STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

+ Installing solar panels, which provided an efficient and renewable energy source.
+ Distribution of coal heaters, which were suitable for indoor usage, easier to maintain and more affordable compared to other types.
+ Using local materials and labour for implementing rehabilitation activities.
+ Integration of protection and hygiene components for the communities at large.

WEAKNESSES

- Short duration of the project, which affected the quality and extent of the repairs.
- Limited budget allocated for shelter rehabilitation activities, which resulted in many households being dropped from the beneficiary list; with more funds, more vulnerable families could have been reached.
- Delays in the procurement and transport of materials across the Turkey-Syrian border.
- Dissatisfaction of most beneficiaries with the shelter repair kits, as the needs were very diverse for each house, and much greater than what could be solved by the materials provided. Also, some households felt that they did not have the skills to do the repairs, and this led the organization to change its modality.

LEARNINGS

• Necessity of conducting trainings for local labours (on carpentry and construction) to enhance the quality of shelter interventions for future programmes.
• The importance of finding local alternatives for fuel used for cooking and heating.
• The need for more comprehensive projects that include multisectoral activities, such as shelter, WASH and protection.
• Ensuring the integration of protection to improve dignity and taking into account the needs of the most vulnerable (women, elderly, children, etc.) in a culturally appropriate manner.
• The amount of kits (both repair and winterization) should be decreased in future projects, in order to increase the funding allocated to each household to cover more critical shelter needs. Following this project, the organization was also considering the use of voucher and cash-based approaches, which improve the dignity and choice of beneficiaries, on the precondition that markets are accessible and functioning. Given the unstable situation in Syria, this has proven challenging. However, the organization was piloting a voucher programme for fuel in an area where the market is working.

MATERIALS LIST

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</tbody>
</table>
**KEYWORDS:** Urban, Housing repair / retrofitting, Cash / vouchers, Advocacy / Legal, Training, Guidelines / Mass communications, Community participation

**Syrian Refugee crisis in Lebanon, 2011-ongoing**

**TOTAL PEOPLE AFFECTED**

1.04 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon  
(Source: Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview 2017)

**PROJECT LOCATIONS**

Beirut and Mount Lebanon governorates

**BENEFICIARIES**

706 households (3,751 individuals) assisted with shelter repairs (Including Lebanese and Syrian families, with a minority of Palestinian and other minorities).

2,745 households attended hygiene promotion sessions (Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian households).

35,700 individuals attended HLP awareness sessions.

**PROJECT OUTPUTS**

499 shelter upgrades  
207 shelter rehabilitations

Other outputs: 25 Focal Points and Committee Members trained; Establishment of a roster of 14 skilled workers; 1,222 man-days of construction activities.

**MATERIALS COST PER HOUSEHOLD**

Upgrades: USD 636 - Rehabilitations: USD 1,570. As per sector standards, upgrades are minor works up to USD 700 and rehabilitations are major works up to USD 1,500.

**PROJECT COST PER HOUSEHOLD**

USD 1,731 on average.

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

The organization used a holistic, neighbourhood, approach across delineated zones in dense urban areas. Shelter rehabilitations and upgrades were provided to 207 and 499 households respectively, along with improvements to water and sanitation facilities. Campaigns on hygiene promotion and housing, land and property rights were also conducted. Community-wide projects were implemented to improve service delivery, such as water and solid waste management.

**STRENGTHS**

+ Enhanced local technical skills and sense of ownership.  
+ Raised awareness about HLP rights and obligations, and improved landlord-tenant relationships.  
+ Served as a platform for information sharing between community members and municipalities.

**WEAKNESSES**

- Strategy had to be adapted due to a lack of empty units available.  
- Information flow and community participation could have been improved.  
- Recruitment of staff/labour from within the community, quality control and flexibility in specifications could have been stronger.
**CONFLICT**

For more background information on the situation and shelter response in Lebanon, see overview A.29.

Lebanon suffered from structural inefficiencies even prior to the Syrian conflict. In 2015, an estimated 87.7% of the population was urban\(^1\), and there was a significant heterogeneity between rural, urban and peri-urban areas, in terms of institutional service delivery and governance\(^2\). This was further exacerbated by the conflict in Lebanon (lasting over two decades) and the political fractionalization that brought the country to a standstill.

The influx of Syrian refugees into such context dramatically deteriorated the living conditions for both refugees and host populations. The crisis increased population density in Lebanon from 400 to 520 persons per km\(^2\), especially in urban areas, leading to urban congestion, competition over housing, increasing pressures on existing resources and tensions between host populations and refugees\(^3\). This situation was particularly constrained in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, with only a limited number of informal settlements in the area. Most refugees in Beirut and Mount Lebanon (92%) resided in rented apartments or houses, although the comparatively high cost of living meant that many refugee families were only able to afford substandard or overcrowded accommodation.

An assessment by the organization in the target areas showed that 23% of households in Beirut and 59% in Mount Lebanon lacked basic facilities and were in need of urgent rehabilitations.

**PROJECT GOAL AND TEAM STRUCTURE**

The objective of this project was to provide immediate community-driven WASH and Shelter support to the most vulnerable Syrian populations and their host communities in Beirut and Mount Lebanon.

The organization had been registered in the country since 2006 and had an established country office in Beirut, as well as a field office in Akkar, with established links with local authorities and civil society stakeholders. The team for this project included one project manager, two team leaders, nine field staff and four technical staff, in addition to support staff.

**LOCATIONS AND BENEFICIARY SELECTION**

Firstly, target communities were identified based on 1) refugee concentration; 2) socio-economic vulnerability; 3) access to basic services; 4) willingness of local stakeholders to host refugees and collaborate; and 5) interventions by humanitarian actors. This selection was informed by Key Informant Interviews and inter-agency rankings. Based on the knowledge of the target areas, the organization provisionally identified clusters from which target communities were selected.

Secondly, the priority in target neighbourhoods was to gain a thorough understanding of local community dynamics, including mapping key stakeholders from relevant demographic groups (Syrian and Lebanese), inter-community dynamics and current WASH and shelter conditions. This included an overview of main shelter types, the state of landlord-tenant relationships, and any issues which could impact the prioritization and implementation of shelter activities. In order to do this, a social-mapping process was conducted, which involved semi-structured interviews and focus-group discussions with immediately identifiable local key informants, including municipal authorities and local NGOs or community-based organizations. Within target areas, vulnerable households were targeted irrespective of shelter type or nationality.

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

The neighbourhood approach used to implement this project relied on beneficiary involvement in the development and delivery of all activities, at both the community and household levels. Following the mapping of local stakeholders and identification of community representatives, consultations were held to review the proposed selection criteria (for household-level assistance) and identify key challenges of the target communities, to be addressed through small-scale emergency projects. Following consultations, the organization established a network of community focal points, committed to improving their neighbourhoods. These assisted in identifying shelter units in need of rehabilitation, and in liaising with landlords.

\(^1\) CIA World Factbook, [Accessed 6 August 2015].

\(^2\) Lebanon: Promoting Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity, World Bank, June 2015.

\(^3\) Lebanon Crisis Response Plan, 2016, pp. 16.
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project initially focused on the rehabilitation or upgrading of empty shelters within the targeted community, to have alternative housing options for families facing eviction. However, due to a number of contextual challenges, the organization shifted to a beneficiary-led model of rehabilitation or upgrading of their own properties. Through this, beneficiaries received the main inputs with a voucher scheme, and were paid for fittings and installation on cash-per-task basis. Apart from providing livelihood opportunities to some beneficiaries, this modality also helped the organization to overcome the issue of having limited access to the sites.

Agreements were signed with local suppliers for material procurement, and vouchers provided to each family in one instalment. The value was based on a bill of quantities that covered the repairs specific to each household. The beneficiaries redeemed their vouchers through one purchase and were given ownership over their own installations. In addition, the organization closely monitored the distribution of materials, to ensure high quality.

In order to support vulnerable populations without formal rental contracts, landlords and tenants were asked to sign a lease agreement in order to participate in the project. The organization also provided sessions on hygiene promotion and legal advice on Housing, Land and Property (HLP) issues through this intervention. This included training for local committee members, as well as campaigns in targeted neighbourhoods. Participants of these campaigns received information on how to obtain a lease agreement, obligations of each party and how to avoid legal trouble. This included advice on handling over of the rented premises, guaranteeing against hidden defects upon move-out and against eviction following end of lease, and advice on conducting major repairs and maintenance, to avoid unexpected costs upon lease termination.

COORDINATION

In addition to conducting coordination through the Sector Working Group meetings in Beirut, the organization liaised with local NGOs conducting other shelter projects by sharing beneficiary lists to avoid overlaps, as well as by referring cases between agencies to avoid gaps in coverage. The organization also liaised with NGOs conducting other protection and WASH activities also contributed to stronger relationships with beneficiaries. However, in many other vulnerable areas where other INGOs faced difficulties for gaining access (due to socio-political issues), the organization was able to successfully implement the project, through its engagement with local authorities.

LOW QUALITY MATERIALS. Due to complaints of low quality materials being used for rehabilitations and upgrades, the organization instituted a new process, in which a follow-up agreement was signed with the supplier, specifically on material quality. In some cases, low quality items were replaced, in order to address beneficiaries’ complaints. The quality of materials was continuously assessed by the project engineers during the distributions. In any event where materials were considered substandard, they were returned and the distribution was delayed.

MANAGING BENEFICIARIES’ EXPECTATIONS. Some complaints on the quality were also due to high expectations that were unrealistic, given the project budget. To avoid this challenge, the organization ensured that each household received complete information on the quality of work that would be provided. Agreements were signed with one local supplier per target area, which beneficiaries could select to complete the works if they desired. Beneficiaries were informed of their ability to register complaints at fora and via the organization’s local hotline, and these were followed up by the project engineer after implementation.

LAND OWNERSHIP ISSUES AND INSECURE TENURE AGREEMENTS. Some of the targeted households had no proof of ownership, which is a widespread issue, given the complex context in Lebanon. Close collaboration with the municipality was needed for verifications of ownership. Additionally, very often only verbal agreements existed between landlord and tenants, without any rental contract. This was tackled through prolonged negotiations between both parties, to clarify the terms of the housing arrangement and to sign a lease agreement.

WIDER IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

At the community level, the project provided a catalyst for change, combined with continued community engagement and capacity-building activities, to highlight needs such as HLP, protection, hygiene promotion, conflict resolution, participatory planning and community-based solutions. The project also helped to identify engagement opportunities for better responses in the future. For example, the committee in one of the neighbourhoods was able to solve a ten-year problem related to solid waste management, by relying on the initiative of the community and planning opportunities that were generated during this project.

For larger rehabilitations, the organization signed contracts that included material specifications and prices with local contractors. Sourcing the materials from within the neighbourhood or district was key to reduce transportation costs and contribute to the local economy. Moreover, it was important to rely on materials that were accessible and affordable to all beneficiaries. Finally, cash was provided for transport in cases where a large volume of materials had to be shipped to the beneficiary’s house.

MAIN CHALLENGES

SECURITY ISSUES IN ACCESSING CERTAIN AREAS. Such risks imposed restrictions on the selection of target communities. The rapidly evolving security context in Lebanon required the organization to increase engagement with neighbourhood focal points and local municipalities. Daily monitoring of shelter activities also contributed to stronger relationships with beneficiaries. However, in many other vulnerable areas where other INGOs faced difficulties for gaining access (due to socio-political issues), the organization was able to successfully implement the project, through its engagement with local authorities.

MATERIAL PROCUREMENT

The organization conducted detailed market assessments and selected local suppliers for materials to be procured locally. This reduced operational costs and increased support for the local businesses, thereby contributing to the area’s economic development, and reduced tensions with host communities over limited resources and jobs.

Many refugees in Lebanon settled in unfinished buildings, often in urban areas.
STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

+ The cash-for-task concept allowed beneficiaries to contribute in their own communities and enhanced their technical skills. While all supplies were made available before the works, cash was given following the completion of activities.

+ The project improved the organization’s visibility and credibility. Community engagement activities, conducted throughout the course of the project, led to a widespread acceptance of the organization for future interventions.

+ HLP considerations and significant improvement in tenant-landlord relationships, as both parties became more aware of their rights and responsibilities.

+ Served as a platform for information sharing between the community members and the municipalities, and responded to the urgent needs of both parties.

WEAKNESSES

- The organization could not identify sufficient empty shelters in the target communities to be rehabilitated and, for the small number identified, landlords refused to sign rental agreements (binding them to keep the shelters empty until potential evictions occurred). Given such a context, the organization modified its strategy, and capacitated the focal points to rapidly respond to evictions, by providing housing to beneficiaries in alternative houses within the same neighbourhood, as well as conducting emergency referrals to other agencies working in the areas, until a more permanent housing solution could be identified.

- Community engagement could have been improved. Better information flow and participation of affected communities in the identification of activities and target areas, as well as in the discussion of gaps and challenges, could have ensured a more tailored and effective assistance.

- Recruitment of staff/labour from within the communities (by the organization and contractors), quality control of materials, stricter procedures in signing changes in BoQs and flexibility in specifications could have been stronger.

LEARNINGS

• Stimulating local livelihoods. The beneficiary-led approach was largely successful in stimulating the local economy and empowering beneficiaries in implementing their own rehabilitations. The final assessment found that the target of 490 man-days of labour was greatly surpassed, with 1,222 man-days created through these works.

• The organization was aware that not all target households would have sufficient technical skills to conduct such upgrades. As a result, the team identified skilled workers from the neighbourhoods, and households were able to utilize these workers to complete their upgrades. In addition, 30% of beneficiaries were found to have conducted further home improvements at their own expense.

• Maintaining community ties and livelihoods. One of the key learnings from previous programming was that geographically spread-out shelter works, especially for empty shelters, created a problem for evicted beneficiaries by forcing them to move to a new neighbourhood, severing ties with their communities and threatening their livelihoods. The neighbourhood approach was specifically designed to overcome this.
KEYWORDS: Shelter retrofitting, NFI distribution, Winterization, Insulation

CRISIS
Syrian Refugee crisis in Lebanon, 2011-ongoing

TOTAL PEOPLE AFFECTED
1.04 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon
(Source: Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview 2017).

PROJECT LOCATIONS
Bekaa and Akkar regions, Lebanon.

BENEFICIARIES
2,346 households (11,608 individuals: 3,259 boys; 3,005 girls; 2,301 men and 3,043 women).

PROJECT OUTPUTS
2,346 insulation kits distributed (set of roofing nails, carpentry hammer, stanley knife, insulation adhesive tape, 2 insulation foil and foam rolls - 30x2m, instruction sheet and content list)

MATERIALS COST
USD 229 per household.

PROJECT COST
USD 295 per household.

OUTCOME INDICATOR
80% of vulnerable children and families reporting improvements in thermal comfort in their shelters.

PROJECT SUMMARY
This project provided fire-retardant insulation kits and weatherproofing to over 2,300 refugee households in informal settlements and incomplete dwellings. The kits provided thermal comfort, enhanced health outcomes and decreased fuel consumption, without adding to the fire hazard.

CONTEXT
For more background information on the situation and shelter response in Lebanon, see overview A.29.

Since the start of the Syrian crisis, a significant proportion of the population in Lebanon has been living in poverty, concentrated in the impoverished North of the country and the Bekaa region. With over one million Syrian refugees registered in Lebanon, the government’s refusal to establish camps (fearing that they would turn in permanent settlements) has been particularly detrimental for those in mountainous areas, such as North Lebanon and Bekaa (which hosted the bulk of the displaced population).

Lebanon’s weather conditions can be extreme, and vary throughout the year. Winter usually begins in November and lasts until March, bringing rain, snow and a significant drop in temperatures. The North of the country and Bekaa valley experience particularly harsh conditions, with even colder temperatures and snow in the mountains and at higher elevations.

Socio-economic vulnerabilities, substandard accommodation and exposure to winter conditions have had severe impacts on households, making adequate shelter especially important.
NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY
In the absence of formal refugee camps, the sector lead agency, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and in coordination with other international organizations and national NGOs, has implemented a number of integrated shelter interventions. Although shelter assistance is provided all-year round, there has been a focus on providing vulnerable households with weatherproofing kits to help withstand the harsh winter months. There are five kits provided as part of shelter winterization interventions: Sealing off kit (for unfinished houses), Light repair kit (plastic sheeting), Medium repair kit, Heavy repair kit / New arrival kit, and Insulation kit.

PILOT PROJECT
In early June 2015, the Ministry of Social Affairs approved the installation of insulation materials within informal settlements. In August 2015, the organization piloted a winterization project, upon request of the sector lead agency. The aim was to develop a technical intervention that could support the Shelter Working Group and shelter actors in the field, give recommendations on winterization solutions and improve protection against the elements more generally. Two insulation foams were used: 1) Expanded polyethylene insulation foam (EPE), foil faced on both sides; and 2) Cross-linked polyethylene insulation foam (XPE), foil on one side and white PE film on the other. Both reflect radiant energy and act as effective barriers against moisture, air currents and vapours, protecting from both hot summer temperatures and wet and cold winter conditions. The second option achieved better results and was therefore chosen for the subsequent phases.

The pilot project demonstrated that the installation of insulation provided physical protection from the harsh weather, improving the thermal conditions inside shelters. Testing carried out in the summer indicated that indoor temperatures differed on average by 5°C from the outdoors. Once the pilot results were analysed, the organization decided to include the insulation kits in its weatherproofing interventions.

LOCATIONS AND BENEFICIARY SELECTION
An informal settlement mapping assessment was carried out, using the Inter-Agency Mapping Platform, in all informal settlements in East Akkar and North and Central Bekaa. This tool has been used by partners on the ground to collect information of all informal settlements on a bi-monthly basis. The information was then used to coordinate humanitarian activities in these informal settlements. Partners were assigned areas of implementation, to ensure there were no overlaps or gaps in interventions. Coordination also ensured effective targeting of the most vulnerable households.

Informal settlements in Bekaa and Akkar (at altitudes higher than 800m above sea level) were prioritized for this project, based on a combination of needs (most vulnerable to the harsh, wet and cold winter conditions), gaps in assistance and the organization’s operational coverage. A blanket approach was used in these areas, for equity reasons and staff security, as well as to mitigate any possible tension between households in the informal settlements. A total of 11,608 individuals were targeted for insulation support – across 48 informal settlements, in 17 villages in East Akkar and 127 informal settlements, in Central and North Bekaa. Within these relatively large areas, cadastral zones were prioritized on the basis of community-level vulnerability, as defined by the inter-agency mapping tool.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION
The project was implemented directly – and distributions carried out – in partnership with key actors, including the sector lead agency and partners. A total of 37 project staff implemented the project: seven technical staff, 20 unskilled distribution support staff and 10 drivers. As part of distribution, field staff explained programme selection criteria and the technical guidance (needed to install the insulation) to recipients. Each kit contained a toolbox and two rolls of insulation foam that can cover 60m².

Participant feedback mechanisms allowed beneficiaries to evaluate the programme and contribute to its ongoing improvement. Regular and timely communication of relevant information was vital to maximize participation of all stakeholders and beneficiaries. A monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning specialist team also monitored project indicators, through the organization’s Post-Distribution Monitoring tool.

FIRE RISK MITIGATION
An increasing number of fire incidents, injuries and fatalities have been reported in informal settlements and substandard buildings. Contributing factors range from heating practices to electrical wires being exposed to the rain during the winter, whilst in the summer incidents are due to dry materials and melting of electric wires. These factors are further compounded by the use of high fire-loading building materials, such as wooden frames, plastic, cardboard and hardboard sheathing, used to construct shelters in informal settlements. This led to the decision to use a fire retardant insulating foam.

PROCUREMENT
The insulating foam was procured from China, as no insulation material available in country met the minimum standards outlined by the sector. Procurement was undertaken in January, once funding had been secured, and the lead time required 60 days from production to delivery, delaying implementation and causing the project to miss coverage for part of the winter. However, as the insulation kits were intended to be used all-year round, this was not detrimental overall.

WIDER IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT
In September 2015, following the successful pilot project, the Shelter Working Group adopted the insulation kits as part of the winterization component of the integrated Lebanon Crisis Response Plan. The main agencies active in the country have since distributed the insulation kits.
STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

+ Significant improvement to living conditions and effective weatherproofing. The insulation kits were one of the most significant improvements made to shelters, with 84% of sampled households reporting their living conditions having greatly improved as a result of installing the kits. The main added value was the improved thermal comfort during both winter and summer seasons. Some beneficiaries also reported that the presence of insects decreased.

+ Buy-in and beneficiary satisfaction. Post-Distribution Monitoring reports indicated that 94% of beneficiaries installed the kits fully, and the remaining 6% partially. In some cases, refugees took initiative to use the insulation to improve their homes in alternative ways. 95% of households expressed satisfaction regarding the quality of the kit received.

+ The kits are adaptable and can be utilized within shelters or incomplete buildings.

+ Significant saving on fuel. Heat loss calculations showed that the insulating foam can lead to significant heating savings, of up to USD 150 per household.

+ Speed and scalability of the intervention. A large number of shelters can be insulated in a short period of time.

+ Fire hazard mitigation. The use of fire retardant insulation foam ensured the intervention was not adding to the fire hazard in the makeshift homes.

+ Additional support provided to install the kits. Due to their high vulnerability, some families required additional support, which was provided by skilled daily workers, hired specifically for these cases.

WEAKNESSES

- The items provided to fix the insulation were not always adequate. Roofing nails provided in the kits were in some cases too long and pierced through the timber into the covering plastic. The insulation in some cases was difficult to secure adequately, due to adhesive tape becoming loose. This was due mostly to the irregular surface of walls and ceilings.

- Communication issues. A combination of tips sheets (including pictures) and verbal instructions were used during distribution. However, community sessions explaining the benefits of the kit and the best practices for installation were observed to be more effective.

- Lack of locally available insulation material that met minimum standards outlined by the sector.

- Part of the winter window was missed due to procurement lead times that caused delays in the project. However, the kits were intended to be used for both summer and winter conditions.

LEARNINGS

• The insulation was one of the most significant improvements made to shelters. The installation of insulation foam on walls and ceilings in contact with the outside led to an indoor temperature decrease of 5°C during the summer, on average. In the winter, the indoor temperature was 4°C higher than the outdoors, on average.

• Beneficiaries attempted to resolve the lack of adequate fixing items by using other methods, for example screws, shorter nails and staples. As a result, the content of the kit was revised as part of following procurement and distributions, to ensure that a variety of nail sizes and lengths would be included.
The situation in Iraq has been unstable for several years for both the internal conflict and the impacts of the Syrian crisis. The shelter response has taken a range of approaches, from mobile assistance for populations on the move, to a variety of interventions for displaced, host communities, refugee and returnee caseloads in multiple settlement situations, including camps, which have been the preferred form of assistance from the government. Integrated programming, protection and accessibility considerations have become essential in responding to such protracted crisis.

**SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSE**

The situation in Iraq has been unstable for several years for both the internal conflict and the impacts of the Syrian crisis. The shelter response has taken a range of approaches, from mobile assistance for populations on the move, to a variety of interventions for displaced, host communities, refugee and returnee caseloads in multiple settlement situations, including camps, which have been the preferred form of assistance from the government. Integrated programming, protection and accessibility considerations have become essential in responding to such protracted crisis.

**PEOPLE AFFECTED**

- 4.4 million people in need
- 3.1 million IDPs
- 1.3 million returnees
- 228,894 Syrian refugees in Iraq (74,984 families)

**PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE RESPONSE**

- 597,841 households (NFIs).
- 201,682 households (Shelter assistance).

For projects in Iraq or similar approaches see:

- Shelter Projects 2011-2012, A.16 and A.17: Lebanon, on shelter repairs/upgrades and sealing off.
- Shelter Projects 2013-2014, A.13 and A.14: Lebanon, on sealing off kits; and on multisector, mixed modality interventions.
- Shelter Projects 2015-2016, A.34, A.35 and A.36: Iraq, on repairs of damaged homes and religious buildings; on accessibility upgrades in camps; and on resettlement of IDPs to a planned site.

Maps have been established in Iraq since 2013 to host Syrian refugees.
BACKGROUND TO THE CRISIS

Against the background of the ongoing Syrian crisis as it entered its fifth year, Iraq’s internal conflict against armed opposition groups has resulted in a protracted crisis that has left almost 3.2 million people displaced. The economic crisis has seen a 40% drop in oil revenues, resulting in the collapse of the social protection floor across the country and seriously compromising the ability of communities to access basic services, maintain incomes and meet everyday needs. Overcrowding, dwindling resources, perceptions of disproportionate assistance, lack of (or competition for) employment opportunities, and continued insecurity threatened to exacerbate already fragile ethnic and sectarian tensions across the country, particularly as sections of the non-displaced population are already in a situation of destitution. By the end of 2016, it was estimated that over 10 million people in Iraq required some form of humanitarian assistance, of whom a large proportion were host communities. More broadly, informal settlements increased significantly after 2003, due to a shortage of land allocated for housing, lack of services and infrastructural investment, corruption and poor governance, compounded by significant waves of displacement in 2003 and 2007-2008.

SHELTER STRATEGIES AND RESPONSES

The Shelter and Non-Food Items (Shelter-NFI) Cluster in Iraq was activated in January 2014 to address the IDP crisis, with a Shelter Sector Working Group already established to focus on the Syrian refugee response. Given that many host communities (particularly in northern Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq) were composed of a mix of vulnerable non-displaced, refugee and IDP families living in similarly substandard shelter and settlement conditions within proximity of each other, the Shelter-NFI Cluster merged to consider both IDP and refugee responses in this mixed crisis.

Shelter Sector Working Group already established to focus on the Syrian refugee response. Given that many host communities (particularly in northern Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq) were composed of a mix of vulnerable non-displaced, refugee and IDP families living in similarly substandard shelter and settlement conditions within proximity of each other, the Shelter-NFI Cluster merged to consider both IDP and refugee responses in this mixed crisis.

In parallel to allowing longer-term displaced families achieve and maintain adequate shelter, agencies in Iraq have also had to prepare for regular waves of new displacement across the country, as the active conflict continued. This required a phased and incremental approach, covering emergency, post-emergency and early recovery activities, often in the same locations during the same timeframe. Building on the national strategy set out by the Ministry of Migration and Displacement, the Shelter-NFI Cluster in Iraq set out the response strategy in the following three packages:

1) first-line response to address the emergency shelter needs of the newly displaced;
2) second-line response to upgrade shelter for existing IDPs in critical need; and
3) full-cluster response to maintain shelter for the most vulnerable and support rapid return. However, due to the scale of emergency needs, funding for first-line, and sometimes second-line responses, has had to be prioritized over the longer-term responses. For 2017, the strategic objectives also included: replenish core households items (second-line) and expand shelter and housing options for vulnerable households, according to standards (full-cluster).
While the preferred response option for the authorities in Iraq has been the establishment of formal, planned, camps for both refugees and IDPs, 62% of the Syrian refugee population⁶ and 86% of the IDP population⁷ across the country have been living outside of camps within the host community, though there has been insufficient focus on their needs and conditions. As the crisis in Iraq continued, greater efforts towards supporting self-reliance, sustainability and building resilience has become increasingly urgent. This had to be addressed within affected populations, as well as at the administrative level through local authorities.

As of December 2016, 45% of the displaced population were in rented accommodation (including hotels), facing increasing financial pressure, as a result of saturation in the rental market and high rental costs, leading to greater vulnerability – as resources were depleted and families fell into debt. In addition, the ability to rent private accommodation did not necessarily correlate with achieving adequate shelter, with 17% of families living in what was considered “critical shelter” types⁸. A main approach of cluster partners working outside of camps within the host community, though there has become increasingly urgent.

OUT-OF-CAMP

While the preferred response option for the authorities in Iraq has been the establishment of formal, planned, camps for both refugees and IDPs, 62% of the Syrian refugee population² and 86% of the IDP population⁷ across the country have been living outside of camps within the host community, though there has been insufficient focus on their needs and conditions. As the crisis in Iraq continued, greater efforts towards supporting self-reliance, sustainability and building resilience has become increasingly urgent. This had to be addressed within affected populations, as well as at the administrative level through local authorities.

As of December 2016, 45% of the displaced population were in rented accommodation (including hotels), facing increasing financial pressure, as a result of saturation in the rental market and high rental costs, leading to greater vulnerability – as resources were depleted and families fell into debt. In addition, the ability to rent private accommodation did not necessarily correlate with achieving adequate shelter, with 17% of families living in what was considered “critical shelter” types⁸. A main approach of cluster partners working outside of the camp context has been to improve shelter alongside security tenure, while coordinating closely with WASH, CCCM and Cash and Livelihoods actors, to ensure displaced families do not fall into deteriorating shelter and settlement situations over time. Therefore, the shelter response had to adopt a holistic and cross-sector approach towards meeting complex, multifaceted, needs outside of camp settings, over a longer duration.

Approaches have included combinations of the following:

- Standardized and complementary Mobile or Basic Emergency Shelter Kits (ESK) and Mobile or Basic NFI Kits, to respond to anticipated new and large-scale

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⁷ Shelter-NFI Cluster Factsheet, September 2016.
⁸ See case study A.34 for an example of a repairs project in these shelter types.
displacement, aiming to address emergency, life-saving, needs in a variety of potential transit, non-camp and camp-like settings.

- **Sealing-off shelters** through distribution of sealing-off kits or implemented sealing-off activities. Inter-agency joint methodologies and mobile site monitoring by CCCM teams have been developed to ensure site, shelter & settlement, WASH and protection (including HLP/tenure security) issues are addressed.

- Development of **Emergency Sealing-Off Kits (ESOK)** for rapid distribution in the case of a large influx, returns, or for climatization measures.

- **Repair, rehabilitation and “durable upgrades”** of collective centres and unfinished / abandoned buildings, including the installation of appropriate shelter-level water and sanitation facilities, as part of shelter actors’ responsibility.

- **Phased and incremental approaches** towards collective centres, unfinished and abandoned buildings and spontaneous sites transitioning to more formally managed settlements. These include sealing-off (often non-structural, for climatization purposes), followed by rehabilitation and durable upgrades to ensure protection against climate in the short term, while longer-term shelter needs are addressed comprehensively.

- **Tenure security and incentives** have been integrated through negotiated bi- or tri-partite agreements between beneficiary, land or building owner, and sometimes with local authorities and/or the agency. For example, in exchange for allowing a displaced family to remain in a house with set rent levels and duration, durable upgrading works to the property (such as installing windows and doors, or bathrooms) would be undertaken. Cash-for-Rent and other cash-based programming have also been piloted.

- **Community construction activities**, such as Quick Impact Projects, to support over-stretched public services in host communities with large populations of refugees and IDPs, often engaging Cash-for-Work or skills-building modalities.

**WITHIN CAMPS**

In some locations, shelters have been established from the start in so-called “permanent” (or “tent-free”) camps with concrete slabs, kitchens and bathrooms, or planned as transitional settlements with prefabricated composite panel caravans forming single-family dwelling units. In other areas, where “transit camps” were initially established for temporary accommodation of the influx of Syrian refugees, a process of transformation and shelter upgrading has been underway since 2014. Tents as temporary, emergency shelter solutions have been phased out and replaced with more durable shelters.

A key aspect of camp activities has been installing, upgrading and maintaining camp infrastructure, from public service facilities, educational buildings and recreation areas, to roads, electrical connections and drainage. Close working relationships with WASH and CCCM actors have been required, in order to coordinate both hardware and software components, with increasing coordination and engagement with local authority counterparts, as management of camps and their associated infrastructure and service provision was handed over to primary duty-bearers. Although rules vary between camps, single-storey construction (masonry or using mixed materials) has been permitted, resulting in the stabilization of the areas as settlements.

**SYRIAN REFUGEE RESPONSE**

Refugees and IDPs comprised 25% of the total population of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) in 2016. A spike in arrivals of Syrian refugees came in August 2013, with a subsequent influx in late 2014. The majority of Syrian refugees entered the KRI. As of December 2016, around 39% resided in one of ten camps established from 2013, with the remaining 61% of refugees living outside of camps, in host communities. The refugee population remained largely stable, with movement into and out of camps characterizing population movements in some areas, alongside migration to Europe and other countries.
Throughout 2015 and 2016, the refugee camps have moved into a period of significantly reduced involvement of humanitarian actors, accompanied by an increased role for the government authorities, through mentorship, capacity development and partnership programmes. For this, a Joint Crisis Centre was established by the Kurdistan Regional Government in 2015, to continue coordination of responses. Enhancement of livelihoods remained a key focus of resilience-building amongst the refugee population and within host communities, which have struggled to cope with the influx of both refugees and IDPs since 2014.

INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING

The needs encountered by the newly displaced, those experiencing multiple and/or prolonged displacement, returnees, host and non-displaced communities have been of large scale and complexity. This has made necessary to trial ways to effectively integrate sectors, for reasons of stimulating longer-term impacts, cost-effectiveness and sometimes due to changing security and access situations. Examples include:

- Encouraging the use of conditional and multipurpose cash-based modalities for shelter and NFI activities.
- Shelter activities include installation or repair of household-level and shared water and sanitation facilities; WASH cluster partners could then more effectively focus on addressing the high needs of community-level networks and municipal systems.
- Development of referral databases and staff sensitization across the sectors (particularly between Shelter, WASH, CCCM and Protection), to refer potential issues rapidly to relevant counterparts.
- Mobile site monitoring (or CCCM) teams roving between settlements to monitor conditions, identify issues and engage or follow up with responsible agencies.
- Combining NFI distributions with sealing-off kit distributions, assessments and information dissemination.
- Training beneficiary and host community households in basic safety and construction, using emergency shelter kits and sealing-off kits, complemented by training in fire prevention and fire-fighting by CCCM actors.
- Hiring local labour and residents to install shelter and WASH facilities, with training in operation and maintenance to ensure shelters and settlements remain in serviceable condition and to strengthen a sense of ownership.

PROTECTION, ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

The crisis in Iraq has been called “a protection crisis” and required to address the challenges faced by persons with special needs, supporting the security of women and girls within the household and settlement (often in very overcrowded conditions), and ensuring that health and safety considerations are woven through physical interventions, as well as in use and behaviour of beneficiaries. Shelter actors have been active in attempting to mainstream protection through:

- Using sealing-off and upgrading activities for partitioning, segregation or fire compartmentalization, to provide more culturally acceptable, safe and secure shelter and settlements.
- Participating in gender-based violence and safety audits, to identify critical areas at shelter and site level.
- Awareness-raising campaigns with displaced communities on electrical and fire safety, fire prevention and fire fighting.
- Adapting shelter improvements to meet both physical and cultural needs, and facilitating the role of carers.
- Developing “Quality of Life” indicators, in addition to technical assessments, and furthering consideration of accessibility through multiple sectors.
- Designing mobile, agile and rapid response packages, to deliver assistance on the move, in temporary situations, scattered across dispersed host communities or wide geographical areas, and in insecure or inaccessible areas.

LOOKING FORWARD

Prior to the start of the Mosul offensive by the Iraqi government on 17 October 2016, partners prepared for the expected displacement by pre-positioning standardized NFI and shelter kits and building camps. Once the offensive started and villages and districts of Mosul became accessible, partners moved in to provide first-line critical shelter and NFI assistance. During this period, temperatures dropped to below freezing, with heavy rain and snow.

As of early 2017, the East of Mosul was largely taken back from the so-called Islamic State, and the focus was shifting to the West, which prompted Shelter partners to pre-position items and prepare camps again, as well as facilitating safe and voluntary return to the regained areas. The Cluster and its partners were also working very closely with the authorities, to ensure gaps were filled and to avoid duplication.

See case study A.35, on accessibility upgrades in camps
CASE STUDY

IRAQ 2015-2016 / CONFLICT

KEYWORDS: Housing repair / retrofitting, Religious buildings upgrade, Training, Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS</th>
<th>Armed conflict in Iraq since January 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL HOUSES DAMAGED</td>
<td>Approx. 70-80% of the private houses owned by returnee families were majorly or partially damaged due to the conflict in the region (Source: OCHA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PEOPLE AFFECTED</td>
<td>3.1 million IDPs in Iraq (Source: 2017 HRP Advanced Executive Summary). 1.3 million returnees (Ibid.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROJECT LOCATIONS</td>
<td>Salah al-Din, Baghdad, Najaf, Kerbala, Wasit, Qadissiya, Babylon and Diyala governorates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENEFICIARIES</td>
<td>2,278 households (13,028 individuals).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROJECT OUTPUTS</td>
<td>300 religious buildings upgraded. 400 returnees damaged homes rehabilitated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHELTER SIZE</td>
<td>21m² floor space for each family (3.5m² per person for 6 people per family).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATERIALS COST PER HOUSEHOLD</td>
<td>Religious buildings rehabilitation: USD 840 per household (USD 4,200 per building). Damaged house rehabilitation: USD 1,540.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROJECT COST PER HOUSEHOLD</td>
<td>Religious buildings rehabilitation: USD 1,200 per household (Total: USD 6,000 per building). Damaged house rehabilitation: USD 2,200.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROJECT SUMMARY

The project assisted 2,278 displaced and returnee families to rehabilitate and/or reconstruct damaged and deteriorating shelter structures. Rehabilitation prioritized infrastructure upgrades of religious buildings (Husseinyas) and other critical shelter arrangements, including the damaged houses of returnees. The interventions included the construction of internal wall partitioning, WASH and electrical upgrades, replacing damaged roofing and minor structural repairs.

STRENGTHS
- Protection measures for the most vulnerable.
- Provided work opportunities to IDPs and host community.
- Effective communication with local government and partners.
- Completion of works ahead of schedule and high beneficiary satisfaction.
- Publication of a step-by-step guidelines booklet.

WEAKNESSES
- Procurement from outside target areas delayed the project.
- Inaccuracies in cost estimations due to price fluctuations.
- Issues in contractor pre-qualification exercise and evaluation process.
- Insufficient capacity-building for staff, in the supervision of shelter-related projects.
- Project management approach was not always consistent with other programmes.
**CONTEXT**

For more background on the Iraq crisis and shelter responses, see overview A.33.

As of September 2015, the organization identified a total of 91,440 displaced families (an estimated 548,640 individuals) who lived in critical shelter arrangements, such as schools, religious buildings, informal settlements and unfinished or abandoned buildings. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in critical shelter arrangements were extremely vulnerable, with little protection from the harsh weather conditions (below 0°C during the coldest months and above 50°C during the summer). Furthermore, IDPs in these shelters generally suffered from inadequate WASH conditions, health services, as well as educational and employment opportunities. Multiple displacements were common, causing long-term instability and vulnerability for IDP families. Furthermore, IDPs were increasingly difficult to access, caught behind front lines, or held at security screening centres.

**SITUATION DURING THE CRISIS / NEEDS ANALYSIS**

Since 2015, IDP families from the districts of Iraq that were recently liberated by Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and/or Kurdish Peshmerga, have slowly returned to their area of origin (12,784 families as of September 2016). However, many of these returnee families have found their homes damaged and in need of urgent rehabilitation or repair. Therefore, the organization targeted these families in the Central Belt of Iraq with shelter assistance, to aid in the rehabilitation and/or reconstruction of partially damaged private homes. According to the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), more than 16,000 families were living in religious buildings called “Husseinyas”, or Shiite prayer halls, primarily within the central governorates of Kerbala, Najaf, Qadissiya and Wasit2. Religious buildings were classified as a critical shelter arrangement, as they failed to provide safe living conditions, and were not sustainable in the long-term. Furthermore, as the prayer halls are open, the majority of Husseinyas lacked adequate partitions, sanitation facilities, household items and other infrastructure to meet the specific shelter needs of a growing number of IDP families. Consequently, during the Ashura holiday, when thousands of Shiite Pilgrims travel to these areas, IDPs were temporarily evicted from the Husseinyas.

**SHELTER CLUSTER STRATEGY**

In 2016, the Shelter-NFI Cluster delivered assistance to IDPs in varying geographic locations and across all shelter types and phases of displacement. The minimum assistance consisted of two components: 1) ensuring sufficient, covered living space, which provides thermal comfort, fresh air and protection from the climate; and 2) providing critical household and shelter support items. Thus, it supported the upgrade of standard housing using durable materials, as well as rental support, small scale repairs, and phased assistance to host families, especially for those in critical shelter arrangements. Persons returning to partially damaged homes were to be provided with shelter and NFI materials, as well as housing, land and property rights support. Cash-based, occupant-driven, or owner-driven, approaches were encouraged. Sites in the greatest need of WASH support were also identified and in general responses had to be coordinated with relevant clusters.

This project was initiated after field assessment reports depicted the worsening conditions in critical shelter conditions of the Central, Northern and Southern regions of Iraq. In cooperation with the government and the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM), this project provided shelter rehabilitation and basic repairs and upgrades to waste water, electrical, structural and ground upkeep, as well as infrastructure maintenance, in line with Cluster objectives. Additionally, the project fell under the second line of the humanitarian response strategy3.

**SITES SELECTION**

Firstly, DTM surveys prioritized three categories: governorate of origin, period of displacement and governorate of displacement, within each shelter type. The surveys further categorized shelters into districts, family units and sex and age disaggregated data for the individuals. DTM reports (inclusive of safety audits) and assessment reports from REACH captured the unsuitable living conditions of IDPs in informal settlements and returnees' damaged houses. **Follow-up focus groups** by shelter technical field staff with vulnerable IDPs were also conducted for two rehabilitation work sites. Finally, safety and living environment **assessment audits** were carried out with rapid shelter assessment forms. A total of 300 critical shelters (Husseinyas) and 400 damaged houses were assessed and recorded. The criteria used regarding the rehabilitation needs included WASH plumbing repair and upgrades, electrical repairs and upgrades and roof leakage repair.

Before starting the project, the **findings were shared with local authorities** and MoDM for endorsement. **Focus group discussions** were held with district representatives, community and religious leaders, and **formal Memoranda of Understanding** – specifying the type of rehabilitation works allowed – were signed with the owners of the Husseinyas. Work plans, quality control,

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2 DTM assessments started in mid-2016.

monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reports were also prepared, to ensure the project’s quality and mitigate delays.

**PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

Project implementation began with a selection exercise of residential construction contractors, through an open tender advertised in local newspapers and through social media. The organization’s technical staff in each governorate were then provided basic training in supervising rehabilitation works; the shelter team was involved in direct management and quality control supervision of the project. IDPs and returnees were selected to take ownership of the project through a participatory approach, by engaging in the repairs of the Husseinyas and damaged houses. Their involvement contributed to increase their skills and provided livelihood opportunities.

The 300 Husseinyas and 400 damaged houses were then randomly inspected once again (after project completion) by senior shelter engineers, to check the technical quality of the interventions, as well as beneficiaries’ satisfaction. Post-distribution and assistance monitoring was performed by the M&E unit.

**COORDINATION**

The organization worked in close coordination with the MoDM, the Iraqi Government and the Shelter-NFI Cluster, prioritizing governorates based on the influx of IDP arrivals to informal and unfinished settlements and buildings. Following the completion of the generalized surveys, CCCM Cluster partners conducted site focused “Red flag” assessments, which captured “prioritized needs” in rehabilitation, in regards to WASH, presence of mines, electrical security, lack of food and NFI, as well as other critical needs. In addition to the above mentioned tools, shelter partners conducted caseload assessment and focus group discussions in each governorate, using the shelter assessment form developed by the organization for this project.

Finally, the organization worked closely with all stakeholders and humanitarian partners, in referencing each partner’s site assessment caseload, in order to avoid duplication. Assessments were shared with Shelter-NFI and WASH partners in coordination meetings, as well as with contractors.

**ENGAGEMENT OF AFFECTED PEOPLE**

Shelter staff conducted initial focus group discussions with displaced persons, as recommended by representatives from religious leaders, heads of households and adolescent groups. Selected IDPs were provided with on-the-job skills training in shelter rehabilitation, such as: WASH plumbing, roofing, concrete work, wall plastering, painting and basic electrical wiring. In addition, community groups were briefed on the planned rehabilitation scope for each family unit, specifically on dignity, privacy and protection. Post implementation monitoring indicated more than 95% beneficiary satisfaction.

**RISK MITIGATION COMPONENTS**

Protection measures were included in the rehabilitation of Husseinyas, through partitions for privacy and adequate lighting along open corridors and water and sanitation facilities. Separate toilets and bathroom facilities were installed for women and men, with adequate lighting along corridors, as well as open washing areas. Health and hygiene promotion campaigns were conducted to mitigate the risks of vector-borne diseases. Finally, awareness-raising campaigns on electrical and fire safety and prevention were also delivered.

**MAIN CHALLENGES**

In addition to infrastructural challenges, several logistical issues were encountered, such as the lack of access through military controlled check points into post-conflict liberated regions, controlled by separatist Militias. As such, material deliveries were frequently disrupted or put on hold for long periods. Further, there was a lack of qualified contractors with proven track records in building construction, especially across Central Iraq. To rectify this, focus group discussions were initiated with the local district mayor, religious leaders, and militia leaders. This resulted in the organization’s staff receiving special access permits (contractors and suppliers) for humanitarian projects. Further, the organization’s site engineers provided pre-selected contractors with trainings on good construction practices for rehabilitation works.

**WIDER IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT**

This was the first emergency shelter project focusing on rehabilitation in the region, after the start of the conflict. Ongoing lessons learned from this project, particularly in light of the increasing displacement of communities, were utilized in the fast-track procurement and contractor selection processes, to expedite responses in these emergency environments. A booklet on rehabilitation works was also produced, as an outcome of this project.
STRENGTHS

+ Emphasis on protection measures for the most vulnerable (women, girls, sick and disabled persons).
+ IDP heads of households, as well as adolescent male and female members of the family, were provided work opportunities through: basic skills training in masonry, electrical wiring, concreting, plastering and roof repairs.
+ The programme developed effective communication with the local government and partner agencies.
+ Field staff received training in project planning and budgeting, timeline management and quality controls, before undertaking programme responsibilities.
+ Rehabilitation projects were completed ahead of schedule and with high beneficiary satisfaction.
+ Publication of a booklet with step by step guidelines on Rehabilitating, Repairing and Upgrading of Critical Shelter and Damaged Houses (see snippet above).

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of local building materials and sourcing of items outside conflict zones delayed the project, also due to inconsistencies at military checkpoints on import regulations.
- The organization’s estimates did not match contracted projects costs, due to an escalation in building materials and transportation costs across different regions in Iraq. Consideration of this cost variations would have expedited the project.
- Issues in contractor pre-qualification exercises and evaluation processes resulted in the hiring of contractors who were not familiar with international humanitarian standards.
- Insufficient capacity-building for shelter staff in project management, specifically in the supervision of shelter-related projects. Due to the lack of experienced local contractors, staff was recruited from other regions. This also caused some tensions with local municipalities and residents.
- The technical project management approach was not always consistent with other programmes, including other shelter and livelihoods initiatives of the organization.

LEARNINGS

• Repair of broken and dysfunctional plumbing was mostly missing in the scope of works (sanitation piping, septic tanks, waste water drainages and water supply pipes). The lessons learned workshop revealed major gaps and WASH repair and upgrades were included in subsequent rehabilitation works.
• A database of pre-qualified contractors was developed to expedite hiring of competent contractors for various projects (including civil infrastructure, building and electrical works).
• Extra capacity-building was needed. A project-management training and a lessons learned workshop were conducted on planning, quality control and construction management, during a retreat with shelter staff.
**KEYWORDS:** Accessibility, Disabilities, Planned and managed camps, Materials distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS</th>
<th>Syrian conflict, Refugees in Iraq, 2011-ongoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PEOPLE AFFECTED</td>
<td>239,000 Syrian refugees in Iraq (as of 2016), 3.1 million IDPs in Iraq (as of 2016), 213,000 Syrian refugees (January 2014), 85,000 IDPs in Iraq (January 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROJECT LOCATIONS</td>
<td>Domiz refugee camp, Dohuk Governorate (Project A), Kawergosk, Qushtapa, Darashakran, and Basirma refugee camps, Erbil Governorate (Project B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROJECT BENEFICIARIES</td>
<td>901 households (including 1,047 individuals with disabilities), 362 HH in Domiz camp, 157 HH in Darashakran camp, 112 HH in Basirma camp, 147 HH in Kawergosk camp, and 123 HH in Qushtapa camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROJECT OUTPUTS</td>
<td>901 shelters upgraded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATERIALS COST PER HOUSEHOLD</td>
<td>USD 350 (average for Project A), USD 500 (average for Project B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROJECT COST PER HOUSEHOLD</td>
<td>USD 640 (Project A), USD 900 (Project B). Estimated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

The programme was carried out in five refugee camps in Iraq in two separate projects, focusing on shelter-related issues specific to persons with disabilities. The projects upgraded existing shelters and plots and adapted global accessibility standards to the camp context and cultural norms of the Middle East. The programme sought to adopt a holistic approach, through focusing not only on the individuals with disabilities, but also on the needs of the caregivers.

**STRENGTHS**

+ Tailored interventions for persons with disabilities.
+ Addressed a gap in accessibility and quality of life in camps.
+ Provided income to assisted households.
+ Challenged teams to think "outside the box".
+ Pushed the issue of accessibility and upgrades to the forefront of discussions.

**WEAKNESSES**

- Tendency for staff to adopt standardized approaches.
- Fencing off household plots further isolated some households.
- Quality of work carried out by paid labourers varied greatly.
- Difficulty in finding balance between the specific needs and the more general household needs.
- Poor communication about targeting and project objectives.

**TIMELINE**

5. A: Late May 2014, B: Jan 2015: Works initiated in camps.
The first camp constructed to host Syrian refugees in the Kurdish Region of Iraq was established in March 2013 in Dohuk Governorate, with a camp population of approximately 55,000. In 2014, four additional camps for refugees were established in neighbouring Erbil Governorate, with a total population of 27,700. In the winter of 2014-2015, 13 camps were established for IDPs escaping conflict in Southern and Central Iraq.

In early phases, households were principally provided with tents as an emergency shelter solution, along with the required basic camp infrastructure. In the later-established camps, there was a greater variety of shelter types, ranging from pre-fab shelters to tents on concrete platforms. Concurrently, an increasing number of camp residents engaged in incremental upgrades, using construction materials from local markets. Local authorities initially restricted the use of “permanent” construction materials (e.g., concrete and blocks), though later opened up to their utilization in a controlled manner. In early 2015, the vast majority of shelter coverings in the camps were still constructed with soft materials. This was even more prevalent amongst households with individuals with disabilities, as they were less likely to have access to resources to improve their shelters.

Prior to implementation, the organization worked with UN agencies, local authorities and the refugee community representatives, to assess the number of households in need, the most common types of disabilities, and the current levels of support from other humanitarian actors. Many of the families with persons with disabilities reported that the organization’s field staff were the first humanitarians to engage with them directly, or that they had received no prior assistance addressing their specific needs. When the organization was funded for the Erbil project, two other organizations also received funding to provide assistance to persons with disabilities. All three organizations worked together in the identification and provision of assistance. Approximately 9% of households in the camps of Erbil were found to have at least one individual with disabilities. Although the types of disability were varied, the most prevalent were physical, sensory and cognitive and, in 30% of the cases, multiple conditions.

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Potential individual beneficiaries and households were identified in close coordination with protection agencies, camp management and other actors providing services within the camps. Following the initial pre-identification process, social and technical assessments were carried out at the household level and were scored based on weighted vulnerability (both socio-economic and technical, as well as severity of disability and mobility or quality of life issues). This scoring phase determined which households were to be assisted, in which order, and played a role in defining the unit costs.

**PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

Both skilled and unskilled workers from the camp population were employed to implement the projects. The aim was to include one unskilled labourer from each beneficiary household as a means to provide a source of income. Each project was implemented by a separate team of six to ten individuals, supervised by a project coordinator. Area based teams worked in pairs, with technical staff focusing on technical assessments, design solutions and construction monitoring, while household assessments, outreach and monitoring were covered by non-technical shelter officers or assistants. Materials were delivered to each household and works were carried out by labourers at household plots. Though the construction time was generally brief, the overall implementation required multiple visits: an initial social and technical assessment, the development of a bill of quantities (sometimes this was carried out more than once due to the movement or modification of the household structure), regular supervision of works and follow-up monitoring visits.

**SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT**

Detailed social and technical assessments were carried out at the household level, focusing on the needs and capacities of the household member(s) with disabilities and technical shelter conditions, as well as general household information. Social and technical field staff worked closely with the individual with disabilities and their primary caregivers, to identify and prioritize specific upgrades to improve mobility and quality of life. The teams continued to engage the households to ensure that upgrades would be used as intended and met the needs of both the individuals and their caregivers. Visits were done jointly with a partner organization carrying out WASH Upgrades, in order to ensure complementarity of the interventions.

Commonly experienced engagement challenges included:

- Eliciting the priorities of the individual beneficiaries when their disability prevented them from communicating effectively;
- Balancing the expectations and wishes of the families with the issues related specifically to the persons with disabilities;
- Observing the shelter and plot to recognize usage patterns, in addition to listening to expressed needs;
- Time required to elicit information from persons with special needs and their caregivers;
- Dealing with requests to replace mobility items that were outside the project scope and expertise of field staff;
- In Erbil, targeted assistance led to significant pressure from households who did not meet the selection criteria.

**COORDINATION**

The organization closely coordinated with other actors implementing shelter and WASH activities in the targeted camps, to ensure complementarity and higher impact. At the household level, the organization focused its efforts on the plot and the shelter itself, while another organization aimed to address the WASH specific needs. Assessment forms were harmonized, initial planning was done collaboratively, and project managers met regularly to discuss project implementation. Technical teams jointly carried out the technical assessments during implementation, to ensure that all inputs were considered when designing the interventions for each plot. Additionally, a multisectoral Technical Working Group was formed to develop guidelines for accessibility and quality of life upgrades in the camp settings of Iraq. Though the final product was never completed, the working group served as a coordination and communication forum, to address some of the challenges encountered during implementation.

**MAIN CHALLENGES**

There are a number of guidelines at the global level for the construction of shelter in emergencies for people with disabilities. Although the guidance highlights the need to tailor interventions to each individual’s needs, it includes little regarding how this tailoring can be done practically, and at the same time how such projects can be scaled up, or streamlined, given the time and budget constraints often faced by humanitarian organizations in the field.

Commonly found challenges included:

- Attaching handles to soft tent or plastic sheeting walls and working with non-standard self-built shelters, expansions and plots;
- Support for people (or their caregivers) sitting down and standing up from the floor;
- Extending supports to the outdoor of the shelters;
- Improving accessibility to latrines on public pathways, in between tents in close proximity;
- Improving access points (particularly for tents) for persons with disabilities and their carers;
- Customization versus standardization;
- Redesigning solutions to adapt to new locations, when households moved;

CONFLICT

SHELTER PROJECTS 2015 - 2016

A.35 / IRAQ 2014-2015 / REFUGEE CRISIS

MENA REGION

WORKS also included mobility upgrades within plots or across the camps. From left to right. Concrete pathway and railing leading from shelter to shared/communal latrine. Concrete slab improving wheelchair access. Handrails, concrete stairway and pathway around or between shelter plots.

• Rapid evolution of camps and varying and inconsistent rules for shelter upgrading;
• Households uninstalling materials and repurposing them for things other than accessibility.

MATERIALS

Materials were sourced from local vendors, through flexible framework agreements that allowed the organization to procure most items based on need. Materials were then distributed to each household according to site-specific BoQs, developed by the technical staff. While this approach allowed for rapid delivery, it also had the unintended consequence of pushing the team to work within existing material resources. This, at times, hampered creativity in identifying unique solutions to the specific needs of the individuals with disabilities.

CONFLICT

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

+ Tailored interventions were implemented, based on comprehensive consultations, to address specific and self-identified needs of persons with disabilities and their caregivers.
+ The project addressed a significant gap in accessibility and quality of life at the household level, existing since the establishment of the camps.
+ Short-term income was provided to assisted households, and additional short-term employment opportunities to camp residents.
+ Teams were challenged to think “outside the box” and develop innovative solutions to address the specific needs of the individuals assisted.
+ The issue of Accessibility and Quality of Life upgrades was pushed to the forefront of discussions within coordination meetings and amongst shelter partners.

WEAKNESSES

- Tendency for staff to adopt standardized (rather than tailored) approaches led to inconsistent outcomes, principally due to time constraints and the feeling to be bound to the originally developed material lists.
- Fencing off household plots was a frequent request, to keep children with cognitive disabilities from wondering off and potentially endangering themselves and others, but it also potentially further isolated such persons from the community.
- The quality of work carried out by paid labourers varied greatly; supervising a large number of sites spread over numerous camps posed significant challenges for the team.
- The difficulty in finding a balance between the specific needs of individuals with disabilities and the more general needs of the household as a whole.
- Poor communication about targeting and project objectives with the camp community at large. As the project was the first in camps using targeted coverage, the communication could have been improved, in order to reduce requests for assistance by households that were not within selected groups.

LEARNINGS

• Keep the needs of persons with special needs at the forefront of shelter interventions, from the onset of an emergency.
• Standardized items and materials, available through framework agreements, can impair the development of customized solutions to address specific needs, which could instead use items procured outside these agreements.
• The lack of consistent leadership in the Technical Working Group focusing on Shelter and WASH Accessibility, led to the final intended product not coming to fruition.
• Foster and encourage the lateral thinking and observation skills of team members, in order to identify creative solutions for individual needs.
• Provide additional support to staff that are consistently interacting with individuals and households in dire conditions, including early training on engagement with persons with special needs.
KEYWORDS: Prefab shelters, Site planning, Infrastructure, Capacity-building, Protection, Gender, Advocacy

CRISIS
Conflict, January 2014-ongoing.

TOTAL PEOPLE AFFECTED
11 million people in need.
3.1 million IDPs.
1.2 million returnees.

PROJECT LOCATIONS
Baghdad, Dohuk, Kerbala, and Missan Governorates.

PROJECT BENEFICIARIES
1,252 IDP families (8,231 individuals, 4,506 female and 3,725 male), including 145 female-headed households and 488 physically or mentally impaired individuals.
512 students.

PROJECT OUTPUTS
Four planned sites with infrastructure and services.
1,406 prefabricated shelter units.
25 university classrooms and 128 student residential units.

SHELTER SIZE
22.5m² per shelter unit.

SHELTER DENSITY
3.75 m² per person (Average household size is 6 persons).

MATERIALS COST PER HOUSEHOLD
USD 5,500 (average)
Dohuk: USD 4,255; Baghdad: USD 6,505; Missan: USD 5,987. All including labour.

PROJECT COST PER HOUSEHOLD
USD 9,621 (including site preparation and infrastructure).

PROJECT SUMMARY
This project established four durable sites for vulnerable IDPs, equipped with 1,406 prefabricated shelter units accompanied by basic infrastructure and public facilities. It also developed institutional capacity of the targeted governorates and introduced guidelines and plans to develop and manage these sites. Additionally, the project provided temporary premises (classrooms and accommodation) for 512 students of Fallujah University.

STRENGTHS
+ Close coordination with all actors.
+ Organizational expertise in site planning and construction.
+ Collaboration with other agencies to enhance basic services.
+ Contribution to reduce the emergence of informal settlements and mitigate tensions with host communities.

WEAKNESSES
- Initial costs for establishing the sites were high.
- Small percentage of the total needs in the country were covered.
- Uniformly designed prefabricated units reduced costs, but flexible designs/sizes could have better addressed households' needs.

Shelter layout. The prefab units included a living space with kitchen separated by the sleeping area, as well as a bathroom.

BACKGROUND

For more information on the background and shelter response in Iraq, see overview A.33.

The conflict in Iraq has had profound humanitarian consequences, with more than three million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), who in some cities have now exceeded their original population, putting host communities under severe pressure.

In protracted displacement situations, temporary shelter interventions can lead to the formation of informal settlements and are inadequate to protect vulnerable groups, including women and girls, from harsh weather conditions and safety concerns. These settlements increased significantly after 2003 and some became “self-ruled zones”, potential incubators for extremism and radicalism.

The humanitarian crisis has deteriorated rapidly since June 2014, generating further displacement, exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities throughout the country, and putting existing infrastructure and services under increased pressure. More than 90% of IDPs were living outside of camps.

The Government of Iraq through its Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoMD) has the overall objective to “create an enabling environment in Iraq to achieve longer-term shelter solutions for people affected by displacement”. To achieve this objective, the national strategy focuses on addressing the following key issues: land for housing, dispute resolution, basic services, housing options, housing finance, host communities, livelihoods and governance strategy.

CORE ISSUES ADDRESSED BY THE PROJECT

Within this framework, the project aimed at offering more durable solutions to protracted displacement, enhancing protection and livelihoods opportunities, as well as considering ways to alleviate tensions with host communities and prevent further conflict. It did so by establishing four sites with prefabricated shelter units and infrastructure.

Firstly, the project considered social and economic vulnerabilities, as well as cultural differences. In terms of protection aspects, the prefabricated shelters have one living space and a bedroom, with a partition to ensure privacy for women and girls. Furthermore, all units are equipped with a lockable door, to ensure security of the residents. Each site has facilities for local police or security guards to be regularly stationed. The project also provided trainings for site managers to enhance their managerial capacity, as well as to increase awareness on gender and gender-based violence risks.

Secondly, the sites included social facilities that are open to the host communities, enhancing their access to basic public services – which is lacking especially in areas with a high IDP presence – and contributing to increase acceptance and mitigate tensions with IDP residents.

Finally, the project aimed at providing livelihoods opportunities to the residents, as well as temporary educational facilities and accommodation for students.

LOCATIONS AND BENEFICIARY SELECTION

Locations were selected through extensive consultations with the governorate counterparts. The organization identified a number of sites that could be allocated, which were away from the conflict zones and at the same time close enough to the major cities (so that basic services could be extended), and conducted technical surveys to assess the geophysical conditions of the sites.

The organization then provided technical support to the targeted governorates to develop beneficiary selection criteria, taking into consideration the vulnerability, socio-economic background and gender sensitivity – for example prioritizing female-headed households and individuals with physical or mental impairments. Special consideration was also given to displaced families living in unfinished buildings, public buildings such as schools and mosques, in tents out-of-camp and in rental accommodation (at risk of eviction). These were considered to be in worse living conditions, with less access to social and public services, and the local authorities needed to make public buildings (particularly schools) available to serve local populations, including newly arrived IDPs.
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The organization first consulted with the targeted governorates and the MoDM to identify their needs and plan the responses appropriately. Steering Committees and working groups consisting of governorate officials, the organization’s staff and implementing partners, were then established to consult key stakeholders, monitor the progress of activities, identify risks and highlight learnings and good practices. The organization developed the site plans, which included basic infrastructure such as roads and electricity networks, as well as public facilities such as health clinics, women’s centres and open spaces. Official agreements were made with the governorates and Fallujah University that they would be responsible for operating and maintaining the sites, to secure local ownership and sustainability. Based on the site plans and on research of local market prices, the organization developed BoQs and provided overall coordination, as well as technical supervision, of the activities carried out by the implementing partners (NGOs and contractors), for quality assurance.

INvolvement of Affected People

IDPs and host community members were actively engaged in the project, as labourers for the construction activities. This contributed both to improve their livelihoods and gain support and understanding from the local communities. Local committees composed of representatives from the IDP families were then created in the established sites, to assist with management duties.

Coordination

The steering committees were key in identifying challenges and discussing preventive or corrective measures. One committee, for instance, foresaw the risk of delay in the construction, due to snow and wet ground conditions in winter. The committee recommended to increase the work force to make maximum use of the limited time, and increased the frequency of monitoring. These measures enabled the project team to catch up on the progress despite the difficult weather conditions, and resulted in the timely delivery of the project. Secondly, coordination with relevant cluster members allowed the joint development of beneficiary selection criteria, prioritizing the most vulnerable. Finally, collaboration with specific agencies was essential, on one hand, to operate and maintain the reproductive health clinics and women’s centres and, on the other, to establish a primary school in one of the sites.

Disaster Risk Reduction Components

In order to minimize the risks posed by hazards such as flooding, land-sinking and fire, extensive technical surveys were conducted to assess geo-physical conditions of the proposed sites. For instance, one of the surveys identified that one site had been used as agricultural land and, therefore, the soil was soft and muddy, which could result in cracks in the dry season and land-sinking in the rainy season. To address this hazard, the top layer was removed and the ground was compacted.

Materials

After a competitive bidding and selection process, the materials for the prefabricated units were procured from the local markets (though originally imported from neighbouring countries). Once the site preparation and basic infrastructure were ready, the implementing partners transported the materials to the site, where small workshops were established to assemble the units. This partially avoided the potentially negative impacts of using imported prefabricated solutions.

Main Challenges and Countermeasures

Security concerns have been the major challenge faced during implementation. For example, security concerns were raised after one site had been assessed and approved, after lengthy discussions. The project team tried to negotiate with the local authority, but at the end had to identify another site and delay the project. Furthermore, there were several occasions where construction materials were confiscated by the militias, and the organization had to liaise with local authorities and the Iraqi Security Force to have the materials released. This caused slight delays, although they were covered by speeding up the construction works.

The project was also able to adapt in its second implementation phase (ongoing at the time of writing), thanks to lessons learned from its first phase. Although the design was agreed within the Cluster and with the local authorities (based on the average household size of six), due to cultural reasons some families complained about the size of the shelter units. This led the organization to adopt a different design (with larger space) in the most recent site, where the family size is even higher. Secondly, the use of buried electrical cables was changed to hanging cables – which are easier and quicker to maintain – based on reactions from the local authorities. Finally, the floors of the living space were initially damaged due to washing inside the units, and floors were not waterproof, except in the bathrooms. In the following phase, this challenge was addressed by producing clear instructions that were printed and distributed to the families.

Wider Impacts of the Project

The overall project approach was praised by the governorates and became a model to address complex and prolonged challenges faced by IDPs in Iraq. Moreover, the construction of temporary educational premises contributed to support displaced youth who bear enormous human, social and economic costs, by enabling them to proceed with their education. While not envisaged in the original project plan, the university facilities were later added, due to the request from the Governor of Anbar. Lack of access to education, basic social services, economic opportunities, grievance over injustices, and a generalized distrust in the capacity of the state to account for its citizens, fuel a cycle of poverty, hopelessness and frustration that can lead to radicalization. While there is no evidence that this is the case, it is hoped that the facilities will help the affected youth to resume their education and maintain their positive attitude.

Finally, global trends show that, with protracted displacement, unplanned sites can turn into urban slums, further exacerbating social and environmental challenges that already exist within the host community (in conflict-affected areas). Establishing planned sites that can function as a neighbourhood, equipped with basic social and public infrastructure, services and durable shelter, contributed to prevent the irregular expansion of informal settlements. Additionally, while in some cases planned IDP sites are poorly located and do not consider livelihood opportunities, this project prioritized the proximity to the existing urban areas, and encouraged livelihood interventions carried out by specialized actors.
The new sites and the shelters represented a significant improvement in terms of security, privacy and dignity for the selected households. However, the project targeted a very small fraction of the affected population in Iraq.

**STRENGTHS**

- **Close coordination** with governorate counterparts and implementing partners, and creation of steering committees to discuss challenges and mitigation measures.
- **Organizational expertise** in site planning and construction.
- **Collaboration with other agencies** to enhance basic services, such as health and education, strengthening the sustainability of the project.
- Contribution to reduce the emergence of informal settlements and also to mitigate tensions between IDPs and host communities, reducing risks of future conflicts.

**WEAKNESSES**

While more economical in the mid- and long-term, initial costs for establishing these sites with prefabricated shelter units were higher than providing other emergency shelter solutions, making the number of beneficiaries relatively small compared to the scale of the crisis in Iraq.

The project had to find the right balance between scale and quality in the mid-term. To achieve this balance, it applied minimum standards of living for the units, to minimize the cost, thereby maximizing the number of beneficiaries. Ultimately, the project directly benefitted approximately 8,200 vulnerable IDPs, which is a very small percentage of the needs (with over 3 million IDPs in the country).

**LEARNINGS**

- Consultation and agreement with governorate counterparts and other humanitarian actors are crucial to ensure the sustainability of the project. This is true especially on roles and responsibilities for operating and maintaining the IDP sites, after the completion and handover to the governorates, including camp management and delivery of basic services.
- While uniformly designed, prefabricated, shelter units contributed to reduce the project cost, adaptable, culture- and context-sensitive designs may have helped to better address the needs of the IDPs.
- In two sites, the organization faced difficulties due to security issues, as well as some grievances of farmers in the area, after the site selection and official handover from the government. Additional and rigorous verification efforts through different concerned departments should be carried out to confirm the suitability of the assigned land.
Yemen 2015-2016 / Conflict

Overview

Yemen conflict
March 2015-onwards.

18.8 million people with humanitarian needs, as of September 2016.  
4.5 million people with shelter or NFI needs.  
2 million IDPs.

People Affected

Response Outputs

(2015-2016)

81,953 households (Shelter assistance).  
211,199 households (NFIs).

Summary of the Response

Working in an extremely insecure environment, with international and national armed actors and enormous needs, the shelter response in Yemen struggled under enormous access and funding constraints. Programmes primarily provided non-food items and emergency shelter materials. At a smaller scale, shelter programmes rehabilitated collective centres and provided conditional cash transfers for rental assistance or non-food items.

Background to the Crisis

Yemen is dry, with very low rainfall. It is very hot in the summer and cold in the winter, particularly at night. It has a conservative society and a population of 26 million people. Even before the conflict escalated, the country faced enormous levels of humanitarian need (15.9 million people in late 2014). These needs stemmed from years of poverty, under-development, environmental decline, intermittent conflict and widespread violations of human rights.

In March 2015, the conflict in Yemen developed from intermittent clashes, to a full-fledged military conflict, involving several foreign countries. Access to food, clean water, fuel and medical supplies became increasingly difficult throughout the country, and many families remained trapped in their places of origin, struggling to access basic services.

As the conflict dragged on, economic conditions deteriorated, worsening the humanitarian situation. The commercial sector was unable to easily import and export goods, as the air and sea space was controlled by conflicting parties.

Timeline

25 Mar 2015


12 May 2015: Five-day humanitarian pause begins. Frequent violations are reported.

1 Jul 2015: UN designates Yemen a “Level-three” emergency.

10 Nov 2015: Two consecutive cyclones batter the southern coast and Socotra Island.

15 Dec 2015: Ceasefire comes into force during peace talks. Frequent ceasefire violations are reported. Ceasefire ends in early January.

10 Apr 2016: A renewed cessation of hostilities comes into force.

May and Aug 2016: Heavy rains in May and August cause flooding in seven governorates.

6 Aug 2016: Peace talks in Kuwait adjourn without agreement. Clashes and air strikes intensify immediately afterwards.


2 Data reported to the Global Shelter Cluster, as of 31 Dec 2016.
DISPLACEMENT

Damage to houses and fear caused by airstrikes and combat, often in residential areas, led thousands of families to flee their houses. Displaced people were mainly hosted by relatives, often in crowded conditions. Some families hosted up to seven households. Displaced people were also living in collective centres, mainly schools and health facilities, or in open air spaces, or makeshift shelters, in dispersed self-settled sites.

The government did not allow formal camps to be established, and access to many areas for humanitarian workers was severely restricted throughout the conflict.

By the end of 2016, more than 4.5 million people required assistance with shelter, non-food items (NFIs), or management of collective centres in which they were living. Of these people, 3.9 million were in areas of acute need, and over 2 million were displaced.

The Shelter-NFI Cluster strategy for 2017-2018 envisioned a comprehensive response package, tailored to each governorate, targeting the most vulnerable families, working with other clusters, and with protection mainstreaming as its core.

As the conflict continued in early 2017, additional challenges such as depleted savings and lack of access to financial resources, and/or saturation of available housing capacity, meant that all viable alternative shelter options needed to be pursued. CCCM approaches had to be developed, working with affected populations, and emergency relief items had to be prepositioned. The use of cash and vouchers, and working through multifunctional mobile teams in areas requiring such approaches, also needed to be considered.

To face the large influx of returnees to areas that were destroyed, assistance should include emergency support on return, as well as fuller support for housing rehabilitation. There also had to be increased focus on capacity-building of national stakeholders, to support shelter design and programming and camp management approaches, based on a strong understanding of local needs.

CHALLENGES DURING THE CRISIS

LACK OF FUEL. With the entire country’s oil production at a complete halt due to the conflict, Yemen witnessed a severe shortage of fuel in the markets. Prices skyrocketed from USD 0.7 per litre, to nearly USD 7 in some areas. The black market in fuel thrived, making it extremely difficult to locate transport; who, if located, asked for extremely high prices.

BLOCKADES. Unavailability of items in the local markets, due to imposed blockades, represented a major procurement challenge for implementing organizations. Supply options meant that international procurement was often required, with careful routing of supplies to ensure that they could arrive in Yemen.

SECURITY AND ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES. Due to ongoing security incidents, including assassinations and bombings near agency offices, staff were often advised not to report to work. In order to overcome this challenge, the teams often worked from home and in the field, whenever the situation warranted it. Since many roads leading to target areas of assistance were either blocked, or witnessed clashes, longer routes to reach target areas were often used. The challenges in accessing areas also made it harder to effectively monitor interventions.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

The Shelter-NFI Cluster was merged with CCCM. Its response strategy prioritized the delivery of assistance to all affected populations, including provision of cash assistance as a rental subsidy. Rehabilitation of a limited number of damaged houses, construction of transitional shelters and rehabilitation of collective centres, were also considered in the strategy.

The Shelter/CCCM/NFI Cluster was only 36% funded in 2016. As of December 2016, the Cluster had reached 81,953 households with shelter assistance since the start of the conflict, and 211,199 households with NFIs. The Cluster had 40 active members, including UN, INGOs, local civil society partners, and government authorities (including the IDPs Executive Unit). A key advantage of the Cluster in Yemen has been its robust linkage with national NGOs, which ensured effective coverage, capacity and better access nationwide.

MAJOR CHALLENGES IN THE RESPONSE

Given the context, there were several challenges encountered. Areas for particular engagement in shelter were:

- Insufficient funding.
- Finding alternative shelter solutions for IDPs currently living in schools (or other public buildings) and facing high pressure from the host community to vacate the premises. If the set-up of camps continued to be excluded, the question would remain as to where people could be moved to, the potential establishment of transitional shelters, and how the displaced population could integrate in the host community.

LOOKING FORWARD

The Shelter/NFI/CCCM Cluster strategy for 2017-2018 envisioned a comprehensive response package, tailored to each governorate, targeting the most vulnerable families, working with other clusters, and with protection mainstreaming as its core.

As the conflict continued in early 2017, additional challenges such as depleted savings and lack of access to financial resources, and/or saturation of available housing capacity, meant that all viable alternative shelter options needed to be pursued. CCCM approaches had to be developed, working with affected populations, and emergency relief items had to be prepositioned. The use of cash and vouchers, and working through multifunctional mobile teams in areas requiring such approaches, also needed to be considered.

To face the large influx of returnees to areas that were destroyed, assistance should include emergency support on return, as well as fuller support for housing rehabilitation. There also had to be increased focus on capacity-building of national stakeholders, to support shelter design and programming and camp management approaches, based on a strong understanding of local needs.
AMERICAS NATURAL DISASTER

CASE STUDY

CHILE 2014-2016 / FIRE

KEYWORDS: Housing reconstruction, Subsidies, Self-recovery, Urban

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS</th>
<th>Valparaiso fire, Chile, 12 April 2014.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL HOUSES DAMAGED</td>
<td>More than 3,309 destroyed (ONEMI, April 2014).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PEOPLE AFFECTED</td>
<td>12,500 people (ibid.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROJECT LOCATIONS</td>
<td>Various locations across the city. The affected areas were the hills in the south, particularly the ravines known as “Quebradas”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENEFICIARIES</td>
<td>Emergency: 2,000 households (planned). Reconstruction: 3,870 households (Target: 4,912).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROJECT OUTPUTS**

(As of Dec 2016)

- **2,000** Emergency shelters (planned).
- **1,588** Reconstruction subsidies (target: 2,977).
- **1,914** Self-reconstruction projects.

**SHELTER SIZE**

- **Emergency shelters: 18m²**
- **Reconstruction: more than 45m²** (Minimum requirement to apply for the subsidies).

**SHELTER DENSITY**

- **Emergency shelters: 5.3m² per person** (based on average family size of 3.4).
- **Reconstruction: min. 13.2m² per person** (permanent houses).

**PROJECT COST PER HOUSEHOLD**

Approx. USD 40,000 (weighted average of the four subsidies described in this case study).

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

This government-led programme provided four types of reconstruction subsidies to over 3,800 families affected by the fire in the steep hills of Valparaiso, Chile. The majority of the subsidies were provided through an assisted self-reconstruction scheme, whereby the funds would be disbursed along with technical assistance by architects or engineers in coordination with local NGOs, and the families would take care of rebuilding themselves.

**STRENGTHS**

- Large-scale programme to support safer self-construction.
- Combined action of government subsidies and NGOs.
- The subsidies took into account people’s needs.
- The initial plan was adapted in response to the requests of the affected people.

**WEAKNESSES**

- The initial response did not consider affected people’s preference.
- Many families did not receive any subsidies due to land tenure issues, side-lining the most vulnerable.

**TIMELINE**

1 **17 Apr 2014**: Government agency announces the construction of 2,000 emergency shelters for the families affected by the fire.
2 **Oct 2014**: Government launches revised reconstruction plan including self-reconstruction subsidies.
3 **Dec 2014**: 1,095 reconstruction subsidies granted (302 paid) 347 self-construction subsidies granted (25 paid).
4 **Dec 2015**: 1,948 reconstruction subsidies granted (835 paid) 1,420 self-construction subsidies granted (382 paid).
5 **Dec 2016**: 2,829 reconstruction subsidies granted (1,588 paid) 1,914 self-construction subsidies granted (961 paid).

**SHELTER DENSITY**

- **Emergency shelters: 5.3m² per person** (based on average family size of 3.4). Reconstruction: min. 13.2m² per person (permanent houses).

**PROJECT COST**

PER HOUSEHOLD

Approx. USD 40,000 (weighted average of the four subsidies described in this case study).

Valparaíso is a coastal city of about 250,000 inhabitants, famous for its colourful housing stretching across densely populated hills of great aesthetic and cultural value. The hills are also the source of vulnerability to hazards, as a significant part of the city is built informally on the 39 so-called Quebradas (ravines). These form a historic informal area with many land seizures, which concentrate the highest rates of poverty and unemployment in the country. The Quebradas have little or no connection to urban infrastructure and vehicle accessibility is generally difficult, as access is mainly provided by steep stairways up and down the hills. The hazards in these locations include not only fires, but also landslides and slope failures, flooding in the lower areas, as well as the ever-present earthquake and tsunami risks along the Chilean coast.

According to a survey before the fire, the inhabitants feel that “inefficient policies” of the government have failed to meet the housing demand. Many current inhabitants of the Quebradas moved to this location as consequence of previous earthquakes destroying their homes (in 1906, 1965, or 1985). According to interviews, especially poor communities felt they did not receive enough assistance from the government for rebuilding or repairing their houses in the city centre after these disasters, hence moving to the ravines to build their own neighbourhoods, mainly by occupying unclaimed land. In the urban area, near the port, this would not have been possible.

Moreover, the government may have added to the desire of locals to remain on these sites, as staying in an illegally appropriated site is key to its subsequent legalization. A decree states that to legalize an occupied site one must be able to prove a presence on this site (in the form of a home) for more than five years, and the site also needs to be approved by the government. However, the sites on the ravines are often not legalized after these five years, due to the precarious and high-risk locations (steep slopes or proximity to the forest). Moreover, up to the legalization, people live in constant fear of eviction and they do not trust government agencies, even in the context of post-disaster reconstruction.

Self-construction in Valparaíso has happened for generations and many residents work in the construction industry, developing intuitive construction knowledge, including of structural risks and possible mitigation measures. It is estimated that approximately 80% of the housing stock in the city is self-built.

**INITIAL GOVERNMENT PLAN AND LOCAL REACTION**

After the fire, the initial government plan was to clear everything and to rebuild the ravines in a “more orderly manner”. The government also proposed to relocate citizens to safer sites, including social housing estates built outside the centre.

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5. Social housing had been built prior to the fire but in part it was also being built in response to it.
Moreover, the Ministry of Housing and Urbanism (MINVU), developed specific subsidies to address the scale of the disaster, but also the particular situation of illegal settlements in the ravines. However, before the legal framework of the new subsidies was established, the people had already started rebuilding. The government agency in charge of emergency shelter provided 6m by 3m units that were erected on new sites and in the Quebradas in "safe zones" determined by the government. The shelters were deemed of bad quality by the local population, further accelerating the drive to self-reconstruction.

Within six months the ravines were nearly completely rebuilt by the local population, much faster than public management. The shelters were deemed of bad quality by the local population, further accelerating the drive to self-reconstruction. For this rapid recovery, locals used recovered building materials, but also improved the quality of their homes, partially due to the availability of government grants for self-construction.

ADAPTATIONS TO THE PLAN

The initial response plan by the government (relocation and emergency shelters) was heavily criticized by the local population, which resulted in the subsidies being adapted in order to be more efficient and useful for the needs of self-builders. This happened in approximately six months from the fire, thanks to demonstrations and the support of local NGOs, who consulted the residents and advocated with the government to propose alternative solutions.

MINVU’s revised plan in October 2014 (with a timeframe until 2021) was to invest about USD 510 million in the reconstruction of Valparaiso’s affected neighbourhood. This included investment in a road around the city, as well as access roads to and in-between the Quebradas, and a geotechnical study of the slope stability of the affected areas.

MINVU’s revised plan in October 2014 (with a timeframe until 2021) was to invest about USD 510 million in the reconstruction of Valparaiso’s affected neighbourhood. This included investment in a road around the city, as well as access roads to and in-between the Quebradas, and a geotechnical study of the slope stability of the affected areas.© Pino Vásquez and Ojeda Ledesma

RECONSTRUCTION SUBSIDIES

Four separate types of subsidies for reconstruction were given to house the affected population, with the precondition that the new house be in a low risk zone (chosen by MINVU).

1) The first subsidy applied to families renting a property, as well as families living on their own site. It involved buying a new house with a value of 900 UF or an existing house with a value of 700 UF in a new location.

2) The second subsidy was for reconstruction of pre-designed houses in a new location by external contractors. No completed construction was reported by the end of 2016.

3) Subsidies for reconstruction in the same location were also available. The payment could be done before or after construction, but in the second case a contractor must have been hired for construction. This subsidy could be used to build a house according to designs proposed by MINVU, or own designs with assistance by an architect, often from a local NGO. The house could be an individual house or a group of houses for densification of a site owned by other family members. The subsidy covered 1,050 UF broken down as follows: 600 UF for construction costs, 300 UF for mitigation measures (e.g. seismic improvements), including the structure and ground, 80 UF for site preparation and any demolition work required, and 70 UF for technical assistance by architects. Additional funding was available for site densification (150 UF) as well as for mobility-impaired residents. About a half of the construction was finalized for this type of subsidies by the end of 2016, with the remaining projects mainly in the process of construction.

4) The fourth type was a subsidy for assisted self-construction (ACA). This offered about the same total financial aid as the previous one, with an average of 1,090 UF assigned per family. From the fire up to the end of 2016, a total of 5,090 self-construction programmes were financed in Valparaiso by MINVU, of which 1,914 were reconstruction projects, corresponding to 39% of all reconstruction projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPES OF SUBSIDIES FOR RECONSTRUCTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUBSIDY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 BUYING A HOUSE IN NEW LOCATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 RECONSTRUCTION IN NEW PLOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 RECONSTRUCTION ON ORIGINAL PLOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 SELF-CONSTRUCTION**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


MINVU and CEHU, 2016.
Architects and local NGOs helped affected people rebuild their damaged houses, thanks to the “assisted self-construction” subsidies provided by the government.

SELF-RECONSTRUCTION SUBSIDY AND THE ROLE OF LOCAL NGOS

Conversations with residents suggested that many people did not like the government-designed solutions, as the houses were too small, built with a poor choice of materials (steel profiles + PVC), and all adopted the same design. In Valparaiso, family identity is strongly associated to diversity in style of the house, and people have a strong feeling for location and aesthetics of their homes, hence preferring staying in unsafe sites than moving to often smaller social housing or locations outside their communities.

The ACA subsidy provided the resources to design and build a house, as long as the beneficiary owned or had some rights over the land. This could also include densification of a site, in which other family members lived, which was particularly relevant in the ravines of Valparaiso.

A local NGO was very active in informing the population about the possibility to self-rebuild and assisting in the process using the ACA subsidy. The NGO believed that self-reconstruction was the best way for the local community to get involved in shaping housing that responded to the needs of each individual family.

The role of local NGOs in sharing the information about the ACA and the other types of subsidies was essential, as many residents were not aware of the different options available and had a general distrust in the government, mainly due to past initiatives that failed to assist them.

In coordination with local NGOs, architects (paid through the ACA subsidy) provided technical advice to the families, teaching them how to build their own houses, which were designed based on their needs and proposals. This ensured a safe design of the house, as well as a more lasting impact, as families often expand their houses with time. Several NGOs worked on rebuilding sustainable wood and earth structures, based on traditional construction concepts in Chile.

The statistics do not paint a full picture of the number of self-rebuilders and also crucially ignore the geographical and social component of subsidy allocation. However, it can be said that assisted self-reconstruction is particularly popular in Valparaiso, especially compared to the much lower number of such subsidies after other disasters, both in Valparaiso and in other Chilean cities. Similar ACA funds existed after the 2010 earthquake, but much lower numbers of these were applied for and allocated. Additionally, the subsidies were heavily improved after the 2014 fire, due to the fact that Valparaiso represents a special case in Chile, with such a high number of self-built houses.

LAND TENURE ISSUES

Land tenure issues proved to be crucial in the context of this response, as it is often the case in similar post-disaster scenarios. Given that access to the subsidy was conditional to a proof of land ownership, many households were not assisted. Several disputes over land ownership arose, but no large scale solution was found. Most of the families who knew they could not apply to the subsidy started rebuilding very quickly, replicating the same vulnerabilities that existed prior to the fire, e.g. high density, proximity to the forest and poor accessibility.

In January 2017, a new fire in the same areas affected again those who were in these hazardous situations. Although the municipality started to work towards an improvement of the land tenure situation in Valparaiso, this example shows how the cycle of vulnerability was not broken, even though best efforts were taken to consider the needs of the local population through the ACA subsidies.

10 See for instance the overview A.39 of the Ecuador Earthquake in 2016.

THE CASE OF MINGAVALPO

A group of local architects and volunteers joined after the fire to provide a model of self-reconstruction using local and recycled materials, based on sustainability principles and a community workshop approach (Minga, a Chilean tradition of community self-help). The structures are built with a timber structure, walls are made of reused pallets, filled with straw mixed with mud and in some cases eco-bricks (plastic bottles filled with compacted plastic bags), finished with a mud and straw render. The result is a well-insulated house with a very low carbon footprint, for a cost of approximately USD 39,000 excluding labour, which was provided by volunteers.


Local groups of architect organized building workshops to rebuild some of the houses affected by the fire on the Quebradas.
The damage caused by fires in the ravines of Valparaiso is often extensive. Entire neighbourhoods were burnt down by the fire in April 2014. The same areas were again affected by a fire in January 2017.

Many houses were rebuilt thanks to the subsidies, with the help of local architects. In some cases, houses were built during community self-build workshop, experimenting with low-cost materials.

**STRENGTHS**

+ As of late 2016, almost 2,000 houses had been rebuilt by their owners with the guidance of architects, having improved construction quality, materials and size. Before the fire of 2014, the houses built in the ravines were precarious, constructed mostly with recovered materials from shelters and emergency housing.

+ The combined action of government subsidies and NGOs that tried to promote the use of these subsidies to help people rebuild, engaging them in the design and teaching them how to build safer.

+ The subsidies took into account people’s needs and for instance allowed for the option of densifying a site to ensure families could live together and self-built houses could evolve with need and occupancy.

+ The initial plan was adapted to take into consideration the needs and requests from the affected population.

**WEAKNESSES**

+ The initial response did not account for affected people’s preference in terms of designs or location.

+ Many families did not receive any subsidies as they decided to remain and self-rebuild in informal locations, without ownership and in high-risk zones. The risk of fires spreading across the ravines hence remained, as many structures were rebuilt close to the forest. The fire in January 2017 proved that the most vulnerable remained so, even after this large-scale response.

**LEARNINGS**

- Affected people are the first responders, and will start rebuilding as soon as possible. This response showed how recognizing this and supporting self-recovery as quickly as possible can have a significant impact in the success of the reconstruction and longer-term resilience of affected people.

- Relocation is seldom the solution. People settle in specific locations due to a variety of reasons, and as proved in this case they rarely want to relocate to far-away areas, distant from their social ties and livelihood opportunities, or to move into standardized housing blocks which did not cater for their needs and aspirations. Locally sensitive, tailored solutions proved to be more effective and accepted by the residents of the affected areas.
**OVERVIEW**

**ECUADOR 2016 / EARTHQUAKE**

**ECUADOR EARTHQUAKE, 16 APRIL 2016**

More than 2,000 aftershocks were felt in the 6 months after the earthquake. 9 of these were equal to / greater than 6 on the Richter scale, adding to the initial damage.

**RESPONSE LOCATIONS**

Primarily the Provinces of Manabí and Esmeraldas (total of eight affected provinces).

**TOTAL HOUSES DAMAGED**

45,455 houses categorized as insecure or of restricted use (Government figures as of Dec 2016).

**TOTAL PEOPLE AFFECTED**

386,985 people (as per the Government Register).

**BENEFICIARIES OF THE RESPONSE**

151,699 people (38,045 families).

**RESPONSE OUTPUTS**

As of December 2016

- 45,464 households reached with NFIs / kits.
- 14,581 households reached with tarpaulins.
- 1,186 tents.
- 12,178 households trained.
- 1,453 houses repaired.
- 2,962 t-shirts built.
- 505 households receiving construction materials.

**SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSE**

On 16 April 2016, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck the coastal areas of north-west Ecuador, impacting eight different provinces across the country and damaging or destroying over 45,000 houses. The response was led by the government and consisted of an emergency subsidy package followed by a reconstruction plan for the longer term. The international community assisted primarily in the emergency and transitional phases in rural areas and with advocacy and capacity-building activities.

The earthquake affected primarily the two north-western coastal provinces of Manabí and Esmeraldas, with its epicentre near the town of Muisne.

**TIMELINE**

1. 20 Apr 2016: Shelter Cluster activated.
3. 4 May 2016: Draft shelter sector strategy document agreed.
4. 30 May 2016: Temporary shelter options submitted to government.
6. 20 Jul 2016: Updated shelter options presented to government.
7. 11 Aug 2016: Finalisation of agreed key messages.
8. 15 Aug 2016: Request from government (MICS) for implementation of transitional shelter solutions.
9. 9 Sep 2016: Workshop on lessons learned.
10. 12 Sep 2016: First Training of Trainers in use of key messages.
11. 28 Sep 2016: Official cluster handover.
CONTEXT
Ecuador is an upper-middle income country in Latin America, with a population of around 14.5 million people. It is a country that is resource rich, but also highly vulnerable to natural hazards. Around 96% of the population live in coastal and mountainous areas that are exposed to earthquakes, volcanic activity, floods, landslides and El Niño hazards including drought.

In the early to mid-2000s, the economy in Ecuador enjoyed a high growth, due in large part to its petroleum resources and strong global oil markets. Although there was rapid growth and progress in health, education and housing, it did not always ensure high standards. Income during this time also remained unequal and levels of poverty high in some provinces. In 2015 and 2016, the collapse of oil prices contributed to push the economy back into recession, further exacerbating disparities for vulnerable populations and increasing general pressure on society.

SITUATION BEFORE THE DISASTER
Prior to the earthquake, there were a number of pre-existing vulnerabilities in the country. The hardest hit provinces of Manabí and Esmeraldas had levels of poverty about 30% and 40% respectively. Both provinces were over 40% rural. Almost half of the homes lacked access to public water networks and only a third had access to a sewerage system. The livelihoods of many people in the affected coastal areas depended on fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.

In urban areas, poor land use planning in many towns had resulted in an increase of inadequate and informal settlements. A high proportion of the population across rural and urban areas had no access to recognized land titles. Substandard and unsafe building practices and regulations were in evidence across a number of different building typologies, from lightweight to masonry construction.

SITUATION AFTER THE DISASTER
The above vulnerabilities played a significant part in the high impact of the earthquake. Post disaster, an estimated 60% of the affected people found themselves without adequate housing and/or sanitation and little knowledge of how to access support. In some communities, up to 80% of the local housing stock was lost. Many people were forced to find alternative housing solutions away from their home, affecting critical socio-economic networks and support systems. In the first weeks following the earthquake, people sought refuge in makeshift camps or in community buildings, such as schools. Government-run, planned, camps - the official national solution - were established from May onwards and financial incentives were given during the emergency to support: 1) host families; 2) rentals (though the available rental stock was scarce).

Despite these options, many people chose to stay either on or close to the land they inhabited prior to the quake, often staying in unstable or inadequate shelter to retain links to their livelihoods, networks and assets, until more permanent solutions could be found. This presented a number of problems, not only because people stayed and rebuilt in dangerous situations, or designated no-build zones, but also as it hampered their access to formal assistance mechanisms.

NATIONAL SHELTER RESPONSE
Given the extent of the damage, the government requested international support. Two weeks later, the Shelter Sector leads established coordination services and set up a response team, ensuring co-leadership of the Sector with the Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MIDUVI). The Sector leads provided field and desk support and ran weekly meetings in the hubs of Quito, Portoviejo and Pedernales for the first four months and thereafter every two weeks, until the formal handover in late September 2016.

The government's reconstruction plan “Reconstruyo Ecuador”, was released by MIDUVI in early May as a mechanism to provide rapid support for housing repair and reconstruction through financial assistance in the eight affected provinces. To complement these plans, which were mainly focused on urban areas and outskirts, Shelter Sector partners directed their assistance predominantly to the rural areas. The strategies of the Sector built up from immediate lifesaving activities, to transitional and permanent shelter options, along with technical assistance to communities, which included Build Back Safer messaging and Housing, Land and Property (HLP) support.

Sector partners were restricted in the early months of the response, especially with transitional shelter options, due to perceived conflicts with government reconstruction plans. Successful projects by humanitarian actors (including A.40), were able to provide assistance by being adaptable and not compromising the position of the humanitarian community, or the government. Such responses included distribution of relief items (tools and emergency shelter kits) along with brief technical training, to allow beneficiaries to make simple repairs to their homes, or build small impermanent shelters that allowed them to stay on their land. More durable solutions from the Sector were later approved in areas where the government was projected to take many months to provide permanent housing solutions.

The Shelter Sector also collaborated with the Protection Sector, to establish the HLP Working Group. This group has worked closely with the government at all levels to ensure more inclusive access to the reconstruction and repair incentive package, to respect people's rights in the reconstruction process (including relocations) and to improve the regulation in building codes, promoting the participation of non-governmental actors in the
Although initially challenged by the government, many agencies proposed temporary or transitional shelter solutions, that would use local materials (such as bamboo) and provide adequate living conditions in the time span between the emergency phase and the formal reconstruction process (planned by the government).

process. These efforts helped to enable the implementation of repairs and transitional shelters, and some regulations were modified or adopted in order to protect HLP rights.

COORDINATION CHALLENGES
Although the Shelter Sector was successful during the initial response in providing essential non-food items to the affected communities, the challenge was finding space to act in the transitional phase. With the presence of a strong government plan for reconstruction, with a short timeline, there was little political will to allow the implementation of transitional solutions from Shelter Sector partners (in spite of significant needs for such options).

These delays in the roll out of the incentive scheme and the construction of permanent housing meant that many affected families remained without adequate shelter for months. The Shelter Sector advocated successfully for the necessity of temporary shelters (including water and sanitation) in rural communities, especially where the government would take more than six months to provide permanent housing. The Sector also worked to gain approval for alternative permanent housing options as part of the reconstruction/recovery planning. There was resistance to this from government actors, due to the use of alternative materials (i.e. bamboo) or the incremental nature of sector partners’ solutions.

LAND AND PROPERTY ISSUES
Estimates indicated that only between 20% and 30% of people in the affected areas had access to legally recognized or formal land titles. This presented a major challenge to the Sector as it meant that the majority of the affected population may be excluded from government assistance. The incentive package, when first offered by the government, only included legally recognized “owners” of land. The HLP working group advocated with government authorities to include a wider range of possible beneficiaries of the incentives, ensuring that the majority of the population that held no land tenure would also be included. The advocacy was successful and resulted in the government reforming the regulation to recognize different forms of tenure, as appropriate or relevant to the context. For instance, bona fide landowners who may not have possessed legally recognized title, but could prove their link to the land, were granted tenure through “right of use”. Moreover, the new regulation granted a grace period of three months after receiving the house, to deliver documents proving that the person was legal owner or bona fide landowner.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT
One consequence of the damage was a shift in support for non-standard construction materials. Many affected communities expressed a desire to move away from poorly built reinforced concrete buildings (which collapsed, causing many causalities), to use more lightweight materials that were seen as less dangerous. Although the use of local materials was advocated for by the Shelter Sector, it was also very important to protect natural resources and discourage use of protected or endangered species, especially timber. The Sector facilitated the production of a timber guideline that was circulated as a resource to all sector partners1.

The Shelter Sector worked with key academic institutions in the affected area to develop a registry of alternative materials (bamboo, timber) which included resources required and available, sustainable producers and potential supply pipelines, in an effort to control pressure on these materials. During the response, the government developed new building regulations for the use of bamboo in construction (yet to be fully released). A detailed evaluation tool was developed to assist the government, sector partners and industry stakeholders in evaluating various models of permanent housing design in a more holistic way (including the social, environmental and economic impact of each model)2.

1 This guideline is available online at http://bit.ly/2hNEHDs
2 All these documents, along with other resources, can be found on the Shelter Cluster Ecuador webpage, http://bit.ly/2ko3TR0
Knowledge and implementation of hazard-resistant construction was low in Ecuador. Although the government scheme aimed to ensure the reconstruction of the majority of houses by qualified contractors, a significant number of affected people would not receive such assistance. In many of these cases, people started to rebuild immediately, repeating many of the same practices that led to previous construction weaknesses. Starting from the observation that there were crucial and basic deficiencies in the use of construction materials and detailing, the Technical Working Group within the Shelter Sector decided to produce key messages, both for non-professionals and for local tradespeople, to develop Build Back Safer information and support an improved building culture in the affected areas. These were produced within the working group and based on previous natural disaster responses, such as Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines and the Nepal earthquakes, contextualized and expanded with the assistance of local engineers and construction experts. A guidance document was produced to explain how to use the key messages and a training of trainers was developed, to assist sector partners in delivering the messages to affected communities at a larger scale.

The key messages were disseminated through official channels, partner NGOs and the private sector, including over local media avenues, such as radio and newspapers. A challenge in the collaboration with the authorities around the production of these key messages was to name them “support for self-construction”, given the government position not to support alternative construction channels. This severely hindered the validation and distribution process.

3 All these documents, along with other resources, can be found on the Shelter Cluster Ecuador webpage, [http://bit.ly/2k0hTR0](http://bit.ly/2k0hTR0)

The first key message from the Cluster in Ecuador, as for other shelter responses, was related to the safe location of houses. Much of the vulnerability of the housing stock was in fact due to the location, often in informal, steep, or generally hazard-prone areas (Source: Shelter Cluster Ecuador and MIDUVI).
LESSONS LEARNED

One of the main issues highlighted by this response was the need for the humanitarian community to develop more flexible models and structures to work in middle-income countries, wherein government capacity is higher than other crisis areas. The Sector should be adaptable and able to provide the appropriate assistance required by the host government and not simply operate with standardized approaches. The response mechanism needs to be ready for action, but flexible enough to be influenced by the context and adaptable. The Sector should support the government directly and include urban planning, hazard mapping and engineering expertise, along with relief, HLP, and recovery planning, in its activities. The potential avenues of assistance need to be made clear both to the government and existing in-country actors, who may not have an understanding of the humanitarian system and the potential added value it can bring.

It is necessary to establish clear and consistent sectoral coordination under government leadership, or at least under a co-leadership arrangement, and be complementary to existing response structures. The Shelter Sector in Ecuador operated well for five months with the co-leadership of one international agency and the ministry for housing (MIDUVI), however the relationship could have been strengthened by increasing collaboration from the outset, to clarify roles and responsibilities; targeting other key ministries that may have been able to assist in any bottlenecks and handover; and having more crossover with national disaster response mechanisms.

In relation to HLP, the Shelter Sector should continue to work together with the protection cluster and governments with the support of the international community, to promote HLP studies as a means of prevention and disaster preparedness. There is also a need to build the capacity of local governments, who were responsible for many territorial planning, urban planning and building regulations issues, but who were unable to play a strong role in this regard.

The Sector should also work closely with national and local authorities in order to ensure that policies and implementation modalities do not exclude affected populations due to, for instance, their tenure status. Ensuring tenure security (not necessarily formalisation) needs to be a focus of all sheltering activities.

Although they took some time to complete, due to the collaborative nature of the process, the key messages were a largely successful part of the response. The fact that the messages were produced directly in Spanish was seen as a strength, and the accompanying guidance notes and subsequent trainings were a further positive step forward in making the messages both relevant and immediately usable.

The potential of the Shelter Sector is reflected in the following case study (A.40) that demonstrates flexibility, collaboration and a locally based approach, that ensured an appropriate and effective outcome. The international humanitarian actors provided technical and resource support to an existing organization working on the ground, acting within the local government structures. Each organization worked to their strengths to deliver a coordinated and well-rounded response that assisted families in the recovery process, gave advice where needed and strengthened community knowledge.
**CASE STUDY**

**ECUADOR 2016 / EARTHQUAKE**

**KEYWORDS:** Emergency shelter, NFI distribution, Capacity-building, Community participation, Partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS</th>
<th>Ecuador Earthquake, 16 April 2016.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL HOUSES DAMAGED</td>
<td>45,455 (Government figures as of December 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PEOPLE AFFECTED</td>
<td>386,985 people (source: Government of Ecuador).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROJECT LOCATIONS</td>
<td>Selected parishes in Portoviejo, Manabí Province.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENEFICIARIES</td>
<td>3,290 households (Approx. 16,450 people, with five persons per household).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROJECT OUTPUTS**

- 3,290 Emergency Shelter Kits.
- 220 Construction Materials Kits.
- 2,100 Water filters.
- 2,680 NFI kits (Mosquito nets, Jerry cans, water filters, kitchen set, solar lamps).

**SHELTER SIZE**

Approx. 24m²

**SHELTER DENSITY**

Approx. 4.8m² per person.

**MATERIALS COST PER HOUSEHOLD**

- Phase 1: USD 71 (Not including labour: Households invested approximately USD 32).
- Phase 2: construction materials kit cost: USD 340.

**PROJECT COST PER HOUSEHOLD**

Approx. USD 132 (Phase 1).

**OUTCOME INDICATORS**

1/ **Knowledge and skills:** 75% of surveyed beneficiaries agreed with the statement that “the shelter training provided was useful”.
2/ **Reduced Displacement:** 85% stated that they had built their shelter on their original plot. 90% stated that the distribution of shelter items made it easier to stay on their plots.
3/ **Reduced Stress and Anxiety:** 70% stated that by receiving shelter aid they could concentrate on meeting other critical needs (Source: Post Distribution Monitoring Report).

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

This project was the result of a collaborative effort between two international organizations (INGO) and a local NGO, to assist earthquake-affected families through the provision of emergency shelter kits and non-food items, coupled with technical support and trainings. Further construction materials were distributed for particularly vulnerable households in the second phase of the project.

**STRENGTHS**

- Excellent community ties of the local partner.
- Well established relationships amongst project partners and complementarity of approaches.
- Capacity-building components and community ownership.
- Focus on one geographic location.

**WEAKNESSES**

- Potential delays due to limited staff available for the project.
- The integration of community volunteers was not very high.
- Mosquito nets were not included for all households.
- Implementation by local leaders was not always consistent with the training and advice given by project partners.
CONTEXT
For more information on the background and the shelter response, see overview A.39.

PROJECT GOALS AND PHASES
Through effective partnerships at global and national level, the project aimed at addressing the emergency shelter needs of people in targeted locations affected by the earthquake, minimizing displacement and paving the way for self-recovery strategies. This was achieved through a first phase distribution of shelter kits and NFIs (three months), and a second phase distribution of construction materials to selected vulnerable households (two months).

LOCATIONS AND BENEFICIARY SELECTION
The project areas were selected in coordination with national and local governments and shelter sector coordinators. The local partner had established links with the targeted communities and most agencies had focused their response on other areas. At the time of implementation, this project was the only visible shelter project in the area. Households were selected following government damage surveys (red = destroyed/uninhabitable, yellow = partially restricted use, green = safe). Houses categorized as red were all targeted. Households with specific vulnerabilities, such as female-headed households, those with members with disabilities, or with children under five years or elders, were selected for additional assistance in the second phase of the project and received extra materials and labour support.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION
The project was implemented through distributions and trainings at the community level, primarily by the local partner, with approximately 10 staff. INGO partners sent a total of six staff and provided remote support throughout. Firstly, a training of trainers for the local organization staff and community representatives was conducted by one INGO partner on the use of the shelter kits and distribution methods. Subsequently, the local partner took care of the technical supervision of trainings and distributions, while monitoring was undertaken by an INGO partner. The trained community representa-
tives acted as focal points in each community, to enable beneficiaries to have clear guidance from within their own community, rather than from external agencies. This approach aimed at developing a sense of community ownership over the process of self-recovery. Distributions were carried out at community centres, the local community being informed well in advance of the date and time. Project partners ensured that there was a high level of community representation, with community members actually distributing many items themselves. Beneficiaries were also trained, during the distributions, on the use of the kits.

In the second phase (also implemented by the local partner), selected households were given additional construction materials funded by one INGO and trainings that complemented the distributions in phase one. Demonstration shelters were built to provide a reference to the communities. The second phase was designed to build on the first phase, to support households in their recovery efforts, and focused only on a part of the first caseload. Initial technical supervision of phase two was provided by one INGO and then passed on to the local partner.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
The affected populations were considered as key partners in the project, being actively engaged by project partners during beneficiary selection and implementation, thanks to the training of trainers approach. In all cases, the partners worked within existing community structures to allow as much involvement and ownership as possible. This led to a highly community-driven assistance model, which was praised by project partners and sector coordinators, as households felt comfortable and supported along the process. It was also seen that the cascade training methodology led to high levels of uptake of best practices, especially in the use of shelter kits. In a monitoring visit, around 70% of the shelter kits distributed were seen in use 48 hours after distribution. Of these, around 95% were seen using techniques that had been taught to community members. Conversations with beneficiaries showed that they knew the focal points in their community and felt supported by community structures in the use of the shelter kits.

The project provided earthquake-affected families with emergency shelter kits and trainings at the community level, so that they could be better able to build shelters.
The project had a high level of community engagement and training. Community representatives would act as focal points to ensure a smooth implementation.

COORDINATION

Prior to this response, there had been good coordination between the two INGO partners at the global and regional levels. This had been initiated through Shelter Cluster mechanisms, and meant that both parties communicated and were familiar with their methods. The continuous support from sector coordinators also facilitated the implementation process. At the response level, coordination was passed on to the local organization, to encourage local solutions and capacity-building. The local organization also had good links with the municipal government, paving the way for a smooth process and good access in targeted areas.

MATERIALS SOURCING

The NFIs and shelter kits for phase one were all sourced internationally by one INGO partner and imported during the emergency phase. Stocks were sourced in this way so as to ensure swift delivery at scale, to the correct specifications, when there was not the time to complete full market surveys and procurement in country. As the kits were standard IFRC specification, procured from accredited manufacturers, the quality control was built-in and no issues were identified at the time of the project, nor in subsequent evaluations.

In phase two, materials – such as untreated bamboo and timber for framing – were locally sourced by the affected population. Bamboo was chosen as it was abundantly available, relatively cheap (when untreated) and locally accepted. Many of the affected communities seemed highly skilled in its use, being able to produce secure frames very quickly. Additionally, many households were salvaging timbers and other materials. Remarkably, the emergency shelters funded by one INGO were built upon the kits initially provided by the other INGO, generating significant economies of scale.

TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

In phase one, the use of locally available, low-tech, skills and materials was encouraged, and simple techniques were designed so that community members could easily understand and use them. The local partner representatives were trained in the use of the shelter kits, such as standardized fixing techniques for tarpaulins to timber, bamboo and rope. These techniques were in line with Shelter Cluster guidance.

In phase two, 220 extremely vulnerable families from two parishes received additional construction materials, to improve the quality of their temporary shelters. According to the different needs and land typologies, two different kits were designed. In Crucita, a coastal parish, the design considered the use of the shelter kit provided in advance and included bamboo structures and a concrete floor. The other type of materials kit was designed for Rio Chico, a parish affected by seasonal floods, and allowed the households to raise their shelters with a bamboo structure and wooden floors. In the future, this temporary shelter can be used as a storage unit.

In all of the cases, tarpaulins were used for walls and coverings. Families were instructed not to use permanent materials for their temporary shelters, as it would potentially disqualify them for future government support towards a permanent house, and add additional weight on the limited load-bearing structure.

MAIN CHALLENGES

TIMELINESS. Although initially some partners felt that the shelter kits had taken too long to be procured (approx. one month), a post distribution survey found that beneficiaries were satisfied. Most of the procurement challenges were overcome thanks to the local partner, who could act as a consignee to import the kits.

DEVELOPING THE PARTNERSHIP. Although it was seen as a key project strength, the development of the partnership between the two international and one local partners required time and input from all three parties. This challenge was mitigated through pre-existing agreements between the two INGO partners and the in-country relationship between one INGO and the local organization. Agreements and working methods were established in a timely manner, thanks to effective coordination at global, regional and field levels.

DEFINING A CASELOAD. In the initial phase, the three partners selected beneficiaries based on damage data compiled by the government. Once a caseload had been defined, further aftershocks caused some areas to be reassessed and some previously excluded households became eligible for assistance. This could not be covered by the first round of distributions, as it happened after the logistical mobilization of the kits. However, it was addressed with a second round of emergency assistance that mirrored the first. It was highly beneficial that the local partner was continuously active both at field and capital levels to understand the changing needs, and that the INGO partners continued to coordinate and had resources to enable the second round.

WIDER IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

As shown in the Post Distribution Monitoring report, the project helped communities in their self-recovery, both through technical trainings and promotion of community ownership of the process. The project avoided displacement, as most beneficiaries were able to stay on their original plots, without leaving their communities and livelihoods. They also felt that, thanks to the shelter intervention, they were able to focus on other critical needs.

Additionally, INGO partners felt that the project led to increased capacities, both within the local organization and the communities, in terms of dealing with shelter issues in response to a natural disaster. Such capacities are both “hard” and “soft”, as communities now have clear systems and focal points to respond to a disaster. It was also felt that relationships between the communities and the local organization were strengthened by the project.

Shelter sector coordinators, who visited project areas and distributions, praised the project approach, especially for its community focus and capacity-building aspects. The success assessed by partners, communities and coordinators, has led one of the INGO partners to consider replicating this model of assistance in other contexts.
STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS
+ Capacity of the local implementer, who had excellent community ties.
+ Well established relationships amongst project partners. The two INGO partners had good relationships at the regional and global levels, and had worked together before. These relationships had been created and fostered through Shelter Cluster mechanisms. The relationship between the two INGO partners is based on the complementarity of approaches, as one has a focus on emergency shelter, while the other has a more recovery-based focus, whilst the local organization had community ties and knowledge of the local context. The partnership hopes to enable good quality shelter programming throughout the post disaster phases, thanks to elements of continuity from the emergency phase through early recovery, as well as the continued dialogue and assistance between actors.
+ Capacity-building components and community ownership. The cascade-style training of trainers reinforced community recovery efforts, even though the items and trainings were provided by project partners. Particularly, the training of community leaders (as a network of local focal points to support families in the proper use of shelter kits) ensured the sustainability of the intervention.
+ Focus on one geographic location, rather than attempting to cover more areas than capacity allowed.

WEAKNESSES
+ The decision to use minimal staff for the project meant that project timescales were potentially lengthened.
+ The integration of community volunteers was not as high as was hoped, primarily due to a lack of monitoring capacity.
+ Mosquito nets should have been included since the start and for all beneficiaries, as many shelters had open gables to allow airflow, and the first round of distributions did not include mosquito nets for all households.
+ Implementation by local leaders was not always consistent with the training and advice given by project partners. This was mainly due to a lack of project staff at site level. It was agreed by project partners that greater levels of monitoring, immediately post distribution, would have enabled a more consistent implementation.

LEARNINGS
• Training of trainers, directly targeting community representatives, greatly enhances self-recovery.
• It is important to foster ownership with a community-based approach and engage local leaders since the start. In this project, they were responsible for different activities, supporting communities towards their own recovery.
• Continued dialogue between INGO partners at the regional and global levels, outside of times of calamity, will lead to increased coordination and partnerships at field level. This can be achieved through official coordination mechanisms, such as the Shelter Cluster and bilateral conversations.
• Working alongside – and building the capacity of – local organizations can be key to gaining sustainable access to affected communities and can lead to a longer-term presence, than if works are carried out by international actors alone.

MATERIALS LIST

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATERIALS LIST</th>
<th>1 kit per HH</th>
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<td><strong>CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL KIT - TYPE 1</strong></td>
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<td>Pole</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pole</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pole</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pole</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bag</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m²</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m³</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL KIT - TYPE 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pole</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pole</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pole</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pole</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box</td>
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<td>Pole</td>
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<td>unit</td>
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<td>Bag</td>
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<td>m²</td>
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<td>unit</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Screw</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Shelter kits (and construction kits in phase 2) were distributed by the local partner (see materials list below), while supervision and programme design, monitoring and evaluation was done by the two INGO partners.
A massive influx of refugees and migrants through South-Eastern European countries resulted in an emergency in transit—as well as destination—countries between 2015 and 2016. However, migration towards Europe was not a new phenomenon. This overview focuses on the shelter coordination and response to this crisis in key locations, primarily Greece, the Balkans and Germany, where the majority of first arrivals to the EU, transit and final arrivals to destination were found.

**SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSE**

Migrants flows to Europe, 2015-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS</th>
<th>Migrations flows to Europe, 2015-2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL ARRIVALS BY LAND AND SEA</td>
<td>1,046,599 in 2015 387,739 in 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OVERVIEW**

**EUROPE 2015-2016 / REFUGEE CRISIS**

**COUNTRIES OF ARRIVAL IN EUROPE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>NUMBER OF PEOPLE ARRIVING (1 Jan 2015 - 31 Dec 2016)</th>
<th>NUMBER OF PEOPLE STRANDED (As of 31 Dec 2016)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>335,278</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>1,034,269</td>
<td>62,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>47,136</td>
<td>5,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>17,091</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COUNTRIES OF TRANSIT IN EUROPE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>NUMBER OF PEOPLE ARRIVING (1 Jan 2015 - 31 Dec 2016)</th>
<th>NUMBER OF PEOPLE STRANDED (As of 31 Dec 2016)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FYROM*</td>
<td>478,004</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>678,493</td>
<td>5,633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>430,690</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>659,105</td>
<td>624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>477,791</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

**TIMELINE**

2011: Arab Spring prompts start of increased migration from North and sub-Saharan Africa to Malta and Italy via the Central Mediterranean route. Start of conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and first population movements into neighbouring countries (Turkey and Lebanon).

2012: Escalating flight of Syrian refugees into neighbouring countries (including Jordan, Iraq and Egypt).

Apr 2015: Start of "Balkan route" migration.

Jun 2015: UNHCR declares internal Level 2 Emergency for Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia.

Aug 2015: Start of open borders in Austria and Germany.

Sep 2015: Closure of Hungary’s borders; arrivals to Croatia and Slovenia increase.

Oct 2015: Peak monthly arrivals to Greece by sea.

Mar 2016: Closure of the migration routes through the Balkans due to re-activation of Schengen border regimes. EU-Turkey deal made to relocate new arrivals.

Nov 2016: 543% increase in stranded migrants in Bulgaria since March 2016.

**EASTERN AND CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN - MONTHLY ARRIVALS TO GREECE AND ITALY (2015 - 2016)**

1 IOM, as of 31 December 2016 (http://migration.iom.int/europe). Data collated from national authorities, IOM and UNHCR.

2 Stranded migrants are those who, for a reason beyond their control, have been unintentionally forced to stay in a country (European Migration Network).

Migration departing from North Africa towards Europe increased since 2011. However, since 2015, attention was focused on the emergency situation caused by large population movements into the Balkans and Northern/Western European countries (via Turkey and Greece). Compared to the 219,000 people who arrived in 2014, a 500% increase in total arrivals to Europe was seen in 2015. Ongoing and escalating conflicts were likely to account for the dramatic increase in numbers arriving to Greece, with 47% of arrivals coming from the Syrian Arab Republic, 24% from Afghanistan and 15% from Iraq. During the second part of 2015, arrivals to Greece by sea reached their peak. By the end of the year, 857,363 people arrived in Greece (compared to 153,842 to Italy). Arrivals did not decrease significantly over winter, despite harsh conditions at sea.

**MIGRATION IN 2016**

Arrivals to Italy in 2016 (total: 181,436) increased 18% from 2015, mostly via the Central Mediterranean route. Migrants and refugees originate from a number of different countries in North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and the Horn of Africa, with a small proportion from the Syrian Arab Republic (less than 1%).

Greece saw a 79% decrease in cumulative arrivals, totalling 176,906 in 2016, inverting the trend from 2015. The reactivation of the standard Schengen border arrangements in March 2016 closed the borders of several transit countries, to stem the flow of people. Combined with an agreement between the European Union (EU) and Turkey in March 2016 to return migrants and asylum seekers to Turkey, this led to a significant decline in arrivals by sea to Greece.

As of December 2016, the total number of migrants and refugees stranded in Greece and the Balkans was 75,031. In Greece, all new arrivals were restricted to the islands, until asylum status (or safe relocation to Turkey) could be established.

**COORDINATION AND RESPONSE**

Initially, the authorities and humanitarian responders in Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia were addressing a dynamic situation of populations in transit. This required temporary accommodation and mobile and lightweight assistance at strategic points, as people continued their journey northwards. Assistance often comprised distribution of NFI’s, emergency shelter, establishment of collective shelters in existing buildings or in tents and Rubb Halls, and adaptation of buildings and sites to allow basic services and facilities to be provided in areas of transit.

As border closures and restrictions on movement came into force in early 2016, longer-term assistance was required to adapt to more static populations in numerous locations across Greece and countries on the Balkan route. For example, reception centres were consolidated and expanded, to allow the closure of other ad-hoc transit areas, and services and facilities in these sites were improved, through upgrades and rehabilitations, such as the installation of heating, insulation, water networks and sanitation.
GREECE

Emergency support needs in Greece remained high in 2016. Formal and informal settlements, including refugee camps, were negotiated and established, with other accommodation and shelter options being explored. There was a high level of technical capacity already present, as well as a desire from Greek civil society to be at the forefront of the response. Pre-registration of arrivals occurs in Reception and Identification Centres (formerly called “hotspots”) on the islands of Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Leros and Kos, rather than direct transfer to the mainland. Surveys indicate that people prefer to be transferred to alternative accommodation in urban centres, such as Athens or Thessaloniki. During the first-wave of arrivals, refugees and migrants with greater financial means attempted to leave Greece quickly, while more vulnerable populations had to remain, mainly in urban areas. Those with financial resources chose to improve their shelter situation by finding alternative private accommodation, for instance. In 2016, occupancy far outstripped capacity on the islands and, towards the end of the year, capacity to absorb arrivals became limited also on the mainland. Approximately 51,000 places were available in various forms of accommodation in December 2016, leaving a shortfall of 11,000 places.

In 2016, Greece therefore evolved from a transit country into a longer-term hosting location. The majority of sites on the mainland were government-built, emergency, tented settlements, intended for temporary use. They soon went over capacity, with limited services that did not meet minimum standards and were located away from urban centres, increasing dependency on multi-sector assistance. While the government took on the primary duty of providing shelter and services to camps, gaps in service provision emerged – particularly for persons with specific needs and vulnerabilities. At the time of writing, additional and expanded sites were being planned, with the evacuation of spontaneous settlements in public parks and squares foreseen.

By the end of 2016, 21,057 reception places were created in Greece for relocation candidates to other EU countries, when the capacity in 2015 was about 1,200. During 2016, this programme was expanded to other people seeking asylum in Greece, prioritizing the most vulnerable and embracing other forms of accommodation than formal camps, including apartments, hotels and “matchmaking” refugees with host families. The provision of this type of accommodation included service delivery in compliance with applicable Greek laws and regulations. Local NGOs and community-based organizations also engaged in alternative shelter support to refugees and migrants. These organizations either rented a hotel, which provided the services, or a building and rehabilitated or adapted it, with services provided by the residents themselves, or the organization’s volunteers.

The sector also started identifying opportunities for mid- to long-term shelter solutions within the existing building stock, including the use of public-private and market-based initiatives. For example, the use of holiday homes and apartments (approx. 30% of buildings in Athens are vacant), or renovations to older buildings. Another idea was the conversion of public and commercial buildings to residential accommodation, with expedited procedures to obtain permission for a change of use and negotiations over rent.

A Shelter-NFI Sector Working Group was established in March 2016 in Greece, to facilitate inter-agency coordination of response activities for refugees and migrants. The main activities were:

1) Coordinating with relevant government bodies and all other sectors.
2) Validating, promoting and monitoring of the use of technical guidance and minimum standards, across all shelter and NFI interventions.
3) Building local and national capacity to understand humanitarian needs with regard to shelter and NFI.
4) Exploring appropriate shelter and site planning designs for longer-term solutions within sites.
5) Pursuing an integrated urban shelter strategy to promote alternatives to camps, by capitalizing on existing building stock.

At the regional field level, there were two hubs: Attica / Central Greece and Thessaloniki. Each of the five main reception islands had their own working group hub. The Working Group developed a number of technical guidance documents, including minimum standards and procedures on shelter shading structures, NFIs and distributions, heating solutions, site planning standards, shelter upgrading and communal kitchens.

By the end of 2016, at national level, the coordination structure was modified, to better reflect the operational needs of the refugees and migrants and to facilitate stronger communication with relevant governmental counterparts. Thus, Shelter merged with WASH, while NFI split to standalone as one working group. The intention for 2017 was for NFI, cash and food to merge as

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91 CRS, Refugee and Migrant Emergency in Europe: City of Athens Shelter Analysis, June 2016.
92 NRC Rapid Assessment for out-of-camp housing and education, July 2016.
93 CRS, Refugee and Migrant Emergency in Europe: City of Athens Shelter Analysis, June 2016.
a “Basic Assistance” Working Group, while shelter and WASH would remain combined at all coordination levels.\(^\text{15}\)

**THE BALKAN ROUTE**

With the sealing of Hungary’s borders in September 2015, increasing numbers of migrants arrived in Croatia and Slovenia from Serbia. Transit and reception centres started to be established at the multiple entry, transit and exit points. Available facilities at these crossing points were put to temporary use as registration points and accommodation, but conditions were very basic, providing only protection against the elements, NFI, food distribution and emergency medical services. As these camp-like sites were mostly not suitable for winter conditions, alternative transit areas had to be developed to provide registration and other services, such as medical assistance, psychosocial support, family reunification, food, separate showers, mother-baby centres and child friendly areas, alongside meeting other minimum standards, such as covered space and WASH. Changing transport arrangements for incoming populations (from train to buses) succeeded in reducing the need for such numerous and dispersed facilities. In urban centres, some of the migrant population were living in unofficial sites, such as abandoned buildings, or sleeping rough.

However, the number of people transiting through the Balkans was under-estimated, as many did not register. The majority aimed to travel through the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia, onwards to Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia. Shelter needs in 2015 were for safe, temporary shelter along transit routes, particularly at border crossings, boat crossings and registration sites, where bottlenecks would form and people would remain stranded for significant periods of time. A major challenge in 2016 remained ensuring protection from the severe winter weather in the region, as well as the provision of more suitable overall conditions for longer-term accommodation and integration.

**GERMANY**

At the end of August 2015, Germany opened its doors to Syrian asylum seekers, no matter in which EU country they had set foot before. There were up to 60,000 new arrivals per week in September 2015 (figures decreased to 21,000 in January 2016 and plummeted to 700 in August 2016\(^\text{16}\)), most of whom travelled through Austria and entered Germany in the state of Bavaria. Once in Germany\(^\text{17}\), populations on the move were received at reception centres at border towns, typically for only a few days before being relocated to mid-term accommodation. Before the opening of reception centres, first accommodation for newly arriving refugees and migrants was ad hoc, ranging from sports halls and unused buildings, but also including people sleeping in train stations, or even in the open.

In order to provide adequate shelter for almost one million refugees and migrants who arrived during 2015, a number of interventions were mobilized:

- Winterizing existing accommodation;
- Re-purposing of existing buildings as collective centres;
- Construction of Rubb Halls / large tents as collective centres;
- Erection of family-sized tents;
- Installation of infrastructure and communal facilities;

\(^{15}\) 2017 Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RRMRP)

\(^{16}\) German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, [http://www.bamf.de/EN](http://www.bamf.de/EN)

\(^{17}\) This overview focuses on Germany, as it was the main destination country and because the following case study A.42 deals with the set-up and operation of a reception centre near the Austrian border. Other destination countries include Sweden, Austria, the Netherlands and Norway.

These evolved into mid-term accommodation sites run by a number of organizations, in order to provide support during the asylum application process. Long-term accommodation for accepted asylum seekers was ideally seen as a general social housing scheme. The government emphasized integrating the refugees as soon as possible, instead of risking the creation of “refugee ghettos”. Therefore, long-neglected social housing programmes were reactivated, funded by the communes and the federal government. Since there had been a shortage of affordable housing in most of major German cities for years, the aim was to benefit both the refugees and the hosting communes.

**LOOKING FORWARD / CHALLENGES**

In early 2017, short-, mid- and long-term accommodation options in Greece, countries along the Balkan route and in destination countries were being explored, through a scaling-up of construction, upgrading and expansion of facilities and sites. However, the attainment of suitable, durable, solutions for those already in Europe and those that continued to arrive – both in terms of legal status and more immediate basic needs – remained a higher-level political issue, which usually takes time to resolve in each hosting country and within the EU.

Advocacy for clear, coordinated and consistent long-term strategies to address the needs of migrants, refugees and host populations continued. However, the challenges faced across Europe were rising, as intended temporary shelters became a longer-term norm for many people. Tensions between some host communities and migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, escalated in many countries in Europe, occasionally resulting in violence and destruction of shelters and settlements. Frustration was also felt for the long registration waiting times and the deterioration of living conditions. While camp-like solutions often seemed to be preferred, sites varied greatly in service-provision, standards and conditions. Some governments were slow in assigning sites and expanding capacity in alternative locations, to enable a transition to mid-term accommodation, while asylum or relocation procedures are underway. In addition, lack of coordination and resources led to gaps in service provision, such as winterized accommodation and safe cooking provision.
### Case Study: Germany 2015-2016 / Refugee Crisis

**Keywords:** Emergency shelter, NFI distribution, Site planning, Infrastructure, Short-term reception centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crisis</th>
<th>European migrant and refugee crisis (multiple countries of origin)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total People Affected</td>
<td>1,047,162 total arrivals to Europe in 2015. 382,687 total arrivals to Europe in 2016. 476,649 Asylum Requests in Germany in 2015.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Locations</td>
<td>Feldkirchen and Erding, Bavaria, Germany.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>170,000+ individuals (across both sites).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outputs</td>
<td>Feldkirchen: accommodation for up to 3,200 individuals. Erding: accommodation for up to 5,000 individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter Size</td>
<td>Varies from single-family tents (18m²), to pre-fabricated shared structures (2,500m²).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter Density</td>
<td>Varies from 3m² per person (family tent) to 8m² per person in larger halls. Note: more than 90% of the people spent less than 24 hours in the facilities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Summary**

Two short-term reception centres were set up in the state of Bavaria to provide temporary accommodation for thousands of migrants and refugees entering Germany at the peak of the migration crisis in 2015. One site was set up in the summer and then winterized in phases, while the other opened as a winterized camp after a longer construction period.

### Timeline

AUG 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 Sep 2015</td>
<td>Non-winterized accommodation for up to 3,000 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Sept. 2015</td>
<td>Ground preparation for collective structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Oct 2015</td>
<td>Start of set-up of four large, pre-fab, light-weight, collective hall structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 2015</td>
<td>Start of works for dismantling summer tents and ground preparation for semi-permanent winter tents. Installation of drainage and sanitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Nov 2015</td>
<td>Replacement of administration tents with modular winterized containers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 2015</td>
<td>Start of works for dismantling collective halls and replacement with wooden structures, with higher snow-bearing capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Jul 2016</td>
<td>Stand-by mode for both sites (arrivals have ended)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Strengths

- Rapid involvement of local volunteers at scale.
- Support and engagement of the armed forces.
- Positive partnership with civil protection and armed forces.
- Very fast, flexible and coordinated approach to set up the camp.
- Quick availability of essential items thanks to the organization’s network.

### Weaknesses

- Lack of available space and stricter regulations, due to poor site location.
- Complex coordination structures, which diverted resources and energy.
- Lack of experienced staff at field and HQ levels.

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Main migrant route to Germany, 2015

**Map:** Main migrant route to Germany, 2015

![Map of Europe showing migration routes](image-url)
PROJECT GOALS

The organization was asked to provide mass accommodation for short-term use close to the Austrian border, where the majority of migrants and refugees entered. Two sites (Feldkirchen and Erding) were set up for this purpose. These first reception centres needed to cover basic needs, whilst at the same time the official government registration process was starting. The project used a holistic approach, aimed at providing warm and safe shelter, food, essential NFIs, family-member tracking and medical services to the newly arrived refugees and migrants, with priority to unaccompanied minors, sick and traumatized people. An official registration centre on site allowed the start of the legal process to apply for asylum, as well as providing information and counselling about the asylum processes in Germany and the EU.

PROJECT LOCATIONS

Different sites, belonging to the German army and municipalities in lower Bavaria, were assessed for a possible location to set up a camp for up to 5,000 people in a very short time frame. Feldkirchen, one of the two chosen sites, is located about 100km away from Passau (the main border-crossing point from Austria) and is outside the boundaries of a military base. The proximity to the base ensured access to infrastructure (electricity, water and sewerage grids), ready-to-use facilities such as gyms (in Feldkirchen) and hangars (in Erding), manpower provided by the federal army, as well as equipment and machinery for a quick set-up. Although the organization worked on both sites, this case study focuses primarily on Feldkirchen.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The camp in Feldkirchen had to be opened just after one week of construction, in order to release the pressure from the immediate border towns and to prevent big numbers of refugees heading to Munich, where the Oktoberfest was ongoing. It started as a summer-camp, using gymnasia and family tents as accommodation facilities. Step by step, it was scaled up to a winterized camp, with works carried out during

CONTEXT

See overview A.41 for more information on the migration/refugee crisis in Europe in 2015-2016.

ACCOMMODATION FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS

All asylum seekers in Germany were first received in the closest reception facilities of the Federal Land in question. Such a facility could be responsible for temporary, as well as longer-term, accommodation. Depending on the country of origin, asylum seekers could be accommodated in reception facilities for up to six months, or until their application was decided on. They could also be allocated to another facility during this period, under certain circumstances, for instance for family reunification.

New arrivals had to be distributed evenly across the different states and communes in Germany, based upon the size and capacity of each individual community. The government granted waivers to town- and country-planning codes, in order to accelerate the set-up of accommodation facilities for asylum seekers.

There were three accommodation types: 1) short-term, first reception centres, intended for registration and very short stay (up to three days); 2) mid-term, secondary reception centres (up to three months); and 3) long-term, collective centres (though individual apartments were the preferred option in the long run). Given the emergency situation, most short-term accommodations, such as schools and gymnasiaums, were used for longer periods of time. While at first short-term centres received people both at day and night, once transport by trains and buses was established at border towns, the migrants were taken directly to mid-term reception centres all over the country, where they stayed until a decision was taken about their asylum application. Most people arrived at the short-term reception centres at night, when transport to other parts of the country was not operating.

normal camp operations by temporarily reducing the capacity. The site in Erding opened already as a winterized camp, after a longer construction period.

The project was implemented in a joint effort of multiple partners, including the implementing organization at the national and local levels, the civil protection, the armed forces and relevant local authorities. Three gymnasiums could be used for collective centres immediately, with enough space around to set up hundreds of family tents.

Besides active support in the set-up, the armed forces (the Helfende Hände / helping-hands sector) were also used for the registration process. The civil protection’s huge network of highly skilled volunteers was well equipped with heavy machinery and tools to be used in case of emergencies. Within one week, a camp to accommodate up to 3,000 people was set up.

In a second step, a better planned camp, with proper infrastructure and sufficient winterized accommodations, was to be built on the former airfield of the base. However, due to environmental protection issues, the preferred location was finally not available. The winterized accommodation facilities (3,200 in Feldkirchen, 5,000 in Erding) were set up on the same site, using a variety of different shelter interventions: re-purposing of existing buildings and construction of large tents as collective centres; deployment of family tents; installation of infrastructure and structures for communal facilities. At peak, Feldkirchen was accepting up to 25 buses (with approximately 1,400 new arrivals) per night.

All those who passed through the reception centres of Feldkirchen and Erding, moved to longer-term accommodation elsewhere in Germany through a series of steps, or tried to reach another European country to apply for asylum.

After June 2016, due the decrease in arrivals, the two sites were put in stand-by mode. Within 72 hours, Feldkirchen could accommodate up to 1,000 people, and after 14 days it could reach full capacity. Erding could be back to full capacity within a notice of 30 days.

**COORDINATION**

New arrivals to the state of Bavaria who could not be distributed to other states, or were caught by the border police, were sent by buses to Feldkirchen. The capacity of the camp was communicated on a daily basis to the refugee coordination centres in Passau and Munich, in order to decide how many refugees would be distributed between the different reception centres.

Within the camp, there were two complex layers of coordination for the project. Both daily camp management and longer term modifications of the camp had to be coordinated with a wide range of actors. Bi-weekly coordination meetings aimed to solve all issues as they arose, which was normal for a project under such extreme time pressure.

**MAIN CHALLENGES**

The major challenge was turning the summer camp into a winterized camp, because the works had to be conducted on the same site, while it was operating. Scaling-up was done by sectors, causing a temporary reduction of accommodation capacities. The sector that was to be scaled up had to be separated by fences from the main camp, the summer tents were removed and the ground was prepared, before the winterized structures could be installed in each sector. There was a significant drop in numbers of refugees in November and December 2015, which made this process easier.

Without the waivers to normal planning codes, granted by the government for the emergency situation, this project would not have been possible in the given time frame. Still, it was challenging to implement such a project with authorities who were used to very clear laws and responsibilities, which were not always applicable for the camp construction. Administrative levels and requirements changed during the set-up period, causing some inconsistencies. For example, several rows of winterized tents (that had already been installed) had to be moved to provide wider escape aisles in case of fire or panic, although the set-up had previously been agreed. Fire prevention was the most difficult and controversial part, due to different interpretations of safety. In Feldkirchen, for instance, bunk beds were not allowed in collective halls (due to fire risk), whilst there were no problems in Erding. Although at the national level there was consent to prioritize action over bureaucracy, at field level it was not always clear how flexible rules were. As a result, the project would sometimes make a brave step forward followed by two steps back.

**WIDER IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT**

There was great interest in this project within the hosting community and many volunteers supported the camp operations in different ways: with in-kind donations, during the welcome of new arrivals, or playing with the children. A local night club organized charity concerts to support the camp. The entrance fee was a pair of warm socks, shoes or other winter clothes, which were all urgently needed for the camp residents.

The camp also attracted local businesses. Soon, private taxis were waiting in front of the camp to take customers from the camp to the next train station, though this was not encouraged. Local suppliers also provided other services to run the camp, such as heating fuel, catering and laundry.
STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

STRENGTHS

+ **Involvement of local volunteers** through the local branch was rapid and at scale. Volunteers were interviewed and deployed within a few weeks, according to their capacities and interests. Several people from the organization and its local branch were deployed just to coordinate the volunteers.

+ **The armed forces were supportive and engaged** throughout the process.

+ **Positive partnership with civil protection and armed forces**, due to the ad-hoc availability of skilled manpower and professional technical equipment.

+ **Very fast and coordinated approach to set up the camp.** All partners were strongly committed to provide the best support possible to the refugees. There was flexibility to start with a quick-and-dirty solution to provide urgently needed relief, and then to scale up, step by step.

+ **Quick availability of huge numbers of essential items,** like tents, field beds and blankets, was possible through combined donations of the organization’s partner societies.

WEAKNESSES

- **Lack of available space and strict regulations, due to poor site location.** The site was situated between military barracks, a water protection area and the breeding ground of a protected bird, so there was no space for expansion or relocation during the winterization phase. Additionally, strict regulations were applied on handling fuel for heating and power generators, because of the direct proximity to the environmental protection area.

- **Complex coordination structures** to plan the winterized camp, with changes in levels of authorities, diverted resources and energy from daily activities.

- **Lack of experienced staff at field, as well as Headquarters, levels** caused stress and misunderstandings. Rapid deployment of experienced people, who could run such a camp 24/7, turned out to be very challenging. International partner societies stepped in, but staff still needed to work very long hours, and there was high turnover.

- **Insufficient strategic approach to the recruitment of national staff** in all positions, but in particular those with translation capacities.

- **No real link to mid- or long-term accommodation,** since no one knew where people would be hosted next.

LEARNINGS

- **Include an expert on environmental issues** in the assessment team tasked with choosing the site.

- **Have all relevant authorities on board from the beginning.** In this case, such a project was new to the authorities and the legal implications not always clear. The local fire brigade seemed to be one of the most important partners.

- **Include a shelter expert in the planning process** from the very beginning.

- **The multi sectoral approach was essential to the success of this project.** Shelter, food, medical screening and treatment (also important to protect others in mass accommodation), NFI s and restoring family links were all key components, which would not have worked if done independently.
OVERVIEW

UKRAINE 2014-2016 / CONFLICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS</th>
<th>Conflict, 2014-onwards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PEOPLE AFFECTED¹</td>
<td>4.4 million (2.6 million for Shelter-NFI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEOPLE IN NEED OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE¹</td>
<td>3.8 million (0.6 million for Shelter-NFI)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY THE RESPONSE (as of November 2016)²

- 20,526 houses repaired
- 109,937 individuals received emergency assistance
- 438,882 individuals received NFIs

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSE

Political unrest in Eastern Ukraine led to a humanitarian crisis, since the start of hostilities in early 2014. After three years, shelter-NFI needs remain high for IDPs, non-displaced populations with damaged dwellings, host communities and returnees. Along with covering immediate needs, the Shelter-NFI Cluster has promoted preparedness and durable solutions, especially focusing on winterization activities.

CONTEXT

Eastern Ukraine experiences long, harsh, winters. Average temperatures drop below 0°C from the end of November to mid-March, with an average low of -10°C and -20°C in the colder areas. Rainfall is consistent throughout the year. Rural villages, especially those with already restricted access, are at risk of being cut off during periods of heavy snowfall.

Following the Government of Ukraine’s decision to abandon talks that would bring the country closer to EU membership in 2013, political unrest led to a destabilizing humanitarian crisis. In March 2014, a first wave of displacement took place from Crimea, following its declaration as an Autonomous Republic, while violence escalated in Donbas region in the east, where it continued for two years. In 2016, shelling was concentrated in specific – rather than diffuse – areas.

The political unrest has affected households in preparing adequately for the winter. Homes damaged by shelling urgently needed to be repaired in time for winter, while the internally displaced and non-displaced alike struggled to meet basic needs, such as purchasing winter clothing and household items, or being able to pay for the rising costs of utilities.

¹ From Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) 2017.
² Pre-Conflict Housing in Ukraine: Real Estate Markets and Tenure Dynamics. Shelter Cluster Ukraine, November 2016.
SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

After the process of mass privatization in the housing sector following 1991, access to adequate housing became limited and communal residential infrastructure and services — that had previously been maintained by the state — started decaying. The economic crisis of 2008 resulted in a reduction in foreign investment, leading to neglect of existing buildings and a halt of new construction. Inadequacies in social housing and housing policy failed to address the housing needs of low-income households (1.39 million people in 2013).²

SITUATION AFTER THE CRISIS

Just before the start of the conflict, 93.7% of the housing stock was privately owned, with 3.4% living in private-rental housing and 2.9% in communal housing. Individual houses outside major cities sustained shrapnel punctures to roofing, damaged windows, and in 3% of cases full destruction. With the escalation of hostilities in 2014, people fled the contact-line areas of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts (provinces), taking refuge in collective centres and apartments, or being hosted by relatives. Properties and income were left behind, with displaced families relying on their savings to meet basic needs. 93% of the houses that sustained damage in the Government-Controlled Areas (GCA) of Donetsk and Luhansk were privately owned, the extent of which was exacerbated by historical lack of maintenance and care². 18,500 of these houses were in the GCA, while a similar scale of damage was estimated in the Non-Government Controlled Areas (NGCA)³.

As the conflict has continued for three years, resources and coping mechanisms have been seriously depleted. The situation was compounded by the suspension of social payments to IDPs, making pensioners the primary breadwinners, for 38% of affected families in the GCA and 60% in the NGCA⁴. Returns were noted in 2016, both voluntary and involuntary (e.g. those forced to return home having depleted all their resources, or been evicted). Across the country, 59% of IDPs have stated a preference to return home because of their private property, highlighting the importance of private houses as a main source of capital⁵. Significant differences exist in the adequacy of shelter and access to basic items, services and utilities, between urban and rural contexts⁶. Groups with specific needs include IDPs, non-displaced populations with damaged dwellings, host communities, households experiencing multiple displacement, and returnees (sustainable return; formerly displaced, dwelling uncertain)⁷.

SHELTER CLUSTER STRATEGY

The Shelter-NFI Cluster in Ukraine was established in December 2014, to respond to urgent humanitarian needs for shelter and NFIs during the sudden onset of the crisis, initially through unconditional cash grants. This has transitioned into preparedness activities, to enable vulnerable and affected households to better cope with protracted displacement, in often inadequate conditions — particularly in dealing with the extreme winter, as access to items, fuel and heating became increasingly restricted by dwindling household resources. Shelter actors have begun mainstreaming winterization preparedness into all repair works, prioritizing the creation of “one warm room”, before upgrading and insulating other areas of the house.

While continuing to coordinate the emergency and winterization response, the Shelter-NFI Cluster promoted durable solutions for IDPs and conflict-affected populations, through emergency assistance, transitional solutions, and the facilitation of longer-term shelter, until the minimum criteria for cluster deactivation would be met. This included a transition of responsibility from the Cluster to national actors, particularly the Oblasts of Donetsk and Luhansk, who have taken a primary role in the emergency response⁸.

² Due to limited humanitarian access in the NGCA, the figures are estimated through various sources.
³ HNO 2017.
⁴ From IOM NMS Round 4, Sep 2016, cited in Pre-Conflict Housing in Ukraine: Real Estate Markets and Tenure Dynamics.
⁵ Shelter-NFI Needs Assessment Report: Ukraine, Aug 2015, REACH / UNHCR.
SHELTER-NFI RESPONSES

83% of Shelter-NFI assistance has been provided in-kind. Monetized assistance in NGCA was not considered a viable option due to limited access to financing and markets for communities along the contact line. While unconditional cash was used prevalently in 2015, restricted cash has always been used as a modality for shelter repairs. Starting in 2016, as shelter partners moved into heavy repairs and reconstruction works, mixed modality (a combination of delivery of materials, provision of construction support and transfer of cash to finish repair works) was increasingly used by shelter partners. In 2016, closer links were developed with government authorities to coordinate the delivery of assistance with the coverage of heating and utility subsidies. A major focus of shelter and NFI activities have been in preparing for and mitigating the effects of low temperatures (see table 1). Other shelter activities, such as repairs, were an important feature of winterization activities, to achieve adequate shelter conditions and protection of vulnerable populations (see table 2). Other activities included the provision of permanent social housing for IDPs and vulnerable groups (in need of housing) who did not wish to return to areas of hot conflict, but lacked adequate accommodation. Contingency plastic sheeting was also provided.

The Cluster has developed a series of tools to support partners in the implementation of activities. These included the collection of a database of damaged houses in partnership with local authorities in the GCA; the development of winterization guidelines, drawing on lessons learned during the response in 2014-2015; a referral database focusing on winterization, as well as other needs, to keep organizations updated; and preliminary feasibility assessments for a profiling exercise, to identify durable solutions for the most vulnerable IDPs.

TABLE 1 - WINTERIZATION ACTIVITIES*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSE OPTION</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>VALUE / COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winterization cash grant</td>
<td>Injection of a one-off, unconditional cash grant for utilities, NFI and clothes through bank transfer or vouchers</td>
<td>USD 100 per individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective centre winterization</td>
<td>Basic repairs and NFI provision for collective centres sheltering people with specific needs (e.g. institutions, retirement homes, orphanages, accommodation for people with disabilities, etc.)</td>
<td>Up to USD 600 per individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid fuel and heater</td>
<td>Distribution of heating items</td>
<td>USD 110 per household without heater; USD 200 per household with heater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI Clothing Set</td>
<td>In-kind provision of warm clothes, jackets, thermal underwear and shoes</td>
<td>USD 80-100 per person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Interventions included housing repairs (Starohnativka, Dec 2015).

TABLE 2 – MAIN SHELTER AND NFI ACTIVITIES*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSE OPTION</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>VALUE / COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash for rent or other shelter-linked monetized solutions</td>
<td>Securing adequate and to-standard shelter. As a response for potential eviction. Possibility to decomposition Collective Centres.</td>
<td>USD 600-700 per year per household for rural and urban areas (this varied by city)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acute emergency repairs</td>
<td>In areas where active conflict damaged houses or where conflict has restarted. Plastic sheeting, wooden battens for quick repairs of openings and roofs, cement and in some special cases sand.</td>
<td>USD 40-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light and medium repairs</td>
<td>Roofing materials and glazing to stabilize living conditions.</td>
<td>USD 400-500 for light repairs; Up to USD 1,000 for medium repairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural (heavy) repairs</td>
<td>Partial reconstruction of one or several walls. Full concrete ring beam and retrofitting for the structure. Partial flooring and partial opening (warm room). Full roofing. Partial insulation. Basic sanitation and heating system.</td>
<td>Up to USD 4,000 per household of two persons; USD 500 per extra person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential utilities, network repairs and connections</td>
<td>Conditional on other works being implemented in the community, and repairs are complementary to other general activities.</td>
<td>USD 100-250 per household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconstruction</td>
<td>Reconstruction on existing foundations of a new, structurally sound small house. Average 10 to 12m² per person (gross surface area), insulated, with basic furniture (bed), heating system, and sanitation. May include possibility of future expansion.</td>
<td>USD 8,000 per household (two persons) plus USD 1,000 per extra person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI (general)</td>
<td>Essential household item provision, e.g. kitchen kit, hygiene kit (if not covered by WASH sector); bed and mattresses if needed.</td>
<td>USD 200 per household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI (bedding set)</td>
<td>In-kind provision of bed linen, pillowcase, blankets.</td>
<td>USD 16 per linen set; USD 8 per blanket</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHALLENGES

The lack of access in NGCA severely restricted humanitarian coverage. Regular liaison with local authorities and creating opportunities to work with local organizations on the ground remained essential. Advocacy efforts have been key to meet the humanitarian needs, though poor information sharing between stakeholders severely constrained the informing of good advocacy. Lack of early recovery programming destabilized the population and forced them into worsening humanitarian conditions, or secondary displacement. There was also a lack of technical resources, particularly in the NGCA. While communities close to the front line have not experienced shelling for over a year, traditional development donors would not fund any reconstruction or access-to-housing projects in these communities, due to the continued and unpredictable instability¹².

LOOKING FORWARD

- By the end of 2016, short-term humanitarian needs of IDPs remained high, as the conflict prolonged and resources depleted. The most vulnerable non-displaced populations, mostly residing near the contact line, required continuous support, due to ongoing damage to shelter and infrastructure, alongside access to markets for fuel and NFIs.
- Self-ownership of housing in Ukraine presented an opportunity for resilience and recovery, being an asset of economic stability.
- Topping up acute and primary repairs through largescale structural and reconstruction activities was an integrated part of the early recovery process, and included the revitalization of basic infrastructure. As part of this effort, the Shelter-NFI Cluster began cooperating with the Education and Health Clusters, in order to create a database of damage and repair for schools and hospitals.
- Given the neglect of common premises, infrastructure and utilities in residential buildings following privatization, it was proposed that programmes include social programming, specialized institutions (such as elderly care facilities), or access to credit to facilitate renting and acquisition of housing.
- In 2016, the Cluster initiated discussions with development donors, to provide guidance on vulnerability profiling, in order to come up with specific policies for better targeting of needs.
- Compensation programming for damage and losses might secure the rights of citizens who lost assets and family members.
- The Housing, Land and Property Technical Working Group was established, between the Protection and Shelter Clusters.
- Recovery programming also had to consider the “ghost-town effect” of settlements along the contact line to mitigate the likelihood of displacement or secondary displacement. These areas were characterized by damaged houses or lack of adequate housing, unemployment, low wages, lack of available transportation, lack of social services, poor road conditions, and lack of medical and educational services.
- Next steps to foster peaceful co-existence could include managing absorption capacity of the housing sector, developing social housing initiatives, supporting proper urban development, stimulating community support, and engaging various stakeholders (including the private sector, humanitarian actors and local authorities).

SECTION B
OPINION PIECES
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This section contains short discussion documents on various issues in shelter and settlements, written by individuals with a specific interest in each subject.

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GBV MAINSTREAMING FOR GOOD SHELTER PROGRAMMING

Reducing GBV risks through better shelter programme design and implementation

By Amelia Rule and Jessica Izquierdo

WHY SHOULD SHELTER ACTORS WORRY ABOUT GENDER AND GBV?

Shelter programmes are based on the most fundamental principles of protection: a roof over one’s head, clothing on one’s body; and at a minimum, freedom from physical harm and violence. The settlement as a whole, as well as individual shelters or “homes”, are often the one place where people seek wellbeing and safety. Shelter is critical in allowing dignity and recovery after a crisis. It must be habitable, provide physical safety and adequate space, as well as protection against the cold, damp, heat, rain, wind, and other climatic threats which impact health. In essence, shelter offers protection. However, it is not enough to build shelters; these – and settlements in which shelters are built – also need to provide protection from violence, including gender-based violence (GBV)1. While Shelter practitioners should not replace GBV and Protection specialists, good shelter programming must include mitigation measures throughout the project cycle to reduce GBV risks across their programmes, ultimately contributing to better shelter outcomes.

GBV mainstreaming is not an end in itself, but a strategy and process that aims at not overlooking issues that relate to gender and protection dynamics; which, if incorporated early in a response, are more likely to help staff to reduce vulnerabilities of affected populations, including women, girls, men and boys. As a minimum, projects should work with the gender norms in a society to make access to assistance more equitable (gender sensitive) and hopefully even change inequitable structures (gender transformative2). A focus on protection and gender-specific needs and capacity ensures better participation and more relevant shelter assistance, which meets individuals’ needs, including improved privacy, safety and dignity.

ONE SIZE DOESN’T FIT ALL

GBV mainstreaming is part of an overall gender approach and is essentially about achieving better, more effective and impactful, shelter projects that proactively aim to do no harm.

1 “Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private.” IASC 2015, Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: http://bit.ly/1MMWHB1, also at http://gbvguidelines.org/


Potential GBV risk-mitigation interventions in shelter programmes should always be informed by a gender and risk analysis, conducted at the start of the programme3. These can support shelter practitioners to identify risks before they unintentionally cause harm. For example, the involvement of women may inadvertently lead to a decrease in men’s access or control of the recovery process, contributing to domestic, intimate partner violence, and other types of GBV4, if a proper assessment of the gender dynamics and roles is not undertaken early on.

This highlights more than ever the importance of good assessments and risk analyses that consider cultural, religious

In the Haiyan response, certain projects aimed to equally involve women in the reconstruction process, e.g. in the promotion of Build Back Safer messaging and vocational trainings on construction. Women also had a key voice in deciding the design of shelters, to ensure the inclusion of elements to guard their privacy and dignity, such as internal partitions for separate sleeping areas, opaque cladding and spaces for hygiene and sanitation activities. Ultimately, to mitigate risks of GBV.

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and economic practices, as well as the distribution of gender roles and existing power structures. The appropriate inclusion of gender and female participation in any project can have the potential not only to improve women’s status in society, but also to decrease risks that can lead to GBV.

PROTECTION INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE HOME

The starting point for any shelter programme is at the settlement level: the location where people will find shelter. Taking GBV risks into account at settlement level can help shelter practitioners to consider how shelter programmes will impact on issues such as overcrowding and site density, access to sanitation facilities, markets and emergency relief items.

An often overlooked type of GBV is the denial of resources, opportunities or services, which in the shelter context can be the denial of rightful access to housing, land, NFIs, safe shelter or livelihoods opportunities. To successfully ensure access to life saving services, shelter programmes must integrate protection and gender considerations prior to and during implementation. For example, considering GBV risks in an NFI distribution can allow shelter programme staff to better plan assessments and targeting, distribution locations, prioritization of individuals at distribution sites, onwards transportation of materials, feedback and complaints systems and staffing, to ensure safe access for vulnerable groups during distribution activities.

GBV does not just occur outside the home. Once settlement approaches and location have been decided, the focus of shelter programmes moves toward the home. For many, the home is not a place of safety. Intimate partner violence and domestic violence often take place in private, behind closed doors and between family members. Providing suitable shelter designs and sleeping spaces for different family members can help to mitigate certain acts of GBV. For example, considering GBV risks in an NFI distribution can allow shelter programme staff to better plan assessments and targeting, distribution locations, prioritization of individuals at distribution sites, onwards transportation of materials, feedback and complaints systems and staffing, to ensure safe access for vulnerable groups during distribution activities.

Case study A.5 shows an example of distribution points that were carefully chosen and procedures designed to ensure the most vulnerable groups – especially women and girls – had a priority line and a “safe passage”, as well as support to transport the valuable items back home. The distribution was carried out by a gender-balanced team who was trained to detect and respond to incidents appropriately.1


In 2011, following findings from focus group discussions, a transitional shelter project in Haiti adapted shelters to include an additional door to the rear. Not only was it traditional to have two entrances but it also served as a secondary exit from the house if a family member needed to escape an act of violence1. Separately, some women also felt safer in homes with outward opening doors, as they felt it would be harder for someone to pry the door open rather than to kick it in.


Good shelter programming which considers GBV will not only focus on practical construction aspects, but will also make sure that vulnerable families feel safe and secure in their communities and are not relying on negative coping mechanisms. If families cannot meet the costs of shelter (such as rent, bills, maintenance and repairs), then negative options such as early child marriage2, trafficking of persons and transactional coping strategies can put vulnerable groups at risk of GBV. When designing shelter programmes, practitioners not only have the responsibility to consider the protection of all vulnerable groups when travelling to access water and shelter materials, but also to ensure safety within the home.

SHELTER ACTORS WORK WITH SURVIVORS

Project implementation frequently takes shelter staff to remote locations and directly into the homes of affected populations. Staff members may be the only humanitarian actors to meet with families and witness or hear about a case of GBV that may or may not be linked to shelter activities2. In these settings, referral pathways3 and qualified GBV staff are not always easily accessible, emphasizing the responsibility of all humanitarian actors, including shelter practitioners, to know how to safely respond to GBV disclosures and how to facilitate access to available support services for GBV survivors.

A staff member was carrying out a shelter assessment in South Sudan, when a mother of a beneficiary disclosed that her daughter was being abused by a host family member. The shelter practitioner offered to take the daughter and mother to the health clinic, but the mother feared further reprisal. The staff member then reached out to colleagues to support the removal and relocation of the daughter and her family. However, in doing so, he compromised the confidentiality of the survivor, which resulted in further and more acute abuses.

The appropriate response to survivors of GBV will vary by context. However, all field staff should be trained in when and how to act on GBV disclosures, to minimize further negative impacts on survivors. This requires shelter actors to understand the concepts of confidentiality, consent, and child safeguarding, while also adhering to referral protocols in place to support survivors3.

CONCLUSION

It is difficult to quantify the number of GBV incidents in any context, but it should always be assumed that GBV is occurring. Measuring the impact of shelter interventions on GBV mitigation can also be challenging. Despite this, ensuring privacy, dignity and a feeling of safety can greatly influence families’ security and well-being, so that people are free to access lifesaving services. Therefore GBV integration should not be seen as an additional task to add to shelter practitioners’ to do list; it can be understood as an integral approach to programming, which includes the key principles of risk analysis, participation, inclusion, consultation and engagement with the affected communities. Abiding by these principles ultimately contributes to the overall objective of good shelter programming and is vitally important in ensuring the rights of those individuals we aim to protect.

5 This is defined GBV disclosure.
6 A referral pathway is a flexible mechanisms that safely links survivors to supportive and competent services.
7 The GBV Constant Companion, a useful tool with practical step-by-step advice on how to react when faced with a disclosure of GBV, is available along with other resources at http://www.sheltercluster.org/gbv.

For shelter practitioners in international organizations, working in natural disaster responses, there are strong pressures and incentives to build back “better” (or “smarter”, or “safer”), and subsequently, to interpret “better” as a question of structural safety.

Structural safety is important: the collapse of unreinforced masonry and reinforced concrete structures, built without following building codes, has been the main cause of death in the major earthquakes of the last 60 years. In contexts where housing of these types proliferates, the shelter sector should be asking deep questions about its role, the underlying systems which produce these homes, and where and how vulnerable people live in these systems.

Despite this, shelter programmes which disproportionately prioritize structural safety potentially miss or exacerbate risks which are more relevant to affected men, women, girls and boys, such as losing access to livelihoods, social exclusion or exploitation. Structural solutions in isolation will be insufficient to ensure vulnerable people are safer than they were pre-disaster. This is particularly true for marginalized groups, who do not have decision-making power (or ownership) over shelter structures, or fewer choices on where they are able to settle. Often, this applies disproportionately to women.

While there are notable examples of non-structural risks being addressed by shelter programming, such as the more frequent inclusion of housing, land and property rights interventions in programmes and increasingly integrated approaches, the measures of success of shelter programmes often continue to remain focused on the quality of buildings, rather than the quality of lives.

This article argues that, to address this, shelter practitioners need to rethink their role in defining what is “better”, by revising how the shelter sector currently assesses “risk” and “success”, in ways that transfer decision-making power in the hands of affected people, instead of largely being kept in the hands of professional shelter practitioners.

**“RISK” AND “SUCCESS” IN THE SHELTER SECTOR**

**WHY PRIORITIZE SAFETY?**

There are many factors which lead practitioners to prioritize structural strength in the delivery of shelter projects.

- **Shelter practitioners often bring assumptions** about (other people’s) safety from their own countries and backgrounds, and do not understand or give sufficient importance to the risks and problems disaster-affected people live with.

- **Shelter funding draws scrutiny** because housing is often a private rather than a public good, so mechanisms for subsidizing and guaranteeing housing recovery are politically and economically controversial.

- **Shelter-related responsibilities are unclear**, because responsibilities for land, infrastructure and housing are often split across institutions. Structural strength is (often wrongly) perceived to be simpler and more easily con-

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1 Build Back Better analysis includes re-affirming post-disaster settlement and shelter principles of Shelter After Disaster (UNDRO, 1982).

---

Shelter programmes which tend to prioritize structural safety over other objectives run the risk of missing or exacerbating other risks, such as loss of livelihoods, social exclusion or exploitation. Addressing structural concerns in isolation will not ensure that vulnerable people are safer than before the disaster.
trolled by INGOs, in comparison with other shelter-related vulnerabilities.

- **Resources involved in shelter construction per household are significant**, and agencies and donors prioritizing value-for-money want to ensure their investment will last.

- **Shelter structures, and failure of those structures, are highly visible**. Structural failure is also more easily linked to implementing agencies than, say, the inability of a household to pay rent or access essential services. For this reason, and the great focus implementing organizations put on the risk of brand damage and liability, they concentrate disproportionately on structural safety.

- **Shelter after a disaster is newsworthy**, understandably creating a window of opportunity and pressure to improve building practices⁴, as indeed stated in Principle 8 of Shelter After Disaster⁶.

Visibility, scrutiny, cost, misperceptions of risk and responsibility and the invisibility and complexity of other factors drive the international humanitarian system to expend great time and expertise addressing the structural strength of shelters, rather than other risks that might matter more to marginalized people.

**MORE THAN JUST “STRUCTURAL SAFETY”**

Often, “better” is interpreted as “safer” – i.e. buildings that better resist collapse. Measuring success on these narrow terms can be problematic, because the definition of “safer” is unclear or hard to check, but we could instead use broader criteria, such as:

- **Quantity, Speed and Coverage**: the sector’s typical indicator is a count of the number and rate of shelters built by international organizations, with no perspective on shelters being built by other actors, or the rate of household formation and shelter construction before the disaster. Factors such as occupancy rate, post-occupancy satisfaction, maintainability and other longer-term outcomes, are rarely measured.

- **Choice and Quality**: after the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan⁶, knowledge was cascaded through government structures and district engineers, and improvements in structural safety were, in part, achieved by recognizing and drawing on existing, local practices. Structural safety was prioritized, but in the context of what could realistically be achieved and was culturally appropriate.

- **Sustainability, Liveability and Longer Term**: a longitudinal study of reconstruction projects following the 2001 Gujarat earthquake⁷ suggested that measures of “success” encompass the preferences and engagement of the people who will occupy the shelter. Where projects prioritized structural safety to the detriment of other requirements, and/or had neglected social capital and “longer-term considerations of comfort, adaptability and the environment”, the results were a mixture of outcomes, ranging from vibrant communities to abandoned villages. Such findings were echoed in more extensive studies of projects in India over the last two decades⁸. Early evaluations of the shelter response of one organization after Typhoon Haiyan suggest high satisfaction with the liveability, likeability and appropriateness of the houses, but only incremental improvement in structural safety, compared to the pre-disaster housing⁹.

**WHAT SHELTER ACTORS OFTEN DON’T KNOW**

Overall, the shelter sector risks doing harm, unless affected people play a central role in shelter-related decision-making. If “building back better” is to respond to community members’ safety, dignity and survival needs, we need to acknowledge how poorly we understand the following:

- What the affected people do to make their homes meet their needs, outside the scope and timescales of our projects.

- Whether those who live in the building would feel and, indeed are, safer, just because a building is more structurally robust, or because they have recovered secure access to housing that is affordable, maintainable and close to social and economic networks.

- Whether we overall collectively act to increase risk by setting safety standards for individual buildings that are in reality slow, fiddly, costly, impossible to control and check and, if done badly, more dangerous than business-as-usual.

- Why projects work well in some contexts and not in others.


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**SUCCESSFUL POST-DISASTER HOUSING OUTCOME**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Durability} & \quad + \quad \text{Sustainability} \quad & \times \quad \text{People} \\
\text{Disaster resistant} & \quad \text{Location} & \quad \text{Livable} \\
\text{Repairable} & \quad \text{Carbon footprint} & \quad \text{Likeable} \\
\text{Strong} & \quad \text{Adaptable} & \quad \text{Feels safe} \\
\end{align*}
\]

*Hypothesis* from David Sanderson & Anshu Sharma’s study of Gujarat Project.

---

The shelter sector risks doing more harm than good, unless affected people are more involved in the decision-making process.
“RISK” AND “SUCCESS” IN OTHER SECTORS

It is often argued that prioritizing structural safety should not apply lower standards for those already marginalized and at risk, and we should not deny access to those with lower rules—set by others—so are compelled to focus on what is deemed “safe enough”.


Role of evidence in standards: Setting standards is a deliberation, not a calculation. In “health technology assessments” in the United Kingdom, there is a vast evidence base to support decisions on how to achieve the highest number of quantity and quality “human life years” for a given budget, though the investment threshold itself is not based on “empirical research”, but on the collective judgment of experts. “There is no known piece of work which tells you what the threshold should be”.

System standards: The World Health Organization, amid fierce internal arguments about the potential injustice of lowering standards for the poor, shifted away from the objective of setting high, global, water-quality standards. Instead, a systemic approach was taken: to build community capacity to assess, find and fix the worst risks in their own water systems.

CONCLUSION

In practice, building and sharing technical evidence is valuable, but threshold-setting by technical experts often brings biases and arbitrary time horizons to the table, when defining “risks” and assessing needs in programme planning.

Structural engineers, for example, have a professional duty to follow rules—set by others—so are compelled to focus on what is compliant, rather than what is deemed “safe enough”. Shelter practitioners designing and implementing “better” shelter responses, often interpret “safer” as compliant, modifies shelter. This leaves them in danger of overlooking other, less evident, risks facing disaster-affected populations. While structural safety must not be neglected, the focus on other risks in shelter programmes must be re-balanced.

In existing debates about “duty of care” vs “informed choices”, the former is often narrowly defined to be about structural safety. It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that, if only people have sufficient understanding of structural design, it will change their understanding and prioritization of the risks they face. Rather than prioritizing and seeking to fully control risks that lie within their professional competence (to the detriment of recognizing other risks), shelter practitioners must enable informed choice, by providing affected people with the tools and knowledge they lack. Shelter practitioners must also learn to trust the informed choices that people make, even if they do not understand or cannot relate to them.

In Corail, Haiti, a camp was built to engineering standards, though largely ignoring the surrounding area. Soon, it was accompanied by a massive, unmanaged, urban expansion on the adjacent land (see A.9 in Shelter Projects 2010).
In most crises, those people receiving support in shelter and settlements (S&S) are a minority of the total with need. Questions of scale, coverage, quality, and impact in implementing S&S programmes thus become key in defining appropriate and responsive (“good”) programming, and how best to use limited resources for timely support to populations in need.

Humanitarians working in any sector face the question of how to best use available funds, skills, and materials. For S&S programming, this can be a particularly challenging question, as needs are often great, and funds, skills, and materials in short supply. In agreeing an appropriate level of support, humanitarians need to be mindful of what the impacts will be on those who will be directly assisted, those who are able to support themselves, and what will happen to those whom they are not able to assist.

The different case studies in Shelter Projects can highlight these challenges, by showing the diversity of programming for the same crisis response. For example, there are seven case studies after typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, where organizations faced similar contexts and worked within government and Shelter Cluster guidance, but programme designs and responses differed, due to differing funding, capacities, agency mandates and available materials.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SCALE AND COVERAGE?

“Scale” refers to the number of people assisted by an intervention. In the case studies in this edition of Shelter Projects, assistance ranges from 484 households, to over half a million households. Whilst looking at absolute numbers provides an idea of scale, looking at the percentage of crisis-affected people supported (including host communities) provides an idea of “coverage”. However, the definition of coverage depends upon whether we are referencing the proportion of people (or households) affected, in need, or to be targeted, as well as the timing of assessments, whilst assuming no duplication of effort.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY QUALITY AND IMPACT?

By “quality”, we mean the timely, efficient, effective, and appropriate provision of assistance, i.e., how well project inputs are designed and implemented. By “impact”, we mean how well project outputs result in positive outcomes and influence beneficial, longer-term, processes following assistance. For example, a project to distribute NFI’s can be a simple “dump and run” operation, or can be based on detailed assessments, careful targeting, and viewed as a basis for future community engagement. Poorly designed and implemented projects (of even limited scope) can do harm, while well-planned and implemented projects, however modest, can have significant beneficial impacts on the lives of affected populations.

In addition, reduced funding availability may limit assistance to choices between NFI kits for each of thousands of households, or the construction of houses for a handful of households. There is a tradeoff between the level of support provided to individual households and the number of households which can be assisted. In this context, humanitarians make decisions on how to balance quality and household-level impacts of intervention, anticipated impact, and scale. The S&S sector does not yet have the metrics which exist in, say, the Health sector, to objectively measure interventions. While there has been a lot of work on evaluating the impacts of shelter projects, many decisions on project selection and methodology will continue to be based upon personal experience and resources, i.e., “best practice”.

DIFFERING ROLES IN RESPONSE

Organizations have their own varied capacities, and project design should take into account how to maximize those capacities. For example, one agency may have experience in managing common NFI pipelines, whilst another may specialize in training. There may also be an institutional interest in certain types of projects. For some organizations, there may be an interest in designing the “perfect” response project; while for those working in national coordination or mak-
ing funding decisions, the focus might be ensuring equita-
ability and coverage, or looking at how to leverage funding to
create shifts in government policy2.

One role of sector coordination is harnessing different agency
capacities and avoiding situations whereby one agency pro-
vides a USD 20,000 house, next to another providing a USD
500 transitional shelter to households with similar needs; or,
ensuring that entire regions are not overlooked. The common
goal should be that all agencies maximize their available re-
sources to support the most vulnerable individuals.

WHAT IS A REALISTIC MINIMUM?

S&S project managers need to decide a realistic minimum of
implementable support per household, recalling Sphere
Project guidance on support of “minimally adequate” covered
living space3. Beyond the type of intervention, operational de-
cisions need to balance whether to go for larger numbers of
people in easier to reach locations, or focus on those in less
accessible locations (or some other focus). People in hard-
to-reach areas are often the most vulnerable, yet also among
the most resilient, leaving agencies to determine who to tar-
get and where the largest cover and impact can be achieved.
Decisions on targeting should be made on how vulnerability
is defined, where people most in need of assistance are, and
how S&S resources and capacities can best support them.

BROADER UNDERSTANDING OF ACCOUNTABILITY

When organizations decide to work in selected locations, they
also decide not to work in other locations, cognisant that they
cannot be held accountable to entire affected populations,
and that most agency accountability frameworks relate only
to the populations within project areas. Indeed in many cases,
accountabilities of implementing agencies are taken to apply
only to project beneficiaries. Practically, it is often impossible
to fully understand the breadth of the needs, given limited
time, scope and reach of assessments; the result being that
decisions are often made with partial/imperfect information.

Coordinating agencies have a differing set of accountabili-
ties. In the Cluster system, most lead agencies take on the
responsibility of calling on partners to address critical gaps in
humanitarian response. As a result, Cluster leaders may need to
push for lower levels of per capita assistance, to ensure that
life-saving shelter needs are met, before shelter programmes
can start to address a broader resilience agenda. They may
also look at the broader national recovery agenda, where, for
example in Nepal, large-scale government assistance has been
planned4. In this sense, the coordination role needs to
understand accountability as being to the entire affected pop-
ulation.

SETTLEMENTS AND COMMUNITY

To provide a strong framework for all shelter interventions, a
settlements focus provides an excellent starting point of shel-
ter strategy and operations. The choice of a specific location
of intervention has significant short- and long-term implica-
tions for the quality and impacts of a project. Further, adopt-
ing a settlements-based approach increases the likelihood of
local/national authority participation in key project decisions.

However, one of the recurring S&S sector challenges is that of
scaling up community-based approaches in a timely fashion.
How can S&S actors engage rapidly at the neighbourhood
level, and encourage multisectoral response at scale? Opera-
tionally, the assessment and response at neighbourhood level
is like a scaled-up household response – working at communi-
ty, rather than household, level. However, this takes resources
to achieve effectively. To date, successful multisectoral pro-
jects exist as examples for single neighbourhoods5.

To help promote neighbourhood responses at scale, Shelter
Clusters should create a settlements-based framework as part
of the sector strategy that prioritizes neighbourhoods for
intervention, based on assessment of neighbourhood needs,
boundaries, and local and regional plans. Governments have
a critical role in scaling up community-based S&S projects.
Well-implemented projects can become models, but at the
same time they must be designed to be financially and po-
litically realistic enough to be replicable at scale – something
which may only be demonstrable after work in the first “model”
neighbourhood is substantially completed.

S&S PROGRAMMING AS A PROCESS

Accounting for the critical programmatic parameters of scale,
coverage, quality, and impact, serves as the basis for promot-
ing “good” S&S programming. However, there is no fixed rule
on how to balance these parameters. Coordination forums
can, for example, establish standards of intervention and strive
for consistency in their implementation, while also promoting
quality programming. No matter what intervention types an
agency chooses, it is the actual implementation of the project
and the levels of social engagement, wherein the quality and
the impacts of a project lie. At whatever scale, and with which-
ever intervention, a shelter team decides to intervene, S&S
programming is a process, and the success of interventions
will depend on whether it meets the needs of those it seeks to
support in a timely way, and whether it facilitates engagement
of affected populations in longer-term processes, towards du-
rable solutions, recovery and development.

2 See, for instance, two projects in the Philippines: A.13 compared to A.11.
3 See, for instance, case study A.20 (Malawi), where tents were distributed as
emergency shelter assistance to decongest overcrowded collective centres.
4 See overview A.3 of the response to the Nepal earthquakes and case study
A.4 on the set up and operation of the Shelter Cluster Nepal.
5 See, for example, case studies A.31 (Lebanon) and A.13 (Philippines).
## DURATION, SCALE AND COST OF CASE STUDIES IN SHELTER PROJECTS 2015-2016

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*ES = Emergency Sh.  
TS = Transitional Sh.  
HF = Host Families  
RS = Rental Support  
CH = Core Housing  
HR = Housing Repair  
IH = Individual House  
= Cash-based assistance  
= Site planning / infrastructure  
= Distribution of NFI / tools / kits  
= Guidelines / Communications  
= Training / Capacity-building  
Project duration in months = 12 months  
Total households supported by the project | = 1,000 HH  
Average project cost per household served / per unit (in USD, converted with exchange rate at the time of the project). In case different modalities of assistance were used, this is an average for the whole project.*
All the case studies, overviews and updates in this book and the past editions of *Shelter Projects* are available online, and they can be searched by country, year, article type, emergency type and publication, or through a free text search.

### INDEX OF CASE STUDIES BY COUNTRY

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This map is for illustrative purposes only and should not be considered authoritative.
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Annexes</th>
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<td>SP 2015-2016</td>
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**ACRONYMS**

- **BBS** Build Back Safer
- **BoQ** Bill of Quantities
- **CBC** Community Based Organization
- **CGI** Corrugated Galvanized Iron
- **CSO** Civil Society Organization
- **CCCM** Camp Coordination and Camp Management
- **DRR** Disaster Risk Reduction
- **GBV** Gender-Based Violence
- **HH** Household
- **HLP** Housing, Land and Property
- **INGO** International Non-Governmental Organization
- **MoU** Memorandum of Understanding
- **M&E** Monitoring and Evaluation
- **NFI** Non-Food Item(s)
- **NGO** Non-Governmental Organization
- **PDM** Post-Distribution Monitoring
- **SOP** Standard Operating Procedures
- **WASH** Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

**CONVERSION TABLES**

These tables are included to help readers convert the measurements in the Bills of Quantities. The data on this page is all rounded to 4 significant figures. Penny sizes are rounded to the nearest millimeter (mm).

For equivalence tables in timber sizing, see UN OCHA / IFRC / CARE International publication: “Timber as a construction material in humanitarian operations”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imperial</strong></td>
<td>1 inch (in)</td>
<td>1 foot (ft) = 12 inches</td>
<td>1 yard (yd) = 3 feet = 36 inches</td>
<td>1 mile = 1760 yd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metric</strong></td>
<td>25.4mm</td>
<td>304.8mm</td>
<td>0.9144 m</td>
<td>1.609 km</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imperial</strong></td>
<td>1 square foot (sq. ft)</td>
<td>1 square yard (yd²)</td>
<td>1 acre = 4,840 yd²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metric</strong></td>
<td>0.0929 m²</td>
<td>0.8361 m²</td>
<td>4046.9 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30.25 yd²</td>
<td>1 perch</td>
<td>2.471 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 hectare =10,000 m²</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Volume</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imperial</strong></td>
<td>1 cubic foot (ft³)</td>
<td>1 cubic yard (yd³)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metric</strong></td>
<td>28.32 litres = 0.02832 m³</td>
<td>0.7646m³</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 gallon (UK) = 4.546 litres</td>
<td>1 liquid gallon (US) = 3.785 litres</td>
<td>1 dry gallon (US) = 4.405 litres</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imperial</strong></td>
<td>1 pound (lb)</td>
<td>1 ton (T) (UK: long ton)</td>
<td>Ton (US: net ton, short ton)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metric</strong></td>
<td>0.4536 kg</td>
<td>1016 kg = 1.1016 MT</td>
<td>907.2 kg =0.9072 MT</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 stone = 16 lb</td>
<td>1 lb = 16 ounces (Oz)</td>
<td>1 hundredweight (cwt.) (US) = 100 lb.</td>
<td>1 cwt. (UK) = 112 lb.</td>
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</table>

**Note:** There are several different imperial systems of weights. We quote the British imperial ton as in the Weights and Measures Act of 1824, and the United States customary system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nails - “Penny Sizes”</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imperial</strong></td>
<td>Penny Size</td>
<td>2d</td>
<td>3d</td>
<td>4d</td>
<td>6d</td>
<td>8d</td>
<td>10d</td>
<td>16d</td>
<td>20d</td>
<td>40d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inches</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1⅛</td>
<td>1⅛</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2⅛</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3⅛</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metric</strong></td>
<td>Nearest length (mm)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>127</td>
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</table>
In compiling this edition of Shelter Projects, we have drawn on key informant interviews and a variety of sources. Some of the published sources are listed below under General statistics and websites, whilst others were project documents.

Also included are a list of key shelter texts, which readers can refer to for many of the shelter-related issues raised by these case studies. Some of them are directly cited in the text. Visit www.shelterprojects.org for a full list of resources for download.

**GENERAL STATISTICS**


**IDMC/ NRC, Internal Displacement Global Overview of Trends and Developments in 2010**
www.internal-displacement.org

**CRATerre, IFRC, Assessing local building cultures for resilience & development: A practical guide for community-based assessment.**
This guide is a tool for those working on habitat and community resilience, to improve the quality of their interventions. Available at: http://bit.ly/2n6XNp

**CRS, Pintakasi: A review of shelter/WASH delivery methods in post-disaster recovery interventions, 2016**
A study to assess the efficiency, effectiveness and appropriateness of shelter and WASH assistance modalities in the Filipino context. Available at: http://bit.ly/2ofS7aW

**CRS, Using Cash for Shelter, 2015**
An analysis of CRS shelter programmes to understand when cash works, why it works, and what factors contribute to its success or failure. Available at: http://bit.ly/2nzVh

**WEBSITES**

www.sheltercluster.org
Home page of the Global Shelter Cluster - the coordination mechanism for shelter responses. Contains links to individual responses, including strategy documents.

www.sphereproject.org
Download the Sphere Handbook, find information on trainings and other activities from the Sphere Project. The Sphere Project aims to improve the quality of humanitarian assistance and the accountability of humanitarian actors to their constituents, donors and affected populations.

www.humanitarianlibrary.org
The Humanitarian Library is designed as a global clearing house for regional humanitarian knowledge. As a user-oriented resource, it is designed to be the first reference for both sharing and searching for field-relevant documents.

http://procurement.ifrc.org/catalogue/
IFRC/ICRC Emergency relief items catalogue: detailed specifications of all items commonly used by IFRC, ICRC, IOM and other organizations.

https://www.youtube.com/user/ShelterCluster
Global Shelter Cluster Youtube channel.

www.reliefweb.int
Up to date information on complex emergencies and natural disasters as well as an archive of information, field reports and situation reports from emergencies since 1996. OCHA situation reports (sitreps) and IFRC appeal documents and operations updates have been of particular use in compiling these case studies.

http://www.globaldtm.info/
The Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) is a system to track and monitor the displacement and population mobility. It is designed to regularly and systematically capture, process and disseminate information to provide a better understanding of the movements and evolving needs of displaced populations, whether on site or en route.

Digital collection of Frederick Cuny’s working library, office files, press clippings, slides, photos and videos of Cuny and his team at the disaster relief/response firm, Intersect.

**KEY SHELTER PUBLICATIONS**

**Camp Management Toolkit**
The toolkit gives official guidelines on the setup and running of camps and settlements, both in emergencies and long-term situations. Available at: http://cmtoolkit.org/

**Care International, Gender and Shelter: Good programming guidelines, 2016**
Guidelines to provide practical guidance on how to integrate gender in the shelter sector, enabling shelter programmes to address the needs of affected communities more successfully. Available at: http://bit.ly/2nj3PAX

**Corsellis and Vitale, Transitional Settlement: Displaced Populations, Oxfam publishing, 2005**
Guidelines for the strategic planning and implementation of settlement responses for displaced populations. Available at: http://bit.ly/2mUXhag
**ANNEXES**

SHELTER PROJECTS 2015 - 2016

CRS, Extending Impact: Factors influencing households to adopt hazard-resistant construction practices in post-disaster settings, 2015
A study to understand what influences people’s behaviour by analysing what prompts, guides or drives people to behave in a certain way, in relation to the use of hazard-resistant construction practices. Available at: http://bit.ly/2nixXwp

CRS, How-to Guide: Managing Post-Disaster (Re-)construction projects

Global Shelter Cluster, Selecting NFIs for shelter - 2008
Provides information, case studies and guidance on how to choose the best items to distribute to those affected by natural disaster or conflict. Available at: http://bit.ly/2oLaGZ9

Global Shelter Cluster, GBV in Shelter Programming
Set of documents which aim to provide tools to help shelter actors to mainstream GBV risk mitigation in their shelter programming. Available at: https://www.sheltercluster.org/gbv

IFRC, Owner Driven Housing Reconstruction Guidelines (ODHR), 2010
Guidance on the planning and implementation of assisted self help reconstruction projects. Available at: http://bit.ly/2nbyEbF

IFRC, The IFRC shelter kit, 2010
A guide on the IFRC shelter kit and how to use it. Available at: http://bit.ly/1tsEv3p

IFRC, Shelter Designs: Structural Reviews (2 publications)
A review of risks in shelter construction and detailed structural analysis of different post-disaster and transitional shelter designs that have been used in the field in large scale projects. Available at: http://bit.ly/2nVPLhr

IFRC, Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness
PASSA aims to raise the awareness of the ‘everyday risks’ faced by vulnerable populations, related to their built environment, and foster locally appropriate safe shelter and settlement practices. Available at: http://bit.ly/2loGBUA

IFRC, Handicap International, CBM, All under One Roof.

IFRC, Oxfam GB, Plastic sheeting, 2007
A guide to the use and specification of plastic sheeting in humanitarian relief. An illustrated booklet on when and how to use plastic sheeting most effectively in emergencies. Available at: www.plastic-sheeting.org

UN OCHA, Tents - A guide to the use and logistics of tents in humanitarian relief, 2004
A booklet describing when and how to use tents, as well how to support those living in them to best adapt them to meet their needs. Available at: http://www.alnap.org/resource/8341

UN OCHA, IFRC, CARE International, Timber as a construction material in humanitarian operations, 2009
An illustrated booklet on how to source and use timber for the construction of basic structures. Available at: http://bit.ly/2mUWUwy


Jha, A., Duyne Barenstein, J., Phelps, P., Pittet, D., Sena, S., Stronger Homes, Stronger Communities
A handbook developed to assist policy makers and project managers, engaged in large-scale post-disaster reconstruction programmes, make decisions about how to reconstruct housing and support communities after natural disasters. Available at: http://bit.ly/2onN2AF


NRC, Shelter Centre, Urban Shelter Guidelines, 2010

NRC/IFRC, Security of tenure in humanitarian shelter operations, 2013
A short report highlighting the regulatory barriers to the provision of short and medium term shelter solutions, presented in collaboration through several case studies. Available at: http://bit.ly/2nMXmSs

UNDRO, (now UN OCHA), Davis, I., Shelter After Disaster, Guidelines for Assistance, 1982
Guidelines and description of shelter provision in all aspects of natural disasters (from preparedness to reconstruction). Available at: http://bit.ly/2o9cfL8

Shelter Centre, UN, DfID, Shelter after disaster - Strategies for transitional settlement and reconstruction, 2010

Sphere Project, Sphere - Humanitarian charter and minimum standards in humanitarian response, 2011
Contains consensus standards agreed among major humanitarian organizations for key sectors, including shelter and settlement. It also contains actions, indicators and guidance notes as to whether standards have been achieved. Available at: http://www.sphereproject.org/handbook/

UN HABITAT, IFRC, UNHCR, Shelter Projects
Case studies and overviews of humanitarian shelter and settlement responses. Five editions spanning 2008-2014. Available at: www.shelterprojects.org

Handbook and tool containing guidance on the management and all key sectors in emergency operations Available at: https://emergency.unhcr.org/

WWF and American Red Cross, Green Recovery and Reconstruction, 2010
The GRRT is a toolkit and training programme designed to increase awareness and knowledge of environmentally responsible disaster response approaches. Available at http://envirodm.org/green-recovery
In 2015 and 2016, the total number of people displaced by crises in the world was higher than any other year in the last 25 years. In 2015, 65.3 million people were displaced due to conflict or violence, and there were 19.2 million new displacements due to natural disasters. With such large scale sheltering 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, Shelter Projects 2015-2016 is the sixth in a series of compilations of shelter case studies, overviews of emergencies and opinion pieces. The projects represent responses to conflict, natural disasters and complex or multiple crises, demonstrating some of the implementation and response options available.

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 needs and sustainable recovery.

The target audience is humanitarian managers and shelter programme staff from local, national and international organizations at all levels of experience. 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

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