households agreed to have their shelter reconstructed, as the new one (while slightly smaller), would be built using bamboo poles treated against insect infections, metal footings anchoring the frame to the ground while preventing its degrading by the ground dampness, and steel-rod connections between the main frame elements.

However, due to an early agreement with the government, the site planning team was obliged to provide formal site plans – even after it became clear the approach was not appropriate. Though it was made clear that the plans were indicative only and should be superseded by the plans developed locally through the row-by-row approach, this created challenges in some situations, for example with a WASH actor seeking to build a latrine exactly where shown on the preliminary indicative plan, but where a shelter had since been built.

After the January 2022 fire incident, utilizing learning from previous experience, the replanning focused on making local improvements to the pre-fire layout, addressing priority issues of access, drainage, slope stabilization, and WASH gaps while incorporating feedback from the community and all stakeholders from the initial assessment stage. An on-site participatory planning approach was taken from the start which enabled better field coordination with all partners and better engagement with the community. In this case, no indicative site plans were provided before



A 'Priority Access and Landslide Risk Areas' map, prepared during the planning phase for Camps 9, 8E and 8W after the first incident in March 2021.

the community consultations but rather developed during field visits, incorporating community feedback. Site plans remained adaptive and provided options for replotting through door-to-door community consultations. This helped to create achievable and agreed-upon site plans in a complex site which were followed by the reconstruction of shelters and WASH facilities.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Reconstruction work in response to the 2021 fire incident took over a year given the caseload of over 10,000 shelters, compared to only three months after the 2022 incident of 373 shelters. The site planning period was also substantially longer in response to the 2021 fire (three months compared to two weeks), though site planning and reconstruction proceeded simultaneously (the site planning team was almost the same size for both responses, despite the difference in scale).

After the first fire incident, the implementation of larger-scale priorities such as the creation of new access roads (which double as fire breaks) and slope stabilization worked well, contributing to long-term hazard mitigation in the area. Moving from comprehensive replanning to a 'row-by-row' approach allowed Shelter and Site Development teams to implement quickly while securing local improvements. Though the indicative site plans provided some guidance to the teams on the ground (for instance, as to areas where additional latrines were needed and might be best placed), they also at times created confusion and even the risk of forced relocations when plans did not match spontaneous community-led reconstruction. It would have been preferable to abandon the indicative plans once it became clear that the more ambitious replanning approach was not feasible, as the developing of these plans also absorbed site planning resources that could have been better used in the field.



A map of the 'Existing Access Network' with network bottlenecks prepared in order to address them by replanning. (Second fire response, January 2022).

The implementation timeline for the 2022 fire response is highlighted below:

- **Initial Phase:** Debris cleaning and emergency support, including temporary shelter and WASH and NFI kit distribution, began immediately. Communication to communities regarding the steps of the response was also delivered from the beginning. The initial phase also included a needs assessment for shelter and site development works and – from the site planning perspective – the identification of bottlenecks and opportunities to improve overall access, fire breaks and drainage networks.
- **Clear frameworks and approvals:** After the second fire incident – building on experience from the previous one – advocacy efforts to obtain clearance from the government on replanning and shelter reconstruction resulted in timely instruction from the government on shelter size and the endorsement of the planning approach – which enabled a more coordinated response.
- **Reconstruction phase:** The affected area was divided into zones (each one assigned to one shelter partner – or rows) to facilitate the quick reconstruction of shelters. Plots were categorized as follows to indicate whether shelter construction could be started:
 - i. Plot is ready for shelter construction.
 - ii. Plot requires site development work before reconstruction or not.
 - iii. Community agreed to the site plan or consultation in process.

In parallel, site development work was done to prepare plots for shelter and WASH facilities. Door-to-door community consultations with site plans were done through shelter partner and site management through the implementation period to validate the plans and integrate eventual changes.



Site development work of reconstruction of bamboo slope stabilisation and access carried out by people engaged in Cash for Work, February 2022.



(Left) Re-planning of the fire affected areas focused on access and drainage, amongst others. (Right) View of the reconstruction phase with emergency and transitional shelters.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Intensive community consultation was carried out following both incidents:

- After the first incident (2021), the Communicating with Communities (CwC) team had multiple discussions with community groups at the 'maji-block' level (around 100 families) in the weeks immediately following the fire, aimed at understanding the priorities of the communities and their willingness for replanning and redeveloping the area. They were supported by the Site Planning team, who produced indicative plans for them to use as the basis of discussions. The community was initially very willing to engage in the process, but this was challenged first by the delay in confirming the approved shelter size and then by the size itself, as it was significantly smaller than the community deemed acceptable.
- After the second incident (2022), community consultation took place from the initial assessment and data collection stage, and community demands on access, drainage, and WASH were incorporated prioritizing the needs of Persons with Disabilities (PWD) or Extremely Vulnerable Individuals (EVI). Group sessions and door-to-door consultations took place throughout the implementation period and site plans were continuously adapted.



The Communicating with Communities (CwC) team engaged with the community groups to understand their needs and priorities, which helped the Site Planning team to develop the plans for replanning.

COORDINATION

Overall coordination at the field level during fire incident response was conducted through regular meetings to share information, set priorities and avoid duplication with all sector focal points, partners, and government representatives. Instruction to partners regarding site plans after the second fire incident (facilitated by joint technical visits and participatory planning) reduced gaps in coordination and enabled a unified approach to reconstruction.

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Unplanned construction, the narrowing of waterways and hill cutting accompanied by increasing demand for new construction in a monsoon climatic area pose great risks of landslide, flooding, and fire hazards in the camps of Cox's Bazar. A total of 81,894 m² of slope stabilization for plot preparation, 8,638 linear meters of vehicular roads, pathways, stairs, and bridges and 12,958 linear meters of drains were reconstructed after the major fire incidents which contributed to mitigating landslide and flooding risk and reinstate and improve access. The improvement of road and pathway networks is particularly important to create fire breaks, facilitate the access of the firefighting response and improve evacuation routes in case of emergency.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- **Limitations of the re-planning:** Considering the context in the fire affected camps – in hilly areas with high density and the requirement to accommodate back all affected households in the same area and the limitations imposed in terms of shelter typology and materials, the capacity from the replanning carried out to improve the networks and site plans was reduced. Opportunities were identified and locations where the replanning could lead to bigger improvement were prioritized.
- **Timing:** Though the field-based process helped coordination efforts – the need to provide site plans before the shelter reconstruction forced the teams to work quickly, and site plans were to be delivered within seven days. In some locations, slope stabilization

efforts were needed prior to shelter reconstruction. The affected area was thus divided into zones and site planning activities began in parallel so that all partners could operate simultaneously where needed. improvements created opportunities for plantation.

- **Data availability:** Family data from fire-affected households were outdated and there were no spatial references to the data. During community consultations, some community members presented borrowed family counting number cards to receive bigger shelter/plot allocations. Later, family data was updated, assistance delivered and planning done according to real household size.
- **Social context:** In some cases, the host community resided next to target refugee households. In some instances, during replanning and plot preparation activities, host community members did not allow the works for slope stabilization and access to be carried

out on their plots. This delayed the process and further discussions were needed, which prevented some planned improvements.

WIDER IMPACTS

Improved living conditions through replanning (reduction of bottlenecks for access and drainage) and increasing the number of WASH facilities by 19 percent (2nd fire incident) were primary outcomes of the project. Improved accessibility ensured safe movement and access to facilities – especially for Persons with Disabilities and EVIs. This created further emergency evacuation routes while improvements to the drainage network helped flood mitigation and ensured the safe discharge of grey water and rainwater by preventing water to get inside shelters. Slope stabilization works contributed to overall safety from land erosion of shelter and facilities plots, and access and created opportunities for plantation.



A view of Camp 9 after the reconstruction in April 2022.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Integration of lessons learned and change on planning modality.** On-site planning, together with shelter, WASH, Site Management and Site Development (SMSD) field teams helped reduce gaps in communication, enhance understanding of priorities, encourage community feedback, and reduce the gap in site-planning and implementation.
- ✓ **Community messaging and consultation:** Community messaging and consultation played a key role in the implementation of the site planning and reconstruction activities. Community consultations were done through several phases, such as during preliminary community messaging on the steps for shelter reconstruction and the purposes and modalities for re-planning, during door-to-door consultations, during validation of site plans, and implementation.

WEAKNESSES

- × **Planning timeliness and rigidity of approved plans.** A comprehensive replanning effort takes time, while reconstruction efforts happen quickly – limiting a plan's capacity to guide reconstruction. This was the case after the first fire incident where the development of the plan took longer (due to the lack of clarity on the shelter size approved and scale of the incident). As a result, the final plan approved by the government did not reflect the situation on the ground and, in some instances, led to relocations of reconstructed shelters to make space for WASH blocks according to the approved plan.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Agreeing on the process and setting parameters.** Any delays in setting the parameters for replanning will render substantial replanning impossible, as communities will take matters into their own hands. A context-specific Standard Operations Procedure for fire response and reconstruction defining the roles and responsibilities across different sectors and clarity on government approvals and limitations is key to facilitate the process.
- **Risks of the enforcement of site plans.** Implementing organizations should avoid the production of rigid site plans for government approval, especially if substantial replanning may not be possible. The extent of realistic site planning and further adaptation through community consultation should be clarified to relevant authorities.
- **Prioritizing planning at different scales.** The cost/benefit of the replanning needs to be assessed, as reconstruction on the ground cannot wait until thorough and comprehensive site planning is completed. Some replanning components such as facility rationalization and decongestion require lengthy procedures which may be too ambitious during a quick response. If the scale of the fire is large, it may be preferable to prioritize replanning larger-scale infrastructure such as access roads and priority facilities – identifying more strategic opportunities for improvement in networks while not defining in detail the plot in some pockets or areas where, considering the topography or the context, little benefits or improvements can be achieved with replanning.
- **On-site planning and securing space for key infrastructure early on:** Joint technical field visits and on-site planning with all stakeholders decrease gaps in coordination and time needed for replanning while enabling a more participatory approach. Hand-drawn site plans were a useful tool, which allowed consultation and flexible changes on the ground to ensure that alterations are consistent with reality and topography. On the contrary, a desktop planning approach required time-consuming data collection in the field to guide decision-making for planning and is less flexible to integrate changes and inputs from consultations. Some preparation in terms of analysis of existing networks, hierarchy, and opportunities should be done from the desktop prior to on-site planning sessions and as early as possible in coordination with partners.
- **Ensuring participation.** To facilitate participation, door-to-door consultations, and group discussions were held to collect updated data on family size. This was important to ensure that the allocation of space and support to each household was accurate and fair, according to agreed-upon standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- **Increased Participation.** With more resources in terms of community mobilization and consultation, it could be possible to be more ambitious on the possibilities for re-planning to achieve more significant improvements on the layout and facility coverage. This would require participatory planning sessions with communities which could be integrated in the re-planning process and would need dedicated sessions with different community groups (women, community leaders, etc.).
- **Strengthened Advocacy.** Further advocacy on double story shelter and improved facility coverage could allow for more improvements through replanning. In the Cox's Bazar context this might not be feasible considering approvals however in other contexts can be considered and would benefit the replanning outcomes.



Reconstruction of the fire affected shelters in Camp 9 through Cash-for-Work.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Bangladesh: [B.1 / BANGLADESH 2009](#); [B.2 / BANGLADESH 2007](#); [A.13 / BANGLADESH 2017–2018](#);

On site planning: [A.9 / SOUTH SUDAN 2018](#); [A.26 / IRAQ 2016–2017](#); [A.18 / NIGERIA 2015–2016](#)

On fire responses: [A.38 / CHILE 2014-2016](#)

CASE STUDY

CAMBODIA 2018–2021 / DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

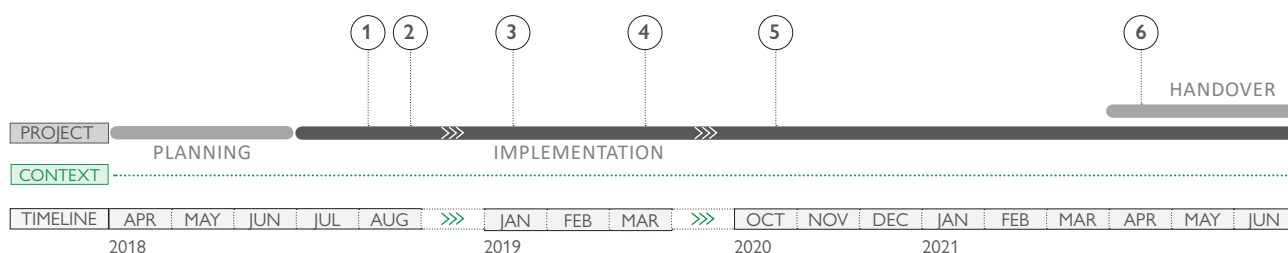
KEYWORDS: Conditional cash transfer, Disaster Risk Reduction, Infrastructure, PASSA

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| PROJECT LOCATION | Battambang province, Cambodia |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 42,270 individuals directly supported 82,556 individuals indirectly supported |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | <p>48 Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA) groups with 415 members (257 females), were formed and trained on the approach</p> <p>48 disaster action plans were developed, and 30 community projects were implemented</p> <p>42 urban informal settlements leaders received Training of Trainers on housing policy</p> <p>1,052 individuals were trained in housing-related policies</p> <p>1,669 individuals attended awareness raising events</p> |
| DIRECT COST | USD 360-3,900 for each of the community projects |



PROJECT SUMMARY

The project focused on reducing the vulnerabilities to disaster risks and enhancing the response capacity of the communities living in informal settlements in Battambang city, most of which were set up in areas with high risks of flooding, landslides, windstorms, and fire. Through the Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA), groups were formed in different settlements involving the communities, and other governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, for the development of Disaster Action Plans. Following the plans, 30 community projects were implemented with the resources mobilized by the project.



- 1 Aug 2018:** Introducing the project to relevant stakeholders and project partners.
- 2 Aug–Dec 2018:** Initiating and introducing the approach in the target communities of the project.
- 3 Jan 2019–Dec 2020:** Forming of the groups in the target villages and building of their capacity.
- 4 Mar 2019–Apr 2021:** With micro-grant support, the groups implemented their community-based Disaster Response, Recovery and Restore-oriented projects.
- 5 Oct–Nov 2020:** Part of the group's scope of work, they mobilized the resources to respond to the flood crisis.
- 6 Apr 2021–Jun 2021:** The project's final evaluation was undertaken and documented.



Participants of the PASSA groups played an integral role in the community-designed plans.

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CONTEXT

Cambodia is one of the most disaster-prone countries in Southeast Asia due to hazards such as floods, storms, typhoons, and cyclical droughts, which frequently result in significant economic and social impacts. Poor rural areas and urban informal settlements in Cambodia bear the brunt of these hazards and continue to experience crippling challenges due to poor adaptive capacities, which are worsened by the negative influence of climate change. Shelter and settlement risks and vulnerabilities are also increasing due to changes in disaster trends, the impact of climate change, growing social and economic marginalization, and the impact of the process of urbanization.

Informal settlements in the developing world are increasing in number and worsening in living conditions in the face of overpopulation, economic instability, and unprecedented climate variance. In Cambodia, cities act as powerful magnets for rural populations who lack local opportunities and who seek to achieve prosperity for their immediate and future generations. However, these cities fail to provide basic needs and services for increasing numbers of internal migrants. In Battambang City alone, the municipality recorded in 2018 that 2,586 households were living in 34 informal settlements, which had been set on public lands such as road edges, railways, riverbanks, and canals, and therefore without any tenure security for the inhabitants. Like many secondary cities, Battambang suffers from a land deficit, and accessing decent housing is not only difficult but economically unfeasible for the urban poor.

Battambang is one of Cambodia's largest provinces. It is located on the northwestern side of the country and is comprised of interconnected landscapes and watersheds that provide essential ecosystem services to the region. The province relies on the Sangker River, which served as the primary foundation for city and agriculture development. Battambang City consists of ten Sangkats (or districts) and 92 villages with approximately 196,709 residents. Urban regulations have often failed to keep up with rapid urbanization, leading to a heterogeneous urban fabric.

Several informal settlements were set along the Sangker River and railway, in areas prone to landslides and flooding.



A flooded village in Cambodia's western Battambang province, following heavy rains in the region, October 2020.

Most of them consisted of tiny wooden houses without access to water or proper sanitation services. Many households were living without land titles in areas where authorities could carry out relocations if the land was needed for development. Many households' livelihoods depended on work in small local businesses such as street food vendors, motor taxis, or household labor.

In late 2020, tropical storms resulted in severe flooding in Battambang province. Most residents living along the Sangker River experienced damage in their houses, as well as in the roads and drainage systems. A total of 66,088 households were affected, and 4,592 of them were displaced, struggling to access clean water and hygiene during the evacuation, which exacerbated tropical illnesses among the displaced. The Government distributed food and cash and coordinated with humanitarian partners for complementing the provision of food as well as WASH, NFIs, and shelter kits.

PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

The implementing organization has operated in Battambang since 2007. Before the 2020 flood event, the organization implemented housing, WASH, and urban development projects in the area. Through its people-centered approach, the organization partnered with vulnerable communities who raised (through a feedback mechanism) increasing concerns for disaster risks, as the areas they lived in were along the Tonle Sap River where flooding was recurrently experienced. As responding to disasters was part of the strategic priorities of the organization, it designed a project aiming to strengthen the capacities of poor urban households who experienced crippling challenges due to insufficient adaptive mechanisms worsened by the negative influence of climate change. Women were likely more vulnerable due to cultural normative responsibilities such as securing water, cooking, and taking over household activities and sanitation practices. The project adopted a Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA) to promote disaster risk reduction.



Increase of informal settlements in Phnom Penh, and rest of the country, consisting of makeshift housing, lack of land security and services, and poor sanitation.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Goal | Strengthen disaster risk management capacities of local communities, especially first line responders, in the most vulnerable urban poor communities in Battambang Municipality. |
| Outcome 1 | Increased Community Participation in decision-making and management of disaster preparedness and reducing vulnerability through the PASSA approach. |
| Outcome 2 | Increased Capacity on Land Frameworks and National Housing policy among the community and local authorities. |

Under Outcome 1, the project aimed to tackle disaster concerns such as flooding and landslides while raising awareness about disaster preparedness and response in 61 poor urban communities (railways, riverbanks, drainage canals, and public state lands). Under Outcome 2, the implementing organization partnered with the Ministry of Land Management, Urbanization and Planning, and a National Policy Specialist to build the community's capacity and knowledge in topics such as social land concession, urban framework, and housing policy. Youth, individuals from the community, and local authorities who joined the training played an essential role by advocating with the government for implementing upgrading works in the informal settlements.

IMPLEMENTATION

The project was implemented in coordination with authorities at different levels - Municipality, Province, and Ministry as well as universities and other stakeholders.

Through the PASSA approach, the project aimed to strengthen the resilience and safety of urban informal settlements in Battambang City by implementing a shelter and settlement improvement plan to enhance the disaster preparedness capacity of vulnerable communities. PASSA groups in the communities were formed and empowered to lead and coordinate processes independently. These groups were comprised of five units (construction, savings, monitoring, budget management, and case management) and led during the development of action plans and group

savings activities based on financial management training provided by the implementing organization. The project team assisted the groups on the development of proposals and community action plans and provided government-requested documentation.

Training on the minimum Construction Quality Standards concept was provided to all groups to enhance awareness of the implementing organization's construction policies. Before any housing construction-related work through the micro-grant began, the project's construction supervisor reviewed the design and trained the monitoring committee to conduct independent monitoring.

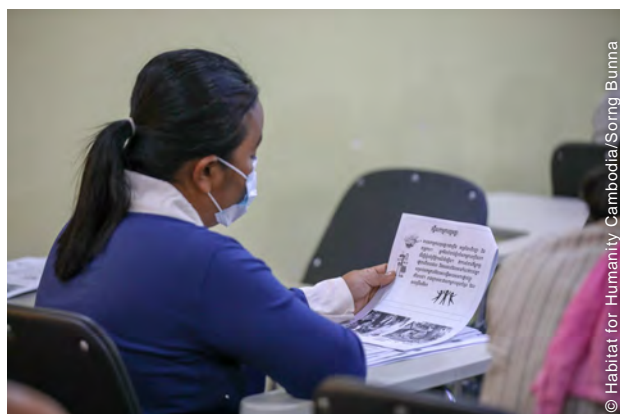
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The project formed 48 PASSA groups in the urban Battambang province comprised of 415 members (62% of whom [or 257 in total] were female). Two of the groups were led by Persons with Disabilities. Each member was a representative of the community – including local leaders, authorities, Persons with Disabilities, youth, the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM), and local NGO partners. Team leaders in each group were voted by their members.

The implementing organization provided group coaching and monitoring on proposal development and grant



Training was provided to the groups to identify main hazards in their community, which further contributed to the Development Action Plans (DAPs).



Community members attended various awareness raising events on DRR.



Training on the PASSA approach to the selected groups, May 2020.

support to selected action. There were 30 micro-grants distributed through the project to 30 groups, who had identified the main eight hazards that their communities were susceptible to, including: flooding, landslide, fire, windstorms, theft, the COVID 19 pandemic, lightning and poor sanitation infrastructure and hygiene conditions. After that, they elaborated Development Action Plans (DAPs) to respond to the identified issues. The proposed interventions included:

1. Renovating roads damaged by a flash flood.
2. Building a drainage system to prevent flooding.
3. Restoring water canals.
4. Installing fire extinguishers in communal halls and schools.
5. Installing solar panels for community lighting along the streets.
6. Providing COVID-19 kits to poor, vulnerable households.
7. Housing repairs for poor, vulnerable households.
8. Raising disaster preparedness and response awareness in the community and building the capacity for disaster mitigation.

A total of 42,270 individuals, including 25,721 women and 97 Persons with Disabilities (56 male, 41 female) from 15,112 families benefited from DAPs that improved community living conditions. The average micro-grant amount supported by the implementing organization was USD 1,188 per DAP. In addition to funding supplied by the project, the PASSA groups also mobilized funding from their community members and the private sector, which was an average of USD 230 per DAP.



The project provided grant support to the groups to renovate the community's water drainage system.



Damaged roads after the impact of flooding. The community projects implemented included the renovation of roads, amongst others.

TARGETING

A total of 34 informal settlement communities were identified as the most vulnerable to climatic shocks, living on government and private land along rivers and roadsides. The communities included Persons with Disabilities, women headed households, people affected by HIV/AIDS, and older people with limited family support. The team coordinated the selection of settlements for the project with district and communal officials. During the verification and selection process, the technical team visited communities to understand their needs and challenges and conducted a resource mapping exercise.

During the assessment to establish the PASSA groups, Battambang local authorities were engaged within the group forming recruitment process, including its goal, objective, target, and community engagement purpose. The project team also consulted with the community at different levels to collect their ideas and suggestions on applying the approach in their settlements.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The project engaged with communities and local authorities through key communication flows such as outreach, consultation, collaboration, and shared leadership. The community participated actively in project activities, including PASSA formation and training, proposal writing, and implementing micro-grants. Primary knowledge and skills were shared to contribute to project implementation. A project signboard was installed as a complaint mechanism box and an online channel was set up through an app within the community for their members and authorities to share information and provide and receive feedback.

The groups identified the main challenges in each community and developed a proposal as a key action plan – in consultation with local authorities – to address them. Additionally, the groups played an essential role in tracking and monitoring information at the community level – assisting in creating coordinating communication mechanisms with government bodies, private sector actors, and

different organizations to mobilize resources for preparedness, response to, and mitigating the impact of disasters. The groups delivered the awareness raising of hazard prevention training among people in the community and prepared each proposal to request micro-grants for the implementation.

COORDINATION

The implementing organization conducted a project launch to provide a project orientation and information on monitoring plans, objectives, and activities to community members, local authorities, and local NGO partners. Collaboration with the Provincial Government was established from the start of the project.

MAIN CHALLENGES

Project sites became a hotspot for COVID-19. The Government of Cambodia and local authorities strictly banned mass gatherings – among other community events – for several months during the project period. Hefty fines were imposed and those who violated the protocols were incarcerated. The project was also obliged to follow government protocols and was guided by the ‘Do No Harm’ principle to ensure the safety of participants and staff. In response to this, challenges arose when field monitoring had to be postponed, leading to further delays of activities such as training, workshops, and individual coaching. To mitigate further delays and challenges, additional training was conducted for the staff to build technological capacities in relation to software and online tools for project design and monitoring.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

- **Environmental Impact:** Garbage bins with waste disaggregation (organic waste, plastic waste, and solid waste) and street solar lighting were included in the proposals.
- **Gender Equality:** Approximately 60% of the project participants were women, who joined project activities such as meetings, workshops, training, and awareness-raising. The project provided women with equal opportunities to raise their voices and participate in the community development plan. The project encouraged women to be leaders in their communities – the project had 6 female led group leaders.
- **Disability Inclusiveness:** The project promoted the participation of Persons with Disabilities. Two groups were led by people with disabilities and 25 (6 percent) of all participants trained were Persons with Disabilities.

TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the project team faced challenges with project monitoring, including information collection, tracking progress on the micro-grant implemen-

-tation projects, and project participant tracking. However, the implementing organization developed remote monitoring tools at the field level. Groups were coordinated using online apps to schedule meetings, provide progress updates, and report on achievements.

EXIT/HANDOVER

Project staff promoted saving groups to sustain the DAPs on a longer term. Micro-grants enabled communities to implement interventions of community development through the creation and management of DAPs, by identifying issues, planning for solutions, and implementing them. Local authorities at the commune level acknowledged the groups’ organizational structure and terms of reference (ToR) as they were considered community-led groups contributing to improving the living condition of their different settlements.

WIDER IMPACTS

The project increased community participation in decision-making in terms of disaster management and vulnerability reduction through its PASSA groups. Each group assessed the levels of exposure and potential impacts from adverse events at the community level, and engaged their communities in proposing an intervention to mitigate the hazard. This increased their sense of responsibility for disaster preparedness, leading to behavioral change within the community and the development of settlement hazard mapping. Other significant outcomes of the project were creating safe spaces for women and girls through installing solar lights along the main roads and improving sanitation facilities and practices for the community. Members of the savings group were also able to use loans to invest in family livelihood development, shelter improvements (including house repair and upgrade), and WASH improvements (including clear water connection and toilet construction).

Battambang Municipality also required the strengthening of multi-stakeholder involvement to develop a holistic strategic development plan for the city. Consequently, the implementing organization advocated for land allocation and onsite upgrading for the most vulnerable households in informal settlements. The implementing organization was involved in a governmental multi-stakeholder platform where issues could be raised concerning development plans on disaster risk reduction and preparedness.



Communication mechanisms were established with community members, local authorities, and local NGO partners from the start of the project.

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STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **The PASSA approach aimed to develop local capacities to reduce shelter-related risks by raising awareness and developing skills within communities.** In the context of Cambodia, the implementing organization moved from raising awareness and education to an empowering approach through the further mobilizing of communities and rallying their participation, resources, and commitment as part of disaster risk reduction management, preparedness and response.
- ✓ **The project gave the community ownership of project implementation** and capacitated project participants to manage their own projects to respond to the needs of their communities.
- ✓ **The project constructively engaged with local authorities** in areas around disaster risk reduction, land and housing solutions.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The project kick-off orientation with local authorities was crucial, as they were engaged in all work processes with specific plans and schedules and for additional support.
- It is important to schedule frequent coaching consultations with group leaders on micro grant implementation to maximize potential support and enhance a smooth DAP implementation.
- The remote monitoring capability helped accelerate the implementation plan while COVID-19 was impacting the project implementation. Similarly, it boosted the technological capacity of project staff, participant groups, NGO partners and local authorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- Concerning the cash transfer program – future projects should utilize the Minimum Expense Basket (MEB) of the cash working group in Cambodia and focus on five primary sectors (Shelter, Education, WASH, Livelihood, and Health) during disaster response.
- Saving group funding support should be scaled up for the affected communities.
- Similar projects should add a component and/or activities addressing project participant livelihoods to provide enhanced pathways to recovery.

WEAKNESSES

- ✗ **Rigorous documentation** could have better included the engagement and impact of project participant demographics (female participants, Persons with Disabilities, and the elderly).
- ✗ **A lesson-learned workshop** would have allowed the project to disseminate learnings and results of the project evaluation beyond its project partners.



The project provided grant support to the groups to install solar street lamps along the community streets, August 2020.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On DRR: [A.15 / VANUATU 2018–2019](#); [A.21 / MALAWI 2015–16](#)

On conditional cash transfer: [A.5 / ETHIOPIA 2019–2020](#)

On infrastructure: [A.19 / IRAQ 2019–2021](#); [A.16 / MYANMAR 2012](#)

CASE STUDY

INDONESIA 2021 / EARTHQUAKE

KEYWORDS: Community engagement, Gender mainstreaming, Housing repair and retrofitting, Training

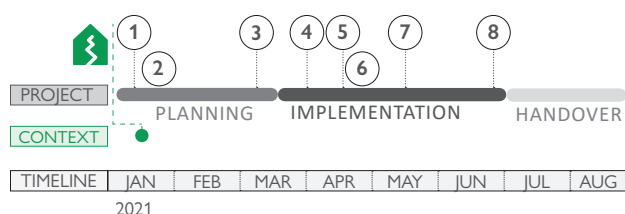
| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| CRISIS | Earthquake |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | 95,157 individuals displaced* |
| HOMES DAMAGED/ DESTROYED | 16,293 homes* |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 65,172 individuals (average HH size of 4)* |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Karampuang and Botteng village, Mamuju District, West Sulawesi Province |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 536 HHs |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 67 houses retrofitted 7 household toilets constructed 2 community facilities renovated - 232 HHs received community shelter repair kits 150 HHs received hygiene kits 80 HHs received PPE - 46 people received Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) training 61 people received basic construction training 134 people received training on home improvements |
| SHELTER SIZE | 25-45 m ² per shelter |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 5-9 m ² per person |
| DIRECT COST | USD 1,035 |
| PROJECT COST | USD 1,383 |



PROJECT SUMMARY

West Sulawesi Disaster Response (WSDR) project is a housing repair and retrofitting project that focuses on medium and light damaged houses after the earthquake in 2021. The project developed participatory assessment tools to gather related information such as building typology, damage spots, site safety, type of technicians needed, using local resources and existing skill while introducing retrofitting with ferrocement techniques through an encouraged women participation in the construction implementation and project monitoring. A program was launched in collaboration with other Shelter Sub-Cluster members involving the participants throughout all the stages of the project, which was a model to respond to future disasters, especially in the early recovery stage.

*Disaster Info: Issue 1, January 2021, BNPB



- 15 Jan, 2021: An earthquake of magnitude 6.2 rocked Majene and Mamuju District resulting in more than a hundred fatalities.
- 1 20-29 Jan, 2021: Rapid Response Team Assignment & Project location selection.
- 2 25 Jan, 2021: Distribution of community rubble removal tools to clear debris and prepare site for transitional shelters.
- 3 1-31 Mar, 2021: Rapid assessment of damaged buildings, and detailed engineering design development.
- 4 1-15 Apr, 2021: Durable shelter solution through customized reconstruction techniques.
- 5 15-30 Apr, 2021: Distribution of community shelter kit, hygiene kit and PPE Covid 19.
- 6 1-31 Apr, 2021: Family selection.
- 7 1-30 May, 2021: Trainings and workshops on DRR.
- 8 15-30 Jun, 2021: Construction, implementation and completion.



An aerial view of a damaged building following the earthquake in Mamuju, West Sulawesi.

CONTEXT AND NATIONAL RESPONSE

A 6.2 magnitude earthquake struck West Sulawesi province in Indonesia on 15 January 2021, resulting in 101 fatalities, 3 disappearances, over 95,000 people evacuated, and significant damage to homes and infrastructure. Typical home construction in the area used to combine a timber-post frame with brick or infill walls which would have no anchorage or connection with the frame or with crossing walls. Many of these walls collapsed due to the earthquake, while the timber frame often did not suffer relevant damage.

Initially, the government assumed assistance for families whose homes suffered heavier or total damage, while requiring that NGOs would assist those with moderate and light damages. These were primarily homes where the timber frame resisted, and retrofitting was needed mainly on the walls. Some homes were clad in wooden plates instead of brick walls.

During the second stage, the government assigned USD 3,200 as in-kind assistance for households with a totally destroyed house, USD 1,600 for those with damage assessed as medium, and USD 960 for those with a lightly damaged house.

PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

The project's initial activities consisted of rubble removal and the distribution of Community Shelter Repair Kits to 232 families in the first selected locations, as well as hygiene kits to 150 households and COVID-19 PPE to 80 HHs, before the repair of the first 67 homes began with the involvement of the homeowner. The Community Shelter Repair Kits included tarpaulins, shovels, hoes, crowbars, etc. The training was organized for both homeowners (home improvement training, attended by 134 individuals, both males and females) and laborers (basic construction training, attended by 61 individuals). Community-Based Disaster Risk Management training was also conducted to identify the community vulnerabilities and strengthen their capacities through the learning captured from past events, identifying potential hazards, and establishing response teams to address future shocks.



Local youth communities helped transport the building materials from ship to beneficiaries' homes.

The project team assessed the areas most affected by the earthquake, some of them on remote islands just accessible through long boat trips, and conducted technical assessments of the damaged homes using tools developed for the project to determine the scope of the repairs needed, materials, and works. Following those assessments, the technical team decided to address the repair of the walls using ferrocement, a construction technique introduced in Indonesia in the 1960s by Engineer Teddy Boen, who spent most of his life disseminating its adequacy for reinforcing the existing constructions. (*See the dedicated piece to Teddy Boen on page 193-94*). The field assessments also verified property documents for a preliminary selection of households to be supported by the project.

To accelerate the planning and monitoring process of each activity stage, several open-source tools and applications related to Information and Communications were introduced for the use of the field staff.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

- i. Initial survey and shelter needs assessment to determine project location selection.
- ii. Formation of village committees.
- iii. Household selection and damage level verification.
- iv. Public announcement of selected households.
- v. Technical assistance for households.
- vi. Agreement with households on construction design and BOQ.
- vii. Construction implementation and capacity building.
- viii. Evaluation.

TARGETING

The locations for the project interventions were selected based on the results of the field assessments conducted for medium and lightly damaged households. The project focused its activities especially on Karampuang village, given the high needs identified and the fact that there was no other organization providing repairs to damaged houses in the area.



Discussion meeting regarding the pre-construction implementation with the local committee members in Karampuang village.

The project team developed household selection criteria together with the local village committee. It was agreed to support the households (HHs) that would meet the following conditions:

- HHs registered in the village and affected by the earthquake.
- HHs not included in the government list of recipients.
- HHs whose house damage was assessed as either light or moderate.
- HHs able to provide proof of land ownership through evidence such as village certificates.
- HHs with preexisting vulnerabilities (underprivileged communities, widows, households with toddlers, disabilities, or pregnant women).
- HHs willing to contribute, participate and assist in the home improvement process and attend each meeting and training held by the project.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The involvement of the community was key to ensuring the adequate composition of the local committees. Each household contributed some building materials where possible and assisted the project staff during the project. The local committee team undertook supervision functions, while the project team managed the admin tasks and oversaw the distribution of materials.



The community played a huge role in the distribution of building materials. Homeowners controlled the quality of materials that were distributed.

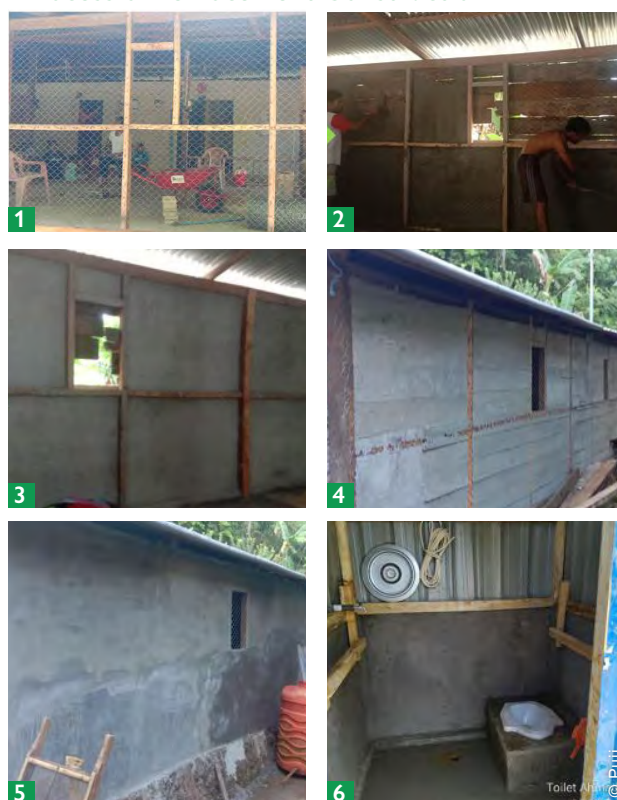


Discussion meeting regarding the implementation process with the local committee members in Karampuang Village.



The technical consultant presented the building technique in construction training for homeowners and local builders.

Process of Ferrocement Construction



1: Construction training; 2: First formwork; 3: Inner plastering; 4: Outer plastering; 5: Outer plastering completed; 6: View of a completed room.

COORDINATION

The project was coordinated within the Sub-national Shelter Clusters, using the data provided by the Government of Indonesia regarding the levels of damage in the affected areas and the coverage of the Government-led response, avoiding overlapping. The project reported all households supported to the District Disaster Management Agency and District House and Settlement Unit.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- Delays were faced in obtaining household damage data from the government. The project team coordinated with the Sub-national Shelter Cluster and followed up closely until the data was shared.

- Project implementation coincided with the longer Eid celebrations in the affected areas, limiting the availability of the community and the laborers. The project team agreed with the donor an adjustment on the timeline of the project to accommodate the limitations in the period.
- Due to recurrent high tides, accessibility challenges were faced in reaching Karampuang Island for the distribution of construction materials. The project team coordinated closely with the village committees to determine the most suitable schedules for the deliveries of the materials, in some cases utilizing local resident boats.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

The project team engaged in community consultations on the possibility of involving women in the training and the construction activities, as in the traditional culture in Mamuju such an approach was not common. As a result of those efforts, a final ratio of 40 percent female and 60 percent male was agreed with the community and respected during the project.

LINKS WITH RECOVERY

The project distributed Community Shelter Kits including tarpaulins, shovels, hoes, crowbars, etc. to 232 households and later repaired 67 homes with the involvement of the homeowner. From the outset of the project, the same location was targeted to bring the community through pathways to permanence, from the relief stage to the recovery stage. In addition, the project coordinated with the government on an assessment to determine the areas where the project would intervene during the recovery period.

MATERIALS AND SUPPLY

Supplies such as coconut wood for the house frame, wood for doors and windows, and stone for the foundations were procured locally in project villages. Cement, iron,

sand, and wire were sourced from vendors in the city and were transported first to a seaport before being moved to the island. The project established relationships/partnerships with the private sector aiming to contribute to the local economy in a wider manner while preparing the organization to react to similar crises.

EXIT/HANDOVER

The exit strategy applied was to provide training on retrofitting (ferro-cement) methods to the community. The method installed ferro-cement layers with chicken wire on both sides of the wall, so that it is wrapped in a layer of ferro-cement to enhance durability when shaken during an earthquake. This method was very suitable for the situation and economic conditions of the area. Through enhanced knowledge of more durable retrofitting measures, the community was able to utilize the practice in the construction and repair of homes post-project conclusion.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

Direct outcomes:

- A total of 536 households received Community Shelter Repair Kits, hygiene kits and COVID-19 PPE.
- 67 homes were repaired using the retrofitting method, 241 were Community Based Disaster Risk Management, Basic Construction with the retrofitting method, and Healthy Home Improvement Solutions.

Indirect outcomes:

- Community members have the capacity to utilize retrofitting methods, develop disaster management plans, and enhance gender parity in construction/repair activities.

Wider Impacts of the project:

- Supported households identified that the improved condition of their homes could eventually open livelihood opportunities, such as a small business operated from the house.



The Karampuang Village Community Hall before and after reconstruction. The project facilitated the community in Karampuang to renovate two Community Centres. The renovations were carried out using retrofitting and ferrocement methods. The renovation focused to improve better space, ventilation and lighting.

- Approximately 70 percent of respondents agreed that they would have a better chance to get a job and 77.5 percent of respondents agreed that they had better opportunities to earn money after the project.
- The project – and the retrofitting program in particular – received positive responses from local authorities and individuals in the Karampuang island area

(where challenges in construction materials transportation were experienced). Because material transportation to this area relied on ocean currents and the availability of boats, it took time to provide the community with an understanding of participatory and retrofitting methods.



© Bahliar Yuda

A family outside their completed transitional shelter. 67 houses were retrofitted in total across the project.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Community Engagement.** The project put people at the center of the response as the main actor, and community participation continued from the design phase to the conclusion of the project.
- ✓ **Gender.** The project enhanced female representation during all phases of the post-disaster recovery process.
- ✓ **Durability.** The retrofitting method enhanced the strength and safety of non-engineered homes. Retrofitting with ferro-cement can provide shelter solutions for families who are unable to afford the building of a house in compliance with the Indonesian building code.

WEAKNESSES

- × The organization-centralized procurement and payment system was **not flexible enough to accommodate a recovery project** in a remote area with limited internet and bank access.
- × Needs assessment planning did not properly factor in **the fasting period and Eid al-Fitr**, delaying the construction implementation period.
- × **Financial limitations** of the implementing organization inhibited the rental of additional boats to support material transport to Karampuang Island.

- ✓ **Livelihoods.** The project used local laborers and vendors. In some cases, individuals reached were able to restart home-based entrepreneurship again after house completion.
- ✓ **Suitability.** Most households viewed home repairs carried out through retrofitting and ferro-cement methods as an easy and inexpensive way to make home improvements that may be further developed. This approach also empowered individual homes to retrofit their homes to suit their own needs, rather than forcing a one-size-fits-all solution across all identified households.



Construction training using retrofitting method (ferrocement) for women in Karampuang Village.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Due to limited monitoring staff from the implementing organization and accessibility challenges, construction monitoring was carried out by village committees and assisted by laborers and affected households. Via this participatory monitoring process, homeowners' and laborers' capacity was enhanced regarding safer home construction/repair.
- Retrofitting – in particular with the ferro-cement method – was initially considered strange by residents, and the prevailing notion was that costly brick walls provided the most durability. Through the retrofitting methods using the ferro-cement method, community shelter knowledge was enhanced, the durability of homes increased, and construction costs were reduced.
- The project triggered the promotion of three webinars post-project completion and offline training with the Mamuju District officials and the Karampuang community. Non-engineered homes remain widespread across Indonesia, and the project could be upscaled to enhance communities' resilience and involve broader shelter practitioners. Technical guidelines and guidelines for villages to reach funding sources to construct more durable homes should be promoted.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- Rapid assessments and planning should factor in community cultural seasons and/or events, especially in relation to livelihoods and activities that impact project schedule (ex. seasons when ships cannot be developed).
- While the procurement of material in large quantities is cost efficient, it is necessary to consider external factors such as small capacity carriers and less spacious port capacity to unload shipments. This may be managed by a committee or members of the affected community.
- There is a need to develop a participatory and inclusive monitoring model in the construction of housing improvements, including the monitoring of gender and social inclusion.
- There is also a need for capacity building within existing local community organisations, such as Disaster Risk Reduction forums.
- A strategy could be developed to integrate the strengthening of community livelihoods within the construction and/or repair of community members whose livelihoods were affected by the crisis.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Indonesia: [A.13 / INDONESIA 2018–2020](#); [B.5 / INDONESIA, JOGJAKARTA 2006](#); [A.12 / INDONESIA, SUMATRA 2009](#)

On earthquakes: [A.18 / NEPAL 2016–2017](#); [A.4 - A.11 / HAITI 2010](#); [B.7 / INDIA 2001](#)

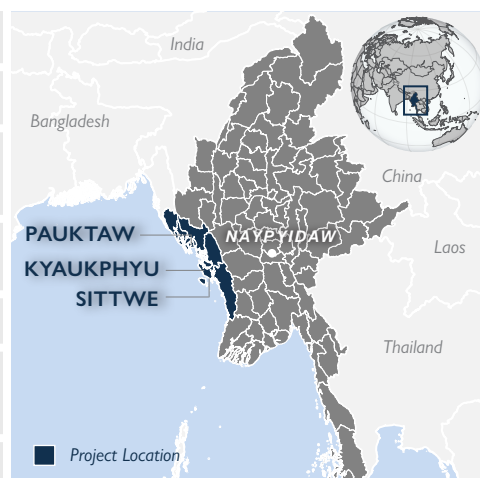
On housing repair/retrofitting: [A.24 / SRI LANKA 2017](#); [A.34 / IRAQ 2015-2016](#); [A.6 / HAITI 2012](#)

CASE STUDY

MYANMAR 2021-2022 / CONFLICT

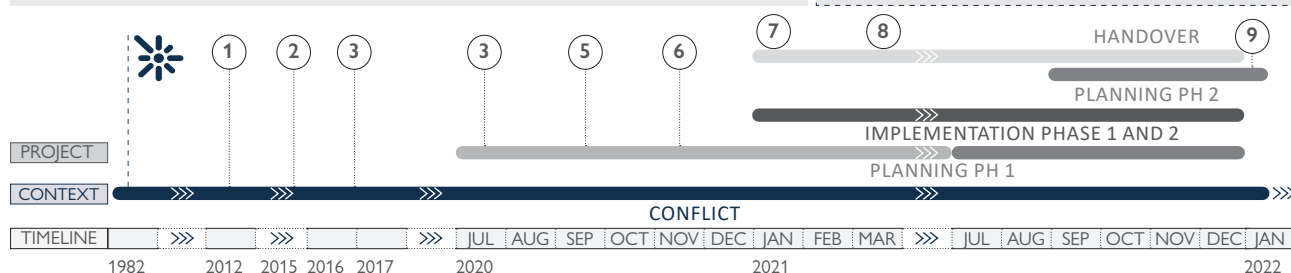
KEYWORDS: Coordination and partnerships, Emergency shelter; Transitional shelter; Wider impacts

| | |
|--|--|
| CRISIS | Rohingya Crisis |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 630,000 individuals approx.* |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | 148,000 individuals displaced in Central Rakhine State camps** |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 24,075 HHs (137,884 individuals)*** |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Sittwe, Pauktaw, and Kyaukphyu Townships |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 8,580 HHs (47,190 individuals) supported with shelter reconstruction |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 1,050 longhouse shelters constructed in 2021 and 2022 1,210 mega-tarps installed in 2021 and 2022 Shelter design improvement increased the lifespan of shelters from 1 year to 5 years |
| SHELTER SIZE | 15.5 m ² per unit (124.7 m ² per longhouse shelter) |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 3.11 m ² per person (8 unit longhouse) 2.49 m ² per person (10 unit longhouse) |
| DIRECT COST | USD 8,200 per longhouse (USD 1,025 per HH) USD 140 per mega-tarp (USD 17.5 per HH) |
| PROJECT COST | USD 1,107 per HH (USD 9.5 million overall) |
| *Myanmar; UNHCR **CCCM/Shelter/NFI Cluster, Rakhine State ***CCCM Camp Profiles, CCCM/Shelter/NFI Cluster, Rakhine State | |



PROJECT SUMMARY

Following the 2012 intercommunal violence in Rakhine State, over 130,000 people, including Rohingya, Kaman, Rakhine, and other groups were displaced. While other groups have since been allowed to return or have been relocated, the Rohingya and Kaman still remain in the camps. In these camps they are deprived of basic human rights including access to citizenship, freedom of movement, and livelihoods. In the face of significant challenges, the CCCM/Shelter/NFI Cluster and its partners have overseen a constantly evolving strategy to improve the quality and design of longhouse shelters, and to ensure the reconstruction of shelters using a multi-functional approach that includes consistent advocacy for both short-term and durable solutions, stakeholder coordination, and protection mainstreaming. This case study looks at the implementation experience and the strategic framework that guided the reconstruction of 1,050 longhouse shelters for the benefit of over 46,000 Rohingya and Kaman IDPs in 2021 and 2022.



- ✱ **Oct 1982:** Burma Citizenship Law passed, effectively stripping Rohingya of the right to nationality.
- 1 **Jun 2012:** Intercommunal violence erupts across Rakhine state between Muslims and Buddhists. Over 130,000 people were displaced into sites and camps. Rohingya, Kaman, Rakhine, Hindu, and other IDPs are placed by the government into central Rakhine camps.
- 2 **2015:** IDPs of Rakhine, Hindu, and other ethnicities are allowed to return to place of origin or are relocated. Rohingya and Kaman in camps remain there.
- 3 **2016, 2017:** A series of military 'clearance operations' in northern Rakhine State result in the displacement of approximately 800,000 Rohingya to Bangladesh. Those in central Rakhine camps remain largely unaffected.

- 4 **July 2020:** CCCM/Shelter/NFI Cluster conducts annual comprehensive shelter assessment of all longhouses.
- 5 **Sep 2020:** Cluster reviews and prioritizes shelters from the assessment, works with CCCM household data to target and batch shelters for reconstruction.
- 6 **Nov 2020:** First version of Shelter Reconstruction SoP developed to emphasise a multi-functional approach.
- 7 **Jan 2021:** The first pre-demolition meetings with community members, CMCs, contractors, and humanitarian actors occur. They re-occur on a rolling basis, batch by batch roughly every four weeks.
- 8 **Mar 2021:** The first shelter handovers occur as the first batch of shelters is completed, this re-occurs roughly every six weeks.
- 9 **Jan 2022:** Second revision of Shelter Reconstruction SoP based on lessons learned from 2021 implementation.

CONTEXT

The Rohingya ethnic group has faced decades of de facto and de jure discrimination in Myanmar. The Rohingya people are from Rakhine State, which has historically experienced several waves of violence and displacement. Amongst the most significant was a wave of intercommunal violence between Rakhine and Rohingya communities in 2012. This violence culminated in the forced displacement of at least 130,000 people into camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs). By 2015 IDPs of Rakhine, Hindu, and other non-Muslim ethnicities were allowed to return or were resettled by the de facto authorities, while the Rohingya and Kaman were forced to remain in the camps. Before the 2012 violence, most of the Rohingya population lived in downtown areas of major towns and cities or in rural villages comparable to those of other ethnic groups.

In Myanmar, still today, about 140,000 Rohingya and Kaman live across 21 camps with limited freedom of movement and continued exposure to longstanding protection risks including barriers to accessing basic services (livelihoods, education, and healthcare). Of the over 24,000 households in the camps, approximately 18,100 live in multi-shelter unit longhouses while approximately 5,900 live in self-made or 'makeshift' shelters.

SITUATION AFTER THE CRISIS

Longhouses are the only officially permitted shelter type for Rohingya and Kaman IDPs in 17 camps. Current restrictions mandate that all longhouses must be temporary in nature, and they were originally built to last one year. These light structures are primarily made of bamboo and rope were extremely weak and vulnerable to cyclones. Over the years, the CCCM/Shelter/NFI Cluster and partners have successfully advocated to gradually raise construction standards to include timber framing, flooring, and CGI roofing. The current longhouse design was updated in 2021 and has an ideal lifespan of five years.

Despite successfully advocating to improve the design quality with the de facto authorities in Rakhine State, increasing the shelter's footprint has not been possible. For an average family of five, the space provided was well below the SPHERE standard of 3.5 m² per person in the typical 8-unit shelter – only 3.11 m² per person. Additionally, there are several camps that have 10-unit longhouses.



Damaged shelters in Sittwe Township camp, March 2022.

These have the same footprint as an 8-unit design, thus the space per household was even farther below SPHERE standards at only 2.49 m² per person on average.

The basic longhouse is composed of eight rooms with one allocated to each family. The outer area was planned as a kitchen space while the interior is a living/sleeping space. The interior ceiling was made of bamboo and the floor of solid wood while the interior walls are plywood. Galvanized CGI roofing is used to mitigate roof deterioration due to the wet tropical climate and damage from high winds during the monsoon season.

NATIONAL SHELTER RESPONSE

The Cluster's shelter response and strategy for Rohingya and Kaman camps in central Rakhine is focused on the overall situation of the camps, with a primary objective of inter-agency advocacy towards durable solutions and camp closure. However, the Cluster maintains that continuing life saving shelter assistance and construction activities are necessary to minimize harm to the IDPs so long as they are forced to reside in the camps without access to basic rights and access to desegregated services.

PROJECT DESIGN

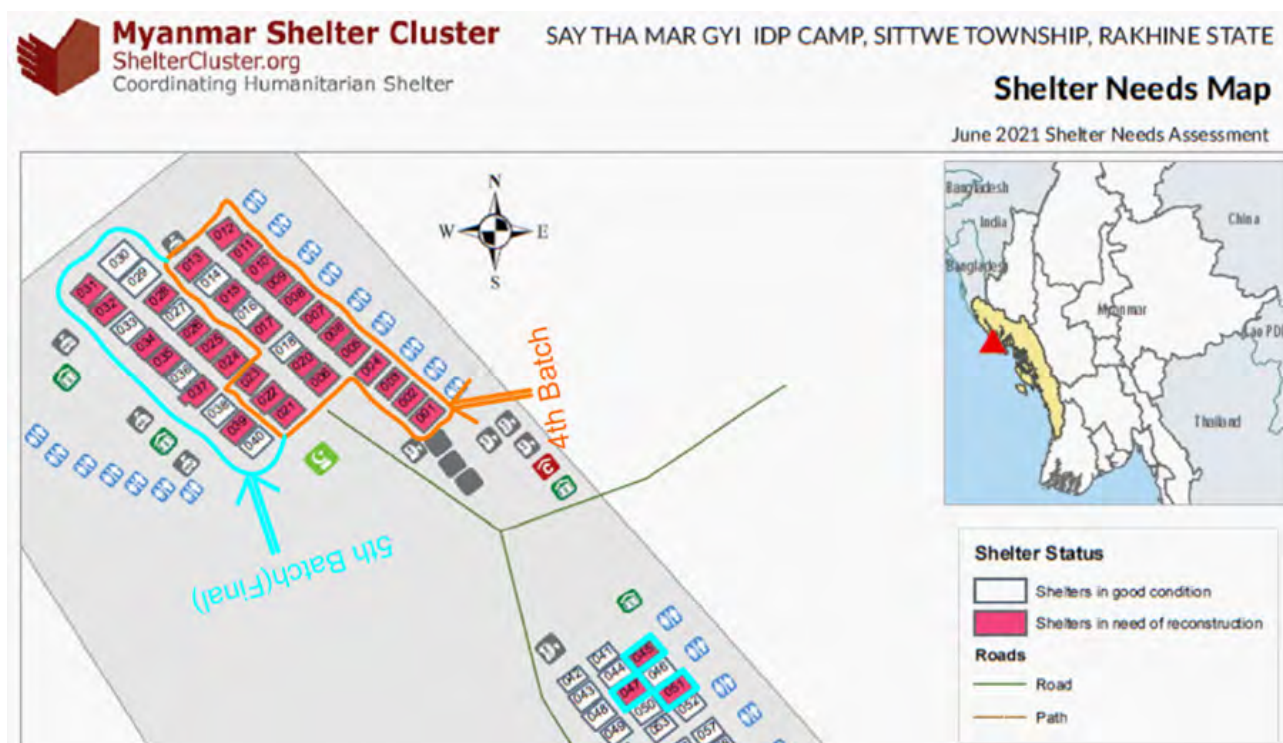
The primary goals of the CCCM/Shelter/NFI Cluster and partners in Rakhine State in the context of shelter reconstruction in the camps were and remain as follows:

- To advocate for the expansion of camps to accommodate all IDPs in safe shelters that meet SPHERE standards until durable solutions are achieved.
- To ensure that shelter reconstruction activities are monitored and implemented in a contextually sensitive manner that does not create secondary harm to IDPs.
- To work with all shelter actors to develop and follow a common approach that mitigates the most significant challenges and protection risks in the shelter reconstruction process.
- To carefully monitor reconstruction activities to ensure high-quality shelters and to ensure to the highest degree possible that IDPs have safe and dignified living conditions.

These guiding objectives frame the overall approach to shelter construction in this complicated and constrained environment.



Temporary makeshift shelters before reconstruction.



An excerpt of a shelter needs assessment map for Say Tha Mar Gyi camp in Sittwe Township, designating shelters in need of reconstruction (red) as well as batches for reconstruction, June 2021.

IMPLEMENTATION

REFLECTION

The Rakhine CCCM/Shelter/NFI Cluster bases shelter reconstruction on a participatory approach with protection at its center due to the complex nature of the context. At the end of 2021, the Cluster and its members reviewed key lessons learned from previous years regarding common challenges and technical standards. This reflection resulted in three key outcomes:

1. Cluster-endorsed Rakhine Shelter Reconstruction Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) outlined the formal institution of a multi functional approach to shelter reconstruction and the different roles of key humanitarian stakeholders including shelter teams, government liaisons, protection teams, and CCCM teams operating in the Rohingya and Kaman camps. The SOPs also provide context-specific guidance regarding the construction and monitoring process, stakeholder management, and camp-specific environmental concerns.
2. A focus on monitoring households during the time they must live in temporary makeshift shelters while their shelter is being constructed. This led to a policy of increased coordination between CCCM, Shelter, and Protection actors during implementation, and the standard provision of padlocks and keys prior to demolition so IDPs could lock their temporary shelter and use the lock again for their new shelter when it is complete. This also led to a greater overall physical presence of humanitarian actors monitoring shelter reconstruction and enhanced communication with communities (CwC) practices.

3. The revision of the longhouse shelter design following meetings of the Shelter Technical Working Group to accommodate common requests from IDPs following an exercise of field visits and post construction feedback led by CCCM and Shelter. These included lockable window frames for enhanced security, increased floor height for more usable under-shelter space, and clearly marked nut and bolt locations in shelter designs to improve structural integrity.

PwsN IDENTIFICATION AND BATCH SELECTION

The Cluster shelter unit maintained a master database of all longhouses, their reconstruction history, and their current condition based on camp-wide annual shelter assessments. This database is complemented with ad hoc data and verifications. The master database was the central tool for shelter reconstruction coordination among shelter actors. Longhouses were grouped for reconstruction in geographically clustered batches to balance practical criteria related to household vulnerability and logistical considerations. Shelter batches were referred against the CCCM household list and cross-checked with Protection actors to identify Persons with Specific Needs (PwsN). The prioritization of shelter batches was based on a combination of shelter conditions in a batch, and the amount of PwsN living within the group of shelters.

This system allowed for practical prioritization criteria that was considerate of IDP needs and could easily be explained to IDPs or other camp level stakeholders when questions arose about why some shelters were being built before others. The explanation of the system often had an effect of reducing tensions with IDPs or other stakeholders who were upset that certain shelters were not being rebuilt first.

PRE-CONSTRUCTION COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PROTECTION MAINSTREAMING

After shelters were batched and prioritized for reconstruction, a meeting was called with all concerned stakeholders including community leaders, IDPs, contractors, and relevant camp-level humanitarian actors including CCCM and Protection agencies prior to the demolition of each batch. In these meetings, the shelter agency reviewed the reconstruction work plan, the labor rights of IDPs, conditions and policies on the use of materials from demolished shelters, the contractors and their key staff, and referral pathways for complaints and feedback related to the reconstruction process. Protection actors then reviewed sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) policies with meeting participants and reporting mechanisms for protection-related issues that may arise, including gender-based violence. Time was provided for meeting participants to ask questions so they could be answered by all concerned stakeholders.

These pre-construction meetings are an essential part of the process as they allow all information to be simultaneously shared with IDPs, Camp Management Committees (CMCs) appointed by local administrations, contractors, and camp-level humanitarian service providers. This has helped ensure there wasn't confusion between various stakeholders and limited the ability of influential individuals or groups to present misinformation during the project that could lead to extortion or abuse of power.

Separately, to further mainstream protection – 'Do No Harm' trainings were conducted with construction company members and Camp Management Committees (CMCs) ahead of the reconstruction project.

During the rainy season, tarpaulin and rope were also provided to households undergoing shelter construction shortly after pre construction community meetings to help extend or maintain the temporary makeshift shelters IDPs made with materials from the demolished old shelter.

CONSTRUCTION

Once shelters are demolished, reconstruction begins. Throughout the reconstruction process, engineers conduct weekly monitoring visits in each camp to ensure quality control. Attention to detail during this process was essential, and specific feedback down to the level of individual posts and bolts was given for contractors to correct following the regular checks. Items marked for improvement or correction are noted and followed up with on subsequent visits.

While construction was ongoing, Protection actors carried out regular focus group discussions (FGD) and monitoring of households in temporary makeshift shelters. Results from FGDs and field visits were communicated to other humanitarian agencies and stakeholders. This helped in understanding the needs of the community during the shelter reconstruction process with an age, gender, and diversity (AGD) lens. This monitoring also allowed for the rapid referral of protection cases and issues as they were identified.

MEGA TARPS

For shelters that will not be reconstructed during the year but were in a significant state of deterioration, the Cluster lead agency provided and assisted in the installation of 'mega-tarps'. These were locally cut and heat-pressed long rolls of standard tarpaulin that were reshaped into a 15m by 12m piece that could be installed securely over the roof of an entire longhouse. Field testing showed high IDP satisfaction and a lifespan of over one year. The tarps helped provide temporary coverage to shelters not marked for immediate reconstruction and keep families living in those shelters dry through the rainy season. The 'mega-tarps' are often used following reconstruction to roof tea shops, markets, and other structures in the camps.



A shelter team inspects ongoing construction works, September 2021.



'Mega-tarps' used to cover shelters not marked for reconstruction ahead of rainy season, June 2022.



The reconstruction work incorporated pre-cast footings for extending the lifespan of the timber frames, while improving the anchorage of the building to the ground.

MAIN CHALLENGES

Access to project sites and permissions: Accessibility in Rakhine State, like the majority of Myanmar, is highly unpredictable and subject to decisions of the de facto authorities. Permissions were issued monthly, and situations where access and permission to continue reconstruction was revoked or stalled mid-project were common. This resulted in delayed construction, and IDP households having to live in temporary makeshift shelters for longer than originally planned. Mitigating these challenges required robust advocacy from the Cluster system, UN organizations, and coordination between the government liaison departments of different humanitarian agencies.

Stakeholder engagement: Camp Management Committees, alleged landowners and other camp level stakeholders could at times act as challenges by blocking access at the camp level, interrupting activities, or in extreme cases by engaging in physical violence in attempts to see their demands met. Continuing the practices of pre-construction community meetings, a focus on communication with communities and the rapid referral of and action taken for serious issues helped reduce the impacts of these stakeholders.

The economic context: Since the February 2021 military takeover, Myanmar's economy has been in a state of decline. The national currency (MMK) has rapidly depreciated, and the nation has been suffering a paper cash shortage and a banking crisis. This has directly impacted shelter reconstruction with inflation, supply chain issues, and humanitarian procurement and finance functions affected in different ways. Shelter items prices in MMK have risen by 20 percent, there are often material shortages and contractors require greater liquidity than ever to purchase large amounts of material as up-front cash payments are required and credit systems have ceased. Finally, payments from shelter agencies to contractors are often delayed due to strict banking regulations imposed by the de facto authorities.

Durable solutions: The overarching goal for Rohingya and Kaman IDPs is to return to their place of origin in a safe and dignified manner, ensuring sustainability and access to basic rights and services (as per the UN Principles on Housing and Property Restitution for Refugees and Displaced Persons). In Rakhine, this would mean the closure of camps

and the provision of durable and sustainable solutions for the IDPs, including camp closures done in a consultative and participatory manner and the guarantee of human rights for IDPs after camp closure. However, given that the short-term environment in Myanmar is not conducive to durable solutions, if people are subject to living in the camps it is part of the humanitarian imperative to ensure safe shelter conditions and to advocate for the improvement of the shelter and camp situations that are below SPHERE standards.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

Clear and consistent advocacy from the CCCM/Shelter/NFI Cluster since the establishment of the camps in 2013 led to increased shelter quality standards for those living in the longhouse shelters, with the permitted lifespan being increased from 1 to 5 years. This advocacy also helped in getting funding over the course of 2021 and 2022 for the construction of 1,050 longhouses. This has ensured safe shelters for over 47,190 Rohingya and Kaman IDPs. Additionally, the Cluster's adoption of a multi-functional approach to shelter reconstruction has helped mitigate some of the major risks associated with activities, and increased collaboration and communication with communities making the overall shelter reconstruction process more accountable and focused on IDPs. The experience led to an enhanced relationship between operational CCCM, Shelter and Protection actors, allowing them to operate more effectively in their specialized roles, but with a more collaborative and less siloed mentality. In parallel, advocacy for Rohingya and Kaman IDP access to desegregated services and basic rights including citizenship and return to place of origin continues.



The reconstruction works included the replacement of the timber frame and bamboo cladding elements of the longhouse.



(Left) A longhouse in Sin Tet Maw camp in Pauktaw Township before reconstruction, September 2021. (Right) The same shelter in Sin Tet Maw camp after reconstruction in 2021.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Clear and consistent advocacy focused on needs:** Evidence based advocacy focused on IDP needs was generally successful in securing both the funding and permissions for shelter reconstruction projects. This allowed for the reconstruction of shelters to benefit over 47,000 IDPs.
- ✓ **A multi-functional approach to shelter reconstruction increased accountability to and protection of IDPs:** Standardizing coordination and roles during shelter construction between Shelter, CCCM and Protection actors improved project implementation quality and helped mitigate protection risks during reconstruction.
- ✓ **Community feedback and practical concerns were incorporated into the shelter design:** Over the years, the Shelter Technical Working group incorporated improvements to the longhouse design based on direct feedback from IDPs and practical engineering concerns to make the shelters more resilient to harsh weather conditions. IDP feedback has been overwhelmingly positive on the most recent designs, though advocacy will continue with the de facto authorities to attempt to meet SPHERE standards.

WEAKNESSES

- × **Lack of beneficiary registration system could mean misallocation of shelters:** Due to the difficult environment with de facto authorities and the nature of the Rohingya context, IDPs have no formal registration. Buying and selling of shelters once completed is difficult to manage and can result in non camp residents living in the camp to receive assistance.
- × **The camps do not have enough space for the current population, which forces people to live in unrecognized makeshift shelters:** Since no new space for shelters has been allocated by the de facto authorities to the camp since their establishment 10 years ago despite advocacy from the cluster, natural population growth has forced many outside of the longhouses. Assisting these vulnerable households remains sensitive since their shelters are not recognized as “official” by the de facto authorities.
- × **Shelter construction in camps is not a durable solution to the Rohingya situation:** The situation of the camps in central Rakhine is a manifestation of violations against the rights of Rohingya and Kaman people. The ultimate objectives of humanitarians must be focused on camp closure and the achievement of access to desegregated services and basic rights including citizenship for the people. In the meantime, shelter construction is a life saving service provided as a gap filling measure in an attempt to meet a basic need for a population confined.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **A multi-functional approach to shelter reconstruction improves project implementation and mitigates risks:** Defining roles and focusing on clear and consistent coordination between all stakeholders involved in shelter reconstruction resulted in a more efficient process that helps to mitigate challenges such as access, communication with communities and protection risks.
- **In complex environments such as the Rohingya and Kaman IDP camps in central Rakhine State, shelter assistance must be viewed as part of the continuum towards durable solutions:** The ultimate goal is camp closure and access to desegregated services and access to basic rights including citizenship for the IDPs. Shelter reconstruction is just one activity required from humanitarian actors to meet a basic need for Rohingya and Kaman IDPs while they must live in camps. Given the protracted nature of displacement and the human rights situation surrounding this IDP population, shelter interventions require constant reflection on balancing possible effects on camp closure processes, impacts on short- and long-term protection concerns, and the roles that humanitarian and non-humanitarian stakeholders have in the overall situation.
- **Constant monitoring and oversight are essential to ensure quality, and systems need to adapt in real-time to the context:** Experience from shelter actors has shown that the best way to ensure high quality shelter reconstruction is constant monitoring of the construction process. Considerable effort and forethought must be put into contingency planning for monitoring and inspection systems. When shelter actors have access to project sites, regular field visits enhance the process and interaction with IDPs and labor groups are prioritized. However, robust remote monitoring systems should be in place too and reviewed with relevant stakeholders before the start of construction to ensure a smooth transition to remote modalities in the event of loss of access.

FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Myanmar: [A.1 / MYANMAR 2013–2016](#); [A.16 / MYANMAR 2012](#); [A.19 / MYANMAR 2008](#);

On reconstruction: [A.18 / IRAQ 2018–2021](#); [A.23 / SRI LANKA 2010–2016](#); [A.38 / CHILE 2014–2016](#)

On partnerships: [A.2 / CHAD 2019–2020](#); [A.16 / UKRAINE 2016–2021](#); [A.40 / ECUADOR 2016](#)

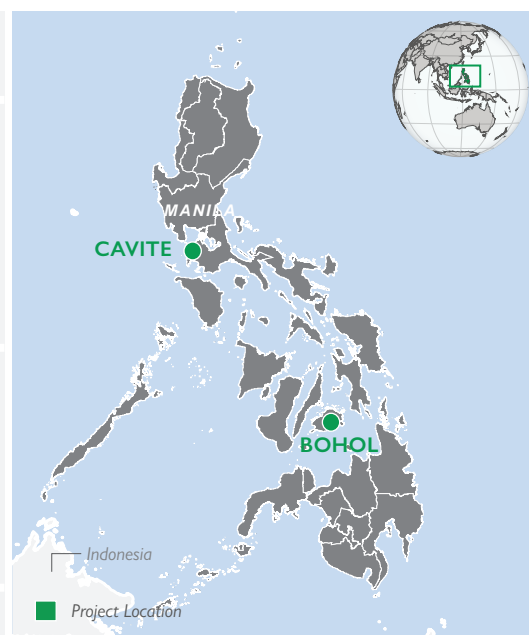


CASE STUDY

PHILIPPINES 2021–2023 / TYPHOON GONI AND RAI

KEYWORDS: Diaspora engagement, Localization, Private sector engagement, Structural assessment

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| CRISIS | Typhoon Goni/Rolly (Nov 2020) and Typhoon Rai/Odette (Dec 2021) |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED/ DISPLACED | Typhoon Goni/Rolly: 845,000 individuals affected* 130,266 individuals displaced* Typhoon Rai/Odette: 12 million individuals affected** 6,825 individuals displaced** |
| HOMES DAMAGED/ DESTROYED | Typhoon Goni/Rolly: 133,324 homes partially damaged*** 37,449 homes totally destroyed*** Typhoon Rai/Odette: 1,704,086 homes partially damaged**** 404,603 homes totally destroyed**** |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Pilot 1: Cavite, Philippines (2021) Pilot 2: Bohol, Philippines (2022) |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 15 female-led HHs (Cavite) 30 female-led HHs (Bohol) |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 1 “Resilient Housing Loan” diaspora guarantor model developed with a Micro-Finance institution for retrofitting houses Orientation and trainings on Build Back Safer Shelter Practices to participants and micro-finance staff 45 shelters strengthened, retrofitted, and monitored through issuing of “Resilient Housing Loans” (roof repair, floor renovation, wall repair, ceiling strengthening, room partition, house reconstruction, toilet room repair, etc.) |
| SHELTER SIZE | 20 m² as per Sphere Standards |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 4 m² per person (average of 5 persons per HH) |
| DIRECT COST | Pilot 1: USD 90 – USD 445 per HH Pilot 2: USD 90 – USD 535 per HH |
| PROJECT COST | Pilot 1: USD 895 per HH Pilot 2: USD 980 per HH |



PROJECT SUMMARY

The project conducted a successful pilot programme in the Philippines, providing retrofitting and loans for the reconstruction and repairs to the houses damaged by Typhoons Goni/Rolly (2020) and Rai/Odette (2021). An innovative financial model was developed for this project, piloting the use of remittances from the U.S.-based Filipino Diaspora as an initial guarantee for obtaining microcredits from a local Micro-Finance Institution in the Philippines. The implementing organization coordinated the different stakeholders while promoting the use of safer shelter and disaster risk reduction construction methods (through training and the provision of technical assistance during the construction works) among the female-led households selected for the programme.

*Philippines: Super Typhoon Goni (Rolly) Humanitarian Needs and Priorities (Nov 2020 - April 2021), OCHA

**Philippines: Super Typhoon Rai (Odette) - Situation Report No. 9 (As of 26 May 2022), OCHA

***Shelter Cluster Strategic Advisory Group Meeting for Typhoon Rolly (November 2020)

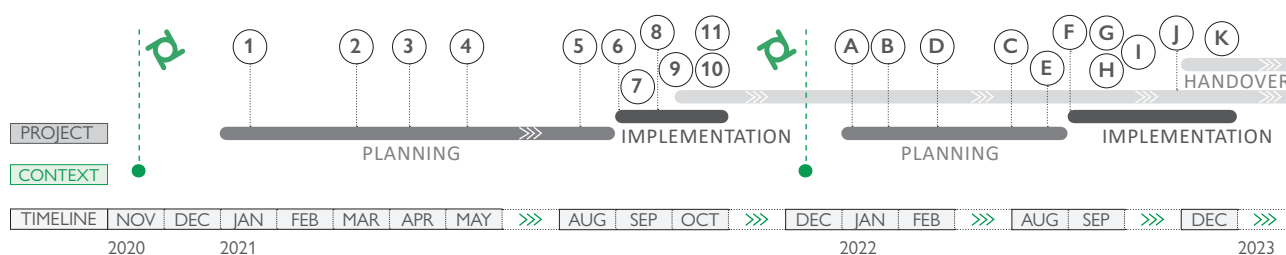
****Shelter Cluster Strategic Advisory Group Meeting for Typhoon Rolly (November 2020)

SOPs on Diaspora Engagement in Shelter Assistance



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Typhoon Goni/Rolly, one of the most powerful storms in 2020, left thousands displaced in Philippines with damaged homes, no drinking water, or electricity.



Nov 2020: Typhoon Rolly/Goni hit Philippines amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dec 2021: Typhoon Rai/Odette made landfall on Dec 2021 in southeastern Philippines.

1 (A) Jan 2021, Jan 2022: Diaspora engagement and project conceptualization.

2 (B) Mar 2021, Jan 2022: Micro-Finance Institutions (MFI) partnership selection.

3 (C) Apr 2021, Aug 2022: Loan manual review and finalization.

4 (D) May 2021, Feb 2022: Site identification with Diaspora, MFI and community members.

5 (E) Aug 2021, Aug 2022: MFI staff orientation and training.

6 (F) Sep 2021, Aug-Sep 2022: Selection of participants.

7 (G) Sep 2021, Sep 2022: Participants orientation training.

8 (H) Sep 2021, Sep 2022: Loan disbursement to participants and material distribution.

9 (I) Sep 2021, Sep 2022: Shelter construction began.

10 (J) Oct 2021, Nov 2022: Final monitoring assessment.

11 (K) Oct 2021, Dec 2022: Handover to the MFI.

CONTEXT

The Philippines is highly susceptible to natural hazards that affect the lives of local communities and subsequently their global diaspora. Recent decades have shown how the impacts of climate change have led to increased shocks, rising sea levels, land subsidence, precipitation, and droughts. The Philippines' vulnerability to natural hazards requires the country to invest in significant preparedness, monitoring, and response efforts to mitigate the impact of disasters.

The Filipino diaspora is extensively connected to their country of origin, and continues to contribute through humanitarian and emergency response interventions collectively and significantly. The Filipino diaspora is among the top ten largest in the world, with many living temporarily or permanently abroad. As a middle income country, the Philippines relies heavily on its agricultural, industrial, and service sectors as well as diaspora remittances. Considering the above, the project was piloted in two communities, Cavite and Bohol, following the environmental crises that struck the Philippines in 2020 and 2021.

Cavite is a province located directly southwest of Manila, in the Calabrazon region, within Luzon. The province faces significant economic risks due to geographical hazards such as tsunamis, landslides, flooding, storm surge, and earthquakes. Bohol is a province located in the Central Visayas, and is the tenth-largest island of the Philippines.

SITUATION BEFORE THE TYPHOONS

Before Typhoons Goni/Rolly made landfall in November 2020, the Philippines was already combatting a multifaceted crisis, including one of the highest COVID-19 transmission rates in the Asia-Pacific region. Further, many communities were still recovering from previous typhoons and tropical

storms that struck between 2019–2020, causing significant loss of life and damage to infrastructure including the destruction of 56,000 homes that left 775,000 in need of humanitarian assistance. A joint analysis of disaster exposure (JADE) conducted by UNOCHA and partners before Typhoon Goni determined that 68.6 million people lived in the exposed area, with 2.3 million persons in vulnerable situations in the areas expected to be the worst affected.

Furthermore, while minimum health protocols to prevent COVID-19 transmission needed to be reinforced, poor conditions in evacuation camps were also experienced due to a lack of WASH facilities, electricity, and cooking areas. The displacement led to the non-cultivation of agricultural land (particularly rice paddies and corn areas), which further threatened food security.



Over 2.1 million houses were damaged by Super Typhoon Rai/Odette, which affected the livelihoods of many farmers and fishermen by destroying hundreds of thousands of acres of coconut trees and crops, and damaged fishing boats.

SITUATION AFTER THE TYPHOONS

Typhoon Goni (known in the Philippines as Super Typhoon Rolly) struck the Philippines on 1 November 2020 as a Category 5 super typhoon, with wind gusts up to 280 kilometers per hour, one of the strongest landfall of a typhoon on record. The storm killed over 6,000 people and displaced over 130,000 individuals across eight regions. The 19th storm to hit the Philippines in 2020, Typhoon Goni exacerbated the limited coping capacities of those in hardest-hit regions. Priority needs include shelter, WASH, nutrition, psychosocial support, and protection according to initial assessments.

Super Typhoon Rai, locally known as Odette, made landfall in December 2021, and was the third strongest storm recorded in the Northern Hemisphere that year. The impact of Typhoon Rai spread across several islands, damaging infrastructure, compromising access to safe water and sanitation facilities, and heightening the risk of communicable disease outbreaks and exacerbating communities' vulnerabilities – especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Low-lying areas and vegetation farms along water tributaries and dams were flooded. With homes and vertical infrastructures as well as other properties and crops affected, livestock, poultry, and agri-fishery damaged, Bohol was declared under a state of calamity a day after the disaster struck, with a total of 290,593 homes damaged.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

With the approach of the typhoons, the Government of the Philippines led pre-emptive evacuations of over 480,000 people in affected areas to protect persons and infrastructure. After Super Typhoon Rai (Odette), the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) Operations Center reported a total of 2,224,803 affected families, including 401 individuals reported dead, 1,261 injured and 65 missing. With this, 486 cities and municipalities declared a State of Calamity (SOC), and two million homes were reported as totally damaged.

With the scheduled national elections in May 2022, non-permitted expenditures as part of the election ban, and the change of leadership in almost all national government agencies, no further actions have been further undertaken by the government towards recovery and rehabilitation of the Typhoon Rai-affected populace.

PROJECT DESIGN

The project aimed to increase access to safe shelters for vulnerable communities, both by: 1) increasing access to safe shelter funding opportunities by working with Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs) and by, 2) equipping MFIs and loan recipients with Build Back Safer (BBS) knowledge through training and rebuilding evaluations by the implementing organization's shelter experts. While promoting the importance of disaster risk reduction (DRR) through skills transfer and awareness raising, it was evident that



House rebuilding process in October 2022, after Typhoon Rai.

communities wanted to incorporate safe shelter practices but did not have the financial means to bear such costs upfront. Therefore, diaspora organizations were linked with MFIs to bridge safe shelter funding gaps in vulnerable communities. This also diversified funding options for affected communities by exploring alternative diaspora funding mechanisms, which encouraged community self-reliance through a loan repayment model in comparison to the provision of grants/direct remittances.

IMPLEMENTATION

DIASPORA AND LOCALIZATION: PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

In partnership to leverage diaspora networks for safer shelters of communities in the Philippines, the implementing organization, and a US-based Filipino diaspora organization met to discuss how to increase access to safe shelters through partnerships with MFI. Once the concept for a diaspora remittance loan model was developed, both parties sought an MFI partner.

DEVELOPMENT OF RESILIENT HOUSING LOAN

Through months of consultations and discussions on the diaspora remittance loan model with relevant stakeholders, the "Resilient Housing Loan" diaspora guarantor model was developed for retrofitting homes. The specifics of the loan and the disbursement methodology were agreed upon, and Cavite was selected as the first pilot community due to the number of homes damaged and the strong presence of the MFI in this community. Due to the success of the Cavite pilot, Bohol was selected as a second pilot community in 2022 where both the number of participants and loan amount were increased to meet rebuilding needs following Typhoon Rai. Since diaspora organizations needed to see proof of concept that this loan model worked before donating their remittances, seed funding of USD 5,000 was provided to act as a diaspora remittance pool. This allowed for lower, fixed interest rates (a key aspect of the loan) to be realized.

Participants could select loan amounts from USD 90-445 in Cavite and amounts from USD 90-535 in Bohol, both for a period of three, six, nine or 12 months.

METHODOLOGY

In addition to the aforementioned project planning, partnership building, and loan model development, the methodology of project implementation included:

- Selection of participants via a vulnerability index.
- Orientation and training on Build Back Safer (BBS) shelter practices to micro-finance staff and participants (loan recipients).
- Fund allocation (direct to participants or direct to a vendor); Material disbursement as applicable.
- Masons provided retrofitting services under provisions and monitoring of implementing organization engineers, who returned after completion to conduct a final assessment.
- Payment monitoring and diaspora (or seed funding from the implementing organization) guarantee disbursement, as needed.

A total of 15 shelters in Cavite and 30 shelters in Bohol were strengthened, retrofitted, or rebuilt, with monitoring by shelter experts through the issuing of “Resilient Housing Loans” (from roof repair, floor renovation, wall repair, and ceiling strengthening to house reconstruction, etc.).

TARGETING

The selection of participants was determined through a collaborative and consultative approach in a four-step process:

- **Diaspora strategy on-site identification:** The diaspora organization assisted in the identification of vulnerable households with shelter needs through its network and long-standing partnership with the MFI.
- **Vulnerability Assessment:** The organization conducted a vulnerability and needs assessment of households within the two municipalities to determine the initial participants for the program.

- **Client Rating Assessment:** MFI staff conducted an internal review of the beneficiary repayment ability of those selected during the vulnerability assessment. The capacity to repay through a cash flow analysis, along with meeting the vulnerability index was an eligibility factor in beneficiary selection.
- **Technical Support and Shelter Assessment:** The organizations’ engineers assessed the selected shelters (all of them female-headed households) for ensuring the adequacy of the loan figure to the shelter needs.

TRAINING AND ORIENTATION

To receive the funding for shelter materials, the project’s participants were required to attend a one-day orientation session on DRR practices and BBS methods in collaboration with the masons and laborers on hand. The training was led by the implementing organization’s engineers, and MFI staff gave an overview of the loan package.

In parallel with training and orientation, participants accessed Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials developed under the project as well as ongoing consultative support from construction experts. The IEC material covered step-by-step instructions on how to better construct shelters based on international standards with risk reduction and resilience in mind. These materials were referenced by participants and the MFI staff during the construction process.

INCREASED RESILIENCE

Because the MFI staff were also trained on DRR and BBS, they were able to provide guidance to participants when performing regular check-ins that were more frequent than monitoring provided by the organization engineers. This allowed for timely improvements and increased the capacity of MFI staff to provide such guidance to their other members and the community at large. Not only were participants supported by the MFI, but they also formed an informal community among themselves for peer-to-peer exchange that brought benefits in other areas of their lives and livelihoods. Therefore, the training and partnerships cultivated by the diaspora and the lead organization also empowered local actors such as the MFI and participants, contributing to increased community resilience through localization.



45 shelters were retrofitted through issuance of the Resilient Housing Loans. Homes were repaired and upgraded with monitoring and assessment throughout.

FEMALE-LED RECOVERY

Of the initial compiled list of participants, and based on the vulnerability index criteria, the project consisted of 45 female-led households who retrofitted and rebuilt their homes promoting restored livelihood means. Many participants utilize their homes for work, for example, hair salon, garment/sari stores, etc.

MAIN CHALLENGES

Financial model innovation: The financial model developed in collaboration between the Filipino diaspora and project stakeholders was novel in its nature. Project partners agreed that it would be necessary to implement a successful initial pilot phase before eliciting diaspora funding into the remittance fund. While this methodology allowed for ensured transparency and awareness-raising among the Filipino diaspora, it limited the pool of the remittance fund during the first phase, with greater diaspora fundraising to occur in the second phase. Nevertheless, the guarantee fund provided by the implementing organization lowered interest rates and demonstrated beneficiary capacity to make timely loan payments. The loan timelines varied from 3-12 months with loan payments at 12 weeks, 23 weeks, 35 weeks, 46 weeks, etc.

Limited capacity and resources: The pilot was implemented at a smaller scale, with 45 households in total, to determine the viability of the financial model. The maximum loan amount was limited to PHP 25,000–30,000 (USD 440-550) depending on location, and the participant's capacity for loan repayment, considering that smaller rebuilding loans will be piloted first.

WIDER IMPACTS

The project successfully piloted the loan model and multi-stakeholder partnership, garnering interest for future iterations.

Specifically, the initiative led to several direct and indirect impacts, including:

- Access to finance for female-headed households, who, in the absence of a diaspora's guarantee might have not been able to request or be granted housing loans.
- Access to technical assistance during the retrofitting process, which was instrumental to ensure that retrofitted homes met BBS standards and are consequently more resilient to the effects of future climatic shocks.
- Increased local communities' and participants' capacity thanks to their involvement in the retrofitting process and exposure to BBS and DRR concepts and practices.
- Increased sustainability of shelters built and retrofitted, as participants were able to afford more sturdy materials (e.g., concrete) rather than less expensive materials that would need to be replaced over time (e.g., coco lumber).

- Creation of a micro-finance model that may be replicated and scaled up to benefit other affected populations. The project also provided inspiration for the use of diaspora resources to promote safer shelters and increase community resilience beyond the 1:1 household level.

Consequently, this direct engagement led to increased awareness and the project received positive feedback and the interest of several key partners, including diaspora organizations, local officials (government of Bohol), academia, and other micro-finance institutions.

SCALING UP IN THE FUTURE

With the success of the first and second pilot phases, another iteration of the project is currently under development in the Philippines that will increase the scope of the project. The loan model will go through several rounds of revisions to accommodate the context and affected populations' needs, such as for preparedness rather than in response to a recent crisis. The financial model will be designed to adapt to crisis contexts and conditions with the hope of engaging national actors, additional local stakeholders (e.g., universities, masons, construction), and potentially other MFIs that are interested in scaling up this methodology in other regions.

In this respect, a diaspora outreach and fundraising campaign will be launched to support the funding mechanism. Further, the project seeks to increase gender and protection mainstreaming and Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) considerations from design through evaluation, with a continued focus on women and girls (female-led households) and the promotion of participation and inclusion of community members – especially persons in vulnerable situations. This includes building upon the orientation training to include cross-cutting components on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) risk mitigation in addition to the inclusion of male household members where appropriate to increase buy-in and support their efforts in the construction. Moreover, the financial model will seek to integrate ongoing, new BBS housing designs to ensure participants have options for sustainable and durable shelter solutions.



The initiative allowed female-heads of households access to finance loans.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **By leveraging diaspora and local partnerships**, this model provides a clear example of the importance and impact of diaspora contributions towards disaster recovery and community resilience, and the benefit of recognizing and strengthening the role that diasporas play as key partners in shelter response. Moreover, this project highlighted a successful **private-public partnership** to demonstrate the adaptive and unique roles that diasporas can play in partnership with other non-traditional local actor(s) towards the identification of alternative shelter financing and increased capacities for affected communities.
- ✓ **This loan model empowered affected communities** to be directly involved in their preparedness, response, and recovery contributing to a sense of agency that can be translated into longer-term buy-in and adoption of practices. Repayment rates were high, with 42 households (93 percent) on schedule and two behind on payments due to extenuating circumstances.

WEAKNESSES

- × While a client rating assessment during beneficiary selection was recommended by the MFI to lower the risk of the pilot and ascertain initial viability, **the assessment can impact the selection of the most vulnerable members of the community**. Future iterations should explore other methods to ensure loan repayment to ensure that the most vulnerable in the society can benefit now that the pilots have proven successful.
- × As this was an initial pilot, **the scale was limited to a small number of households**. The narrow scale was imperative to test and ensure the viability of the project but meant that results and relative impact are subsequently limited. The overall visibility of the project was also low, as the proof-of-concept was being tested. Therefore, it should also be noted that the current scale of the project is cost-intensive, and it is key to understand how many households should be targeted at a minimum to ensure cost-effectiveness. Although the project was successful at a limited scale, it is essential to understand to what extent the model can be brought to a larger caseload.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Bridging the Community and Diaspora:** Multiple stakeholders were engaged in the project, but the main actors (diaspora and MFI) had formal partnerships through service agreements or Project Implementation Agreements with the implementing organization. The loan model itself also outlined the roles and responsibilities of each partner.
- **Diaspora contributions to localization and community resilience:** The project empowered actors at multiple levels, demonstrating how the diaspora inherently supports localization by providing assistance to local actors.
- **BBS Resources and Information:** In providing loans, participants were able to overcome financial obstacles, while the technical BBS guidance allowed them to ensure their investment was an efficient and sustainable use of their funds.
- **The need for adaptable financial models per context:** This pilot included a specific set of agreed-upon financial terms and interest rates, however, varying and flexible loan options (e.g., lower interest rates) should be explored with the diaspora to reduce the risk for both borrowers and loan agents.
- **Exploration of the uses of the diaspora guarantee:** As payments were ongoing at the time of report writing, seed funding for the diaspora guarantee had not been disbursed yet. Follow-up and future pilots are needed to explore diverse methodologies of utilizing the diaspora guarantee.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

Future iterations of the model should include a formal evaluation to better understand outcomes and increase the effectiveness of the intervention. This can be supplemented by a monitoring report encapsulating the view of the community on the success of the approach, which can guide additional phases and help to ensure more localized approaches. Future iterations should also explore the viability of non-members, who may be more in need or vulnerable, or explore ways to increase access membership of institutions.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Philippines: [A.20 / PHILIPPINES 2015–2017](#); [A.22 / PHILIPPINES 2018](#); [A.8 / PHILIPPINES 2013–2016](#)

On private sector engagement: [A.7 / SOUTH SUDAN 2017–2018](#); [A.27 / IRAQ 2017–2018](#); [A.32 / TURKEY 2017–2018](#)

CASE STUDY

TIMOR LESTE 2021 / THE DILI FLOODS

KEYWORDS: Community engagement, Coordination and partnerships, Infrastructure, Preparedness

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| CRISIS | The Dili Floods |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 25,709 HHs affected* |
| HOMES DAMAGED/ DESTROYED | 4,546 homes** |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Dili, Timor-Leste |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 7,154 individuals supported through community infrastructure projects 1,826 individuals supported with emergency items (Food and Non-Food items) 103,000 HHs reached through the safer shelter awareness campaign |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 10 communities were facilitated to develop and manage 16 unique settlement/ infrastructure projects based on a participatory budgeting process 103,000 HHs were reached with locally designed, locally illustrated safer home construction IEC messages National Shelter manual developed and locally illustrated in coordination with an expert consortium of shelter INGOs, NGOs, and Government |
| PROJECT COST | USD 113,070 for the overall project |

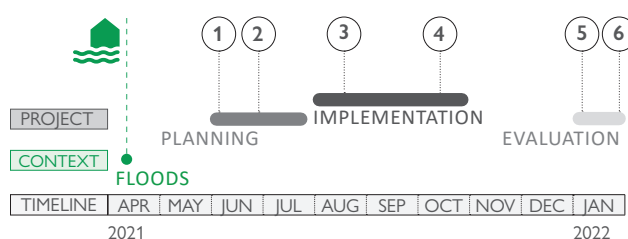
*UN Resident Coordinator's Office Situation Report No. 7, April 2021

**Timor-Leste Civil Protection



PROJECT SUMMARY

Responding to the Dili floods of 2021, this project worked to localize the humanitarian response by empowering communities to enact their own shelter and settlements plans and paired this with an innovative collaboration between global, national and local levels to develop truly localized shelter IEC materials. The community developed community-enacted projects through participatory budgeting which led to a set of unique settlement projects, bespoke to each participating village which focused around the repair and construction of various DRR related infrastructure works. Local engineers and illustrators developed culturally appropriate IEC materials, and through collaboration with a long-standing community magazine publisher distributed those materials and messaging through its extensive network to reach over 100,000 households including messaging for children.



- Apr 2021:** Flash floods and landslides affected 13 municipalities in Timor-Leste, especially the capital Dili, and surrounding low-lying areas.
- 1 Jun 2021:** Gender and Shelter assessments to capture the community's perspective related to their homes and their community development.
- 2 Jun-Jul 2021:** Community consultations and meetings conducted at 10 sub-villages (aldeias) to identify shelter priorities.
- 3 Aug-Oct 2021:** Community shelter activities which included cleaning and repairs of drainage and culverts, installation of water disposable units, repair of water canals.
- 4 Oct 2021:** Distribution of emergency items to more than 283 HHs.
- 5 Jan 2022:** A community-led evaluation process based on the aspects that best suited the project context, timeframe, feasibility and budget.
- 6 Jan 2022:** Post Distribution monitoring conducted which focused on the emergency items distributions and safer shelter awareness campaign.



Women groups of Persons with Disabilities attended FGDs as part of the project evaluation process, January 2022.

CONTEXT

Timor-Leste is a small country with a population of approximately 1.3 million (as of 2020). It is particularly mountainous, with central mountains rising to 3,000m and many rural communities located in hard to reach places. Local people in these communities most commonly reside in self-constructed single story timber frame houses, sometimes on stilts, with other materials such as bamboo, thatch, and mud used for the secondary structure based on what is locally available. The country is particularly exposed to natural hazards such as cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis, and heavy rainfall, which – in combination with the substandard local vernacular construction practices, limited and inadequate infrastructure, and social welfare – enhances vulnerability.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

Prior to this crisis in March/April 2021, Dili (the capital city) had not fully recovered from flooding in 2020, the impact of which took lives, damaged homes, and paralyzed infrastructure.

In general, much of the informal housing in Timor-Leste exhibits inherent structural vulnerabilities, such as weak connections between framing elements, poorly arranged structural frames lacking cross-bracing elements, and low-lying buildings lacking a raised plinth to enhance resilience to flood waters. Additionally, informal construction is usually located on sites exposed to risks such as flooding, high winds, and heavy rainfall-induced soil erosion – a recurring hazard and common cause of emergency shelter needs. This meant that many of the poorest households in the country who faced the impacts of this crisis were pre exposed and vulnerable to multiple significant risks with little knowledge of safe and/or sustainable building techniques to mitigate the impact.

SITUATION AFTER THE CRISIS

From 29 March to 4 April 2021, heavy rains across Timor-Leste caused flash floods and landslides – the worst flooding in 50 years. A total of eight municipalities were affected, the capital Dili and its surrounding low lying areas being the worst affected. While most of those displaced by floods were able to return to the site of their homes within weeks, many others had to settle in partially damaged structures or with neighbors where individuals' homes had been fully destroyed. On 8 April 2021, the Government of Timor-Leste declared a state of calamity in Dili for 30 days and requested international assistance for the flood response. In this context, a large population of affected households were repairing or reconstructing their homes on their own (referred to as self-recovery) at a scale beyond the scope of humanitarian actors to fully reach traditional material shelter support.

NATIONAL RESPONSE

The Government of Timor-Leste requested urgent support after the floods, which was answered in part by donors, national and international humanitarian actors, and civil society organizations. Specifically, the government asked for support in the dissemination of health messages and the distribution of emergency and shelter non-food items. Strict COVID-19 lockdowns in the Dili municipality were temporarily suspended because of the ongoing flood response.

Later in the crisis, the government issued a decree declaring its intent to coordinate a national cash program with UN agencies, requesting NGO support in complementing the program with government prescribed material distributions. This created constraints to INGO shelter programming that sought to address needs beyond emergency distributions.



Torrential rains caused the worst flooding in recent years in Timor-Leste, April 2021.

PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

Based on rapid needs assessments conducted in June 2021, initial emergency distributions of shelter non-food items (kitchen supplies and hygiene kits) and food items were carried out by the organization to respond to acute household shelter needs of the most vulnerable.

The shelter strategy was developed alongside emergency assistance with a focus on supporting the longer term efforts of communities toward shelter self-recovery. Following this approach, the program sought to better understand households' efforts to self-recovery before designing shelter inputs to best complement these recovery pathways. Initially, the project strategy aimed to support households in self recovery through a mix of cash and in-kind material support for reconstruction, to maximize beneficiary choice and agency in the application of humanitarian resources. However, the government decree and changing context prompted the organization to evolve this strategy.

Additionally, it was identified that commonly utilized practices in vernacular construction were not addressing vulnerabilities during reconstruction and repair, which could have led to exposure and risk in future hazard events. Examples included the poor positioning of new constructions near riverbanks and the lack of internally reinforcing cross-bracing elements in the timber frames. For these reasons, the program retained its emphasis on shelter self-recovery support but pivoted its implementation strategy away from household-level shelter provision to addressing settlement-level infrastructure needs and the broader knowledge management needs of shelter reconstruction.

By adapting project programming to the country's rapidly changing context and the results of a consultative gendered shelter assessment (detailed in the next section), the implementing organization developed innovative and community-led recovery projects and played a key role in the development of a national Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign around safer home construction.

ASSESSMENT

GENDERED SHELTER ASSESSMENT

From the early phases of the project, the implementing organization wanted to capture nuanced community data related to homes and communities by developing a qualitative assessment tool that included gendered and disaggregated reflection, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews.

The organization was committed to the idea that gendered perspectives like those of women and girls can often be lost in more generalized assessment processes. Because of this, special efforts were made to engage different groups separately on their terms (as opposed to engagement through mixed community forums).

This engaged groups such as women, men, girls, boys, the elderly, and Persons with Disabilities. The gendered forums aimed to amplify varying community voices and shaped the project through ongoing consultation and engagement once activities commenced.

Through the inclusion of gendered perspectives, women, girls, and other marginalized groups were given a platform for participation from the start of the project. For example, this catalyzed a conversation between the men and women in each community around role assignments for community projects. As a result, women in the community deliberately assigned themselves key roles in many of the community projects – including some of the more traditionally male roles such as drainage clearance and construction.

Many of the discussions that began in the gendered shelter assessment went on to inform project selection and development. For example, discussions on ongoing recovery challenges around drainage canals and flooding debris directly resulted in several communities electing to develop drainage clearance projects. Projects like these were not pre-designed by the organization, but rather emerged out of discussions with the communities themselves.

One of the key learnings from the gendered shelter assessment was that, for participatory assessments to be meaningful, they must tie into and directly influence activity planning. The themes and ideas brought up during the participatory assessment remained strong influences for the programs that followed them.



Assessments of the damaged households was a qualitative approach through KIs and FGDs by engaging groups of women, men, girls, boys, elderly and Persons with Disabilities., June 2021.



Women from the community engaged in debris cleaning process.

IMPLEMENTATION

COMMUNITY-LED RECOVERY PROJECTS

To address settlement-level needs and empower community-led self-recovery efforts, the organization assisted each affected community through a participatory process including risk assessment and project identification. This led each aldeia (village) in the development of its own set of INGO-funded settlement level activities, resulting in a diverse set of community-managed projects such as drainage canal repair and/or reconstruction, refuse management, water system repair, retaining wall construction and community building construction.

Communities started this process by reflecting on the impacts of the crisis and how settlement and household-level exposure to risk had exacerbated the crisis. The communities were then supported in the brainstorming and formulation of community-level project ideas to address flood risks with the support of engineers to cost the proposals. Through participatory budgeting, communities worked within allocated funding constraints to short-list the projects they felt were most relevant to them. The organization then supported implementation by managing the procurement of in-kind construction materials and some small cash transfers to communities to support the local procurement of food and locally available items where possible. The original intent was to fund these projects through community-managed cash tranches. However, the short time frame over the COVID-19 period and limited experience at the country office in conditional cash

transfer mechanisms led to a compromise with in-kind material procurement.

This approach empowered each community to develop their program based on the needs they perceived them. The process was received positively by participants in the community-led evaluation. While this process did not result in traditional household-level shelter construction, the interventions determined by each community were seen as more relevant, impactful, and complementing existing government programs at the household-level to support self-recovery.

SAFER SHELTER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

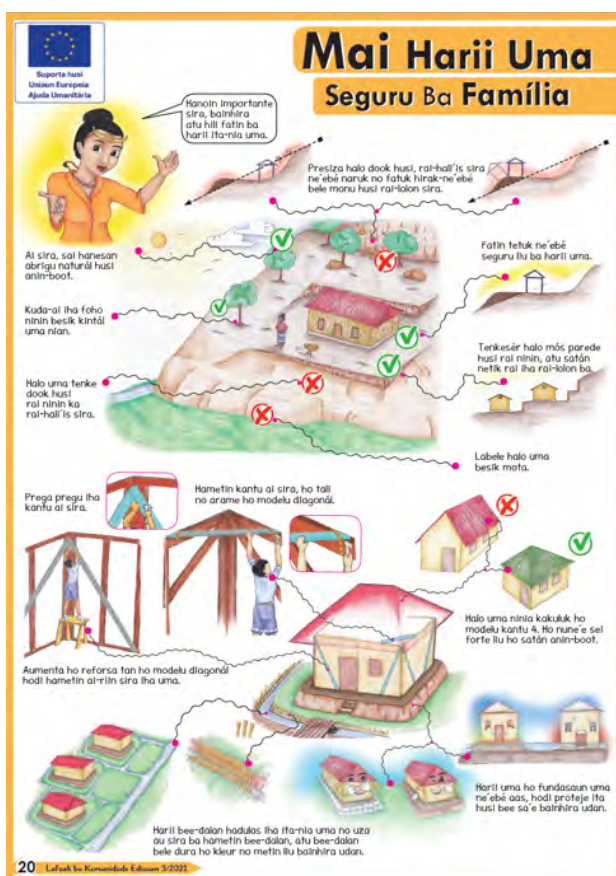
The implementing organization also took on a key role at the national level to promote safer shelter awareness messaging using IEC materials including a magazine campaign, a manual, and poster signage. Technical messages were developed by global shelter advisors, in coordination with local engineers, the national government, and the Technical Working Group of INGOs, addressing vernacular construction practices designed to provide accessible and affordable guidance on rural home construction. To prioritize the localization of shelter messages, the implementing organization utilized a 20-year relationship built with the publisher of a community magazine to illustrate and publish shelter IEC material in a culturally appropriate and accessible style.

Once key messages were tested and agreed upon, the organization worked with experienced illustrators from the community magazine to translate technical content into accessible and culturally appropriate visual guidance materials. These included materials bespoke to the magazine and its audiences, including specific messaging for children. The magazine itself was used as a platform to distribute these materials and reached a wide audience of more than 100,000 households.

Additionally, the organization worked with other Shelter NGOs and INGOs, the National Government, and the IEC Technical Working Group to develop a national shelter manual, “Hari’l Uma ne’ebe Ho Seguru husi Disastre no Asesivel”. Following the IEC Compendium and protocol, the agencies worked together assigning and conducting responsibilities between themselves for different steps of the process. The implementing organization of this case study developed detailed IEC for audiences/stakeholders, while a peer organization worked on developing the roll out strategy, confirming the IEC objective and the monitoring, revision, and evaluation framework.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Efforts were made at every stage of program development and implementation to maximize community participation and engagement – especially regarding women and girls – with the goal of fostering community ownership of the project. This approach supported shelter self-recovery by recognizing, enhancing, and complementing the agency of affected people in their recovery efforts.



Locally illustrated safer home construction IEC messages were disseminated through the Lafaek community magazine.

MAIN CHALLENGES

One of the major challenges of the response was implementing the project within the COVID-19 context. This delayed some activities, as COVID-19 mitigation policies were put into place that slowed cooperation between global-level technical teams and country-level field teams, prohibiting travel and limiting all external support to be carried out remotely. Another major challenge was the government decree early in the emergency that shelter material distributions had to meet a minimum of USD 600 per person and adhere to a government-approved material list. Taking the size of the project into consideration,



Rehabilitation of water tanks was one of the community infrastructure activities implemented.

this high unit cost hindered the organization from reaching vulnerable participants at-scale as intended within the scope of the available budget.

This contextual challenge – in combination with gaps identified through community consultations around resilient rural construction knowledge and a lack of settlement-level recovery interventions – led the organization to pivot its programming. With the wider impacts of shelter in mind, the organization designed a program consisting of multiple activity inputs to shelter self-recovery pathways, aimed at addressing community-level infrastructure and knowledge needs rather than the usual household-level shelter interventions.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

Community led projects were evaluated by revisiting the participating communities using the 'most significant changes' methodology, while the Magazine Safer Shelter Awareness Campaign was assessed through a sample respondent assessment survey. Given more time/budget, it would have been desirable to return with peer agencies to the sites of reconstructed homes to better document and evidence a behavioral change in vernacular construction.

The monitoring and evaluation undertaken revealed that the program not only addressed short-term needs that emerged in the wake of the flooding but also initiated reflection, analysis, co-creation, and action on the ground – led by the communities themselves. The project also leveraged national capacity through the community magazine distribution network, local artists, and engineers in combination with global technical support and Global Shelter Cluster IEC learning to develop an effective and localized approach to safer-shelter awareness. Overall, the project's approach enabled a short term project to begin addressing longer-term aspects of knowledge, preparedness, and disaster risk reduction while it strengthened the role of the community in self-recovery efforts – as reflected by the community-led evaluation.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **The project's donor allowed the project to pivot towards community-identified gaps** in settlement-level recovery activities and construction knowledge for more resilient rural reconstruction.
- ✓ **The gendered shelter assessment** was consciously designed to give women and girls a voice and role in recovery and reconstruction.
- ✓ **Participatory budgeting and project development exercises** worked well, allowing communities to take meaningful decisions and lead in programming.
- ✓ **A collaboration with local engineers and illustrators** enabled the development of localized and culturally appropriate IEC materials.
- ✓ The project's partnership with a local magazine allowed the organization to tap into a wide distribution network and augment the reach of technical messaging.

WEAKNESSES

- ✗ **Due to contextual constraints**, community-led projects relied on the provision of in-kind materials rather than cash transfers which would have given the community groups more agency.
- ✗ **Larger budget allocations for community-led recovery projects** could have led to more sustainable DRR interventions, such as more significant flood protections for housing, river diversions, and forest planting.
- ✗ **Additional post-distribution monitoring and in-depth evaluations of the safer shelter awareness campaign** could have contributed to lessons learned by measuring its impact on behavioral change in building practices, thus informing future iterations of this approach.
- ✗ While the community-led recovery projects were successful in attesting that communities can responsibly develop, plan and manage their projects – the approach could benefit from **additional funding to increase project scale**.
- ✗ **Additional efforts to document and capture the project's impact on rural housing construction** and/or reconstruction against the baseline could have strengthened outcome evidence.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- While the safer shelter awareness campaign focused on IEC and technical knowledge management products, more could have been done to connect this activity to community and household-level reconstruction efforts. For example, the inclusion of technical support through a mobile community shelter team, tasked to support participants in the reconstruction of their homes, may have helped amplify and better apply messages at the household level.
- Additional field visits from technical staff and community-level training events during reconstruction could have also enhanced understanding of IEC material and improved the final construction of homes. The COVID-19 pandemic largely prohibited the implementation of more ambitious field-level activities. In response, more resilient implementation strategies should be developed to achieve outcomes in the face of unforeseen constraints like those experienced during this project.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Shelter program design should not forget settlement needs when identifying household needs.
- Communities are capable of developing and managing funds and activities if the project is structured toward this approach.
- Highly participatory approaches can be deployed during short time frames. Emergency timeframes should not limit humanitarian actors to only utilizing activities with a short-term impact.
- The creation of child-friendly messaging by local editors and illustrators shows that new pathways can be found for technical knowledge disbursement.
- Meaningful participation with communities – especially women and girls – can alter the course of a program toward more appropriate and impactful humanitarian outcomes.




FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

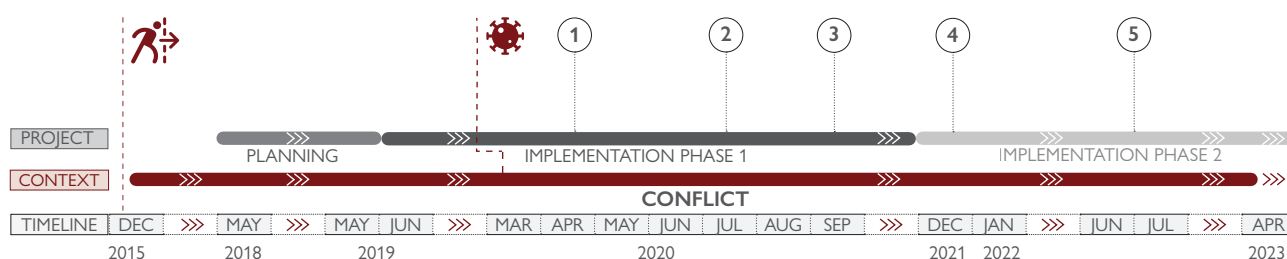
On community engagement: [A.14 / PHILIPPINES 2016–2020](#); [A.27 / TURKEY 2017–2020](#); [A.10 / UGANDA 2017–2018 / CONFLICT](#)
On infrastructure: [A.23 / SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC 2019–2020](#); [A.16 / MYANMAR 2012](#); [A.3 / COLOMBIA 2010–2011](#)

CASE STUDY

GREECE 2019–2023 / COMPLEX CRISIS

KEYWORDS: Host community integration, Local authorities engagement, Rental assistance, Security of tenure, Social cohesion

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| CRISIS | Mediterranean Migration Crisis |  |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 391,568 people affected* | |
| RESPONSE LOCATION | Multiple locations in Greece | |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | Total of 35,777 people and 15,942 HHs 48% female and 52% male beneficiaries 39% assisted were children 54% were adults 7% were people in their old age (50+ years) | |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 19 Integration Learning Centres established in 13 cities throughout the country 21,876 people/ 9,249 HHs benefitted from monthly rental subsidies for apartments leased in the beneficiary's name 9,384 people enrolled in the Integration Courses 27,971 integration monitoring sessions conducted 10,477 individual job counselling sessions conducted 6,8639 beneficiaries skills' profiles created 233 focus group discussions conducted 97 sensitization events conducted 43 career days and employability events conducted | |
| * International Protection applications (2013 – January 2023) Source: Greek Asylum Service | | PROJECT SUMMARY The project aimed to promote self-reliance within the migrant population and to support the Greek authorities in establishing a sustainable integration mechanism into the society, as part of the overall Migration Management System, through the provision of a holistic set of services including integration courses, consisting of Greek language and soft skills courses, accommodation support services, including rental subsidies, employability support services, integration monitoring services and sensitization activities. The project focused towards a multifaceted and flexible approach to service provision adaptable to current and future needs while adapting the response to Covid-19 restrictive measures. |



2015: Mixed migration flows escalated due to mass influx of Syrians, Iraqis, Libyans, Afghans and Eritreans fleeing war, ethnic conflict or economic hardship.

- 1 Mar- May 2020:** Adaptation to remote service provision and extraordinary extension of rental subsidies entitlements due to COVID restrictions.
- 2 Jul 2020:** 19 Integration Learning Centres were established across Greece as service provision locations.
- 3 Sep 2020:** Fire at Lesbos Moria reception and identification centre, led to intensified outreach and enrollment activities.
- 4 Dec 2021:** Transition to national government funding.
- 5 Jun-Jul 2022:** Project target group population expanded to include Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BTP) and increase in the duration and amounts of rental subsidies to incentivize integration in the country.



Syrian and Iraqi refugees arrive from Turkey to Skala Sykamias, Lesbos island, Greece

CONTEXT

Greece is the southeasternmost mainland European Union member state. The country encountered continuously high numbers of mixed migration flows since the end of 2014, with the biggest influx being recorded during 2015–2016. While migration flows have followed a steady decline in numbers since, over 390,000 international protection applications have been submitted from 2014 to August 2022, according to the Greek Asylum Service.

The dominant narrative in Greece is that the country has a nationally, linguistically, and religiously homogenous population. In this regard, most of the population of Greece is of Greek origin (local population groups and descendants of early 20th century Greek refugees from Asia Minor), Greek-speaking and Greek Orthodox. The only officially recognized minority is that of the Muslim population living in the region near Turkey. Nevertheless, after 1990, Greece became a destination country for over one million migrants from the Balkan countries (mainly Albania) and Eastern Europe.

The country's economy is comprised primarily of tertiary sector enterprises, with a thriving tourist industry. High-quality Greek agricultural products, favored by the typically Mediterranean climate, are also exported throughout Europe and Russia. However, because of the global financial crises of 2007–2009, the Greek economy suffered important setbacks in the period 2009–2018, which resulted in a significant decrease in the income per capita and consequent living standards, while the social welfare system had to undergo substantial cuts.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

Although Greece has been a transit country for migrants predominantly from the Middle East and Central Asia, the migration flows of 2014–2016 due to the expansion of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq was unprecedented. Over a million people entered the country through Turkey, primarily landing on the islands of the Aegean Sea and – to a lesser extent – by crossing the Evros River (the natural border between the two countries). The refugees were predominantly Arabs, Kurds, and Afghans from both the urban centers and the rural areas of Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

SITUATION AFTER THE CRISIS

Upon arrival on the Greek islands, the intent of many refugees was to use the Western Balkans Route (from Greece to North Macedonia, to Serbia and Croatia, through Slovenia to Austria and Germany). The main exit point from Greece was the irregular crossing of Idomeni, where an informal refugee camp was created on farming fields. However, border crossing restrictions began in November 2015 and a complete shutdown of the irregular crossings took place in March 2016. The Greek state responded during the crisis by setting up accommodation schemes of the Greek Reception System, including open and closed

reception and identification centers, short and long-term open accommodation centers, safe zones and shelters for unaccompanied children, protective housing programs, and accommodation projects in chartered hotel facilities and rented urban apartments. These are considered as participants' residence locations prior to enrolling in the project (and residence therein during recognition serves as a prerequisite for enrollment). Pre-crisis infrastructure was strictly limited compared to the accommodation schemes set up in response.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

In accordance with EU Directive 2013/33 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 – laying down standards for the reception of applicants of international protection – the Government of Greece began creating temporary accommodation facilities in mainland Greece as early as February 2016. By September 2017, 49 temporary accommodation facilities with a total capacity of 50,000 individuals were established in mainland Greece. In addition, accommodation for asylum seekers in apartments was also provided through the UNHCR-implemented ESTIA project (Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation) with a capacity of 27,000 individuals. However, no additional support was foreseen for the migrants who were granted international protection status, resulting in congestion in reception accommodation schemes. Since its conception, the project aimed to facilitate the stranded participants of international protection to exit reception accommodation schemes. The project was planned and established as an integration mechanism, to provide a holistic set of services to participants, and since July 2022, temporary status of protection.

PROJECT DESIGN

The main goals of the project were to increase migrants' prospects towards self-reliance and to support them in becoming active members of Greek society through a holistic set of services that touched upon basic elements of integration, i.e., integration courses (Greek language and soft skills), accommodation and employability support, individual integration monitoring and host community sensitization.



A recognized refugee receives information about job opportunities in Greece after attending in a Career Day co-organized by the organization.

One intended outcome was to support the national authorities to establish a sustainable integration mechanism for these participants in Greece, as part of the overall Migration Management System in the country. The project also intended to work as a rotation mechanism for the Greek Reception System (GRS), offering an exit strategy – along with the integration policy – to decongest GRS accommodation schemes or address participant needs after exiting others accommodated as applicants.

The project included rental subsidies as financial support for apartments leased by participants in their names, utilized to have participants understand and use the same methods, credentials, and platforms any other citizen in the country would use to rent a property.

IMPLEMENTATION

Nineteen Integration Learning Centers (ILC) were established in thirteen cities as service provision locations to host project activities, in addition to field teams roving the government reception accommodation facilities. The value and duration of rental subsidies were revisited to match the situation in the housing market and to respond to the needs of the participants as identified through project feedback mechanisms. Land allocation or land issues were not a project concern, as the intended housing units were existing registered private properties in the country available for rent.



It is crucial that beneficiaries of shelter provision projects are timely informed, periodically reminded and adequately empowered to address their needs after the end of service provision.

Government-imposed movement restriction measures enforced during the initial phases of the COVID-19 pandemic urged the project to design remote implementation mechanisms. These were eventually maintained after the end of the restriction period – resulting in the availability of hybrid services (in-person and remote/online).

The project was implemented by an international agency with the support of ten partners. The initial overall personnel structure included five hundred staff. Over time, the number of staff involved was amended in accordance with the number of participants enrolled in the project in each period.

TARGETING

The project was designed for implementation at the national level, following relevant coordination with important stakeholders. Furthermore, the target population was initially those receiving international protection (refugees and participants of subsidiary protection) and then, as of July 2022, included those receiving temporary protection (on the basis of the published Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 of the Council of the European Union).

Project outreach activities took place at accommodation schemes of the Greek Reception System (Open Accommodation Centers, Reception and Identification Centers, and Hotels). Areas for the establishment of the project's Integration Learning Centers were targeted based on a preexisting presence of participant populations of rented urban apartment accommodations schemes (ESTIA).



A refugee working in an elderly care facility together with his colleague, after receiving integration support by the organization.



Beneficiaries of the organization moving-in to their new apartment.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Integration is a two-way process that requires the investment of both the host and the hosted communities. In this regard, participants of the project were required to attend mandatory integration courses, were provided with optional accommodation and employment services, and were invited to participate in individual integration monitoring and sensitization activities. Consequently, to benefit from the complete set of offered services, participants were required to be actively involved.

Moreover, the project launched impact and satisfaction services where participants provided feedback and suggestions on offered services. Project participants and members of the local population also had the opportunity to interact through 233 focus group discussions and 97 sensitization events organized by the sensitization component of the project. This feedback mechanism resulted in significant changes to provisions throughout the project, such as the increase in the duration and amounts of the monthly rental subsidies.



Refugees are visiting an apple orchard as part of the employability support provided by the organization.

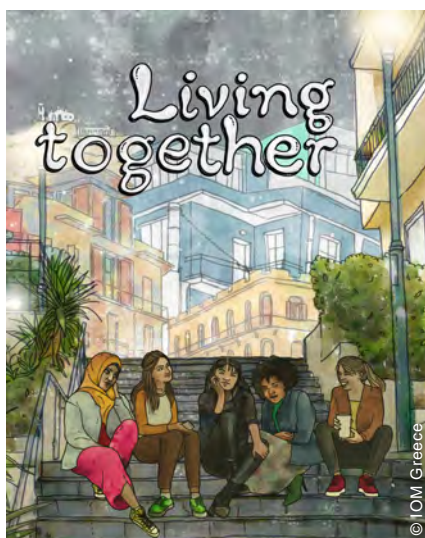
COORDINATION

The project falls under the general Migration Management continuum in Greece. In this regard, close coordination with the governmental and local authorities was required, to support the National and Local Integration Strategies and to support building the state's integration mechanism that is not in place yet. The project was developed in close coordination with the Ministry of Migration and Asylum and all primary decisions were taken trilaterally (MoMA, DG Home, and the implementing agency) during international funding and bilaterally (MoMA – international agency) after the transition to national funding. Strong coordination with implementing partners in accommodation and education resulted in project quality and credibility, which was established as the main integration mechanism of the country.

MAIN CHALLENGES

The onset of COVID-19, and the first restrictive measures on mobility between March and May of 2020, were challenging to a project designed for face-to-face implementation. The project response was to adapt and overcome by redesigning implementation modalities for remote service provision. Additionally, with regards to financial support, an extraordinary extension of rental subsidies beyond participants' entitlements was agreed with the donor and implemented for the period needed, due to the COVID-19 mobility restriction impacts on the labor market.

The closing of the Moria Reception and Identification Center on Lesbos Island due to fire led to intensified outreach and enrollment activities from September–October 2020. The project's target group population was then expanded in June–July 2022 to include those receiving temporary protection in Greece based on the published Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 of the Council of the European Union. This put in motion a parallel design and implementation mechanism geared towards this specific population of participants.



Illustrations promoting community living as part of an awareness raising campaign towards integration.

CROSSCUTTING ISSUES

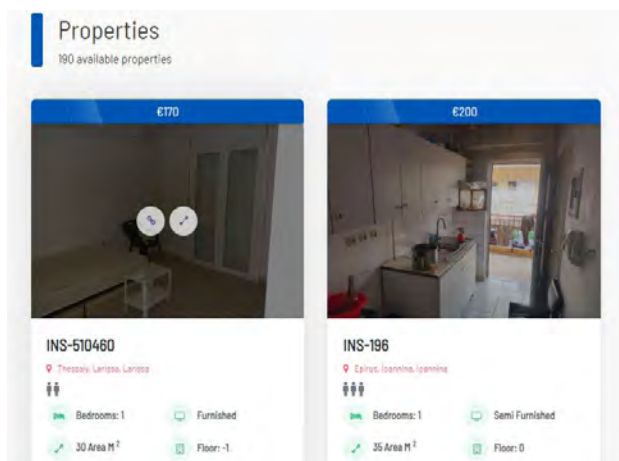
Aiming to ensure equal gender accessibility, mandatory integration courses were offered in three shifts during the day so that each family had the possibility to organize their schedule and childcare according to needs. The project also offered recreational activities through specialized staff available at Integration Learning Centers to take care of the children aged 2–7 while their parents attend mandatory classes. In addition to the above, a mother-toddler space operated in one ILC in Thessaloniki provided the possibility to mothers of children younger than two years of age to also attend integration courses. Specific employability and sensitization events, tailored to the needs of female project participants, took place to promote social integration and labor market inclusion.



Refugees attend language courses lessons in dedicated Integration Learning Centers, run by the organization and its partners.

TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

The project's website was not a technical innovation per se, as websites with listings for apartments to rent are common. The innovation was qualitative, as a platform with participant-friendly listings for project pre-verified housing options and employment opportunities. The



Various tools were developed to facilitate the provision of rental assistance including a website providing information on apartment listings.

e-learning modality being offered for integration courses was available for sourcing from within the international agency but was adapted to cover the project and participants' needs. Remote implementation solutions implemented during the movement restriction period, such as digital job fairs, remote apartment verification process via geolocation, and virtual house visits were maintained after the lift of the measures due to high-quality results achieved.

Information on how to use the tools developed for accessing housing were prepared and disseminated for effective programming.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

Findings indicate increased resilience and integration potential of participants when accommodation support is embedded in a support scheme that addresses various aspects of daily life in the protection-granting country – opening and sustaining an integration pathway. The sustainability of a participant household in subsidized accommodation is significantly enhanced when integration pathways are initiated and supported. This is achieved as a rental subsidy provision and is matched with educational (Greek language and soft skills courses) opportunities/obligations, local labor market inclusion support, and integration monitoring provisions. The project provided a model for scaling up a response, as evidenced programmatically with the inclusion of a second new participant target population in mid-2022, and reactively with the intensive outreach to and enrollment of high numbers of participants in a concentrated timeframe.



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

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ The project is the first **country-wide holistic integration project** implemented in Greece, it engaged tens of thousands of participants and adapted to fluctuating circumstances, especially during pandemic restrictions.
- ✓ **Multilateral cooperation was achieved** through a concrete multilayered coordination structure as the project was implemented with the support of ten implementing partners and in close cooperation with government authorities.
- ✓ Rental subsidies **assisted individuals facing the threat of marginalization** especially those about to exit the government accommodation schemes, also decongesting the Greek Reception Systems.
- ✓ Tools such as the online platform, accommodation workshops and the facilitation of communication with apartment owners contributed to an **efficient provision of services**.
- ✓ Provision of skills building courses with a tailored curriculum through e-learning **facilitated integration**.
- ✓ Employability events for beneficiaries resulted in effectively bringing together local employers and project beneficiaries, facilitating the access of the latter in the labour market.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Standalone accommodation provision is not sufficient in terms of promoting integration of third country nationals (TCNs) in a host community. Data received through the project's feedback mechanisms portray that the beneficiaries who receive the entire set of project services are more positive regarding their integration potentials in the country.
- In the context of rental subsidy approach, it is possible that the service provider will come across individuals whose traumatic experiences and previous cultural setting render them reluctant to leave their collective accommodation, even when these appear to be inadequate for their integration needs.
- Targeted geographical distribution to regions with job opportunities requires additional incentives.
- It is crucial that beneficiaries of shelter provision projects are timely informed, periodically reminded and adequately empowered to address their needs after the end of service provision.

WEAKNESSES

- × Some beneficiaries **could not sustain their rental agreement after the project** due to limited employment opportunities during the COVID 19 pandemic and the fixed value and duration of rental subsidies.
- × The **link between course attendance and the provision of rental subsidies was sometimes not clearly understood by the beneficiaries**, who would only realize the consequences of non attendance after their deregistration from the project, with very limited possibility of re-enrolment.
- × The project's unified approach targeting many beneficiaries **decreased the possibility of supporting people with vulnerabilities** related to health, which render them in need of such tailored and intensive support not foreseen in the project.
- × The project dedicated **comprehensive efforts to promote decentralization from the main urban centers**, with additional monthly rental subsidies combined with employment opportunities. However, the lack of supporting networks of co-nationals was an insurmountable obstacle to this end.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- Given funding restrictions, the project did not include additional types of employability services, such as traineeships or vocational training. This expansion is foreseen in the next funding period, negotiated with relevant authorities beginning in February 2023.
- It is also acknowledged that the housing market in Greece – in urban centers and tourist destinations particularly – lacks affordable opportunities. Nevertheless, a significant number of properties remains outside the market due to needed repairs and upgrades whose cost exceeds their owners' budgets. The project will need to explore synergies with affordable housing initiatives and to advocate for the accessibility of TCNs to relevant social housing policies adopted by the State.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On local govt. engagement: [A.12 / ECUADOR, 2016 – 2018](#); [A.16 / UKRAINE, 2016 – 2021](#); [A.18 / IRAQ, 2018-2021](#)

On rental assistance: [A.8 / BAHAMAS, 2019 – 2020](#); [A.20 / JORDAN, 2018 – 2020](#)

On social cohesion and integration: [A.2 / CHAD, 2019 – 2020](#); [A.3 / CHAD, 2018 – 2020](#); [A.32 / TURKEY, 2017 – 2018](#)

OVERVIEW

UKRAINE 2022–2023 / CONFLICT

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| CRISIS | Russian invasion of Ukraine (2022) |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 21.3 million people affected 17.6 million people in need* |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | 5.35 million IDP** 8.17 million refugees across Europe*** |
| HOMES DAMAGED/ DESTROYED | 1.4 million**** residential units have been damaged 499,056 units (Over one-third of the damaged units) are destroyed, while two-thirds are partially damaged. |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 8.3 million individuals with shelter and NFI needs* |
| LOCATION | Whole of Ukraine with following contexts: 1. Oblasts receiving displaced populations, mainly Western and some Central oblasts. 2. Conflict-affected-mainly Eastern oblasts. 3. Newly accessible areas, liberated and where it is foreseen the situation might remain stable in terms of security. |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED IN THE RESPONSE | Over 4,336,000 individuals reached***** |
| RESPONSE OUTPUTS | 605,806 individuals reached with shelter emergency support 28,547 individuals reached with rental support 2,084,876 individuals were distributed NFI kits at HH level 901,803 individuals received NFIs in collective and reception sites 24,086 with NFI kits for bomb shelters 70,732 with light & medium repairs 76,850 with basic refurbishment of buildings to be used as collective sites 44,251 with hosting families' support 1,988,920 individuals supported through winterization |



SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSE

The Ukraine Shelter Cluster is currently coordinating three different shelter responses to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, tailored to different geographical areas affected by the ongoing conflict. In the western areas and where there has been a large influx of IDPs, the focus of the response has been on improving and creating accommodation options in collective sites, finding rental solutions, and distributing essential goods. In the areas that were formerly occupied, (N & E) the response has focused on repairing damaged homes and replacing NFIs. In the areas of contact, NGCA, and difficult to reach areas, the response has been to distribute Emergency Shelter Kits and provide NFI for bomb shelters. Winterization activities have been carried out throughout the territory reaching out to the neediest households. Overall, the Ukraine Shelter Cluster has been and will need to continue evolving and adapting to the dynamic situation in the country to address the diverse needs arising from the conflict and maintaining its relevance as the crises evolves beyond emergency ensuring the affected populations have access to safe and adequate living conditions.

*Humanitarian Response Plan 2023

** IOM Internal Displacement Report

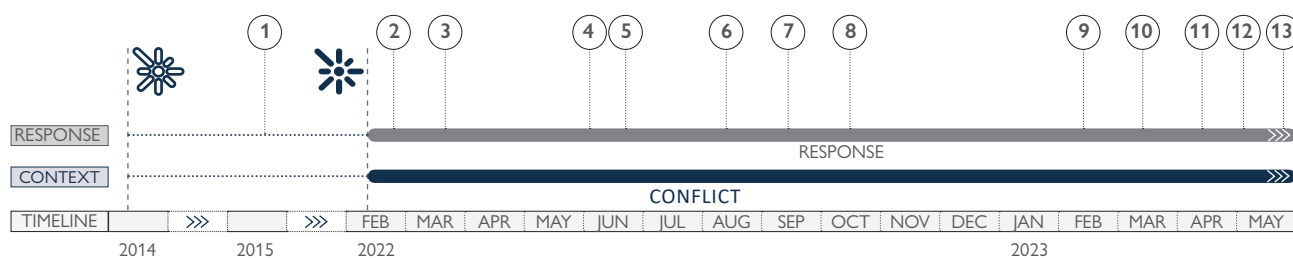
*** Operational Data Portal, UNHCR

**** Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (Round 2)

***** Ukraine Shelter Cluster dashboard



A residential building destroyed by shelling in Irpin, Ukraine, March 2, 2022, and the same building in May 2015.



2014: Russia-Ukraine conflict.

1

2015: Activation of shelter cluster in Donbas.



Feb 2022: Russia full scale invasion of Ukraine.

2

Feb 2022: Transformation of the Ukraine Shelter Cluster scope and structure to extend beyond Donbas region.

3

Mar-Apr 2022: Flash appeal for the humanitarian response in 2022 was published in March and reviewed in April.

4

Apr 2022: Shelter Cluster Damaged building assessment Technical Working Group (TWiG) was activated.

5

Jun 2022: Ukraine Shelter Cluster strategy was approved.

6

Mar-Jun 2022: Technical Working Group (TWiG) for Collective sites was activated in March. Collective sites Guiding Framework was published in June.

7

Apr-Aug 2022: Cash for rent Technical Working Group (TWiG) was activated in April. Shelter Cluster Recommendations on Cash for Rent was published in August

8

Mar-Sep 2022: Light and medium repairs Technical Working Group (TWiG) was activated in March. Shelter Cluster Light and Medium repairs SOP was published in September.

9

Apr-Oct 2022: Winterization Technical Working Group (TWiG) was re-launched in April. Shelter Cluster Winterization recommendations was published in October.

10

Feb 2023: Ukraine Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2023 was published.

11

Mar 2023: Shelter Cluster Refurbishment of Collective Sites - Building targeting criteria was released by Collective Sites TWiG

12

May 2023: Shelter Cluster CBI Implementation Guidelines for L&M Repairs was released by Light and Medium repairs TWiG

13

May 2023: Expression Of Interest for renewal of SAG and TWiG for durable housing solutions. Elaborate the cluster role in shift to more durable solutions as GOU compensation scheme is launched. Commencement of the development of a multi-year Shelter Cluster

CONTEXT

On 24 February 2022, a full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation began – causing massive loss of life, catastrophic suffering, and immense infrastructure destruction throughout the country. For 2023, the estimation of people in need of humanitarian aid is more than 17 million. Given the intensity of the conflict, including missile attacks in cities all over the country, the crisis has led to the largest displacement crisis in Europe since World War II. The latest estimations note that (of a population of 42 million) 5 million Ukrainians are internally displaced and 8 million have been registered as refugees across Europe – primarily in Poland, Germany, and the Czech Republic.

Inside the country, the eastern oblasts (sometimes translated as region or province) have been the most frequently attacked areas, facing humanitarian access constraints and limitations to the movement of civilians. One of the worst affected cities in this sense – Mariupol – was besieged for more than two months. The western oblasts were also affected by bombardments and struggled to deliver adequate shelter and access to services to newly arrived individuals. In parallel, in a third context, reconstruction work began as soon as some areas were liberated from the presence of Russian troops.

An additional level of complexity is added to the crisis due to the fluidity of the boundaries between the three situations mentioned. Furthermore, temperatures in Ukraine can drop below -20°C during the coldest months and many areas have suffered during the past winters' significant disruptions to electricity and heating supply due to targeted attacks on energy infrastructures.



A neighborhood in Mykolaiv. 300,000 of the pre-war population of 600,000 have left the city to find refuge, protection, and safety elsewhere.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

Since 2014, Ukraine has faced a humanitarian crisis caused by the conflict between the government and pro-Russian separatists in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts.

This situation resulted in a total internal displacement of 1.3 million people. The population in need during this specific crisis reached a peak in 2015 when the figure was estimated at approximately 5 million people the moment the clusters were activated. A total of 21 Shelter Cluster partners worked for almost seven years in a shelter response focused on light, medium, and heavy repairs, the improvement of conditions in collective sites, and the distribution of household and winterization items. The Shelter Cluster was in the process of being deactivated and handed over to the national authorities at the beginning of 2022. A protocol was developed to transition responsibilities to relevant ministries. (For more information on the cluster deactivation and handover to national authorities, see [A.16, Shelter Projects 8th edition](#)).

When the current crisis escalated and full-scale war began, the cluster coordination structure and the Shelter Cluster partners initiated a process of adaptation to the new humanitarian crisis. While this was considerably larger and more complex, previous work on coordination tools and technical guidelines provided a solid foundation for the new structure.

Particularly important during the early stages was contingency planning prepared by the cluster during the hand-over process, with an identification of priority activities, a first draft of the kit composition, and the latest calculation of activity costs. By utilizing information from contingency planning and determining the most relevant interventions using existing technical guidelines – reaching a consensus among the Shelter Cluster (SC) partners on strategy was not difficult. Another key tool that supported the foundation for relevant cluster work was a pre-existing damaged infrastructure database.

SITUATION DURING THE CRISIS

The war with Russia has substantially damaged and destroyed the residential housing stock and key basic infrastructure in the country. This has increased the level of vulnerability of the affected population, especially during winter months. In many geographical locations, the harsh living conditions are linked to challenges with repairing homes and accessing basic needs and public services. In other cases, this is due to the lack of safety to remain because of the ongoing attacks, the lack of privacy and space when living in collective sites or with host families, and the difficulty to find suitable accommodation and to be able to pay the rent.

NATIONAL SHELTER-NFI STRATEGY

The Shelter Cluster has designed the humanitarian response for 2023 with two objectives:

Objective 1: Provide shelter assistance responding to the needs of IDPs, people who remain at home, and returnees.

This is to be done through emergency shelter support, temporary housing, light and medium repairs (in-kind and in cash), heavy repairs, the rehabilitation of collective sites, rental support, and host family support.

Objective 2: Provide essential Non Food Item (NFI) support based on the needs for IDPs, people who remain at home, and returnees at the household level, including those residing in collective sites.

The second objective is to be achieved through the distribution of NFI kits for collective sites, NFI kits for individuals, NFIs for bomb shelters, and the provision of winter clothes and winter heating and support for winter energy needs (in-kind and in cash).

For the adequate implementation of the shelter response and the provision of guidance to Shelter Cluster partners, the different Technical Working Groups set up within the Cluster structure played a key role.



The impact of the full-scale war, the freezing winter temperatures coupled with the energy crisis, exacerbate pre-existing needs and are likely to lead to new multi-sectoral humanitarian needs.



Specialists were consulted and engaged with the Shelter Cluster for debris management prior to reconstruction due to the presence of unexploded ordnance and asbestos.



Reconstruction work began as soon as some areas were liberated from the presence of Russian troops.

The winterization TWiG was instrumental in coordinating partner efforts across the entire country to assist the most vulnerable households in coping with harsh winter conditions.

By defining and coordinating the strategic allocation of resources and implementation of activities, the SC partners have provided essential support, including insulation materials, heating equipment, warm clothing, and fuel supplies, to improve living conditions and enhance resilience.

The next phase of Shelter/NFI strategy development will focus on creating a multi-year document covering ongoing emergency shelter and NFI needs, as well as outlining activities to pave the way for a smooth transition to sustainable shelter solutions and longer-term recovery activities and actors.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- There were strong access constraints for some populations during extended periods, particularly in the case of besieged cities. The organization of humanitarian convoys was in some cases the only way to send NFIs among other supplies to select locations.
- Target locations were in extremely different contexts: areas under heavy attacks, areas receiving displaced populations, and newly liberated areas. The shelter-specific response was designed to address the needs of the population in each of them, but flexibility in programming was required to adapt to the situation's evolution.
- Complexity of debris management prior to reconstruction due to the presence of unexploded ordnance and asbestos. Specialists were consulted and engaged with the Shelter Cluster for this matter.
- Scarcity of detailed information about specific shelter and NFI needs for each of the target population groups.
- The perception that the cluster system is not necessarily fit-for-purpose for the Ukrainian context has put additional pressure on the Shelter Cluster to perform. It took time for the cluster to scale up to appropriate capacity from a position where it was transitioning to national structures. Ukraine is a large and developed country with a strong functioning and competent civil service. Additionally, there are many local entities providing shelter and NFI services. The cluster – through its national and four sub-hub structure – is working hard to widen cluster participation with non traditional localized actors (volunteer groups, civil society organizations, etc.) while forging positive relationships with authorities.
- Localization and the perception that area-based coordination (ABC) mechanisms were required led to the creation of a 'reorienting coordination task force,' and the exploration of several pilot initiatives. It is necessary that OCHA articulates exactly what is required from this approach and how ABC mechanisms will connect efficiently with established cluster sub-hub mechanisms.
- Need for humanitarian shelter initiatives to reassess and remain focused on their mandate while considering how they can be a conduit for a smooth transition to durable housing solutions in parallel with the government's longer-term reconstruction programs.



For the adequate implementation of the shelter response and the provision of guidance to Shelter Cluster partners, different Technical Working Groups were set up within the Cluster structure.



The cluster provided shelter assistance across Ukraine through shelter support, temporary housing, light and medium repairs, heavy repairs, the rehabilitation of collective sites, rental support, and host family support.



The winterization TWiG was instrumental in coordinating partner efforts across the entire country to assist the most vulnerable households in coping with harsh winter conditions.

WIDER IMPACTS

The Government of Ukraine passed laws addressing infrastructure damage compensation schemes and recently launched its housing restoration – or “eVidnovlenia” – program. The Shelter/NFI Cluster is developing a damage assessment platform, called ‘SIDAR’, in collaboration with an international agency, to facilitate improved coordination of humanitarian assistance at the address level among participants, local authorities, and humanitarian organizations. By providing comprehensive information on the shelter needs and resources available in conflict-affected areas, SIDAR aims to enable a more effective and efficient response to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine.



The war with Russia has substantially damaged and destroyed the residential housing stock and key basic infrastructure in the country. This has increased the level of vulnerability of the affected population, especially during winter months.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Localization measures should be implemented (coordination and response) from the start of programming to ensure project mechanisms are fit for purpose.
- Key to the success of the project was adequate staff contributing to quality shelter coordination at the national and sub-national levels.
- National staff capacity-building efforts to promote suitable contractual modalities should be undertaken to retain strong candidates.
- Establishing an effective collaboration with government bodies should start from the beginning of the crisis.
- It is key to enhance integration with relevant sectors such as WASH, CCCM, Livelihoods, etc. as well as strengthen collaboration with cash coordination actors for a more efficient response.
- Contingency planning must be systematic and informed as a preparatory measure to avoid being caught unaware when situations rapidly deteriorate.
- It is important to have a strong field presence through enhanced partner collaboration and co chair mechanisms.
- A multi-year strategy should be developed considering the immediate shelter and NFI needs of the most vulnerable individuals in collaboration with relevant stakeholders. Exit strategies for sustainability should be considered during design.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- A multi-year Shelter and NFI strategy need to evolve and include relevance for emergency responses while acting as a catalyst for the development of longer term housing solutions linking to reconstruction schemes of the government with a feasible exit plan.
- The humanitarian Shelter and NFI Cluster coordination mechanism should transition effectively to longer term sectoral coordination suitably resourced with expertise and aligned with national development policies as the conflict unfolds. Scenario based contingency planning is critical to ensure shelter and NFI needs are adequately considered to address the needs and severity of both displaced and non displaced vulnerable Ukrainians.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On local govt. engagement: [A.12 / ECUADOR, 2016 – 2018](#); [A.16 / UKRAINE, 2016 – 2021](#); [A.18 / IRAQ, 2018-2021](#)

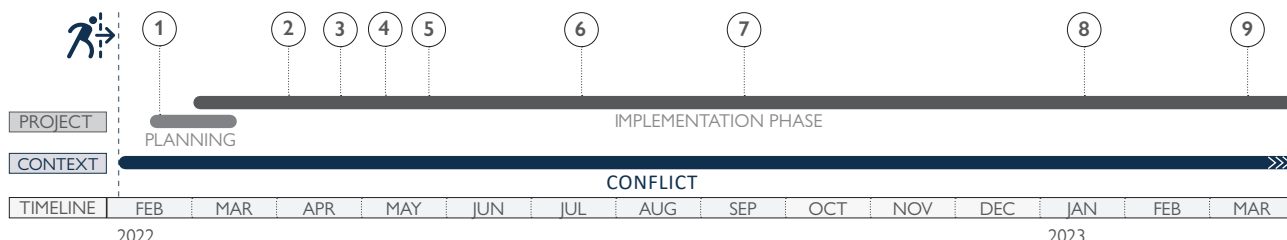
On rental assistance: [A.8 / BAHAMAS, 2019 – 2020](#)

CASE STUDY

UKRAINE (REGIONAL) 2022-2023 / CONFLICT

KEYWORDS: Private sector engagement, Remote management, Rental assistance, Social cohesion, Urban accommodation

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| CRISIS | Russia's invasion of Ukraine (2022) – Influx into neighboring countries |  |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | 8,240,000 people displaced (outside Ukraine)* | |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 3,130,000 people** | |
| RESPONSE LOCATION | Multiple cities in Czechia, Hungary, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovakia | |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 2,593 HHs (7,008 individuals) | |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | <p>175,889 safe-nights were provided through safe, dignified, and secure accommodation</p> <p>2,593 HHs (7,008 individuals) were provided short-term accommodation assistance at 112 cities across 7 countries</p> <p>Project also supported the local economy through the private host network who had rented their apartments</p> | |
| DIRECT COST | USD 29.37 (Avg. accommodation cost per person per night) | PROJECT SUMMARY <p>The project enabled access to temporary individual accommodation through existing tools and capacities in the rental market, such as an accommodation listing platform with large repository of accommodations by landlords from the host community. In addition, the project offered complementary support and services, such as MPCA, psychosocial support, and employment support. Given the scale of the short-term rental service offered through the e-commerce platform and the efficiency of the system, it was possible to provide individual transitional accommodation to thousands of people in a quick, efficient, safe, and dignified manner.</p> |
| PROJECT COST | USD 6,000,000 | |
| <p>* Ukrainian Situation. Operational Data Portal May 2023. UNHCR</p> <p>** Profiles and Intentions of Refugees from Ukraine. UNHCR</p> | | |



Feb 2022: Start of war in Ukraine led to huge refugee influx in neighboring countries.

- Mar 2022:** Organization partnered with non profit partners to access digital platform for providing accommodation assistance in Hungary, Poland, Moldova, Romania and Slovakia.
- Apr 2022:** First household received assistance under the project.
- Apr - May 2022:** Coordination mechanisms were set up and trainings on the use of platform were conducted for staff.
- May - Jul 2022:** Tools and resources were developed for remote management and implementation of the project.
- May 2022:** Country offices started advertising locally.
- Jul 2022:** Prioritization criteria for receiving assistance were revised and periodic review of the criteria was introduced.
- Sep 2022:** Project was expanded to Czechia and Lithuania.
- Jan 2023:** Post Activity Monitoring was conducted.
- Mar 2023:** Conducted an After Action Review (AAR)



8.24 million Ukrainian and 650,000 Third Country Nationals (TCN) were recorded as having crossed borders into neighboring countries in 2022.

CONTEXT

On 24 February 2022, the Russian Federation launched a full-scale invasion against Ukraine. One year after the invasion, approximately 8.24 million Ukrainian and 650,000 Third Country Nationals (TCN) were recorded as having crossed borders into neighboring countries. Such a humanitarian crisis had a regional impact, and in addition to the 10 countries close to Ukraine which were included in the response plan, there have been more than 30 other countries hosting Ukrainian refugees. With an uncertain timeline for the resolution of the conflict and varying degrees of support available, people moved across country borders – primarily to cities – throughout the whole of 2022.

THE ACCOMMODATION CHALLENGE

Neighboring countries responded to the influx and the resulting need for shelter and accommodation in different ways. Most governments prompted a response that offered a combination of collective and individual accommodation, including host family support (subsidized or voluntary). The sudden influx stretched the already saturated housing markets (especially in urban areas) and the social rental assistance systems. Access to individual accommodation became particularly challenging for the displaced TCNs.

People and governments relied heavily on host communities and the rental market available stocks, often providing support through compensation for host HHs, cash support for renting or making student residences, and tourist accommodation centers available for the displaced. The different approaches enabled most people to access individual accommodation solutions, with around 20% being housed in collective centers. As host community support programs decreased, vulnerable Ukrainian refugees started to face difficulties paying the rent, as their savings were consumed over time. Rental prices increased significantly, and in countries such as Poland, Czech Republic, Estonia, and Slovakia the increase in the demand in major cities provoked an increase in the rents to over 20%.

RENTAL ASSISTANCE AND HOUSING MARKET

The rental and housing market in Europe is highly regulated. The processes for adapting regulatory structures to an emerging influx situation and needs would require an



The refugee influx in 2022 stretched the already saturated housing market and social rental assistance systems in Europe.

extended timeline and increased resources – such as modifying tax laws to support the affected population.

In some cases, regulatory efforts that were intended to protect tenants ended up exacerbating the consequences of people's vulnerability. For example, existing tenant rights regulations that prevent the eviction of women-headed HHs with children and people with specific needs, during the winters, had an adverse effect on the landlords' hesitancy to rent to those HHs.

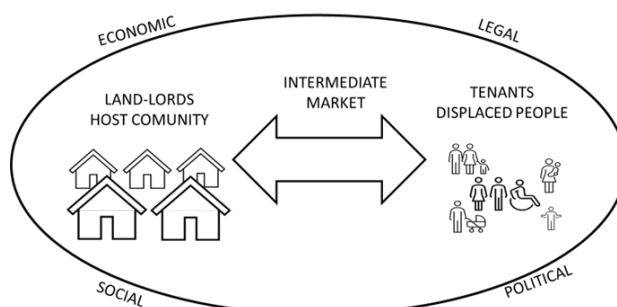
For many, navigating the rental market in a foreign language, with limited understanding of the legal frameworks and, in many cases, without personal, financial, or employment documentation or an existing social support network, was a major challenge. Risks of exploitation and abuse, as well as gender-based violence (GBV), were of high concern as approximately 90% of refugees fleeing Ukraine have been women and children.

While Ukraine-neighboring countries have used a variety of tools to meet the housing needs of refugees, the general aim has been to support their integration towards self-sufficiency.

Rental assistance is considered as a rapid solution to provide financial or other necessary support for accessing accommodation options available within the local rental market stocks. However, access to the rental market is not always easy due to multiple barriers, including economic barrier. In many cases, intermediation, information sharing, and legal advice, in addition to the provision of cash were required to provide adequate access to the rental market.

A rental assistance program may cover various component, such as: protection, information, housing standards, security of tenure, financial support, sustainability, and accountability to the affected population. These components may involve different actions as they may be directed at the refugee population, the host communities, or the admin and legal processes involved. By considering coherently all components, the risk of causing volatility in the rental market or posing a high risk to the well-being, safety, and dignity of refugees can be minimized.

A rental assistance program might be an implementation of an individual or a combination of components, ensuring economic, social, legal, and political operational frameworks appropriate to the needs, capacities, and circumstances of each country, thus establishing it as an adequate modality of shelter assistance in the given context.



Rental assistance as a solution to access the local housing market offered by the host community and to better integrate within the community.




PROJECT DESIGN

An international organization developed a project for providing immediate temporary relief to people fleeing the war in Ukraine, by ensuring safe, secure, and dignified accommodation, aiming to: reduce the number of people that needed collective accommodation, support those like TCNs who had limited access to any assistance, provide short-term stability for those still deciding their mid- and longer-term plans, and allow new arrivals to any location to start the process of finding long term solutions.

As the geographic scope of the project involved different countries, the organization established a partnership with a partner from the nonprofit sector, to facilitate the use of an e-commerce short-term accommodations listing platform with listings offered to the public regularly by hosts/landlords across the world.

The conditions of the partnership allowed the organization to focus on three strategic lines:

1. The organization would focus primarily on the identification of accommodation needs, addressing protection concerns, and providing complementary assistance to the target population by adopting a case management approach.
2. The partner would provide access to an existing e-commerce accommodations platform for renting short-term accommodations and would manage the relationship with the landlords, including contracts, damage insurance, and payments.
3. The organization's representatives in each country would define the target population profiles based on needs, referrals, and location preference, provide all relevant information on their responsibilities and rights as short-term tenants, ensure they had access to feedback and complaints resolution mechanisms, refer them to other services, and where necessary, support them in accessing longer term accommodation.

| | <div>ORGANIZATION</div> <div>PRIVATE PARTNER</div> | <div>LAND-LORDS HOST COMMUNITY</div>  | <div>INTERMEDIATE MARKET</div>  | <div>TENANTS DISPLACED PEOPLE</div>  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| COMPONENTS OF RENTAL ASSISTANCE | PROTECTION NEEDS BASED AND REFERRAL | PROTECTION ORIENTATION AND GUIDANCE | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES | IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS |
| | INFORMATION ORIENTATION AND MATCHING | REFUGEES SITUATION, RIGHTS AND DUTIES | MATCHING, INTER-EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION | RENTAL MARKET RIGHTS AND DUTIES |
| | CONDITIONS HABITABILITY AND SERVICE | REPAIRS, IMPROVEMENTS, SERVICES | ASSESSMENT, DATA BASE OF PROPERTIES AND CONDITIONS | MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT (N/A) |
| | SECURITY OF TENURE LEGAL AND CONTRACT | DOCUMENTATION, LEGAL SITUATION | CONTRACT AGREEMENTS, CODE OF CONDUCT, HOUSING RISKS | MIGRATORY STATUS, DOCUMENTATION |
| | FINANCIAL SUPPORT PAYMENTS AND GRANTS | RENTAL PAYMENT, FEE, DEPOSIT | INSURANCE, REPAIRS, UTILITIES | MPIC, CASH FOR RENT, CASH FOR SHELTER |
| | SUSTAINABILITY ADVOCACY AND COMPLEMENTARITY | SOCIAL RENTAL AND HOUSING PROGRAM | INTERLINK WITH OTHER SERVICES AND SECTORS | ADVOCACY FOR INCLUSION PROGRAMS |
| | ACCOUNTABILITY FEEDBACK AND MONITORING | PARTICIPATIVE PLATFORM FOR INFORMATION, COMPLAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS, SYSTEM AND TOOLS THAT ALLOW FOR REAL TIME MONITORING | | |

Rental assistance may consist of various components. It should take into consideration the economic, social, legal, and political operational frameworks.

IMPLEMENTATION

The project started in June 2022 in five countries: Hungary, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia, and it was extended to the Czech Republic and Lithuania in September as needs in those countries increased.

The assistance offered consisted of a free-of-charge stay limited to 29 nights (with exceptional stays of up to 89 nights for the 10% of the families) in accommodations listed on the accommodations listing platform.

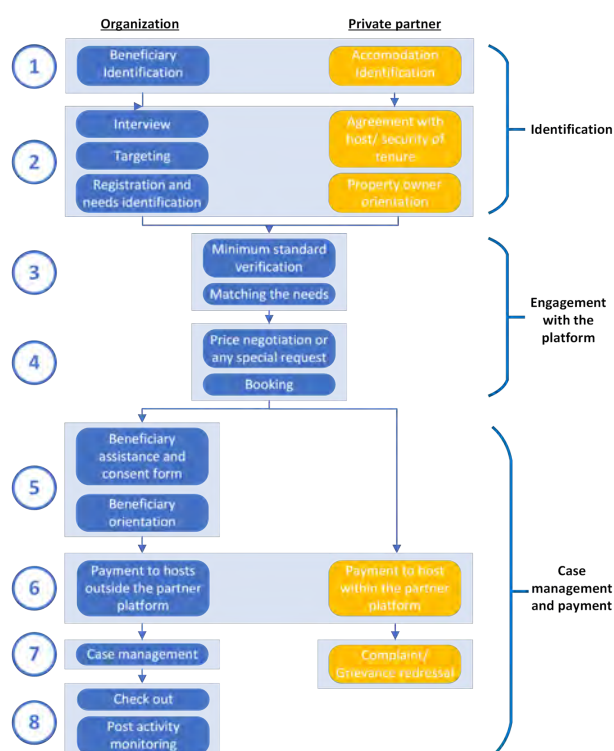
The 10% longer-term exception allowed the organization to increase the assistance to HHs that were in vulnerable situations (e.g., pregnant, and lactating women, persons undergoing medical treatment) for whom individual private accommodation was essential.

The project created opportunities to link the target population to medium- and long-term housing programs. For example, some families continued to rent the same apartments for longer terms after the project ended, thereby enabling easier access to the complex rental market and/or acquiring enhanced knowledge of it.

The accommodations listing platform comprised of an online search engine with an interactive map showing the accommodation listings with pictures and descriptions, public feedback and complaint resolution mechanism, insurance coverage for landlords, and secure online payment systems.

Within the project, only non-congregated accommodation listings, such as apartments or private hotel rooms with an attached bathroom were allowed, to minimize protection risks and ensure privacy and dignity of the affected population.

The main steps for the implementation of the project involved: identifying participants, registration, accommodation verification, booking accommodation, case management, and monitoring.



The partnership provided verification of services and ensured minimum standard quality of accommodation, a complaints and information system, an insurance system for housing situations, monitoring of costs and direct payments to landlords.

TARGETING

The project assisted Ukrainian citizens and third-country nationals (TCN) who were fleeing Ukraine after the full-scale Russian invasion (on or after 24 February 2022). Project outreach mechanisms and the identification of participants included tools such as social media, local advertisements, and referrals from other agencies and governments.

People with extreme vulnerabilities who needed “around-the-clock services,” had special needs, or unaccompanied minors, were referred to specialized service providers. The organization prioritized those in immediate need of shelter (HHs at the moment without shelter or facing imminent risks of losing their accommodation), HHs in overcrowded reception or collective centers, HHs facing other protection risks, single-parent HHs, HHs with pregnant or lactating women, people with disabilities or chronic illness, and elderly headed HHs. These prioritization criteria were flexible to be adapted based on the needs and context of the country. Remote or in-person interviews were conducted by the organization staff to assess the target population based on the set prioritization criteria. As the focus of the overall Ukraine response was put on Ukrainian nationals, TCNs were generally at risk of being left behind and faced difficulties in accessing state support. They became one of the primary target groups of the project, constituting approximately 11% of the people reached on average.

THE PARTNERSHIP

The platform has an existing identified pool of apartments from landlords and an instant reservation system in place, eliminating lengthy administrative processes. Moreover, it allowed the organization to assess and verify accommodations and landlords through a mechanism of public reviews and feedback from the experiences of previous guests, which proved to be invaluable in assessing possible risks or undesirable behavior on the part of the landlord. This also ensured that accommodation met minimum habitability conditions and addressed the specific needs of the tenants such as physical accessibility, availability of utility services, and pet friendliness.

Since the project involved extensive case management, the organization relied on a robust existing complaint and grievance resolution mechanism in place through the platform. This unique mechanism dealt with all complaints by the tenants and the landlords, with limited liability towards tenants. While the platform ensured participant protection, it also protected and compensated the landlords in case of any damages.

RENTAL PROCESS

The project, using an existing and easy-to-use platform, helped to provide adequate accommodation depending on specific needs and taking into consideration the preferences of tenants. The platform also allows remote follow-up mechanisms such as secure electronic transfer of relevant information and open communication channel with the landlords, during the rental process.

Most accommodation requests were in larger urban areas and cities, often in the capitals where rental costs were higher and the availability of affordable housing was limited, including for local populations. In addition to referrals, an email address was set up and disseminated where people could request assistance. The organization followed up with phone interviews to assess needs, the urgency of the cases, and the profile of the HH, and conducted an accommodation availability check in the preferred locations. If a listed accommodation met the needs of the HH, the organization would inform the landlord about the project and make the reservation on their behalf via the platform. Some landlords offered discounts and even free accommodation when the organization explained the project's purpose.

As the platform offers self-check-in and immediate reservations, the family could have access to accommodation within a matter of hours. In some cases, the organization's reception teams at Points of Entry would provide transportation to HHs crossing the border and make the reservation whilst on transit ensuring that on arrival at the destination city, the family would have a safe place to stay. The predominantly contactless check-in and check-outs also ensured minimal interactions between landlords and tenants, thereby minimizing associated protection risks.



Follow-up calls or visits were set up by the organization to ensure safety and assess any additional needs of beneficiaries. Based on the needs, other complementary services such as multi-purpose cash, psychosocial support, and employment support were provided.



Organization staff assessing and ensuring that accommodation met minimum habitability conditions and addressed the specific needs of the tenants.

Early in the response, when people's needs changed rapidly (e.g., families who planned to stay in one city for three weeks but decided to relocate to be closer to family or livelihoods vacated the accommodation earlier than planned), the project offered the possibility of modifying reservations and repurposing bookings for other families, for more effective and efficient use of available resources.

Before check-in, tenants were provided with all necessary information regarding the accommodation, including a guest fact sheet including data on emergency services, their rights and responsibilities as short-term tenants, their rights and duties in the hosting country, and other relevant emergency contact information. Moreover, they were also provided with information on how to report incidents of exploitation or abuse. To ensure safety and assess any additional needs of beneficiaries, a minimum of three follow-up calls or visits were set up by the organization throughout their duration of stay. Depending on their needs, other complementary services such as multi-purpose cash, psychosocial support, and employment support were provided directly or through establishing referral pathways.

The rental payments for short-term accommodation were channelized directly through the platform to the local homeowners eliminating any direct transaction between the tenants and the landlords minimizing the risk of any potential financial exploitation.

MAIN CHALLENGES

Lack of baseline information on needs, the movement of people across cities and borders, and varied accommodation prices across cities and countries, made it difficult to predict the number of people that would be served from the design phase. Anticipated caseloads were revised frequently, (e.g., in the summer of 2022 some governments announced the removal of subsidies, affecting those with fewer resources).

Prices increased due to the influx and increased demand, but in some cities, this coincided with seasonal price changes (e.g., tourist/vacation season), presenting new challenges to the project. In case of a lack of available affordable accommodation listings on the platform, the project had the

flexibility to use other modalities such as mid-term leases and hotels or apartments available outside the platform.

Despite follow-up and clear obligations in place for the landlords, there were some cases of unsuitable accommodation, privacy breach, discrimination, attempt to charge additional fees, and eviction. Due to the partner's flexibility, the organization quickly found alternatives for those HHs and mitigated the risks, scaling up monitoring and follow-up activities.

A lack of certainty over future plans, language barriers that reduced the possibility to access livelihood opportunities, and other obstacles prevented some people from finding longer-term accommodation right away.

OUTCOME AND WIDER IMPACTS

The project supported the immediate physical well-being of people in vulnerable situations by providing a roof over their heads, as well as impacting their mental and emotional well-being by providing a sense of safety, security, and dignity. It was particularly helpful for those who were excluded from host government benefits and who faced additional barriers in accessing accommodation due to socio-cultural discrimination such as TCNs, HHs belonging to a particular community, HHs with multiple children, large HHs with a single-income member, HHs with people with disabilities, LGBTQI, etc.

The project provided people fleeing the war in Ukraine, with immediate temporary relief, which helped them to assess and plan their next steps. It also promoted integration and cohesion by enabling access to livelihood opportunities, education, social life, and other services in the urban context such as the fact of obtaining an address from the moment of the arrival to a country, facilitated for the refugees some services available in the urban context, such as opening a bank account or applying for jobs.

The project also proved to be a huge financial relief for the tenants as the cost of accommodation was a major source of stress for Ukrainian refugees and the affected population due to the rising costs in the housing markets and general housing shortages. It also posed a financial benefit for the landlords/hosting community, as it served as a cash boost to stimulate the local economy.

According to post-activity monitoring, approximately 64% of respondents reported that the assistance within the project improved their mental/physical health. Around 58% of respondents felt the assistance provided them with a better sense of security. 57% reported financial relief to focus on other necessary items like food, medicines, etc. Many reported being able to plan for their future and process administrative formalities without having to worry about accommodation. More than 90% of respondents reported a high level of satisfaction with the assistance received.

ACCOMMODATION AFTER THE PROJECT

After receiving short-term accommodation assistance, around 20% of the respondents reported that they were able to partially/fully self-support the accommodation cost.



The project supported people at risk of being left behind and faced difficulties in accessing state support such as TCNs, people with disabilities, large households with children, HHs belonging to particular community etc.

Around 29% of respondents went back for accommodation in collective centers while 13% continued living in hostels/hotels. 10% were reported to be hosted by people either free of cost or within the government scheme. Around 8% of respondents reportedly looked for cheaper or shared accommodation while 6% of them continued to receive rental assistance. As this project was designed to be used as a pathway to mid- and longer-term options, in many countries it paved the way for scale-up of the organization's response in providing other accommodation assistance including setting up mid-long term

rental assistance programs as well as other similar short term accommodation assistance for transit. Moreover, the impact, strengths, and lessons learned from this project have set path for future responses of similar nature.

The project also underlined the solidarity of individuals and nonprofit sector actors to support people in need, providing an opportunity for people who would usually not know how to support refugees to do their part such as providing their accommodation units for free.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Minimal personal data requirement** from landlords, as compared to long-term rental assistance due to existing bilateral agreement between the platform and the landlords.
- ✓ **Availability of public reviews and feedback** regarding the accommodation and landlords that were used to assess the protection risks.
- ✓ Since there was no direct transaction with the landlords, there was limited interaction which **ensured the safety of tenants** to an extent from any unlawful means that could be exercised by the landlord.
- ✓ **Minimum habitability conditions were ensured** as the listed accommodation was assessed and vetted by the platform and prior users via publicly available reviews on the platform. Accommodation units were pre-assessed on various parameters including accessibility and availability of utilities.
- ✓ Project flexibility allowed the provision of assistance to people who were particularly **excluded from host government protection schemes and faced additional barriers** to accessing accommodation assistance. e.g., Roma Population or TCNs.
- ✓ Availability of a legally binding minimum **guaranteed security of tenure**.
- ✓ **The project contributed to the local economy** by providing the landlords with rent as well as insurance coverage, in case of any damage.
- ✓ Project flexibility allowed providing assistance outside the platform such as hotels, hostels, motels, etc., to be able to **meet the demands of the market and thereby contribute to the local economy**.
- ✓ **Project flexibility allowed for adaptations** depending on needs and changing situations such as extension of assistance duration and repurposing of bookings in case of unavoidable cancellations.
- ✓ Availability of a dashboard on the partner platform, allowed for **real-time monitoring of bookings** made pursuant to the partnership agreement.
- ✓ **Established complaint and grievance resolution mechanism** through the partner platform.

WEAKNESSES

- × The flexibility to assess and support cases remotely increased efficiency, but in some cases, it stretched the organization's services to new locations. Although the organization established effective referral pathways to expand complementary services, **additional resources to reach people physically would have improved support**.
- × Due to individual accommodation, **people may lose the ability to inform and relate to the community, missing out on opportunities and services that contribute to integration and cohesion**.
- × Despite detailed reviews and image descriptions of the listed accommodation, **some did not match the images, or the actual locations were not found suitable**. Although the organization found alternative accommodation, it took time and people had to move to more adequate locations. This affected the initial anticipation of staff needs, adversely affecting staff welfare.
- × **The project only allowed accommodation for 29 nights**. Although an extension of up to 89 nights was permitted for up to 10% of the caseload, often it was not sufficient.
- × The **cost of accommodation assistance varied significantly** due to dynamic market forces, often making it unsustainable during times of high demand like the holiday season.
- × Tenants could **check out often without information** which hindered effective monitoring and follow-up.



The project provided people fleeing the war in Ukraine, with immediate temporary relief, which helped them to assess and plan their next steps.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The project teams worked in close coordination with protection specialists including service mapping, case management etc. This was a critical aspect of the project which should be replicated.
- Establishing partnerships and referral pathways for providing complementary service along with accommodation enabled integration and cohesion.
- Tenants were sensitized on their rights, protection risks, staff code of conduct, and access to complaint and grievance resolution mechanisms through information materials before checking into the accommodation through digital / print resources, but other communication materials (e.g., video instructions) may have been more effective.
- The project highlighted the need to explore possible links with the nonprofit and private sectors for preparedness activities
- Project staff managed communication with the landlord and tenants, effectively mediating communication which took time and significantly more effort than anticipated. Initial calculations of staff per caseload ratio were quickly surpassed and the frequency of communication with tenants was more than expected.
- This project required soft skills rather than traditional shelter skills. A coordination group was set up across the countries where staff could ask questions and always reach specialists.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- Project's strength is the ability to implement market-based rental solutions in less time and cost if the right operating tools are in place. A combination of the activities that make up a rental assistance program along with market-based alternatives can enable many actors without sufficient capacity or funds to support long-term housing by providing transitional emergency accommodation assistance as a complementary measure to other programs.
- The learnings for the organization on the use of a private sector platform, its challenges, and opportunities, have opened the possibility for the development of tools such as the online search engine and the contractual conditions of the platform, adapted to other contexts where such resources and partnerships are not in place.
- To improve the effectiveness of the project and have significant outputs, the organization would recommend setting some prerequisite conditions for the implementation of a similar future programming, such as working in close coordination and support of the protection specialists, having an existing internal complaint and feedback mechanism, and a functional exit strategy, promoting integration and mid- or long-term accommodation, in place.

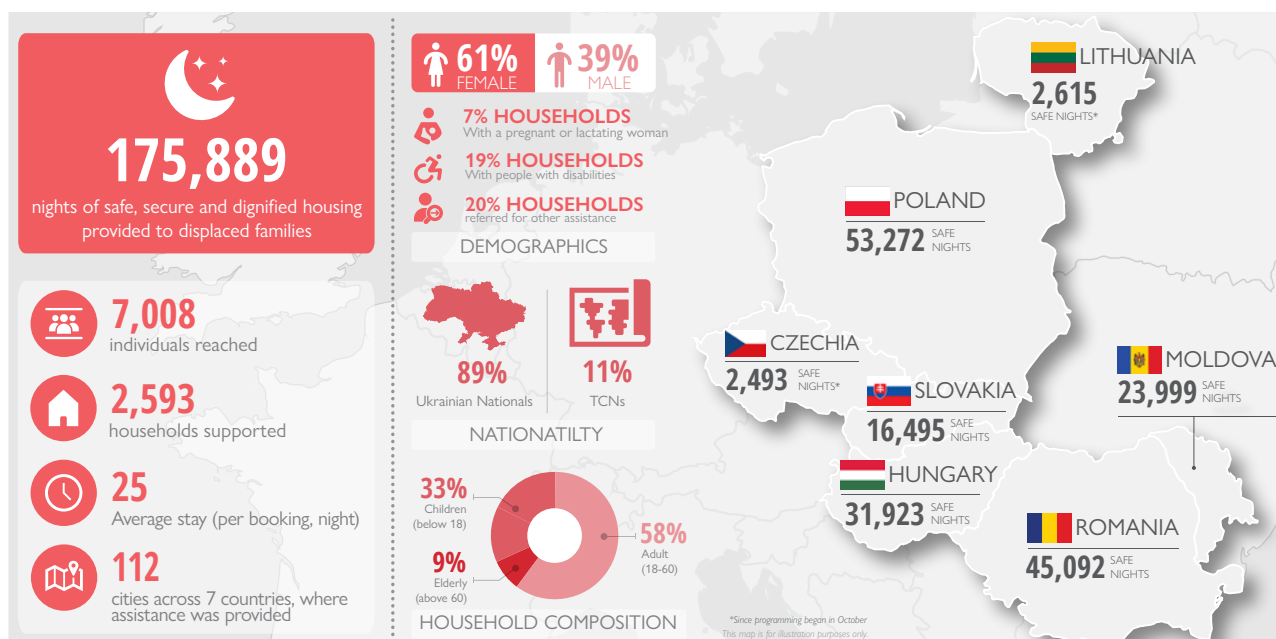


FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Ukraine : [A.22 / UKRAINE, 2022-2023 \(Overview\)](#); [A.16 / UKRAINE, 2016 – 2021](#)

On social cohesion : [A.21 / GREECE, 2019 – 2023](#); [A.2 / CHAD, 2019 – 2020](#); [A.3 / CHAD, 2018 – 2020](#); [A.32 / TURKEY, 2017 – 2018](#)

On urban accommodation : [A.34 / GREECE, 2016 – 2018](#); [A.8 / BAHAMAS, 2019 – 2020](#); [A.20 / JORDAN, 2018 – 2020](#)





A Cash-for-Work program involving women from vulnerable households provided solid motivation to rely on themselves in carrying out the daily maintenance of their shelters inside the camp, even when they return to their areas of origin.

© Sami Abdullah

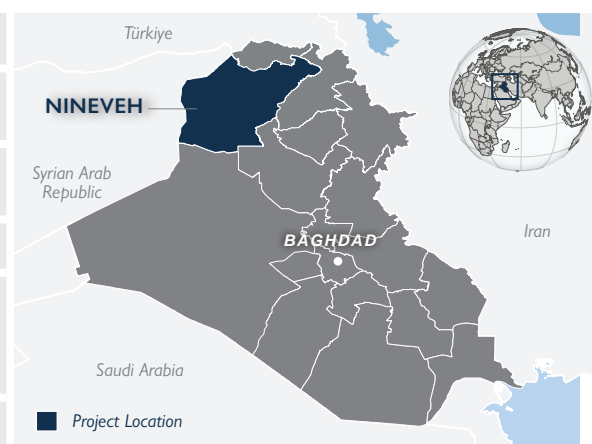
CASE STUDY

IRAQ 2019 / CONFLICT

KEYWORDS: Community engagement, Emergency shelter, Gender mainstreaming

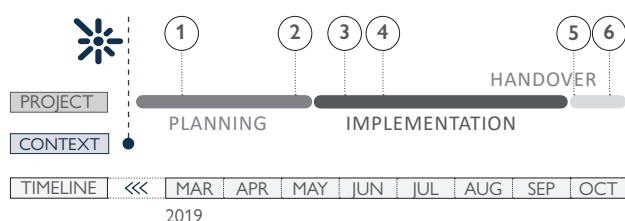
| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| CRISIS | Iraq conflict, 2014 onwards |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 5.62 million affected* |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 2.40 million individuals* |
| LOCATION | Jeddah Camps, Nineveh Governorate |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 2,500 HHs supported with tent repairs 1,000 HHs supported with financial assistance through Cash-for-Work |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 2,500 tents repaired 1,000+ female-headed HHs participated in repair work and received financial assistance Trainings provided along with Cash-for-Work |
| SHELTER SIZE | 24 m ² (4 x 6m) |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 4.8 m ² per person (household of 5) |
| DIRECT COST | USD 286 per tent (excluding steel structure) USD 30 (labor cost + additional materials) |
| PROJECT COST | USD 332 per household |

*Humanitarian Needs Overview Iraq 2020, OCHA



PROJECT SUMMARY

The project consisted of the maintenance, repair and replacement of damaged tents in the Jeddah camps located in the Governorate of Ninewa, Iraq. It targeted 2,500 vulnerable households and it involved +1,000 females in the works through a Cash-for Work program, enhancing the limited livelihood opportunities for them in the camps. It also enabled the women to engage in communal activities in the camp, which are otherwise restricted because of the cultural context. The project participants were allowed to implement the works by themselves with technical support from the organization and on-the-job training, or could also chose to get the works done by a local contractor.



2014–2017: Iraq conflict.

- 1 Mar–May 2019:** Assessment, planning, preparation of all BoQs, tools, and materials procurement.
- 2 May 2019:** Registration process and informing families of the date of replacing their tents and preparing the schedules.
- 3 Jun–Oct 2019:** Selecting and assigning team for the supervision of the project activities, and engagement of the CFW workers.
- 4 Jun–Oct 2019:** Uploading, offloading, dismantling, and replacing the tents storage processes.
- 5 Oct 2019:** Collecting documents signed by the participants.
- 6 Oct 2019:** Monitoring, evaluation and preparing final reports.



New tents were installed with the support of the female participants of the project, September 2019.

© Dayana Kamel

CONTEXT

The conflict between the Islamic State of Iraq, the Levant (ISIL), and the Iraqi Security Forces began in late 2013 and moved to the country's core governorates in June 2014. The Ninewa governorate received a portion of the displaced population, and from late 2016 to mid-2017, six camps were set up in its Jeddah-Qayarah district, hosting Yazidi, Sunni, Arab and Kurdish people from urban and rural areas with diverse religious, cultural, political and educational backgrounds. These individuals have resided in the camps since then.

The summer and winter weather conditions in the camps are harsh. Temperatures reach 48°C in the summer, and sandstorms frequently affect the area. During the winter, torrential rains often lead to flash flood episodes. The camps often face sensitive political and security situations and accessing them requires coordination with the military authorities.

In Ninawa governorate, most inhabitants are farmers, shepherds, and government employees. It is common for constructions in the area to use cement blocks and concrete in the urban settlements while in the rural environments, many homes are built with mud walls. Before the conflict, Mosul, the capital of the governorate, was one of the largest and wealthiest cities in Iraq, with a population of almost four million. The city was occupied by ISIS-affiliated armed factions in June 2014, provoking a massive displacement of the civilian population while many others remained and endured the oppressive civil and social rules imposed. The military operation to liberate the city began in December 2016 and lasted until June 2017.

SITUATION AFTER THE CRISIS

The economy of Mosul experienced a significant regression in the period under ISIS control, and the infrastructure of the city suffered major destruction during the liberation campaign, leaving only around 25 percent of the buildings undamaged, and another 22 percent destroyed. After the campaign, no regular electricity or piped water networks were functioning across the city.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

During ISIS's occupation of Mosul, the government (in cooperation with UN agencies, NGOs, and INGOs) established 22 IDP camps in the north of Iraq to shelter families fleeing violence and oppression. Between these are Al-Jeddah camps in the Qayyarah subdistrict of Ninawa Governorate, where Jeddah 1 camp was established at the end of 2016 with a capacity of 2,500 shelter plots. By mid-2017, five more camps (2–6) were established with the capacity for an additional 15,600 plots to receive displaced people from other governorates.

PROJECT DESIGN

The tents used for those camps were the MoMD (Ministry of Migration and Displacement) tunnel type, with a galvanized steel pipe frame covered by a three-layered canvas and a limited lifespan. Camp residents reported, however, that the tents had not been maintained since 2016 when the camps were constructed. Severe summer conditions over the years rendered nearly all tents unusable.

Upon the area's liberation from ISIS in late 2017, the government decided to close many of the camps in different governorates. However, the Jeddah ones remained



1000 women from vulnerable households were given technical training to take part in the maintenance and repair of tents, September 2019.

open due to security, tribal and religious concerns in the areas where their inhabitants would return to. More than a year after the camps were set up, residents reported that tent cover had not been maintained, and the deterioration suffered had left many unusable. The implementing organization was permitted by the Iraqi pool budget to upgrade the tent covers in Jeddah, Qayarah, and Haj Ali camps. Approximately 52 percent of the households living in those camps were female-headed, and their socio-economic situation was particularly vulnerable since the cultural context and security situation would not allow them any income-generation activity.

Through focus group discussions held with the female-headed households in the Jeddah camps, the project team and the community decided to engage women living in damaged shelters through a cash-for-work approach, aiming to generate livelihoods opportunities for them while engaging with others in the community.

IMPLEMENTATION

The project organized groups consisting of five workers each – either of three women/two men or three men/two women – to repair ten tents each day of work. Project team engineers supervised each tent repair group. Information management staff built an electronic cash-for-work database to manage the recruitment of the teams, preventing any discrimination in the participant selection. All participants had the right to register in the system – their names were recorded for future action. Each week, the cash focal point selected names based on the predetermined criteria to assess the household vulnerability, and those selected were prepared for on-the-job training and the start of repair work the following day. Training was provided upon check-in on the day of work by technical staff. Using between 12–15 groups per day, an average of 135 tents were replaced daily – with variations due to attendance and working conditions. Teams were replaced weekly, and additional tasks for them included loading tents, supporting offloading processes, lifting tents, or storing used tents.

The construction materials and tools were sourced from local markets near the camp, increasing demand and contributing to the recovery of the local economies. Many of the participants gained experience in the field of electrical repair and other technical works through the project.

A comprehensive assessment of damaged tents was made by a technical team from the implementing agency to indicate the extent of the need to replace damaged pieces of each tent.

MAIN CHALLENGES

Because the implementing organization did not manage the Jeddah camps, accessibility challenges were prevalent and resulted in delivery delays. Additionally, access

constraints forced the implementation of the project to take place in the summer, when temperatures exceeded 45°C. Because of this, work needed to begin in the early morning and hydration was of increased importance for participant safety. After numerous agreements with the different stakeholders involved, the project team was able to successfully implement the activities, and positive comments were received from the IDPs impacted.



The groups of women took charge of additional tasks, such as loading of the tent parts, arranging the steel frames, lifting the tents, and storing the used tents.



Focus Group Discussions were held with the female-headed households to engage them in the tent repair work, which would generate livelihoods opportunities for them.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Some households were initially reluctant to repair/replace work through the project, and others did not approve of the participation of women in cash-for-work activities. However, as the project was being implemented, and participants were sensitized on project activities and benefits – households increasingly accepted the importance of the project, its purpose, methodology, and benefits to both men and women.

WIDER IMPACTS

The direct results of the initiative were the replacement of approximately 2,500 tents, three years after their construction and the inclusion of women in camp activities for the first time. Participants' (male and female) names were registered in the system for future activities and will be utilized as primary actors after the success of this project and positive government feedback and support. The project intends for upcoming events to provide women with on-the-job training on how to address electricity problems in the camps.



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© Nahla Rafeaa

(Above) Women filling the bags with sand. (Below) Many of the participants also gained experience in the field of electrical repair and other technical works through the project.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ Despite initial delays in procurement and access approvals for transportation and entering the camp – **the project was implemented before starting the rainy season.**
- ✓ Despite the difficulty of the camp's religious situation and security concerns, **the project succeeded in utilizing women in primary implementation roles.**
- ✓ The strategy employed in tent replacement to effectively address special constraints of female headed households was **enhanced by the project's focus group discussions with women.**
- ✓ The success of on-the-job training for women was enhanced by **support and cooperation from male participants considering time and working hours.**

LESSONS LEARNED

- Clear communication and collaboration were vital for project success. Government counterparts at various levels should be directly engaged as early as possible to enhance the feasibility and efficiency of project activities.
- It is important to adopt flexible approaches at the project conception stage in terms of both usage and locations in a context where camps can be closed without sufficient notice.
- If similar projects are conceived, it is recommended to have full tents rather than tent covers only, as tent covers are only useful for replacement purposes.
- Enhanced focus is needed on gender-specific involvement. This may have been accomplished by differentiating the tent replacement needs of women and men, addressing the constraints of female-headed households to promote gender equality during implementation and providing women with alternative sources of income.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- The Cash-for-Work database was expanded and improved, and thousands of women registered for future activities, as the tent replacement project had difficulties in identifying enough number of women available to participate. Since CCCM agencies would partner with MoMD in managing Jeddah camps, the collected database was made available for future activities.

WEAKNESSES

- × **A lack of coordination between the implementing organization and MoMD** led to overlapping activities which required the repurposing of the tasks and identification of new location sites, causing delays.
- × **Camp closure and camp consolidation:** The Governor of Ninewa took the decision in the latter part of 2019 to close and consolidate camps (including the ones targeted by this reserve allocation), which impacted the scope of this project.

Moreover, the Governor of Ninewa announced the creation of a small committee at the end of June 2019 to oversee the consolidation and closure of camps and return of IDPs to their areas of origin within 3 to 6 months (prioritizing returns for families from other governorates). As a result, Jeddah camp was consolidated, with several sub-camps being closed and Jeddah 5 remaining open. This put the project on hold for some time initially.

In March 2021, it was announced that Jeddah 5 would be closed, this also led to delays in decision making process regarding whether tent replacements would have been viable for these camps.

During this evolving situation, the project team, in close coordination with the CCCM and Shelter Clusters and Camp Management agencies, continued monitoring the situation and continued utilizing the tent items as needed and as appropriate. However, the camp closures meant that there were not enough tents in the camps left in Federal Iraq that required covers replacement.

- × **Delay in access approvals:** Despite access coordination with relevant authorities, delays were experienced in obtaining clearances for the transportation of tent covers from the border with Turkey to Qayyarah sub-district.
- × **Duration/time of implementation:** As implementation extended into the summer season, it was not feasible to implement the scope of work within the original timeline.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Iraq: [A.18 / IRAQ 2018–2021](#); [A.27 / IRAQ 2017–2018](#); [A.9 / IRAQ 2013](#)

On community engagement: [A.14 / PHILIPPINES 2016–2020](#); [A.27 / TURKEY 2017–2020](#); [A.18 / NEPAL 2016–2017](#)

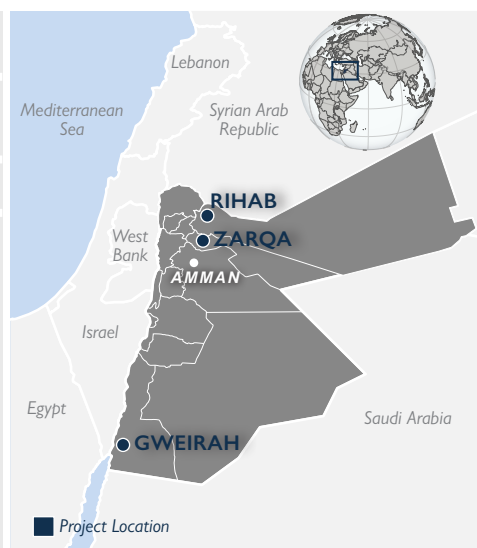
On gender mainstreaming: [A.15 / VANUATU 2018–2019](#); [A.16 / BENIN 2010–2011](#)

CASE STUDY

JORDAN 2018–2023 / SYRIAN CRISIS

KEYWORDS: Environmental sustainability, Livelihoods, Social cohesion

| | |
|--|--|
| CRISIS | Syrian Crisis |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | Jordan is still hosting around 674,148 Syrian refugees, leading to a 10 % increase in the total population* |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Gweirah (South), Zarqa (Centre) and Rihab (North), Jordan |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | <p>First phase (completed) 656 HHs provided with livelihoods support (short-term work) which includes 54% Jordanians, 46% Syrians, 45% women, 55% men, 3.6% Persons with Disabilities 138,000 people in the surrounding area of the four parks</p> <p>Second phase (planned) 420 HHs provided with livelihoods support (short-term work) which includes 50% Jordanians, 50% Syrians of which 30% women including 3% Persons with Disabilities 19,000 people in the surrounding area of the two parks</p> |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | <p>First phase 4 public spaces rehabilitated (28,400m² of land) Public space management and maintenance in 4 locations 463 trees and 1,639 shrubs planted 656 workers benefitted from short-term work and skills generation</p> <p>Second phase 2 public spaces to be rehabilitated (14,265m² of land) Public space management and maintenance in 2 locations 275 trees and 4,000 shrubs to be planted 420 workers to be benefitted from short-term work and skills generation</p> |
| DIRECT COST | <p>First phase USD 1,550,557 for four interventions</p> <p>Second phase USD 751,135 for two interventions</p> |
| PROJECT COST | <p>First phase: USD 1,924,052 for four interventions</p> <p>Second phase: USD 1,080,000 for two interventions</p> |
| *Jordan - Statistical Report on UNHCR Registered Syrians, March 2022 | |

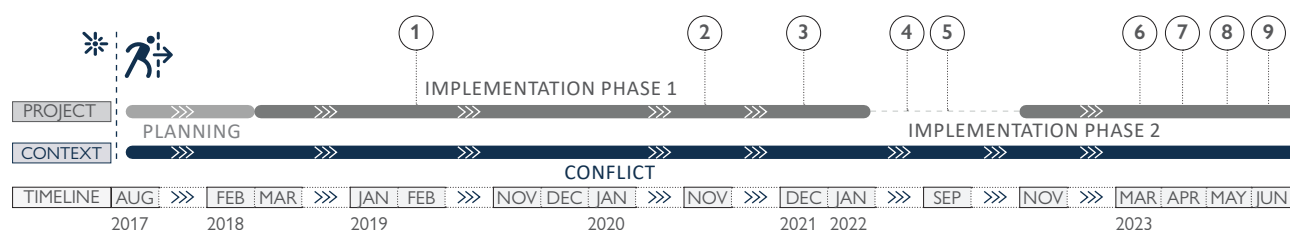


PROJECT SUMMARY

As cities become denser, access to green public spaces becomes more and more important as a space to socialise and play, contributing to social cohesion, health and wellbeing. This project in Jordan supported the rehabilitation and maintenance of public spaces through Cash for Work, using a participatory design approach. The rehabilitation of the public spaces not only improved the settlement's assets, but provided short term work to more than 1000 workers, fostering employability through trainings and labour market services, creating social cohesion between Syrian and Jordanians, and contributing to women's empowerment, including People with Disabilities. The added value of this initiative helps one to reflect on the importance of rehabilitated public spaces and its positive affects on the local community.



Women from the community involved in mosaic work for a wall in Janaa park, Zarqa, 2020.



2011: Unrest and conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

- (*) MoUs signed with different municipalities at all stages of the project.
- Engagement of the community on a regular basis since Mar 2018.
- Community events in the parks rehabilitated on a regular basis throughout the project timeline.
- Creation of steering committees at the end of each intervention.
- On the job training for CfW workers on construction sector, and planting and upkeeping community garden activities.

- 1 **Feb 2019:** Gweirah park and Humayma park (Aqaba Governorate) rehabilitated. Gweirah park handover to the municipality.
- 2 **Nov 2020:** Janaa park and Queen Noor Park (Zarqa Governorate) rehabilitated. Humayma park handover to the municipality.

- 3 **Dec 2021:** Rihab and Djenieh park (Mafraq Governorate) rehabilitated. Janaa park handover to the municipality.
- 4 **Aug - Sep 2022:** Trainings to mainstream the protection component in CfW interventions, especially towards children, gender and People with Disabilities issues.
- 5 **Sep 2022:** Public spaces networking event which served as a kick-off moment to unite the stakeholders and ignite debate.
- 6 **Mar 2023:** Potential extension (phase 3) including new locations and additional cash workers.
- 7 **Apr 2023:** Queen Noor park handover to the municipality.
- 8 **May 2023:** Djenieh park handover to the municipality.
- 9 **Jun 2023:** Rihab park handover to the municipality.

CONTEXT

As of figures from March 2022, Jordan was host to 1.3 million refugees, of which 674,148 were Syrian. About 19 percent of this Syrian population has been identified as having a specific need, including serious medical conditions (10.1 percent), specific legal or physical protection needs (4.4 percent) and/or children at risk (3.7 percent). Jordan is the second largest refugee-hosting country per capita in the world, after Lebanon.

Moreover, since the beginning of the Syrian refugee response, the country has allowed for refugee inclusion in critical areas including education, health care, and (most recently) universal access to the national COVID-19 health response and vaccination program.

The displacement of refugees from Syria is protracted, while national, regional, and global socio-economic dynamics in recent years provoked shocks that deepened the vulnerabilities of the population across Jordan. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated pre-existing challenges, including poor economic performance at the national level, food insecurity, water scarcity, high electricity tariffs, and weak infrastructure. It has also significantly reduced access to livelihoods for refugees and host communities.

SITUATION DURING/AFTER THE CRISIS

By June 2019, more than 664,000 refugees from Syria were officially registered in Jordan according to UNHCR. However, a large number were not officially registered as refugees under the Geneva Convention.

This influx resulted in more than a ten percent increase in the country's population in just a few years. Around 80 percent of refugees would not live in refugee camps, but in host communities such as urban areas.

The rapid population growth put immense pressure on Jordan and its people, forcing them to compete for jobs, water, electricity, and food. In many municipalities, infrastructure no longer met the needs of the growing population and municipalities lacked the resources to maintain and create public open spaces. Jordan is one of the most arid countries in the world, and during the rapid process of urbanization – the planning of public green spaces was not prioritized.

Adequate and accessible green open spaces are a key factor to human well-being as they stimulate recreational activities and support social cohesion. Functional public green spaces, networks, and recreational areas are essential for the improvement of the urban climate, which can foster biodiversity and contribute to climate change adaptation.

At the time of implementation, the unemployment rate in Jordan was around 19 percent and there were few job opportunities in the low-wage sectors – of which, not all were open to non-Jordanians. As a result, the living conditions of refugees and vulnerable Jordanians in urban, suburban, and rural areas were deteriorating rapidly. Under the economic pressure, environmental challenges were not regarded as a priority, yet Jordan's natural systems are extremely fragile.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

While there was no specific national strategy for public spaces, the Jordan Response Plan (framework addressing the Syrian crisis in Jordan) indicated two main pillars: Refugee/Humanitarian and Resilience. These consisted of three components: Refugee Needs, Host Community Needs, and Infrastructure and Institutional Capacity Development. Therefore, projects should contribute toward the self-reliance of Syrian refugees while maintaining quality services for the host community.



Before and after images of Janaa park, taken in 2019 and 2021 respectively. The community was involved in each phase of the intervention, from design to implementation.

PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

The objectives of the project were to support the rehabilitation and maintenance of public spaces using a participatory design approach, and to create short-term employment opportunities, skills, and employability.

This was achieved using a labor-intensive approach (Cash-for-Work [CfW]) which benefited both displaced persons (Syrians) and host communities (Jordanians). The laborers raised walls, installed benches, planted trees, created picnic areas, and restored parks, playgrounds, and sports facilities, using local materials to minimize the impact on the environment. The project paid particular attention to the needs of women and girls in public, especially regarding safety in public spaces and gender-based violence (GBV)-related issues. All CfW activities targeted also women and girls, enhancing their livelihood capacities through marketable skills development (e.g., mosaics, paintings, and planting). These activities also employed Persons with Disabilities in the rehabilitation – creating a safe and comfortable work environment that responded to those specific needs, as well as capacity building for both the host community skills development (e.g., mosaics, paintings, and planting). These activities also employed Persons with Disabilities in the rehabilitation – creating a safe and comfortable work environment that responded to those specific needs.

Around 1,000 workers were employed for at least two months in three locations. Of these, 50 per cent were vulnerable Jordanians, and 50 percent were Syrian refugees. About 40 percent of the total were women. The workers benefitted from on-the-job training in mosaic production, mural painting, earth, and stone construction, planting, and training in life skills, and labor market services. More than 30 training sessions were completed, and also more than 30 community events such as co-design workshops, planting, women's and children's sessions, and inauguration events were organized to promote ownership of the parks by the community and raise awareness of environmental topics.

Youth were engaged in awareness sessions and recreational activities to spread awareness on the value of public spaces. Women requested dedicated events to address women's-related issues and to spend time together in a comfortable space. This engagement improved the use of

the space and empowered women and youth to inhabit other public spaces in their community, which made them more visible in the public sphere and promoted equal access and ownership.

IMPLEMENTATION

MUNICIPALITY-LEVEL MOUS

Engagement with local authorities played an important element in the sustainability and ownership of the project through joint planning, induction sessions, and the co-design of activities. In preparation for implementation and prior to their commencing, memorandums of understanding (MoUs) were signed with municipalities to agree and define tasks, roles, and responsibilities.

PARTICIPATORY DESIGN PROCESS

The project design phase was conducted in collaboration with the community and local stakeholders through co-design workshops. This approach had several benefits such as fostering community involvement, enhancing ownership, identifying community strengths, and generating realistic expectations about the project. Co-design workshops with the municipality and local community managed expectations and the need for the open green spaces that were incorporated into a proposal for the rehabilitation work. The workshops also offered an opportunity to provide information about the CfW initiative and register potential workers.

CASH-FOR-WORK

One objective of the project – the creation of job opportunities for the local community – was maximized using a labor-intensive approach which required a large workforce. The construction techniques for the proposed open green spaces follow these criteria: Proposals were a) labor-intensive, b) technically feasible with an unskilled workforce, and c) environmentally friendly, using locally available materials and resilient planting using low water consumption of native species to reduce negative environmental impact.

Although these criteria were prioritized, some essential urban furniture elements such as playground equipment, pergolas, and lighting needed to be delivered and installed using skilled local contractors, who were also requested to train unskilled cash workers in construction techniques.



Before and after images of Humayma park, taken in 2019 and 2020 respectively. Safe spaces for women were created, taking in account their needs and expectations.



Textile production process carried out by the women in the community, Gweirah, 2019.

TARGETING

Worker registration was conducted via a public announcement, followed by a vulnerability assessment of each candidate using the following criteria: household income, household size, household members' age and condition (presence of pregnant women, Persons with Disabilities or illnesses, etc.), and housing tenure (rented/owned).

COORDINATION

There is a clear need in Jordan to restart and mainstream a debate around public spaces. A lack of commitment and technical/financial capacity is one of the constraints identified in previous public space interventions in Jordan, jeopardizing the sustainability of such initiatives.

To influence the national debate around public space, the implementing organization kicked off a debate on public spaces in Jordan through a networking and discussion event hosted in Amman in June 2022. This was followed by field visits to several municipalities to show, document, and discuss innovative practices for public space creation and management while highlighting social benefits and community impact.

MAIN CHALLENGES

VANDALISM: Some cases of vandalism by local youth were observed during the project. The individuals were

identified and included in community engagement, psycho-social and recreational activities. Engaging the individuals reduced the risk of incident recurrence by exhibiting the value of the open space for the community.

MAINTENANCE: After the handover of the parks to the municipality, women maintenance committees were established in each location to ensure day-to-day maintenance in coordination with the community, municipal authorities, and key stakeholders. This provided a continuous presence in the parks to ensure the longevity of the greenery planted and the replacement of those that had died, allowing a continuation of awareness raising in the local community and municipality on the importance of proper maintenance and use of the park and strengthening the space management committee – giving women more visibility in the public sphere.

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENT: In one case, the organization faced challenges in engaging local municipal authorities, which resulted in the limited use of the park. Without municipal authority support, it was not possible to guarantee maintenance and surveillance after regular working hours. The park remains functional almost every day during daylight.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The parks were transformed into a safe space where women can socialize and spend time with their children and friends. The initial assessment found that the areas lacked a recreational space where children and families could spend time together and meet with other people from the community. From a safety and security point of view, women wanted a quiet, clean, and pleasant space where they could stay without being harassed, fearing for their children, or suffering from the heat.

Additionally, Cash-for-Work activities engaged Persons with Disabilities, providing them with opportunities to learn new skills and connect with new people. Moreover, by including Persons with Disabilities' voices in the design of the intervention, the implementing organization was able to consider specific aspects and elements to ensure a friendly and inclusive architectural space (e.g., ramps, hand-rails, colorful signals, etc.).



Before and after images of the terrace area in Janaa park, taken in 2019 and 2021. 463 trees and 1,639 native shrubs were overall planted during the first phase.

The rehabilitation of green public spaces contributed to the overall improvement of neighborhoods from a social, economic, and environmental point of view. Environmental awareness sessions and events were organized, and participants were trained on how to take care of the park, respect, and upkeep the environment.

EXIT/HANDOVER

After the handover of the parks to the municipality, a presence was maintained through support to the space management committees, employing women's maintenance committees, and organizing regular community events. This helped to ensure a smooth transition, allowed the trees and plants to settle and grow, and promoted the ownership of the parks by the local community and municipality.

WIDER IMPACTS

Through the project:

- Six public green spaces were rehabilitated.
- A total of 1,000 people were trained and provided with short-term work.
- More than 30 community events were organized.

The project was conceived as a second phase and scale-up of a previous project implemented in 2018 in the south of Jordan, which consisted of two rehabilitated and reopened parks in Gweirah and Humayma. Women, who previously were unable to leave their homes without male

accompaniment, took ownership of the park since the rehabilitation works and oversaw daily maintenance. The open spaces were transformed into safe spaces for women where they could socialize, spend time with their children and friends and organize communal activities. By including women in the design, implementation and maintenance of public spaces, the project created a space which responded to their needs and expectations.

The project was observed with interest by other municipalities who requested it to be expanded to six parks in the center and north of Jordan. The project showed also how the CfW approach can be used to create, rehabilitate and maintain inclusive public spaces in a participatory and sustainable way, reducing social tensions and contributing to smarter cities. In response to positive project feedback from engaged communities, the implementing organization encouraged the creation of Space Management Committees (SMC). The SMCs would oversee decisions on the future scope of the parks, as well as organizing events and activities for children and other attendees of the space.



Mosaic training for women, Humayma Park, 2019.



Before and after images of the grandstand area in Janaa park, taken in 2019 and 2021. The project encouraged the use of locally available materials in its construction.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Empowering women** to safely and comfortably inhabit public spaces in their communities would also enhance their visibility in the public sphere.
- ✓ **CfW provided equal access to opportunities** and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded (women, Persons with Disabilities, etc.). By engaging people from different backgrounds, social cohesion was fostered, facilitating exchanges and relationships between the host community and displaced population.
- ✓ **CfW opportunities enhanced skills development** in target communities while building a better understanding of the job market in the area and of the possible opportunities for cash workers and their new skills through a comprehensive labor market services component.
- ✓ **The promotion of training in traditional Jordanian techniques**, such as mosaic and stone production, enhanced the dissemination and safeguarding of cultural heritage.

WEAKNESSES

- × The project faced a **lack of municipality commitment** in one location. The park is only partially open during municipality working hours, not allowing the local community to enjoy the facilities on a regular basis.
- × Challenges to the long-term maintenance of parks remained due to a **lack of awareness** concerning the value and importance of green open spaces. Financial resources will also be needed to implement maintenance interventions.
- × CfW is a valid option in contributing to enhanced skills and employability. However, to meaningfully enhance worker employability post-intervention, it must be part of a **wider program supporting additional actions** that directly affect skills development.



Children at Gweirah park after rehabilitation, 2020.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Holistic public space rehabilitation:** The rehabilitation of public spaces can be instrumental not only in improving green infrastructure, but also in providing short-term employment, fostering employability through trainings and labor market services, creating social cohesion between Syrian and Jordanians and contributing to women's empowerment and Persons with Disabilities inclusion.
- **Participation and Sustainability:** Enhanced participation is necessary for project sustainability. In this project, participation is promoted in the design phase, through the implementation of the works and during maintenance with the establishment and follow-up of the space management committees.
- **Social cohesion:** Through CfW it is possible to foster inclusiveness and social cohesion, by providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded by creating safe working environments.
- **Empowering women:** This intervention, while enhancing accessibility to open green spaces, also serves to empower women in safely and comfortably inhabiting public spaces in their community, making them more visible in the public sphere and promoting fair and more equal access. The inclusion of women in the design, implementation and maintenance of public spaces was crucial in creating spaces which responded to their needs and expectations.
- **Safeguarding the cultural heritage:** CfW can be extended beyond traditional sectors such as agriculture into green infrastructure and cultural heritage preservation through training in traditional local techniques such as mosaic production and stone construction.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Jordan: [A.20 / JORDAN 2018–2020](#); [A.12 / JORDAN 2014](#); [A.10 / JORDAN 2013](#)

On environmental sustainability: [A.4 / DEM. REP. OF THE CONGO 2019–2020](#); [A.11 / BANGLADESH 2018–2021](#)

On Cash-for-Work: [A.8 / SOUTH SUDAN 2017–2018](#); [A.12 / BANGLADESH 2019–2020](#)

CASE STUDY

LEBANON 2020–2022 / BEIRUT PORT BLAST

KEYWORDS: Area based approach, Housing rehabilitation, Infrastructure, Urban neighborhoods

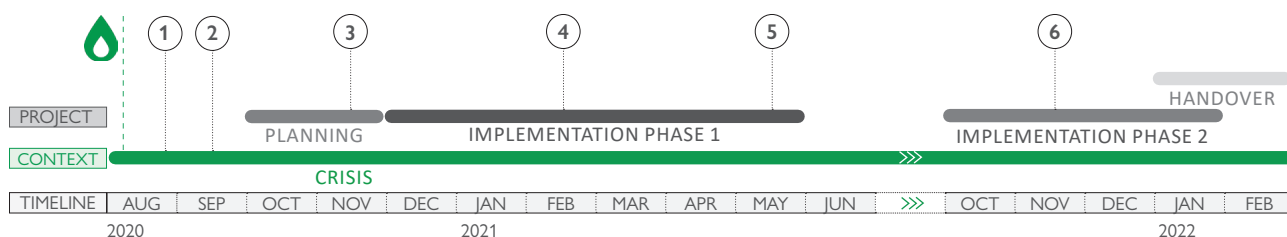
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|---------------------------------|---|
| CRISIS | Beirut Port Blast |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 200+ people dead* 6,500 people injured* |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | 300,000 people** |
| HOMES DAMAGED | 73,000 apartments in 9,200 buildings damaged* |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 219,000 people* |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Burj Hammoud, Beirut |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 206 HHs (710 ind.) through shelter repairs 283 HHs and businesses (1190 direct and indirect individuals) through Urban Recovery |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 206 shelters and 24 shopfronts repaired (154 shelters supported with light repairs and 52 with moderate repairs) 1 urban recovery project implemented (rehabilitation of 11 building facades, installation of 21 streetlights and cable management along 230 l.m. of streets, creation of a green public space) |
| DIRECT COST | Cost of shelter repairs: USD 329,022 (USD 1,597 per HH) Cost of shopfront repairs: USD 50,000 (USD 2,083 per shop) Cost of urban project: USD 99,220 (USD 350 per HHs & business) |
| PROJECT COST | USD 1,153,000 approx. |

Mediterranean sea
BEIRUT
Syria
Israel
Project Location

PROJECT SUMMARY

The project responded to the shelter needs in the aftermath of the port blast, which shook a country with heightened social tensions, and collective psychological exhaustion due to an unprecedented financial crisis, unemployment, crippled public services, inflation, and Covid-19 lockdowns. The project sought to support the recovery of affected households including an urban recovery component that engaged the wider community, significantly contributing towards improved access to services that enhanced safety and security and promoted social cohesion.

* The humanitarian response to the Beirut port explosions: Lebanon 2020 Flash Appeal - End report
 ** Leduc, Clémence. "The Beirut blast and what it says about how displacement is monitored." IDMC, 1 Sept, 2020



- Aug 2020:** Explosion took place in the Port of Beirut causing a blast wave that radiated through the city and beyond
- Aug 2020:** Monitoring of information and data shared through emergency coordinating bodies.
 - Sep - Oct 2020:** A strategic partner was identified and scope of partnership was developed. Four implementing partners were selected and trained on implementation and programmatic tools.
 - Nov 2020:** Zone 78 and 79 were assigned to the organization for implementation of minor and moderate rehabilitation and repair.
 - Feb 2021:** Identification of urban recovery interventions after KI-interviews, transect walks across neighborhoods, and focus group discussions with the community.
 - May - Jun 2021:** HH assessments were conducted and new area was selected through Area based Approach (ABA).
 - Nov 2021:** Completion of After-Action Review (AAR). Lessons learned influenced implementation in the new zone.



A massive explosion damaged 9,200 buildings across the city of Beirut, sending a giant mushroom cloud into the sky while leaving 300,000 people displaced.

CONTEXT

On 4 August 2020, an estimated 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate – a fertilizer and highly flammable substance – exploded in the Port of Beirut on the city's northern Mediterranean coast, causing a blast wave that radiated through the city and beyond. The explosion destroyed a section of the shoreline, and homes as far as ten kilometers away were affected by the blast. The Governor of Beirut estimated that roughly 300,000 people were displaced by the explosion and that 40,000 homes and apartments were damaged and required demolition – with at least 150,000 windows needing installation. The following period brought a shortage of aluminum and glass, and a severely disrupted supply chain due to the port's destruction and the global and national COVID-19 lockdowns.

The country was already suffering a severe economic crisis with a local currency devaluation at almost 95 percent, which complicated the import of additional resources and exerted significant upwards pressure on the cost of essential goods and construction materials to support recovery and reconstruction.

Damage from the explosion was categorized into three levels, as per the inter-agency coordination map:

Level 3: Within 1 kilometer of the port. Major structural damage to buildings.

Level 2: Within 2 kilometers of the port. Home to 750,000 people. Windows and doors shattered, and some balconies collapsed.

Level 1: Within 3 kilometers of the port. Minor damage, such as windows damage and cracks in older structures.

Authorities estimated that initial total property damage was as high as USD 10-15 billion.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

Amidst a stagnant economy and high unemployment, the Lebanese Government announced taxes on fuel, tobacco, and VoIP applications such as WhatsApp in October 2019. This triggered nationwide protests and signaled the beginning of an ongoing economic and financial crisis which resulted in the widespread loss of livelihoods.

The devaluation of the Lebanese pound meant that many families found themselves unable to cover basic needs. For the Syrian and Palestinian refugees in the country, the economic crisis caused a greater need for social assistance to cover basic needs, including rent.

Some refugees moved from residential areas to informal settlements. However, registered Syrian refugees continued to receive cash benefits in USD through local NGO cash programming.

This discrepancy, along with competition over limited employment opportunities, gave rise to social tensions between the host community and refugee groups and increased perception of aid bias.

UN Habitat's Geographic Poverty Index labels Burj Hammoud, one of the areas most impacted by the explosion – and one of Lebanon's most densely populated neighborhoods – as majority poor. It is a commercial, residential, and industrial town. Historically, it was home to the Lebanese Armenian community after the First World War, and it received displaced Lebanese during the Lebanese civil war.

Over the years, however, migrant workers from Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, and Egypt have flocked to the neighborhood seeking affordable rent, and more recently, even Syrian refugees who work in its bustling small businesses or the port nearby.

Damage within this area was classified as mostly light and moderate, whereby light damage (level 1) was identified as any level of building damage such as broken glass, broken doors, locks, or the collapse of a false ceiling with no structural damage. It meant that the shelter remained habitable for the family with no or minor compromises on safety, security, and access to services, including water, sanitation, and electricity.

Moderate damage (level 2) was greater than level 1, but still with no structural damage. At level 2, the house was either not habitable or it was habitable with the safety and security of the premises significantly compromised. Services including water, sanitation, and electricity were either not or only partly accessible.



An estimated 40,000 homes and apartments were damaged and required demolition – with at least 150,000 windows needing installation. A shortage of aluminum and glass, and a severely disrupted supply chain due to the port's destruction and the global and national COVID-19 lockdowns was witnessed during this time.



SITUATION AFTER THE CRISIS

The COVID-19 pandemic and the port explosion were catastrophic for both the Lebanese and the refugee population. Unofficial estimates rated unemployment at approximately 44 percent in 2021, while the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) studies stated that multi-dimensional poverty reached a staggering 82 percent in 2022 (Multi-dimensional poverty measures households deprived along three dimensions of well-being – monetary poverty, education, and basic infrastructure services – to provide a complete picture of poverty).

In reaction to the explosion, the government declared a two-week state of emergency. Protests and public outrage towards the government's performance caused the cabinet to resign on 10 August 2020. Many residents in Burj Hammoud were temporarily moved out of their homes and sought to live with relatives and friends, returning to their area of residence only following humanitarian interventions and aid. The explosion also damaged businesses, causing significant economic disruption for the local community. Lebanon's housing stock had been neglected and poorly maintained pre-crisis, its decay post-crisis was striking to intervening actors.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY/RESPONSE

UN agencies and the Lebanese Armed Forces led the response to ensure that humanitarian assistance reached the most affected, with partners under the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), developed by the Government of Lebanon and the UN to support displaced Syrians, vulnerable Lebanese, and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon expanding and adapting their services. The UN launched a comprehensive response in three phases: immediate relief, early recovery, and reconstruction. The strategy involved the establishment of a specific coordination structure under the Humanitarian Coordinator's leadership to facilitate joint needs assessments and alignment in collective response strategies, and the oversight of the principled delivery of emergency assistance. The strategy included the issuance of a flash appeal, seeking USD 354.9 million to support the collective response to the most urgent protection and humanitarian needs of the affected population.

Through coordination with the shelter working group and as per the Shelter Partner's Distribution, the implementing organizations were assigned to two areas in Burj Hammoud, within a 3-kilometer radius from the blast with minor and moderate damage.

The response to the Beirut port explosion continued to evolve and gradually shifted towards providing cash assistance to increase households' purchasing power for food and other necessities and interventions to support longer-term recovery and reconstruction. Early recovery activities, such as cash-for-work, support for small and medium enterprises, and recovery and reconstruction work were conducted and integrated into the Reform, Recovery, and Reconstruction Framework.

PROJECT DESIGN

The implementing organizations carried out early recovery activities (housing rehabilitation and repair work) in the areas identified and assigned by the Shelter Working Group. In addition, they repaired some small stores and businesses affected by the blast to restore their livelihoods.

Project teams employed common approaches to support affected households and communities recovering from the Beirut port explosion including the use of participatory methodologies which allowed communities to be meaningfully engaged in decision-making on activity design, including shelter repairs and the identification of community micro-projects. Such shelter interventions applied community-based and settlement-based approaches, operating at multiple scales to strengthen local capacities.

The project focused on providing light and medium repairs to damaged homes and communal infrastructure, rehabilitating public spaces and small businesses, and providing technical assistance on shelter issues to households and local organizations.

The project also aimed to empower the community by providing opportunities for self-reliance and building local capacity through targeted livelihood initiatives. Project Objectives were as follows:

- **Objective 1:** The most vulnerable affected households regain access to safe, secure, and dignified shelter through direct support to selected partners.
- **Objective 2:** Local partners implementing shelter & settlement recovery programs have increased capacity to support affected families and neighborhoods through the provision of technical assistance.

Activities included minor repairs (up to USD 1,500), moderate repairs and rehabilitations (up to USD 4,500), shopfront repairs, urban recovery programming, and mentoring and capacity building of implementing partners. Repairs were categorized based on damage from the blast, accounting for pre-existing shelter vulnerabilities such as a lack of sanitation, lighting, ventilation, waterproofing, etc.



Construction work on a building facade as part of the urban recovery project.

IMPLEMENTATION

The international partner agencies met with the Burj Hammoud municipality to coordinate the response and initiated conversations with potential local partners to agree on the approach to adopt. Due to the economic/financial and fuel crisis, the country faced local currency devaluation and fluctuating prices.

A contractor-led approach was therefore taken to avoid price changes for items, as contractors were obligated to comply with initial quotations submitted for the duration of the project. Also, a contractor-led approach would require fewer monitoring visits to households than a tenant-led approach, which was preferable considering the COVID-19 outbreak.

Various additional tasks were undertaken, such as the repairing or reinstalling of windows and doors, installing safer electrical and lighting solutions to reduce the risk of fire, upgrading kitchen and bathroom facilities to improve functionality, weatherproofing to prevent moisture, and addressing any dampness or mold on walls and ceilings that could cause health issues. These tasks were essential in restoring minimum habitability standards and creating a comfortable living environment for participants.

Another crucial addition was the installation of handrails on balconies and stairs to enhance safety. Output targets and unit costs for light and moderate repairs were based on sector estimates of approximately USD 1,500 for light repairs and USD 4,500 for moderate repairs. The targets were adjusted based on actual needs according to the results of the assessment.

As part of the shelter repairs, tripartite agreements were signed for rental units between the implementing entity, targeted tenants, and landlords, stipulating a rent freeze for households for 12 months, in addition to refraining from evicting the tenant household from the housing unit.

A Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) guidance note in the context of the Beirut blast was developed by the implementing organization and disseminated to the shelter sector actors. HLP material with information on tenants, housing, and land rights was also developed to be disseminated in targeted communities.

However, these were not eventually disseminated to others as advised by the local authorities to avoid any community tensions between landlords and tenants.

Partners conducted regular visits to monitor repairs, check the quality of materials used, and ensure the repairs were done based on the agreed Bill of Quantity (BOQ) and with the desired quality. A site inspection tool was developed for monitoring visits. Once repairs were complete, the project team would inspect and sign a handover document with the participant and conduct a survey measuring the level of satisfaction with the quality of repairs, safety measures, accountability, COVID-19 measures, the contractor used, workers, and staff behavior and conduct. The survey demonstrated overall positive feedback from participants.

Following the completion of work in designated zones, the implementing entities switched to an Area Based Approach (ABA) in the newly identified Maraash zone, due to the multi-sectoral needs identified (such as food, health, and welfare) and the high level of vulnerability of its population.

This urban recovery intervention aimed to enhance the community's well-being and contribute to social cohesion within the neighborhood and focused on four components: an open space upgrade, managing entangled cables, lighting streets, and rehabilitating building facades.

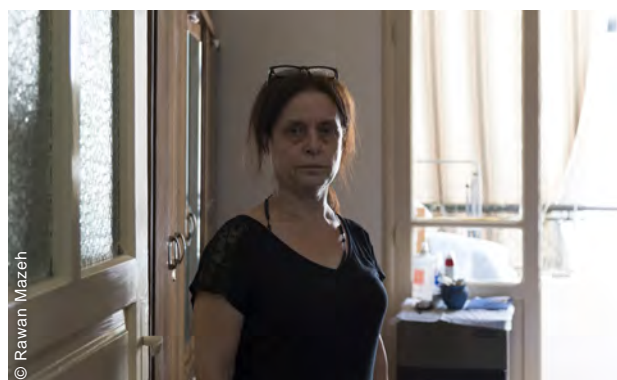
The design of the open space included elements that considered sustainability, durability, safety, and inclusivity for people of different age groups, genders, and abilities. The space featured LED lighting, native plantings, heavy-duty furniture, rainwater harvesting, toilets for people with disabilities, a children's play area, murals, shading, and a steel fence for safety. The design for the open space was discussed with the community in a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and was coordinated with the municipality.

TARGETING

Given the context and the similarity in damage within the same area, partner agencies decided to conduct a mapping of households through door-to-door assessments. Eligibility was determined based on shelter damage resulting from the blast. When partners expanded to the urban recovery project in the Maraash area, it was decided to identify which households still had damage from the blast through referrals from the municipality and referrals received from the field by community members.



Small businesses were unable to cover the repairs cost. They were at high risk of closing down and required assistance in fixing damage caused by the blast.



A house repaired after the explosion including windows and doors restoration, fixing of plumbing lines, and installation of water heater.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Project teams worked to ensure transparency in communication with participants throughout the project's timeline. Clear and consistent communication on the role of partners, what to expect in terms of implementation and the duration of the rehabilitation works allowed the participants to feel included in the project and built trust between service providers and household residents.

To help ensure engagement, project teams conducted community consultations, established a community committee, and liaised with local authorities, community leaders, and various community members.

By involving affected people in the project, the implementing entities were able to: Improve shelter quality, helping to ensure that interventions meet shelter needs and preferences leading to better outcomes for the community and empower the community, allowing affected people to be aware of key activities, involving them in the decision-making processes, and enhancing ownership of the project.

MAIN CHALLENGES

Limited resources: the crisis put a strain on the country's resources. This made it more difficult for organizations to secure all necessary funding and materials to carry out and cover all needs.

The disruption of supply chains due to the pandemic outbreak in addition to the currency devaluation increased the cost of materials, fuel, and transportation needed for projects, construction materials, and supplies.

This resulted in higher and fluctuating project costs, which were challenging for planning and implementation, and heavily impacted the creation of BoQs.

Sporadic strikes and road blocking continued after the blast and made it difficult for teams and contractors to commute to the project areas which posed a challenge to implementation and project activities.

It was difficult to find suitable land, especially for communal projects as open spaces in the target areas are limited.



The urban recovery intervention aimed to enhance the community's well-being and contribute to social cohesion within the neighborhood.

The refusal of some tenants and landlords to sign three-party agreements prevented the intervention in some vulnerable households. Following the handover of the public space, the municipality struggled to maintain opening hours due to financial and labor restrictions. Opening hours were then limited to municipal staff availability.

EXIT/HANDOVER

Household participants signed a clearance form stating that all work agreed with them had been executed per quality standards. Concerning the urban recovery project, an opening schedule and maintenance plan for the public space were shared with the municipality to ensure ownership and handover.

To formalize the completion of the project, an official opening ceremony of the public space took place and included municipal officials and community members.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

A total of 154 households were supported through essential minor repairs and rehabilitations and 52 households were supported through essential moderate repairs and rehabilitations.

A total of 24 shopfronts were repaired because of financial and technical assistance provided by the implementing entities and local implementing partners.

One urban recovery and rehabilitation project in the Maraash neighborhood of Burj Hammoud in Beirut was conducted. Urban recovery activities included the installation of 21 energy-efficient streetlights and electric cable management along 230 linear meters of streets, essential repairs to 11 building facades, and the creation of a green and open-public space prioritized for use by women, youth, and the elderly.

A total of 13 workshops and training were provided to four local partners, where topics focused on: minimum shelter standards, implementation processes and tools, monitoring, tendering and procurement, database management, referrals and service mapping, and an after-action review.



An official opening ceremony of the public space took place and included municipal officials and community members, for a formal handover.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Process and sequencing:** site division amongst partners within a defined area and referrals from municipality actors aided in reaching participants in high need.
- ✓ Light Monitoring survey that measured factors such as COVID-19 measures, contractor performance, quality, and safety of work **fostered the building of trust between partners and participants.**
- ✓ The registration database resulted in the creation of substantial data that **allowed for strong referrals** to other organizations.
- ✓ Strong coordination between the contractor, engineer, and participants ensured a **timely and quality implementation and delivery**, enhancing the inclusion of participants in the decision-making processes.
- ✓ Adherence to minimum building standards resulted in **positive feedback from participants** on construction safety and quality.
- ✓ Approximately 92 percent of households responding to the **satisfaction survey reported feeling safer** because of shelter repairs and communal interventions.
- ✓ All surveyed households reported that they were **satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the quality and type of materials used** in the shelter repairs.
- ✓ All surveyed households were either **satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the execution of the works** by the contractor and labor.

WEAKNESSES

- × **Local implementing partners had limited experience** and required additional training.
- × **Participants made direct requests to contractors** without implementing entity approval, requiring additional support for local partners in terms of participant management.
- × **Inability to ensure environmentally friendly and sustainable solutions** for both shelter and urban recovery projects due to budget allocation.
- × **The international partner organizations were not registered in the country**, which limited their ability to influence the sector – specifically in the HLP component, whereby their ability to call for a national-level housing forum or dialogue was affected.
- × There is a **need to update stakeholder mapping of available services and build referral SOPs** that ensure acknowledgment of referrals by service providers, at minimum. The referral system used did not track services by other service providers. Conducting case management for referral services would better serve targeted communities and complement the intervention.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Many of the successes of this project can be attributed to actions taken in the planning and design phase as the project team anticipated challenges and took steps to mitigate them. Through careful planning, the local partners were able to implement project activities and complete the repairs with a minimum number of home visits.
- Clear lines of communication and a unified vision and tools (planning, tracking, scoring, and monitoring tools) allow for quality and timely implementation and the exchange of experiences and learning.
- Many actors conducted assessments and left the affected area without following through with the communities or enacting interventions. Focusing on a geographically bound area allowed the implementing agencies to build trust with community members and enabled successful implementation and recovery efforts.
- Agility in implementation and adaptability of the team is key to delivering an effective response. The implementing partners' ability to make quick amendments to the BoQs, provide complementing referral services for excluded households or those in need of additional humanitarian assistance, and continued presence on the ground to ensure proper coordination with the local authorities and different actors proved to be essential for a timely and quality response.
- A holistic integrated approach should be used when supporting crisis-affected communities from the outset of the intervention, to meet household and community-level needs in target areas through infrastructure and shelter repairs within the same geographically bound zone.
- Before the development of any learning material, dissemination channels should be pre-determined to ensure optimal sharing.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- The project should benchmark social cohesion levels to enable an accurate and evidence-based assessment of the contribution to social cohesion at the community level. This is especially necessary as the intervention set out to strengthen the social fabric and mitigate tensions within and between neighborhoods in the communal project's component as part of the original design.
- Projects should build MEAL systems with enhanced metrics while conducting baseline studies for outcomes measurement. Stronger MEAL systems would inform and support the quality of implementation, enhance accountability to the affected population, and produce evidence and learning more systematically and methodically.
- The intervention should be designed with a gender lens, in addition to prioritizing households from a gender perspective and conducting a gender assessment to inform program activities. This was not possible at the time of implementation because the local partners did not have this technical capacity in-house.
- Establishment of a community-based feedback mechanism with clear SOPs on feedback and complaint handling and resolution – although a feedback reporting mechanism was already established by the partners, it did not have methodical or systemic parameters or oversight by the implementing entity, and feedback was handled by partners.
- Include energy-efficient shelter solutions like rechargeable LED lights, water-saving sanitary ware, etc. in current projects to ensure more sustainable and environmental-friendly interventions.
- Networking opportunities afforded to us through this project will allow us to plan with relevant housing stakeholders to develop more innovative and crosscutting solutions.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Lebanon: [A.21 / LEBANON 2018 – 2021](#); [A.31 / LEBANON 2015-2016](#)

On housing rehabilitation: [A.29 / SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC 2017 – 2018](#); [A.20 / JORDAN 2018 – 2020](#); [A.32 / TURKEY 2017 – 2018](#)



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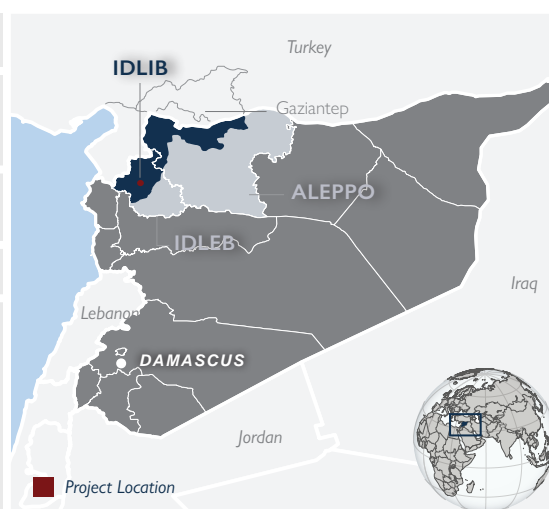
Urban recovery intervention focused on four components: an open space upgrade, managing entangled cables, lighting streets, and rehabilitating building facades.

CASE STUDY

SYRIAN ARAB REP. 2021–2022 / SYRIAN CRISIS

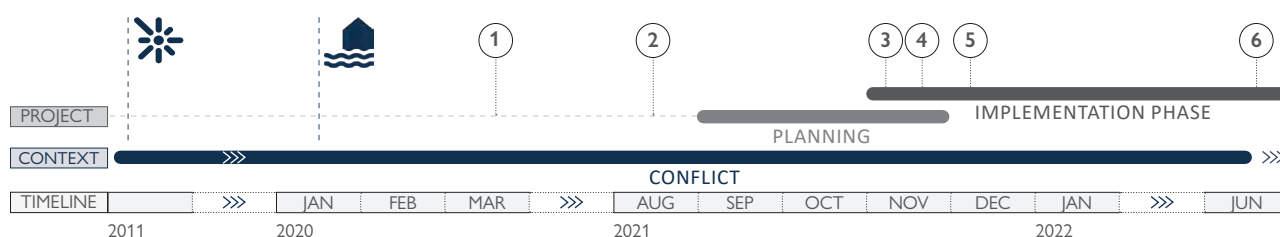
KEYWORDS: Emergency shelter, Habitability, NFI distribution, Winterization

| | |
|---|--|
| CRISIS | Syrian crisis, 2011 onwards |
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 14.6 million people in need 6.9 million IDPs* |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 5.9 million people within Syria* |
| LOCATION | Idlib, Northwest Syria |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED IN THE PROJECT | Tent Leveling Pilot: 685 people (120 HH) were supported in the pilot Core Winterisation Package: 13,423 people (2,300 HH) received NFI kits and clothing kits |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 120 tent bases constructed ahead of flooding event 2,300 NFI kits distributed 7,953 clothing packages distributed |
| SHELTER SIZE | Tent base sizes were 6x4m, 5x4m, 9x4m, 12x4m . (Depended on the size of the tents) |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 3.3 m² per person |
| DIRECT COST | USD 160 per tent |
| PROJECT COST | USD 173 per tent |
| * 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview : Syrian Arab Republic, February 2022. | |



PROJECT SUMMARY

The objective of the tent leveling activity, which was part of a larger winterization project, was to provide protection to family's tents and belongings in time for the seasonal wet weather, through the provision of concrete tent bases. This tent leveling supported 120 households across 2 camps in Idlib. An evaluation took place 6 months after construction, in a timeframe that allowed learning to be captured before project planning would commence for the next winterisation project. At a relatively low cost, the impact of tent leveling was high with positive results around the wider impacts of shelter and settlements. The tent base was successful in protecting participants homes from flooding wet weather. However in general, the tent leveling support is not effective at protecting people from winter conditions if they do not have a weatherproof shelter that will sit on top of the tent base, or a durable shelter solution, such as stone or concrete houses.



2011: Syrian crisis began.

Jan 2020: Severe flooding across Northwest Syria affecting over 126 IDP sites and over 67,000 people, including 40% of the people supported by the 2020 winterisation project.

- Mar 2020:** NFI response to families who had critical needs due to the floods.
- Aug 2021:** Plans developed for tent leveling pilot project.
- 07–25 Nov 2021:** Tent leveling phase.
- Nov 2021–Dec 2022:** Distribution of NFI kits, clothing packages.
- 22 Dec 2021:** Post-Distribution Monitoring for tent leveling.
- 1 Jun–04 Jun 2022:** Tent leveling evaluation.



Aerial image of a camp in Idlib devastated by the heavy floods, forcing many families to leave their homes during the night and take shelter elsewhere.

CONTEXT

The crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) began in March 2011 and has since displaced over 5 million people to neighboring countries and over 6.9 million people internally (Syrian Humanitarian Response Plan, 2022). The current crisis is compounded by interlinking factors and events (ongoing hostilities, regional economic crisis, damage to infrastructure, COVID-19, and environmental shocks) that caused significant suffering to the population. Northwest (NW) Syria experiences harsh winter conditions with freezing temperatures, rain, and snowfall. This is particularly worrying for displaced families living in camp settings, many of whom are residing in tents and makeshift shelters. Increasing the thermal comfort of households via winterization activities is a priority for the Shelter and Non-Food Item (SNFI) Cluster.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

In NW Syria, over 1.8 million people live in 1,421 sites of last resort – 87 percent of which are self-settled Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) tented camps. Those sites are more vulnerable to flooding due to the lack of site planning, infrastructure, and management systems – which coupled with the annual heavy rainfall in the winter and spring months leaves the sites particularly at risk of flooding events. In 2022, approximately 30 percent of IDP sites in NW Syria experienced flooding, affecting over 540,000 people (Syria, HNO 2023). Self-settled camps are often located in high-risk areas such as in river systems or agricultural land compounding vulnerability to flooding and (in some cases) creating difficulties or even preventing relief efforts as access is impacted due to unpaved roads and heavy mud.

SITUATION DURING/AFTER THE CRISIS

Syria remains a complex humanitarian and protection emergency characterized by over 10 years of ongoing

hostilities and their long-term consequences, including widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, explosive ordnance contamination, and the largest number of displaced populations in the world. The protracted crisis has inflicted immense suffering on the civilian population, who have been subject to massive and systematic violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. More recently, the accelerating economic deterioration and impacts of climate change have increasingly become additional key drivers of needs, compounding vulnerabilities even further. In 2022, approximately 14.6 million people needed humanitarian assistance, an increase of 1.2 million from 2021. Syria remains one of the largest humanitarian responses in the world, with assistance delivered to 6.8 million people per month in 2022 (2022 Syria HRP).

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

The SNFI Cluster set its winterization activities in 2021, focused on increasing thermal warmth. This was considered to be a lifesaving intervention due to the many interlinked vulnerabilities of the displaced population and the extreme weather associated with winter (2021 SNFI Strategy).

The priorities were “1. Fuel and stove distribution; 2. Winterization NFI packages (including tarpaulin, rope); 3. Winter clothing for children and vulnerable adults; and 4. Tent leveling” (2021 SNFI Strategy). Drawing on organizational experience, the project focused on Priority 2 (winter NFIs) and Priority 3 (winter clothing). A tent leveling pilot component was added, aiming to expand that experience and increase the impact of the overall intervention.

NW Syria experiences seasonal wet weather and flooding events, which can have devastating impacts on families whose homes and belongings are vulnerable to rain and flood water. By raising tents off the ground around 20 centimeters via concrete and gravel bases, the intervention aimed to mitigate potential damage to homes and possessions that could impact that household's ability to keep



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The harsh winter makes life very difficult for displaced people in camps. It's really particularly difficult for the elderly people and people with disabilities, who live in torn and ripped and flimsy tents in sub-zero temperatures. (Mark Cutts, 2022)

warm (e.g., if carpets, mattresses, and blankets get wet or if they are destroyed). Through evaluation activities following the project, 80 percent of respondents reported that the tent base provided protection from the cold.

During the design of this pilot, the organizational strategy was focused on supporting people at the individual and household levels. As such, broader interventions focused on community-level infrastructure and flooding mitigation through drainage network implementation were outside of the scope of this project.

PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

Following the winter of 2020, large-scale rainfall caused localized flooding events that impacted at least 192 informal camps. As a result, many households that had been recently supported with winterization packages lost their items due to flood damage. It was then decided to conduct a pilot project for tent leveling using the SNFI cluster technical guidance.

Given that a large proportion of the previous year's assisted IDPs in the area had been impacted by flooding and the increasing likelihood of flooding events moving forward, a project was needed that added a layer of protection to participants by mitigating the impact of flooding. The tent leveling modality offered a cost-effective solution that could be retrofitted to existing tents and makeshift shelters, allowing participants to remain in their current location – limiting disruption and onward displacement. While the tent bases are not a permanent durable solution, with an under-layer of polythene or similar acting as a dump barrier, they offer a significant improvement to the living condition of participants and could potentially provide a foundation on which incremental improvements could be made.

IMPLEMENTATION

To move the project forward, the organization (based outside of Syria) contributed by providing technical shelter expertise and support, procurement assistance and advice (with the tender of the contractor and due diligence process), and remote monitoring and evaluation. The partner team (based in Syria) undertook stakeholder engagement, including with the regional government while also conducting Housing, Land and Property (HLP) assessments to ensure rights of tenure for participants. Once the project implementation started, the in-country team provided oversight of the entire process to ensure quality control and that humanitarian principles were upheld. In addition, the in-country team provided vital coordination with camp management and implemented the field monitoring and evaluation process which encompassed tent leveling quality checks that were conducted within two days of construction, Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) activities that were conducted one month after installation and evaluation activities that were conducted six months after installation.

Through coordination with the Syria SNFI Cluster, camps with a need for core winterization and tent leveling support were identified. Post-identification, camp, and household-level surveys were conducted to understand the needs of the population within each area. Selection criteria were then applied within each camp to identify which individuals required support. This information was then shared back within SNFI Cluster for further coordination.

As this was the organization's first attempt to implement tent leveling support, a small caseload was identified (120) to ensure that improvements could be verified in all areas (e.g., camp and household identification, procurement, construction, and participant engagement) before committing to a larger scale intervention.

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Tent leveling construction activities - (above) Building of the tent base perimeter with mortar blocks, November 2021. (below) Filling of the tent base with aggregate before the final cement layer, November 2021.





Cementing of the tent bases, November 2021. Size of the different tents were measured, and the tent bases were constructed according to the tent sizes.

TARGETING

A total of 120 families in two camps were selected by the partner in-country team based on the following criteria:

- Families living in IDP or refugee camp/tent settlements who were susceptible to flooding on their existing plots.
- Tent/shelter sites where tent bases would improve resilience and protection from flooding without resulting in a complete loss of household shelters and materials (to determine this, the in-country team conducted camp level and household level needs assessments to ascertain which locations and housing structures were most vulnerable to flooding damage if heavy rains were to occur, and then which households would benefit from a tent base construction).
- Families with critical shelter and household items need or few, if any, available resources.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

- Needs Assessments were conducted at the camp and household levels to ensure feedback was incorporated into the project design.
- Follow up construction quality checks were conducted to ensure that each tent base was of high quality and to refer damages to the constructor (if any) that required repair.
- Post Distribution Monitoring was conducted, which helped the organization to understand the extent to which the project objective and outcome were met.

An evaluation was conducted six months after the construction of tent bases and included interviews with project participants and key informants.

As this was a new modality for both organizations involved, the pilot project offered a good learning opportunity. Community consultations during the needs assessment phase helped in the adoption of a flexible approach to the sizing of concrete base structures. There were also many touch points after the installation, where project participants were asked to provide feedback on the project activities. Feedback gathered through tent base quality checks,

PDM, and evaluation activities was instrumental in helping the organization shape the next project and ensured that the project design was appropriate to the needs of the affected population.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- **Camp Selection for Tent Bases:** During camp assessments for the tent leveling pilot, it was recognized that tent sizes varied across camps. The initial use of rigid criteria for tent sizes as part of camp selection led to lengthy assessment times and difficulties in identifying suitable locations. Once tent base installation commenced, the in-country team and contractor adopted a more flexible approach, where the size of participant's homes was measured, and tent bases were constructed tailored to the tent size. The project's contingency budget was able to accommodate the flexible approach.
- **Tent base ramps:** During the construction of tent bases, several families were identified as having members with disabilities. There was concern that raising tents off the ground by 20cm would make access to homes more difficult. When identified post-construction, the in country team visited these families to offer the addition of a concrete ramp to ease access into the raised homes. While families shared that adding ramps wasn't a priority need at the time, the project team felt strongly that these ramps should have been an option for families before the construction.
- **Poor quality tents:** The in country project team identified several tents that required replacement or repair. While this information was shared with the coordinating body, it was not certain that they would receive this support in time for the wet weather. Tent base construction was successful in protecting households from flooding damage, but many people provided feedback that the poor quality tents were not fully protective from winter weather conditions. The team identified that adding in future interventions a complimentary tarpaulin to the tent leveling support may be a simple solution to help families in enhancing the weather resilience of their homes if needed.

MATERIALS AND SUPPLY

The in-country partner engaged a civil-works contractor through a competitive procurement process, contracting out the tent base construction package. Once the team had conducted due diligence checks and was satisfied with the civil works contractor's policies and processes, responsibility for the following elements was passed on to the contractor: procurement of materials (cement blocks, gravel, and cement), transportation of the materials to the installation site and the labor required for the construction of tent bases. Contractor work was overseen by the in-country team and a construction foreman, ensuring it was delivered according to the agreed-upon specifications, timeframes, and quality.



Interior view of a tent after the construction of the tent base.

TENT BASE CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Step 1 | Materials were delivered and unloaded at each tent location on the day of its construction to mitigate family obstruction. |
| Step 2 | Families' belongings were removed from the tent. The tent canvas was then either rolled up from the ground or the entire tent was disassembled. |
| Step 3 | The tent base outline was measured and marked out. |
| Step 4 | The surface of the ground was cleared of any rocks or debris to place the gravel and blocks. |
| Step 5 | A layer of fine gravel was laid and leveled to provide a base for the concrete mix and blocks. |
| Step 6 | A string line was set to mark the height of the base. The blocks were placed and fixed with concrete. |
| Step 7 | Once the block layer was complete, the concrete was left to cure before the addition of gravel. |
| Step 8 | Once the concrete was cured, a 15cm layer of coarse gravel was placed and leveled within the base. |



Survey results and KIIs indicated that eighty percent of the people felt the tent base did a good job at providing insulation from the cold, and also highlighted the importance of tent bases are for families' health, wellbeing and flood protection.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Evaluation results showed that the tent leveling support had a positive impact on people's health and well-being.** A total of 98 percent of families felt that the tent base improved how safe they felt during the winter months, 96 percent said that the tent base had a positive impact on their wellbeing and 100 percent said that the tent base helped to protect their and their family's health. However, separate lines of questioning highlighted that the tent base didn't provide complete protection to health and wellbeing, with 14 percent of respondents saying that flooding caused damage to family members' health.
- ✓ The tent bases were constructed in November 2021 ahead of any heavy rain and flooding events. Six months later, 96 percent of respondents stated that the tent base had fulfilled **its purpose of preventing flooding damage throughout the winter season.**
- ✓ The tent leveling cost is USD 70 per tent base and can be constructed within one day. Given the positive evaluation of the participants, the organization deemed this to be a **good value for money.**
- ✓ **Engagement with project participants** at two days, one month, and six months after the initial installation provided valuable opportunities for feedback. Through feedback activities, the organization found that people were able to augment/improve their bases themselves. These augmentations provided further insight into how future projects may enhance effectiveness in meeting beneficiary needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- A ramp was added during installation for those identified as having mobility challenges and/or those who would benefit from a ramp.
- A single tarpaulin and a rope were given to each household during installation to enhance the weather resilience of existing tents and mitigate potential water ingress.
- A skim layer of concrete was added during installation to improve household comfort and weather protection.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Syrian Arab Rep.: [A.23 / SYRIAN ARAB REP. 2019–2020;](#)
[A.31 / SYRIAN ARAB REP. 2018;](#) [A.8 / SYRIAN ARAB REP. 2011](#)

On NFI distribution: [A.9 / PARAGUAY 2019–2020;](#)
[A.10 / PHILIPPINES 2013-2015](#) [A.4 / CUBA 2012](#)

On Winterization: [A.4 / NEPAL 2015](#)

WEAKNESSES

- × When providing tent leveling support, **the condition of tents should also be addressed**, either with tent replacements or with additional tarpaulins to make repairs.
- × **Access to the tent base** (20cm off the ground) for people with disabilities was not initially considered within the tent leveling design.
- × **The initial use of rigid criteria for tent sizes as part of camp selection led to lengthy assessment times** and difficulties in identifying suitable camps. A flexible approach to sizing is recommended in future projects.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The project highlighted the importance of incorporating the needs of people with disabilities within the tent leveling design. People with disabilities should be identified before construction and consulted on whether there is a need for adjustments to the tent base to allow for easier access (which is raised 20cm off the ground).
- While the tent base was effective in protecting peoples' homes and possessions from flood damage, feedback was received that shelters would leak due to the wet weather. Further considerations should be made on shelter resilience to wet weather, in addition to any vulnerabilities that may exist regarding flooding.
- Most people have either added, planned to add, or wished to add a layer of cement to their tent base. The purpose of this was to improve weather protection and improve the comfort of people living on top of the base. A concrete layer could thus be added to the initial construction of the tent, to avoid participants having to spend this money themselves when they have competing priority needs and to improve overall impact. Incorporating this cement layer during construction will also ensure that the design meets high-quality standards and that the improvements are made ahead of any potential flooding.
- Although only a relatively small number of families added additional bricks to the perimeter of their tent base (e.g., raised wall), half of the respondents felt this was something that should be done at the point of construction. It is recommended that future projects consider adding additional bricks to the perimeter of the tent base at the point of construction.

CASE STUDY

YEMEN 2020–2022 / CONFLICT

KEYWORDS: Community engagement, Security of tenure, Transitional shelter

| CRISIS | Armed conflict |
|---------------------------------|--|
| PEOPLE AFFECTED | 23.4 million people affected 12.9 million people assessed to be in acute need.* |
| PEOPLE DISPLACED | 4.3 million people since the start of the crisis** |
| PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS | 7.4 million people* |
| PROJECT LOCATION | Ma'rib, Ta'iz, and the West Coast |
| PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE PROJECT | 2,125 HHs (14,875 individuals) |
| PROJECT OUTPUTS | 2,125 transitional shelters handed over to the most vulnerable households |
| SHELTER SIZE | 18 m ² per transitional shelter |
| SHELTER DENSITY | 3.5 m ² per person |
| DIRECT COST | USD 1,000 per shelter |

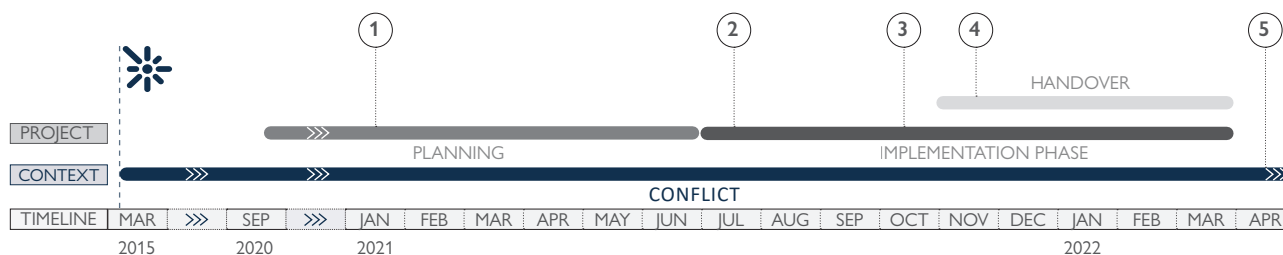


* Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

** Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan 2022

PROJECT SUMMARY

This project aimed to improve the living conditions of households living in IDP sites through the construction of transitional shelters in Ta'iz, West Coast, and Ma'rib governorates. The project specifically focused on the organization's Second Line Emergency Response (SLER) to the shelter needs of households displaced for more than three to six months. Beneficiary selection targeted most vulnerable households with severe shelter needs, i.e. households living under inadequate or inappropriate shelter conditions; female headed households; households with elderly or people with special needs. Affected families were provided with transitional shelter assistance with the aim of establishing safe, dignified, and sustainable shelters solutions in secure settlements.



2015: Start of crisis in Yemen

- 1 Jan - Jun 2021:** Planning and coordination meetings with different stakeholders including local authorities, SNFI cluster, beneficiaries.
- 2 Jul - Sep 2021:** Conducted needs assessments, verification and registration exercises.
- 3 Oct 2021:** Provided technical training to staff and beneficiaries on construction related skills. Provided awareness raising on targeting and selection criteria to beneficiaries.
- 4 Nov 2021 - Mar 2022:** Development of BoQs and designs, distribution of materials, construction of transitional shelters.
- 5 Apr 2022:** Post distribution monitoring exercises to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the project.



Child walking in Aden, Yemen, an area that has been affected by war since 2015

© OCHA - Giles Clarke

CONTEXT

Yemen, a small country on the Arabian Peninsula, has become the site of grave civilian suffering amid an intractable civil war. Yemen's civil war began in 2014 when Houthi insurgents took control of Yemen's capital and largest city, Sana'a, demanding lower fuel prices and a new government. Following failed negotiations, the rebels seized the presidential palace in January 2015, leading the president and his government to resign. Beginning in March 2015, a coalition of Gulf states led by Saudi Arabia launched a campaign of economic isolation and air strikes against the Houthi insurgents. The president rescinded his resignation and returned to Aden in September 2015, and fighting has continued since.

A United Nations-brokered truce was agreed upon and came into effect on 2 April 2022. The subsequent six-month truce period, up to its expiry on 2 October, offered a glimpse of hope for many people. Among the many overarching benefits of this period were an overall reduction in fighting – the first extended reprieve since 2015. Civilian casualties and displacement decreased, and no airstrikes or major military operations took place. The truce also saw an increase in fuel deliveries and the smooth flow of other essential items through Al Hodeidah Port, as well as the reopening of Sana'a International Airport after years of closure, enabling approximately 40,000 people to travel on commercial flights including to access medical treatment and education opportunities abroad. However, fighting did not completely cease, and localized clashes continued in some pockets of the country.

At the end of 2022, nearly nine years into the current conflict, a comprehensive political settlement remains elusive. The Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI) Cluster estimates that 7.5 million people in Yemen reside in inadequate shelter conditions, often lacking essential household items. Among them, over 5.3 million people are in acute

need. The increase in need is primarily due to the recent conflict, which induced displacement of 234,000 people, the impact of climate change (which affected nearly 517,00 people in 2022) and the protracted nature of the crisis – affecting over four million people who have been displaced for more than a year.

SITUATION DURING THE CRISIS

Yemen's public services and infrastructure have been severely impacted by the conflict, the deteriorating economy, and recurrent natural hazards. By the end of 2022, more than 80 percent of the country's population struggled to access food, safe drinking water and adequate health services, while nearly 90 percent of the population had no access to publicly supplied electricity. Most public sector employees, including teachers and healthcare workers, have not received a regular salary in years.

IDPs continue to face a myriad of challenges, with the average displacement duration being eight years with at least 25 percent being displaced two or more times during that period. Of the 4.5 million IDPs, over two-thirds are living in rental accommodations or hosting arrangements. A recent study showed that 82 percent of them reported serious difficulties in paying rent, and 76 percent did not pay rent for more than three months, thus heightening the risk of eviction, particularly in low-income households whose ability to meet basic needs diminished due to deteriorating economic conditions and increased cost of necessities. The other one-third of displaced people reside in last-resort informal and spontaneous settlements, exposed to hazards such as flooding, landslides, fire risks, and even landmines and unexploded ordnances.

The economy has shrunk by more than half since the conflict escalated in 2015, largely due to currency depreciation, loss of government revenue and rising commodity prices.



2,125 transitional shelters were handed over to the most vulnerable households in Ma'rib, Ta'iz, and the West Coast

COUNTRY HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN (HRP)

The Country Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) objectives included the provision of life-saving emergency shelters and Non-Food Item (NFI) support to newly displaced people by conflict and disasters, as well as rental subsidies, maintenance and upgrade interventions, construction of transitional shelters and home rehabilitation and reconstruction. As per the plan, relevant Shelter/NFI interventions for vulnerable households would include protection from natural hazard risks, winterization assistance and support for achieving relative security of tenure. The Shelter/NFI Cluster aligned its objectives with the HRP.

PROJECT DESIGN

The project aimed to construct 2,200 transitional shelters (TS) for displaced households residing in informal IDP sites, to reach the most vulnerable populations affected by the crisis.

Targeted households were provided with all material and labor required for their self-construction of the shelters. Implementing organization engineers and technical team focal points provided technical assistance and conducted training sessions on shelter construction and maintenance.

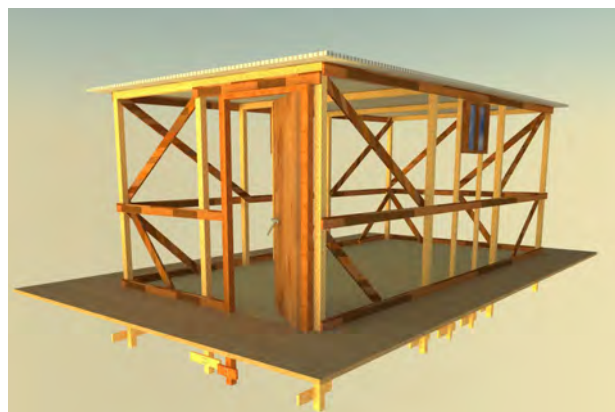
The shelter design was determined according to cluster guidance, beneficiary preferences, local practices and land property conditions: as most of landlords would not allow to build permanent structures on their land, materials such as concrete or brick were not permitted, and the design previewed the possibility of easily dismantling and transporting the shelters to another location. Materials were procured locally.

IMPLEMENTATION

Prior to implementation, the project team conducted need assessments identifying target sites where the support was feasible and allowed by landowners. The team conducted IDP household registration and verification according to the selection criteria of vulnerable households displaced over six months with the intention of staying for another six months in the same site.

The team also provided sensitization on the overall project to ensure participants understood the intervention. Sensitization was conducted in three stages: 1) Target community was briefed on the overall project, donor and selection criteria; 2) Door-to-door awareness raising was carried out to reiterate previous info shared and to provide more details on the implementation process and feedback mechanism; 3) During construction, teams informed participants of their roles in the construction process.

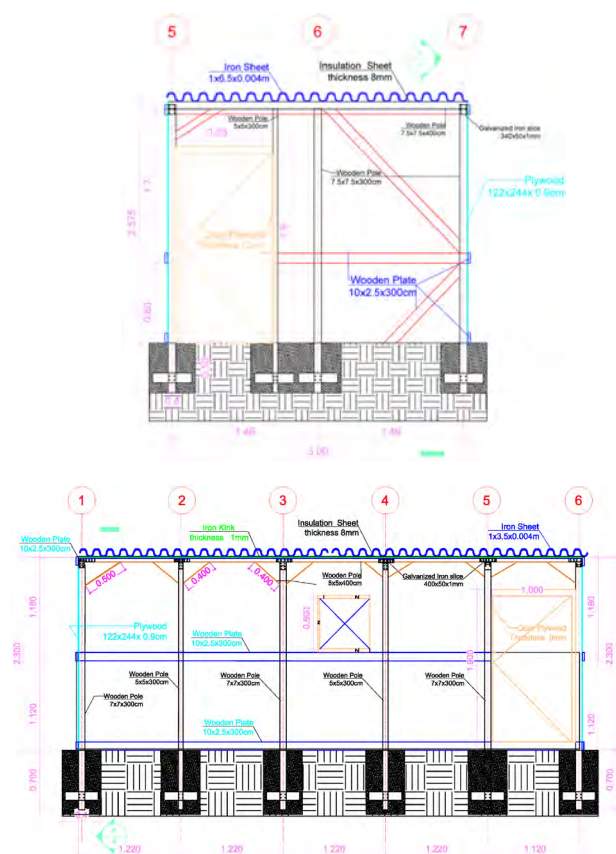
Prior to launching activities, the team obtained the required landowners' approvals in coordination with the organization Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) team and local authorities.



Design of the t-shelter allowed for easy dismantling and transporting the shelters to another location.



Targeted households were provided with all material and labor required for their self-construction of the shelters. All materials were procured locally.



Detailed drawing of a transitional shelter constructed in Ta'iz and Ma'rib

Through a public tender, a contractor was identified to supply the required materials and implement the construction. The organization team conducted market assessments and consultations with relevant stakeholders including affected households, landowners, CCCM teams, WASH teams, the SNFI Cluster and local authorities.

Accordingly, the SNFI team finalized the designs and bills of quantities (BoQs) ensuring the use of plywood and non-permanent materials such as cement and bricks, as agreed with the landowners. Continuous coordination, follow-up, monitoring, and guidance was maintained throughout implementation. Community members willing to participate were trained in the construction process and techniques and encouraged to take ownership in the implementation by coordinating closely with the contractor and providing guidance as needed.



Community ownership and participation was encouraged throughout the implementation of the project



Family after moving to a new wooden transitional shelter that provided safety, security and comfort from harsh environment conditions.

TARGETING

- Participant selection targeted the most vulnerable households (HHs) with severe shelter needs, such as:
- Female-headed and child-headed HHs.
- HHs with pregnant and lactating women, widows, and adult women in families with multiple wives.
- HHs with older persons (above 60), and HHs headed by elderly.
- HHs with people with disabilities (mental or physical).
- HHs with people with chronic diseases/serious medical conditions.
- Large families with more than 5 children (under 18 years old).
- Newly displaced HHs who have been living on the site for six months or above.
- Marginalized individuals.
- Isolated elderly individuals.
- HHs living in emergency shelter, family tent, or local material and do not have the capacity to rehabilitate and upgrade their shelters.
- IDP families living in structures without solid walls, such as IDPs without shelters and people living in damaged or unfinished buildings.
- IDPs in dire need of shelter assistance who had not been supported with SNFI in the past.
- Families with inadequate shelter or living in old/damaged local transitional shelters (it does not protect them from external influences, whether natural or other including heavy rain, strong wind, and heat).
- A displaced family with many members who would not have enough living space in their shelter or more families living in the same space and would not have enough shelter to accommodate them all.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community ownership and participation were encouraged through focus group discussions and in consultation with affected households to ensure that participants were actively involved in all phases of the intervention.

The outcomes highlighted key preferences which were taken into consideration during the design stage, including adding insulation sheets to the roof, improvements to provide more protection for water leakage by painting the shelter from the outside and changing the slope direction of the roof, adding more than one window for better ventilation and increasing the height of the structure for more air circulation.

Community participation promoted community ownership, aiming to enhance self-resilience and sustainability of the assistance.

MAIN CHALLENGES

The activities were stopped due to interference by landowners and site community members who tried to add additional families to the project who did not meet selection criteria. Despite continued efforts and several meetings with landowners, a compromise was not easily identified, and works were suspended several times. The construction was actually prolonged and exceeded the timeline of the project due to a combination of factors: accessibility issues, reoccurrence conflict, delays in the materials delivery and skilled labor availability.

HLP issues represented one of the main challenges. Most IDPs resided in informal settlements, where the majority live with precarious tenure arrangements (undocumented and verbal agreements), leaving IDPs vulnerable to price increases, evictions, and other forms of exploitation.

In addition, competition over the access and use of land and water resources had resulted in tensions and disputes between IDPs and the host communities.

The implementing organization faced bureaucratic challenges and lengthy processes to receive access permits by local authorities where they requested the organization to coordinate with landowners and obtain all necessary permits and landowner's approval, which delayed the implementation of assessments, verification, and registration activities.

Unexpected rejections from these landowners to construct shelters continued to delay project implementation despite the approval documents obtained and led to fear among other landowners. This occurred in cases where there were multiple landowners on the same land.

OUTCOME AND WIDER IMPACTS

The transitional shelters provided a higher quality than emergency shelters, extending their lifespan and were aimed to offer affected households safe, secure, healthy, and dignified accommodation.

The materials and construction methods chosen for transitional shelters were familiar to the community, utilizing the skills and tools they could access. The designs and materials were also chosen so that after the construction was completed, the transitional shelters may be upgraded, reused for other functions, even sold, or recycled into permanent housing.

The outcomes of this project were measured by observing the lifespan of the shelters and how much protection they provided from external factors (floods, sun, or rain). Beneficiary satisfaction surveys and monitoring through regular field visits were conducted.

The local authorities were satisfied with the shelter design and requested other shelter partners to provide similar interventions. The project was used as an advocacy element to promote transitional shelter interventions in other locations.



Organization provided technical assistance and conducted training sessions on shelter construction and maintenance for the targeted households.



Roof was insulated to protect from the harsh environmental conditions.



The shelters were painted from the outside for additional protection against water leakage.



Design considerations from community participation and feedback were implemented to achieve the final outcome.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

- ✓ **Continued consultation and engagement** with target households throughout all stages of the project.
- ✓ Lessons learned and recommendations from the community were taken into the consideration and designs improved based on **input from the community**.
- ✓ **Continued coordination** with local authorities, shelter cluster, community leaders, CCCM and protection partners.
- ✓ The implementing organization **conducted capacity building programs with the community and site leaders** on different topics including targeting and selection criteria for the transitional shelters.

WEAKNESSES

- ✗ The number of the transitional shelters implemented **could not cover the huge need on the ground**, and the project targeted the most critical needs only – raising tensions in some areas. However, through regular awareness raising on the targeting and selection criteria – the project was successfully implemented.
- ✗ Early in implementation, the host community around IDP sites were not fully engaged in project activities which led to the **disruption of activities and security threats to staff and workers** at the site. After establishing regular engagement with the community leaders and conducting awareness raising on targeting criteria, the situation was resolved and the project activities continued smoothly.
- ✗ The project also faced **delays in procurement and construction**, mainly due to the current situation in Yemen including security and HLP related issues. The implementing organization is exploring different approaches to ensure effective project implementation. Currently the transitional shelters are being implemented either through vendor based or community-based approaches.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Educating target beneficiaries and community leaders on the targeting and selection criteria for transitional shelters was crucial for activity success. Additionally, the provision of orientation on selection criteria to CCCM focal points and site leaders was helpful to support project activities.
- It was important to maintain regular coordination with local authorities, the CCCM team and the shelter cluster to facilitate and secure land approvals from all landowners and obtain land authorization/approval before moving with the construction of the transitional shelters. HLP experts or the HLP technical working group should be engaged to address HLP related issues.
- Awareness on the importance of learning how to install transitional shelters should be conducted while motivating affected households through their work with the contractor for a daily wage.
- The transitional shelter model should be designed in consultation with the community to improve its quality, efficiency, resistance and suitability in the area. Continue to revisit and improve the transitional shelter model after each stage of implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- HLP issues were the main challenges for the implementation of transitional shelters in Yemen. Due to this, prior coordination with relevant stakeholders including local authorities, landowners, HLP experts or technical working groups and the shelter cluster should be given utmost importance before implementation.
- Target beneficiaries should be consulted at all stages starting from the project inception stage.
- Identify the skills and capacity available within the community, provide technical training to community members on the installation and construction of transitional shelters and motivate the community to participate in the construction for daily wages and to gain technical skills.
- Engage the host community from the earliest stages of the project and include the vulnerable host community households as participants of the project.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On transitional shelter : [A.3 / CHAD, 2018–2020 / CONFLICT](#); [A.8 / ETHIOPIA, 2011 / SUDANESE CONFLICT](#); [A.10 / JORDAN, 2013 / SYRIA CONFLICT](#); [A.3 / NEPAL, 2015 / EARTHQUAKE OVERVIEW](#); [A.7 / DRC, 2002 / VOLCANO](#)

A woman wearing a bright yellow hijab and a dark skirt with colorful geometric patterns is seated on a wooden ramp. She is positioned next to a structure made of light-colored bricks. The background shows a rustic environment with mud-brick walls and a thatched roof. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting daylight.

SECTION B

RESEARCH PIECES

An inclusive cooking space constructed using local materials and simple construction techniques for easy upgrade and maintenance for persons with disabilities.

© Stylia Kampani

INFLUENCES ON THE DECISION TO USE CASH ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

By Madeline Burnham, Jim Kennedy, Lizzie Babister, Leeanne Marshall and Jenny Weatherall

INTRODUCTION

This article reflects on the decision-making process shelter practitioners go through in order to consider whether to use cash assistance, the evidence they use, and the influences on this process. The use of cash assistance in support of those who have lost their shelter and settlements has a long track record⁵, and shelter practitioners have often programmed cash assistance in coordination with local financial institutions and national governments. Despite this, the source of much of the evidence which frames cash programming in humanitarian crises originates from the food security sector⁶. Little research has been produced concerning shelter and settlements in humanitarian crises⁷, and this has contributed to shelter practitioners describing a lack of confidence when choosing to use cash programming⁸. This article presents new evidence based on primary and secondary data, providing a contribution towards more confident cash programming.

METHODOLOGY

This article summarises early findings from a wider study being undertaken by the Global Shelter Cluster, concerning Cash and Shelter. While the overarching study asks about the criteria shelter practitioners use when they decide whether or not to use cash, this article focuses more specifically on what influences these decisions. These influences are explored below.

The data for this research has been collected from literature reviews, an on-line questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews with shelter practitioners with relevant experience in the field as decision makers. The interview group was made up of shelter programme managers, global and regional advisors, cluster coordinators, international and national staff, and donor representatives. Within the interview group, there was a balance between genders, the types of responses where they had been working (disaster or conflict-related; new emergencies or protracted situations), and the range of different geographic locations, including Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

5 For example, in response to the South Asian Tsunami: [ODI Cash Learning Project \(calpnetwork.org\)](http://calpnetwork.org) and [External Evaluation Report on the Cash for Repair and Reconstruction Project Sri Lanka - The CALP Network](#).

6 For example, The CaLP Library contains 488 resources which mention shelter, and 1899 which mention food ([Search - The CALP Network](#)); visited 30.05.23.

7 Peacock, W.G. Dash, N. Zhang, Y. (2007) *Sheltering and Housing Recovery Following Disaster*. In: *Handbook of Disaster Research. Handbooks of Sociology and Social Research*. Springer, New York, NY. *Sheltering and Housing Recovery Following Disaster** | SpringerLink; visited 31.05.23

8 [Global Shelter Cluster: Research Priorities Baseline 2022](#). GSC, 2022.

DECISION-MAKING

While the advantages and disadvantages of a particular modality may appear straightforward from a technical perspective, decision-making in the field takes into account many other considerations. These considerations include decision-making as an organisation or group of organisations, rather than as an individual. For the most part, of those interviewed, all practitioners did state that they were the ones who took the decisions, but in many cases, their decisions followed one of two scenarios where a high-level decision to use cash had already been made by others.

In the first scenario, there was an acknowledgement that very often by the time the individual shelter practitioner arrives in the field, a general decision to at least consider whether to include cash as an option had already been taken – by country representatives, overall heads of emergency programming, or by donors. This in turn influenced the shelter practitioner in any Go/No-go decision, and in any subsequent decisions about how to combine modalities. More widely mentioned among the interview group, was the second scenario, whereby there was already a decision to use multi-purpose cash, taken at a cross-sectoral level. This meant that the shelter practitioners were then limited in their decision-making, in terms of how to ensure that other shelter activities could be designed to achieve programme objectives, as add-ons to the main unconditional cash support, such as technical training or the distribution of key shelter materials not available in local markets. The shelter practitioners recounted instances where it was difficult to insist upon shelter-related conditionalities (e.g. making the payments in tranches, dependent upon the completion of intermediary stages of the shelter construction) after a cross-sectoral decision to use unconditional, multi-purpose cash had already been taken.



A refugee withdraws financial assistance, which she receives as part of a cash assistance programme in Turkey, from an ATM.

FIVE KEY INFLUENCES

The shelter practitioners were then able to provide more details, and extensive narratives from their own experience in the field, about the specific influences on their decision-making. The following influences emerged from the data as those which frequently shape the decision on whether and how to programme cash assistance in support of shelter and settlements. They include the range of potential shelter options, the capacity to provide responsible programming, the relationship with Multi-Purpose Cash programmes, the influence of other actors and the sustainability of the programme.

1. RESOURCES TO PROVIDE RESPONSIBLE SHELTER PROGRAMMING

The first most commonly mentioned influence on decision-making was the degree to which the shelter practitioners thought their programmes would be able to provide all the other necessary components for responsible and quality shelter programming. These include technical training and capacity-building of households receiving the cash, engagement with support for security of tenure and other HLP issues, and programme monitoring by shelter staff. Decision-makers repeatedly emphasised that cash-only programming does not necessarily secure a safe and dignified shelter outcome, often because of concerns for construction quality and structural safety. One interviewee stated, *“if you only look into the financial transaction, it’s not working for me because I don’t think I will be able to achieve the impact with the intervention.”* This finding suggests that decision-makers do not consider cash alone to be a form of shelter assistance, rather they consider cash as a modality that may be used to accompany the technical elements that form the backbone of a strong shelter programme.

2. RELATIONSHIP WITH MULTI-PURPOSE CASH PROGRAMMES

The second influence on decision-making was described by the interviewees as the presence of other, often larger, multi-purpose cash programmes established at the inter-sectoral level. In these examples, cash working groups run by the cash sector had taken the decision to use inter-sectoral multi-purpose cash programming. For decision-makers within the shelter sector, this then influenced - and in some cases became the overriding influence - on all the other aspects of shelter programming which would be necessary to complement the access to cash (similar to the aspects listed in the discussion of the second commonly listed influence, above). One interviewee stated *“... the cash working group and their position that can be a defining factor,”* indicating *“you might decide to redesign your programme accordingly”*.

In the case above where inter-sectoral multi-cash programmes were present, there was a further concern expressed that multi-cash programmes may take up most, or all, of any donor funding available. There would then be not enough funds remaining for technical training or for



The Ronda family received cash grants to construct their home as part of the Typhoon Haiyan response in the Philippines.

the necessary shelter staff to undertake the assessments, outreach and monitoring to ensure that shelter objectives were actually being achieved. Another interviewee noted that once the *“first inject [of funding] has gone out [...], there’s just not enough funding left to do a meaningful more quality and more shelter-focused funding.”* Shelter practitioners highlighted the strengths of multi-purpose cash for delivering on shelter needs in the onset of an emergency while indicating it is just as essential that funding be in place to develop shelter specific programming that can secure shelter outcomes in the medium to long-term.

3. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROGRAMMES

A third influence for the shelter practitioners, was the degree to which a shelter programme which included cash assistance, would be sustainable in the longer-term. For many practitioners, considerations about the future can be a decisive Go/No-go factor as much as the current situation on the ground. Although a lack of sustainability was less often cited as a risk for emergency-phase provision of shelter materials, it was seen as a consistent risk for supporting shelter upgrades and housing repairs, with regard to the necessary structural qualities of such repairs, and with regards to build-back-safer issues. The most common concern, however, was over the risks associated with rental support, whereby more than one interviewee stated that they might consider deciding not to provide cash support for rent, if there was no clear answer for what would happen to the renting households, once the period of rental support had come to an end. In speaking to the importance of exit strategies with Cash-for-Rent programmes, one decision maker stated *“every time that I have anyone submitting Cash-for-Rent proposal, the first question I asked is like, okay, what next?”* continuing, *“what other complementary activities are you doing to so that you ensure that this person after six months will be able to continue paying?”*.

4. INFLUENCES OF OTHER ACTORS

A fourth influence on decision-making was the range of both the information and the decisions coming from other actors at the field level. Decision makers most often cited other shelter actors in this regard, as well as other partner organisations, including partners in national shelter clusters

or other shelter coordination forums. Practitioners stated that if one or more other shelter actors had already taken decisions to include or not include cash, then it would be more likely for them to move their programming in the same direction. The attitudes of local authorities, and to a lesser extent humanitarian donors, was also consistently cited as a heavily influence on the decision-making process. For the most part, local authorities in host communities were described as being more hesitant about using cash assistance for shelter support and were more likely to argue for limitations in its implementation. On the other hand, interviewees described donors as limiting potential cash and shelter programming in some responses, but actively encouraging such approaches in other responses.

Decision makers are navigating a complex web of intervening variables which regularly shift in influence based on the context at the time of their operation. As summarised by one decision maker, “*you’re triangulating multiple information sources... and you’re trying to gather all that information at once*”. The information and analysis coming from colleagues and partners in other sectors, particularly the analysis of markets and of the viability of cash-transfer mechanisms, was often cited as influential. This was particularly in cases where personal visits to local markets or to the affected communities were not possible, or where there was an assumption that a single visit to one market might only provide limited information. Less commonly mentioned, were potential interactions either with colleagues from other sectors (e.g. WASH or Camp Management), or participation in national Cash coordination forums.

5. SCALE OF POTENTIAL SHELTER OPTIONS

The fifth influence on decision-making, was the scale of different shelter and settlement options which shelter practitioners thought could be considered, in their decisions about cash assistance. Cash assistance was often considered for household level interventions, but less so for settlement level programming. The examples shared were predominantly of shelter assistance given to individual households. Despite there being examples in case studies from the *Shelter Projects Shelter and Cash: 16 Case Studies booklet*⁵ of approaches of cash assistance to ‘solidarity’ or multi-household groupings, little about these types of interventions were highlighted in the interviews. Similarly, few examples were given for the use of cash assistance at the settlements level, for instance for site improvement in camps or collective centres, or for community infrastructure projects. One possible implication here, is that whilst relatively modest amounts of cash are indeed becoming more accepted as a modality for support to individual households, the inevitably larger amounts necessary for site planning improvements, either in total for the programme or for each individual site-improvement task, means that cash is less likely to be considered at the settlements level. community infrastructure projects. One possible implication here, is that whilst relatively modest amounts of cash are indeed becoming more accepted as a modality



A man receiving cash assistance for shelter repairs after Typhoon Bopha counts his money before buying construction materials at a local hardware store in the Philippines.

for support to individual households, the inevitably larger amounts necessary for site planning improvements, either in total for the programme or for each individual site-improvement task, means that cash is less likely to be considered at the settlements level.

CONCLUSION

This article has provided an initial framework which highlights the discussions and information analysis necessary for the decision to choose cash assistance, as a series of pointers for interpreting decision-making criteria at the field level. In all cases, the question of whether responsible shelter programming could still be provided was perhaps the greatest concern beyond all others. The presence of multi-purpose cash programmes was seen as providing flexibility in short-term first-phase shelter responses, but only where resources for complementary, more shelter-specific support programming are included for the longer term, and with resulting higher risks for shelter quality. Sustainability of programming was highlighted as a particular type of influence – one which considered the risk to future shelter outcomes just as much as any current situation on the ground.

A range of actors were described as being influential in the decision-making, generally with more influence ascribed for local communities and local authorities, and less for colleagues working in other humanitarian sectors. For the range of shelter options which could be considered for cash assistance, there may be greater potential to explore cash support beyond support for single households. The identification of these influences on the cash and shelter decision-making is intended to support further efforts to increase the evidence base for shelter practitioners in the future. This evidence can inform their capacity for market analysis and risk analysis, and guide case studies and other sectoral resources analysing the increasing number of programmes where cash assistance.

⁵ See: Afghanistan 2012, Pakistan 2010.

CONSTRUCTIVE AMBIGUITY: SUPPORTING RECOVERY FROM HUMANITARIAN CRISES

By Lizzie Babister, Aaron Opdyke, Arvin Hadlos, Charles Parrack, Bill Flinn

INTRODUCTION

For communities affected by crises, their experience of recovery is a continuous journey and an ongoing process, but for the diverse actors supporting them, recovery from humanitarian crises can be understood in many ways. Humanitarian agencies, government and donors often have overlapping, but different, perspectives on recovery. These variations in understanding mean that the space for supporting recovery is not often given, but needs to be negotiated. This study explores how this negotiation takes between humanitarian shelter practitioners and other key stakeholders such as donors and governments, using the term 'constructive ambiguity', which has emerged from this research, to explain these approaches. Constructive ambiguity describes the way practitioners are finding a middle ground that key stakeholders can support, while taking into account wider limitations which can not necessarily be immediately addressed.

Stephenson calls upon humanitarian agencies to *"reflect on how they understand and define recovery, as this affects the objectives they set, the design of their programmes and their evaluation of results"*¹. This study begins by considering more widely how recovery has been understood by humanitarian and development actors, to reflect on how humanitarian practitioners might approach their own role and objectives in recovery. The second half of this article presents a collection of practitioner experiences highlighting how they have used constructive ambiguity to manage the challenges and opportunities of supporting households to move forward with their recovery.

1 Stephenson, M. (2018) 'Chapter 5: Transition to Recovery' in 'The State of Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements', Global Shelter Cluster, Geneva. [The State of Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements 2018-CHAPTER 5.pdf](https://www.sheltercluster.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/State%20of%20Humanitarian%20Shelter%20and%20Settlements%202018-CHAPTER%205.pdf) ([sheltercluster.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com](https://www.sheltercluster.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/State%20of%20Humanitarian%20Shelter%20and%20Settlements%202018-CHAPTER%205.pdf)) visited 31.05.23



A transitional shelter built with emergency funds, considered by the household to be their permanent home.

METHODOLOGY

This article draws on the early findings of a wider study commissioned by the Global Shelter Cluster following a consultation to establish research priorities. The wider study takes the top priority of approaches to longer-term recovery and focuses on the connections and barriers between providing relief and supporting the recovery of shelter and settlements in humanitarian crises. An initial review of academic and grey literature was conducted, followed by semi-structured interviews. The main inclusion criteria for participants were those with field experience involving the transition from providing relief to supporting household recovery, from a range of geographical and crisis contexts.

DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS, DIVERSE OBJECTIVES

For those who support communities recovering from crises, their perspectives on the meaning of success can differ. This is particularly the case for stakeholders who place boundaries (such as mandates, teams, or budget lines) around their humanitarian or development work. 'Recovery' as an overarching term has become useful to encompass a range of more specific ideas, such as rehabilitation, reconstruction, resilience, peacebuilding, sustainability, and durable solutions which can fall across these boundaries. In humanitarian settings, some of these terms have taken on sensitive associations when the objectives of different stakeholders do not necessarily align (for instance terms associated with construction and permanent buildings). The objectives of different stakeholders may be influenced by the length of time they plan to be involved in the humanitarian crisis, and how they prioritise communities, for instance, by vulnerability, by location or political affiliation. This results in organisations and institutions working together with a range of perspectives on whose recovery should be prioritised, who should support, for how long and what can be achieved. The following section describes the evolution of frameworks to support recovery from humanitarian crises which have attempted to bring together these diverse perspectives and objectives.

AN EVOLUTION OF RECOVERY FRAMEWORKS

Initially, recovery was most often understood as a linear process, and described by phases which followed an initial emergency response². Supporting recovery through bridging from short-term relief to longer-term outcomes

2 Quarantelli, E. L. (1982) 'Sheltering and housing after major community disasters: case studies and general observations' University of Delaware Disaster Research Center. [Sheltering And Housing After Major Community Disasters: Case Studies And General Observations \(udel.edu\)](https://www.drc.edu/research/publications/sheltering-and-housing-after-major-community-disasters-case-studies-and-general-observations) visited 31.05.23

supported by development actors has roots in the Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) movement that emerged in the 1980s³. Later, the Humanitarian Reform process identified that recovery repeatedly fell between organisational boundaries of humanitarian assistance and longer-term development; between emergency relief and durable solutions, but with the expectation that humanitarian agencies would “facilitate transitions from emergency to recovery”⁴.

Recognising that the lived experience of affected communities does not fit neatly into humanitarian or development boundaries, Corsellis and Vitale’s ‘transitional shelter’ approach provided shelter practitioners an interim outcome between emergency shelter and permanent reconstruction or resettlement⁵. This approach was particularly valuable in conflict contexts where a linear journey towards recovery rarely occurs. It acknowledged the reality of the time lag between the type of support offered by key stakeholders, where “reconstruction takes usually between two and five years, but that a tent only lasts for around one year”⁶, causing households to remain in tents for an inappropriate period of time. The South Asian Tsunami of 2004 also contributed useful evidence showing how recovery might be supported, acknowledging that there are interim outcomes between short-term and long-term recovery⁷. In other words, recovery involves a series of outcomes, some of which can be achieved quickly, and other outcomes will take longer.

Initially the endpoint of recovery was understood as a return to normal for affected communities, while it is now recognised that recovery should connect with a ‘new normal’, moving beyond comparisons to pre-disaster conditions. Following the South Asian Tsunami, the “build back better” (BBB) approach, formalised by the United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, became a priority of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030⁸. This approach

aligned the development concern for reducing risk, and increasing resilience, with the humanitarian concern for alleviating suffering, in that “Recovery offers the opportunity to address the underlying risk factors from multiple hazards and ‘build back better’”⁹. Crucially, BBB, and later ‘Build Back Safer’¹⁰, provided a platform for humanitarian actors to not only plan ahead but to overlap their concerns with development actors “by integrating relief and development through long-term planning and disaster risk reduction”¹¹.

A further evolution in understanding is represented by ‘early recovery’, which acknowledges recovery as a series of overlapping processes, some of which must start early because they have a longer trajectory:

*“Early recovery is a multidimensional process of recovery that begins in a humanitarian setting. It is guided by development principles that seek to build on humanitarian programmes and catalyze sustainable development opportunities”*¹².

In 2013 the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) took the step to request all clusters integrate early recovery into their operations. Much of the discourse on early recovery at this time centred on preparing the ground for an effective ‘exit strategy’ for humanitarian actors and the expanded development of guidelines on ‘durable solutions’¹³ by establishing the base on which nationally-led development can occur after a crisis¹⁴.

More recently, a growing theme has been to unify and connect recovery with the sustainable development agenda¹⁵. This can be seen in the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction’s current definition of recovery as:

*“the restoring or improving of livelihoods and health, as well as economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets, systems and activities, of a disaster-affected community or society, aligning with the principles of sustainable development and “build back better”, to avoid or reduce future disaster risk”*¹⁶.

3 Mosel, I. and Levine, S ‘Remaking the case for linking relief, rehabilitation and development’, ODI, London. [Remaking the case for linking relief, rehabilitation and development | ODI: Think change](#) visited 31.05.23

4 Adinolfi C, Bassiouni DS, Lauritzen HF, Williams HR (2005) Humanitarian Response Review. United Nations, New York and Geneva. [Humanitarian Response Review 2005 \(interagencystandingcommittee.org\)](#) visited 31.05.23

5 Corsellis, T. and Vitale, A. (2005) ‘Transitional Settlement: Displaced Populations’, Oxfam, Oxford. [Transitional Settlement, Displaced Populations - Oxfam Policy & Practice](#) visited 31.05.23

6 Collins, S. Corsellis, T. and Vitale, A. (2010) ‘Case Study 5 Transitional Shelter: Understanding shelter from the emergency through reconstruction and beyond’, ALNAP, ODI, London. [Transitional shelter: understanding shelter from the emergency through reconstruction and beyond - ALNAP Innovation Case Study no. 5 | ALNAP](#) visited 31.05.05

7 Ingram, J. C., Franco, G. Rio, C. and Khazai, B. (2006) ‘Post-disaster recovery dilemmas: challenges in balancing short-term and long-term needs for vulnerability reduction’ *Environmental Science & Policy*, 9 (7–8): 607–613. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2006.07.006> visited 31.05.05

8 Fernandez and Ahmed (2019) “Build back better” approach to disaster recovery: Research trends since 2006’ *Progress in Disaster Science*. “Build back better” approach to disaster recovery: Research trends since 2006 - [ScienceDirect](#) visited 31.05.23

9 levers, J., & Bhatia, S. (2011). ‘Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction – Recovery as a catalyst for reducing risk’ International Recovery Platform, ISDR. [levers_&_Bhatia_2011.pdf](#) (preventionweb.net) visited 31.05.23

10 Flinn, B. and Morel, L. (2017) ‘The Case for Self-Recovery’ *Forced Migration Review*, Oxford. [The case for self-recovery | Forced Migration Review \(fmreview.org\)](#) visited 25.05.23

11 Kennedy, J. Ashmore, J. Babister, E. and Kelman, I. (2008) ‘The meaning of “build back better”: Evidence From post-tsunami Aceh and Sri Lanka’, *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 16(1), 24–36. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5973.2008.00529.x> visited 31.05.05

12 CWGER (2008) Guidance note on Early Recovery. United Nations Development Programme, Geneva. [Guidance Note on Early Recovery CWGER April 2008 | United Nations Development Programme \(undp.org\)](#) visited 31.05.23

13 Blay, C. Crozet, S. (2017) ‘Durable Solutions in Practice’ Global Cluster for Early Recovery, Geneva. [durable_solutions_in_practice_-_handbook_sept_2017.pdf](#) visited 31.05.05

14 UNDP (2012) UNDP in Early Recovery, UNDP. [UNDP in Early Recovery | United Nations Development Programme](#) visited 31.05.05

15 Take Action for the Sustainable Development Goals - United Nations Sustainable Development visited 26.04.23

16 [Recovery | UNDRR](#) visited 31.05.05

This is however increasingly contested in the context of protracted crises where normality and extended periods of displacement come with unique challenges¹⁷. In protracted crises, the multidimensional nature of recovery has become recognised through Humanitarian, Development, and Peacebuilding Nexus (HDPN) which acknowledges that simultaneous rather than sequential involvement of different stakeholders is required:

*“... strengthening the coherence between humanitarian, development and peace efforts, ... effectively reducing people’s needs, risks and vulnerabilities, supporting prevention efforts and thus, shifting from delivering humanitarian assistance to ending need”.*¹⁸

The HDPN approach has enabled notable gains to operationalise the meaning of recovery for conflict settings – connecting peacebuilding, stabilisation, state-building, and the ‘durable solutions’ of voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement.¹⁹

For shelter practitioners, a further extension to understanding recovery has emerged from the traditions of participation and people centred housing²⁰. The notion of ‘self-recovery’ acknowledges that the majority of those affected by crises shelter and settle themselves on their own without external support²¹. The self-recovery approach encourages practitioners to use household level recovery priorities as a starting point, in contrast to the humanitarian or developmental boundaries organisations and institution place around their support.

WHY DID CONSTRUCTIVE AMBIGUITY EMERGE?

Despite the evolution of recovery policies and approaches, these have not always translated smoothly into practice for the recovery of shelter and settlements. The ways in which organisations, institutions and governments organise their

resources and legislation have not necessarily yet evolved to suit a complex multi-dimensional, multi-actor process. For instance, international funding instruments²² and existing national building codes may not serve the blend of humanitarian and development approaches required in a crisis. In addition, there are sometimes few incentives for governments and host communities to support the recovery of communities who become displaced without warning, for example refugees from a new conflict or rural IDPs displaced into urban areas. Constructive ambiguity then becomes a necessary approach to secure appropriate and ongoing support by finding a middle ground. The preceding section documented the recurring issue of addressing recovery in a coordinated way, and constructive ambiguity is one way practitioners have managed this. The following section is informed by primary data from key informant interviews with shelter practitioners and uses examples to explain how shelter practitioners have successfully employed this approach.

CONSTRUCTIVE AMBIGUITY IN PRACTICE

This research found that constructive ambiguity has been used in a range of crises over many years, but without being identified as a specific approach. This section identifies several different types of constructive ambiguity which have successfully moved support forward from relief to recovery. These include carefully choosing terminology, funding channels, materials, or legislation.

One way shelter practitioners have used constructive ambiguity to make space for support to recovery is to focus on terminology which highlights humanitarian needs, and is acceptable to all parties. At a certain point in time after the onset or peak of a crisis, the life-saving relief provided begins to fail to alleviate suffering. In Syria, although IDP families still live in tents, construction using concrete in the process of sheltering IDPs was initially restricted by national authorities. Humanitarian agencies addressed this by advocating for ‘dignified shelter’ rather than using terminology related to recovery or permanence²³. By renaming the desired outcome as ‘dignified shelter’, and away from specific materials with sensitive associations, humanitarian agencies were able to support shelter recovery with more substantial options beyond tents. Another example of using specific humanitarian terminology was shared by a practitioner working in Lebanon, where one donor provided ‘emergency’ funds on an annual basis, but no funding for longer-term activities. As humanitarian agencies worked with the same communities and local authorities year after year, the communities began to recover and their needs

17 Devictor, X. and Q.-T. Do. (2016) ‘How Many Years Have Refugees Been in Exile?’ Population Movement and Development, Volume 43, Issue 2 <https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12061>

18 The DAC Recommendation on the OECD Legal Instruments Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus [643.en.pdf \(oecd.org\)](https://www.oecd.org/hdpn/643.en.pdf) visited 25.05.23

19 UNHCR (2011) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Resettlement Handbook, UNHCR. [UNHCR Resettlement Handbook \(complete publication\) | UNHCR](https://www.unhcr.org/refugees-handbook/) visited 31.05.05

20 For example: M, Lyons. and T, Schilderman. (Eds.) (2010) ‘Building Back Better: Delivering people-centred housing’, Practical Action, London South Bank University, and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. [Building Back Better: Delivering people-centred housing reconstruction at scale - World | ReliefWeb](https://www.betterbuilding.org/) visited 25.05.23

21 Flinn, B. Schofield. H and Morel. L (2017) ‘The Case for Self Recovery’, Forced Migration Review, Oxford. [download_file \(ox.ac.uk\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/forced-migration-review) visited on 31.05.23

Parrack, C. Flinn, B. and Passey, M. (2014) (PDF) [Getting the Message Across for Safer Self-Recovery in Post-Disaster Shelter \(researchgate.net\)](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260111111) visited on 31.05.23

Twigg et al (2017) ‘Self Recovery from disasters: an interdisciplinary perspective’ Working Paper 523. ODI, London. (PDF) [Self-recovery from disasters: an interdisciplinary perspective \(researchgate.net\)](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315111111) visited on 31.05.23

22 See also Babister (2022) ‘Overseas Development Aid for Humanitarian Crises: Implications for the Recovery of Shelter and Settlements’, Open University, Open Research Online. [Overseas Development Aid for Humanitarian Crises: Implications for the Recovery of Shelter and Settlements - Open Research Online](https://www.openresearchonline.ac.uk/overseas-development-aid-for-humanitarian-crises-implications-for-the-recovery-of-shelter-and-settlements/) visited 25.05.23

23 Dignified and Safer Living Conditions for IDPs in Protracted Crises: North West Syria, Global Shelter Cluster: [Dignified and Safer Living Conditions for IDPs in Protracted Crises: North West Syria | Shelter Cluster](https://www.globalsheltercluster.org/dignified-and-safer-living-conditions-for-idps-in-protracted-crises-north-west-syria/) visited 25.05.23

evolved. The humanitarian agency worked with the donor to make sure the terminology in their reports fulfilled the donor's humanitarian requirements, and the donor allowed programming flexibility in the knowledge that no other funds were available.

In other situations, it is the source of resources which needs to change, rather than just the terminology. For instance, in the Central African Republic, one practitioner found that donors would not fund construction from their humanitarian budgets, yet would use their development budgets to fund construction for the same affected communities. Similarly in Burkina Faso, certain donors would fund durable shelter solutions from their long-term budgets. For the humanitarian agencies in these locations, it was a case of liaising with several different donor teams and knowing how to describe the same activities in different ways to secure resources.

A further type of restriction is legislation in the form of building legislation or tenure legislation. In these cases, practitioners may need to adapt the shelter design or simply know the right type of legislation to apply. An example of changing the shelter design occurred after Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 in the Philippines. The national government created 'no-build' zones in coastal location, which restricted construction of shelters to using only lightweight materials. Some humanitarian agencies negotiated with local governments to use pre-cast concrete only in the pillar foundations, because these could be removed, so that more resilient shelters could be constructed while a sustainable relocation process could be planned. After the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, humanitarian agencies applied specific tenure legislation to support households with their next step of recovery. Land tenure issues made reconstruction difficult for those without formal tenure documentation. Some agencies were able to support families to register their transitional shelters as temporary rather than permanent construction, similar to a 'usufruct'²⁴ agreement, to allow for occupancy while formal tenure discussions continued. A further example where the choice of materials allowed for flexibility followed the Padang earthquake in 2008, Indonesia. Donors restricted their emergency funds to the construction of transitional shelters, even though local materials and labour were available

for permanent construction. Humanitarian agencies used these emergency funds to provide cash assistance for construction with a restricted pallet of materials. Using less masonry and more timber allowed households to qualify for the funds. The households, however, openly stated that they considered the houses to be their permanent homes, not transitional, and an indicator of their recovery.

The examples above demonstrate that effective constructive ambiguity can take many forms, but the common objective is discovering what is acceptable to key stakeholders. Practitioners can use terminology to advocate for recovery, or they can negotiate with donors in a range of ways to secure funds for recovery. Where legislation is a barrier, they can negotiate which materials are used or find the key pieces of legislation which enable recovery to take place.

CONCLUSION

As recovery policy evolves to advocate for a more complex multi-dimensional, multi-actor understanding, in practice, shelter practitioners may need skills to think outside the box and collaborate with a range of different actors to negotiate the space for recovery. The examples of 'constructive ambiguity' above demonstrate two key points. First, they provide insights into how shelter practitioners can successfully support the recovery of households from humanitarian crises, despite barriers created by different understandings of the process and outcomes of recovery. Second, they highlight the opportunities to advocate for more connection between the promotion of recovery processes and outcomes in policy and the methods by which this can be achieved on the ground. When faced with the transition between providing relief and supporting the recovery of shelter and settlements in humanitarian crises, practitioners can assess whether the understanding of recovery going forward is shared among stakeholders. By reviewing how the process and outcomes are understood, some shared middle ground may be established. For instance, questions to ask may include what different stakeholders expect to achieve and by when, who is expected to be involved in the process and how, and whether joint assessment and analysis might be possible. By starting to ask these questions it may become clearer to practitioners how to secure resources for recovery and create a platform to advocate for a smooth transition.

24 See here for a definition: [Usufruct | law | Britannica](#) visited 25.05.23



A range of masonry shelters in Northwest Syria.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES TO ADEQUATE HOUSING FOR VENEZUELAN REFUGEES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

AN EXAMINATION OF RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR STRENGTHENING HLP AND TENURE SECURITY

By Melina Holder



Venezuelan migrants crossing the border in Pacaraima, a city in northern Brazil that lies just across the border from Venezuela and is the main entry point into Brazil for thousands of migrants.



Katuska Fernandez, 31, six months pregnant, getting prenatal consultation in a small open school in Sakao Motá, an indigenous remote border village hosting Brazilians and Venezuelans in northern Brazil.

INTRODUCTION

Emergency rental assistance has emerged as an opportunity to support HLP rights and tenure security for displaced persons in urban areas, especially as most people in urban areas engage in rental markets. In Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), rental assistance in the form of cash for rent has become a major method for supporting access to adequate housing for refugees in response to the Venezuelan displacement crisis. However, challenges such as social barriers and economic constraints pose risks to tenure security despite rental payment support. Overall, rental assistance can be critical to delivering HLP and tenure security support for migrants, refugees and IDPs in urban areas, but additional efforts are needed to ensure that it is effective in providing long-term solutions.

The context of urban displacement in Perú was analyzed to identify the primary challenges faced by migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers from Venezuela in accessing adequate housing through rental assistance and the greatest needs in rental assistance programming to support long-term tenure security. Perú hosts the second-most (1.49 million) Venezuelan refugees and migrants in LAC¹ and is home to the third-largest city in Latin America, Lima, where approximately 80% of Venezuelan migrants and refugees have settled². Therefore, Perú provides a complex context of urban displacement which highlights the need for long-term HLP and tenure security strategies that can have greater implications for HLP programming in Latin America.

1 USAID. (2021). *Venezuela Migration Crisis Peru: Second Largest Destination for Venezuelan Migrants*.

2 Ibid.

BACKGROUND

The right to adequate housing is a fundamental human right that is enshrined in international human rights law³. It ensures that every person has the right to live somewhere with security, peace, and dignity, and to be protected against forced evictions⁴. Housing, land, and property (HLP) rights are crucial for protecting the human right to adequate housing and ensuring that people can establish themselves in a self-determined location without fear of displacement.

Security of tenure is a critical condition for housing to be considered "adequate," and it is essential for a person's ability to access social services⁵. Displacement can significantly impact HLP rights and tenure security of individuals, resulting in forced eviction, loss of property, social support networks, and limited access to essential services and resources.

Previously, HLP rights in the humanitarian context have focused on securing land or buildings for emergency camps and shelters, facilitating restitution for internally displaced persons (IDPs) back to their property, or resettling persons to new land if return is not possible. However, as urbanization, climate change, conflict, and economic hardship lead to prolonged displacement, humanitarian responses to HLP and tenure security must focus on long-term solutions

3 UN Habitat. (2000). *The Right to Adequate Housing – Factsheet 21*. P. 3-27

4 International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2018). *Guidance Note: Integrating Housing, Land, and Property Issues into Key Humanitarian, Transitional and Developing Planning Processes*. P. 1-15.

5 Payne, Geoffrey, Lasserre, Alain. (2012). *Holding on: Security of Tenure – Types, Policies, Practices and Challenges*. P. 10-25.

for urban integration, while ensuring that settled communities have the capacity to welcome increasing numbers of migrants and refugees.

Urban areas pose particularly difficult challenges for migrants, refugees, and IDPs in accessing adequate housing due to higher living costs, xenophobia, and difficulties in acquiring legal documentation to safeguard their rights as tenants. In addition, the coexistence of informal and formal housing markets and shortages of housing and services in urban areas create further challenges for these populations⁶

METHODOLOGY

The research took place over a six-week period in Lima, Perú, supported by the Global Shelter Cluster. Site visits and interviews were conducted in two regions: central Peru, Lima, and the Amazon region of Madre de Dios on the borders of Brazil and Bolivia. Field visits were coordinated with support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The research design focused on qualitative data collected from semi-structured field interviews and desk research, including case study research on CCCM and shelter projects with HLP and tenure security components, disability inclusion, settlements approach, eviction response and mitigation case studies, gender mainstreaming in HLP programming, and case studies on addressing GBV in shelter and CCCM projects.

Interviews were conducted with country offices and partners implementing rental assistance programs in LAC to understand skills, capacities, and gaps in addressing HLP and tenure security through rental assistance for different populations. The field interviews with Venezuelan migrants and refugees focused on two groups: beneficiaries of Cáritas' rental assistance project in Lima and those who have not received rental assistance in Madre de Dios. A list of questions guided the interview discussions informed by discussions with staff from Cáritas in Lima working on an ongoing rental assistance project, contextual information provided by operational Perú teams and data from the R4V Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela. The questions focused on understanding the greatest challenges faced by Venezuelan migrants and refugees in accessing a place to rent, types of rental agreements and level of tenure security. Overall, the qualitative data collected from case study research and practitioner interviews were analyzed to draw out key takeaways and recommendations.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHALLENGES TO TENURE SECURITY FACED BY VENEZUELAN MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES?

SOCIAL BARRIERS

Discrimination, particularly targeting pregnant women and individuals with children, posed a significant obstacle in securing appropriate rental accommodations. This issue

issue had a disproportionate impact on women, who were more likely to be accompanied by children. Additionally, xenophobia and conflicts between renters and landlords often resulted in forced eviction or harassment to the extent that renters would be forced to leave without any recourse.

The limited availability of legal or customary mechanisms for resolving disputes, coupled with a lack of awareness regarding existing legal and social support, exacerbated the issue. Limited childcare options or social support for migrants and refugees in shelters also limited people's ability to leave the shelter to look for work and housing.

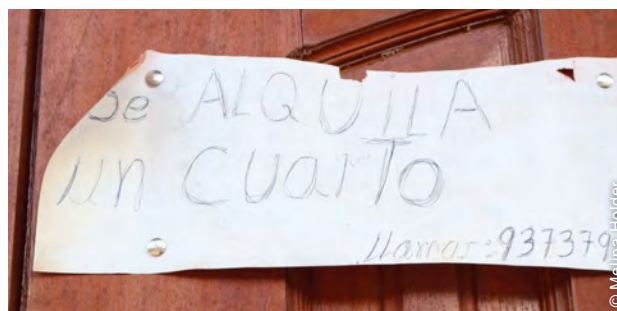
Lack of awareness building about renters' rights and landlord responsibilities also served as a social barrier to tenure security. This was especially prevalent in the context of disability inclusion. There were some cases where a person with disabilities were unaware of their rights to request for housing modifications or support that met their requirements, or where to access other protection, social or livelihood support.

ECONOMIC BARRIERS

The cost of living in Lima and Madre de Dios presented a significant challenge for migrants and refugees to afford their rent. Rental payments often were not provided long enough for rental assistance recipients to secure their economic position enough to continue their rental payments. In Madre de Dios especially, there were limited job opportunities that would provide enough income to cover the cost of rent in the area. Further, the options most available to women were often in environments where there was increased threat of exploitation.

RENTAL PRACTICES

The common practice of verbal rental agreements posed challenges for both renters and landlords, lacking assurances and protections in case of disputes or forced evictions. There were cases where landlords would cut off essential services despite rent being paid, leaving renters with limited options: staying without services or becoming displaced once again. Even when documented rental agreements were used, they did not always have sufficient terms and conditions to offer comprehensive protection. Further, legal or formal pathways for enforcing rental agreements and systems to resolve rental violations were often unclear and inaccessible.



An example of rental advertisement in Madre de Dios, Perú (example of informality of rental situation)

6 University of Oxford. (2010). *Adapting to Urban Displacement. Forced Migration Review*. P.7

WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHALLENGES TO TENURE SECURITY SUPPORT IN RENTAL ASSISTANCE?

FUNDING & CAPACITY CHALLENGES

Due to time, budget and capacity constraints, there was limited ability to monitor rental assistance recipients' post-assistance to evaluate if assistance was provided long enough to improve the livelihood situation of the recipient and maintain tenure security, or what factors continued to pose challenges. Additionally, rental assistance was only provided for a maximum of three months due to funding constraints.

INFORMATIONAL CHALLENGES

Performing comprehensive independent due diligence processes to verify information provided by rental assistance recipients and landlords was a challenge to ensuring all needs of the renters were met and conditions were suitable to proceed with assistance. For example, due to the high rates of discrimination towards people with children, some families would say they had fewer children out of fear of becoming ineligible for assistance. Additionally, landlords sometimes provided inaccurate information about their property ownership or the property's adherence to habitability requirements.

Other informational challenges, such as establishing reliable methods of communication between rental assistance project managers and recipients hindered the monitoring of rental payments and the resolution of disputes or response to evictions. Additionally, inadequate information on procedures and timing of rental payments occasionally made it difficult for renters to explain the process to prospective landlords, leading to hesitancy in renting.

SOCIAL CHALLENGES

Social barriers, such as discrimination and xenophobia often prevented landlords from renting to rental assistance recipients despite the fact that payments were made directly to the landlords. In some cases, renters were still at risk of eviction and harassment even after rental payments were made.

Additionally, limited awareness about the support requirements for different populations of persons with disabilities

occasionally impacted rental assistance project managers' ability to ensure persons with disabilities who receive rental assistance have adequate support and resources to accessible housing, project information, and legal, communication or other social support.

WHAT DO RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROJECTS NEED TO SUPPORT TENURE SECURITY?

ACTIONS TO ADDRESS SOCIAL, RENTING & ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Community sensitization, either through information campaigns or direct engagement with landlords, could help ease tensions between renters and landlords. It is important to engage directly with landlords and property owners to understand their hesitation and provide the necessary

projects, use of documented rental agreements, rights and responsibilities of renters and landlords, available mechanisms for resolving disputes and provision of rental agreement templates.

Social support network mapping could also assist in addressing social barriers. This should focus on identifying relevant organizations and individuals that can provide assistance in addressing HLP concerns, childcare and legal support, organizations that specialize in support for persons with disabilities, such as Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), or other social services. The support network is also a valuable tool for collecting information about the tenure security context, addressing disputes and providing referrals for other available assistance, such as job support services or other programs to help renters continue payments post-assistance.

To ensure rental assistance projects are meeting the needs of all rental assistance recipients, a disability inclusive that is rooted in the principles established by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including respect for dignity; participation and inclusion; non-discrimination and equality of opportunity; and equality between men, amongst others⁷. Further, a case management approach that integrates housing and tenure security support with income generation, legal support, protection and support for caregivers or family members should be included in rental assistance programming when applicable. Assessments that identify persons with disabilities and their needs should employ recognized data collection methodologies, such as the Washington Group Questionnaire Sets⁸.

COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION GATHERING

Conducting HLP and tenure security assessments, either independently or in coordination with the overall rental market assessment, that evaluates the level of tenure



An image of Iñapari, Perú, one of the most porous borders between Brazil and Perú where many migrants cross and there is only one operating service provider.

7 IASC. Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action. P.7. https://reliefweb.int/attachments/ebc305c6-9252-3412-8ddd-2695ece185af/iasc_guidelines_on_the_inclusion_of_persons_with_disabilities_in_humanitarian_action_2019.pdf

8 Washington Group on Disability Statistics. (N.D.) Washington Group Questionnaire Set. <https://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/question-sets>

security that an individual or community has in their land, property, or in this case, rental accommodation could help rental assistance projects better understand the HLP and tenure security context, proactively address tenure security barriers and plan for needed awareness-building, referrals and exit strategies. HLP due diligence focused on independently verifying the landlord's right to rent out the property, and any information provided by renters and landlords that has the potential to weaken the renter's security of tenure is also needed to ensure project managers are accounting for all variables that could impact tenure security.

EXIT PLANNING

Although rental assistance projects can enhance tenure security during the period of assistance, it is crucial to plan from the beginning of the project how renters will be able to continue their rental payments and maintain or improve their tenure security. This could include identifying and linking renters to complementary income generation or development sector programs, appropriate job-skills trainings, or local organizations already working with government-funded livelihood programs. Monitoring programming is also needed to understand the impact rental assistance programs had on beneficiary tenure security and ability to improve living conditions.

Rental assistance projects provide an opportunity to deliver tenure security and HLP support in the context of urban displacement by providing targeted resources to migrants,

refugees and IDPs to help secure housing and acquire the stability to plan next steps. Rental assistance, when paired with awareness-building, can also play an important role in community integration and sensitization towards renting to migrant and refugee populations.

To effectively scale long-term HLP and tenure security support and minimize the risk of eviction and secondary displacement, rental assistance projects need to incorporate exit planning and programming that tackles key obstacles to tenure security from the beginning of the project. This includes addressing social and financial barriers, promoting renting awareness, tailoring support for different vulnerable populations, and ensuring independent verification of information relevant to HLP rights. Identifying opportunities to leverage existing support and resources, such as through coordinating with development-sector programs or organizations working with municipal government-funded could help overcome barriers with funding and emergency timelines.

Scaling such an approach could have significant implications for addressing urban displacement in Perú and serve as an example for HLP programming in other LAC countries. Given the magnitude of the Venezuelan refugee crisis and the challenges faced by Venezuelan refugees in realizing their right to adequate housing, implementing effective rental assistance programs can play a crucial role in providing HLP and tenure security support for displaced populations throughout the region.



Venezuelan migrants line up for migration procedures in the Brazilian city of Pacaraima, close to the borders of Venezuela.

DR. TEDDY BOEN AND FERROCEMENT SEISMIC RETROFITS

By Arwin Soelaksono and Dave Hodgkin

This article is written to honour the memory of Dr. Teddy Boen, (1934-2023) an engineer who worked for decades to improve the safety of dwellings in Indonesia.

In 1962 Dr. Boen was the first Indonesian engineer to be sent by the Indonesian government to Japan, specifically to study earthquake engineering. From 1964 onwards he published numerous papers, manuals and guidelines related to earthquake-resistant designs, empowering communities to retrofit and upgrade houses to reduce the risks from earthquakes, as well as working tirelessly to support communities to rebuild more safely after earthquakes.

Dr Boen was responsible for the development and introduction of the first formal earthquake engineering syllabus in Indonesia at the University of Indonesia and Trisakti University back in 1967, and personally lectured on earthquake-resistant design to countless civil engineering students across Indonesia. Dr. Boen served as the Director of the International Association for Earthquake Engineering (IAEE) from 1978-1986 and then continued on as the Indonesian national delegate to the IAEE through to 1992. In 2022, a year before his passing at the age of 89, DR Boen became one of only four recipients of the ACECC Asian Civil Engineering Achievement Award for his “outstanding & remarkable contribution to the advancement of civil engineering & development in Asia”, in recognition to his lifelong career.

The following article highlights the use of Ferrocement reinforcement, which was one of the many technical solutions promoted by Dr Boen for improving the earthquake resilience of housing in Indonesia.

FERROCEMENT RETROFITTING AS AN AFFORDABLE MEASURE TO STRENGTHEN HOUSES IN THE PREPAREDNESS AND RECOVERY CONTEXT

There were three basic principles that Dr. Teddy Boen taught his students about retrofitting with ferrocement.

1. Civil engineering, including earthquake engineering, is a matter of respecting and following the natural flow of loads. This is the same whether these are static vertical loads or dynamic load caused by wind or an earthquake. Structures might fully or partially collapse if the structural elements cannot carry the loads.
2. People should implement civil engineering principles by following building codes. These do not need an engineering degree. If builders are trained to read the drawings, to fix rebar correctly and work with the proper admixture, they can create strong structures. For those civil engineers who produce the building

codes, a combination of calculation and laboratory tests are required to validate calculations.

3. Retrofitting to improve seismic performance needs to be simple and economical. Whenever possible it should be implemented using affordable building materials easily found in local markets and hardware stores. Dr. Boen calculated that retrofitting an existing building for seismic resilience commonly costs only around 30% of the cost of building a new structure.

Dr. Boen recognised that to achieve such a societal change to building practices a combination of regulatory work, and engagement on supply and demand is required.

On the regulatory side you need to work with governments and authorities to ensure that it is within the building codes.

On the supply side you need to work with the building trades to ensure that the industry has the capacity to build using the approach.

On the demand side you need to work with vulnerable communities to ensure that they are their aware about this simple and affordable technique. You also need to encourage the understanding of the risks that they face and the importance of investment in risk reduction.

Many emerging nations throughout the world face the problem that a significant portion of the country's housing stock was built prior to the enforcement of appropriate seismic building codes and is therefore inadequate for the seismic risks they are likely to face. This leaves many communities highly vulnerable and in need of urgent support to reduce risk. Simply waiting for disaster to strike will result in unnecessary loss of life and much higher cost in recovery and reconstruction.

Retrofit solutions such as the ferrocement system developed by Dr Teddy Boen offer a practical and affordable solution for development agencies to assist local governments and communities to be better prepared.



FERROCEMENT RETROFITTING IS SAFE, ACHIEVABLE, AND AFFORDABLE

Dr. Boen was the first engineer in Indonesia to research and document retrofitting through the use of ferrocement for seismic resilience. The simplest system developed used a combination of chicken wire, steel rods, common fastenings and cement render to create a 'ferrocement' layer. This layer encased the masonry walls of a building to create an integrated earthquake resilient structure. The beauty of this methodology is that it can easily applied to existing, new or repaired brick walls. It provides an effective, low-cost seismic retrofit solution. This solution can be particularly appropriate for heritage listed masonry buildings in need of seismic upgrading or post-earthquake repairs. The low cost and relative ease of the system also makes it appropriate for a wide range of simple non-engineered community masonry structures such as houses and shops.

Dr Boen extensively tested ferrocement techniques using calculation and computer analysis to identify where forces are largest, and how ferrocement can strengthens those parts. He validated these theoretical models with full-scale shake table tests. This modelling and research showed that ferrocement renders is inexpensive compared to building a new structure and is simple to apply and can be done by anyone. During many hands-on trainings with both men and women, builders and homeowners, people learnt to fix the wire mesh in the x-shaped cracks formed by seismic stresses on a wall.

Ferrocement retrofitting works well on houses with masonry walls and can be applied after disasters or as a preparedness measure. However, the technique is quite different to standard construction practice in Indonesia so requires time investment within a given community to raise awareness.

THE IDEA OF MASSIVE RETROFITTING FOR PREPAREDNESS MEASURES

The ferrocement retrofitting system developed by Teddy Boen is an appropriate and applicable technology for masonry houses in many parts of the world. Implementing this system will however need to be actively promoted both with government agencies and with local communities. Ideally implementation of this system should include additional local research and engineering as Dr. Boen conducted to ensure that it meets the requirements of local building codes and is appropriate to local seismic risk and construction techniques. Implementation in new contexts will also need to be accompanied by appropriate public information campaigns to create understanding and demand for this cost-effective retrofitting solution.

The gap between retrofitting ferrocement knowledge and public willingness for people to retrofit their houses can be significant. The most challenging part for the retrofitting of vulnerable houses is for homeowners with extremely low

incomes. For these people additional assistance and incentives may be required along with information and communications programs.

In Indonesia, more than 70 percent of houses are built without any assistance from licensed construction professionals. As a result a large proportion of the national housing stock is suspected to be highly vulnerable to earthquakes. This is also true in many other emerging nations where poor building code enforcement and a lack of training leave many households vulnerable to seismic risks.

In these contexts improving the demand/capacity for seismic retrofitting is essential and can be done by community mobilization through sensitization of earthquake risk.

A pilot programme was conducted in 2020 in Sukabumi, West Java and Banyuwangi, East Java, both in Indonesia. This programme saw a series of local-language trainings on ferrocement retrofitting using a community-based approach. These trainings were made available, not only for local builders and tradespeople but also to local

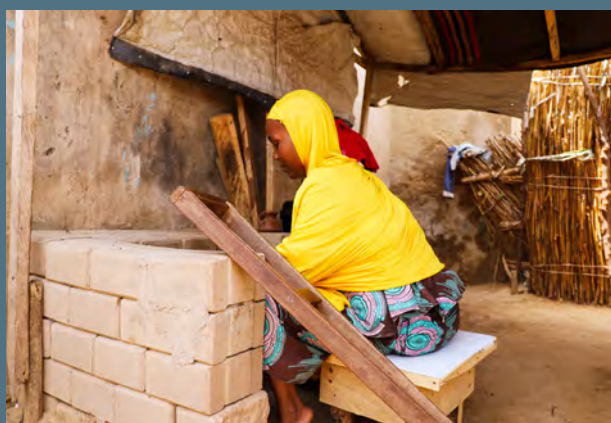
to local leaders, housewives and any other community members who could benefit from access to such training and help ensure improved resilience.

In Indonesia, Dr. Boen worked tirelessly to train local builders and volunteered to teach shelter agencies and their teams about recovery initiatives through ferrocement training. As recently as 2019 at the age of 84, Dr. Boen travelled to Palu to support the Indonesia National Shelter Cluster during the ongoing response to the 2018 Central Sulawesi earthquake. Shelter agencies were subsequently able to better convey important retrofitting messages to both the local government and the affected community.

Whilst Ferrocement is still far from standard in Indonesia, it is now accepted in building codes and the beginning of the work to ensure that people are aware of it and use it is well underway.

For Teddy Boen's publications, such as manuals, guidelines, posters, and drawings please visit the website:
teddyboen.com





In 2021 and 2022, the total number of people displaced by crises in the world continued to grow. By the end of 2021, 89.3 million people were displaced due to conflict or violence, and during 2022, 185 million people were affected by disasters. With such large-scale needs, there is also an imperative to ensure that the assistance that is delivered makes best use of often limited resources.

Spanning humanitarian responses from all over the world, this book is the eighth in a series of compilations of shelter and settlements case studies, response overviews and opinion pieces. The case studies included in this book show projects that took place in contexts of conflict, disasters and complex crises, demonstrating a wide range of approaches to shelter and settlements assistance.

The book is intended to support learning by highlighting the strengths, weaknesses and some of the lessons that can be learned from different projects, which try to maximize emergency funds to safeguard the health, security and dignity of affected people, whilst – wherever possible – supporting longer-term shelter and settlement needs and sustainable recovery.

The target audience is humanitarian managers and shelter and settlements program staff from local, national and international organizations at all levels of experience, as well as local and national government representatives involved in crisis response and recovery. Shelter Projects is also a useful resource for advocacy purposes, showcasing the work done by the sector, as well as for research and capacity-building activities.

All case studies and overviews contained in this book, as well as from all past editions, can be found online at:

www.shelterprojects.org

