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Health in Humanitarian Emergencies

Principles and Practice for Public Health and Healthcare Practitioners

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Chapter

18

Shelter and Settlements

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Introduction

When natural and man-made disasters, including conflict, result in housing damage or destruction and population displacement, people typically desire to return to their communities to rebuild or repair their homes almost immediately. Unfortunately, this return to normalcy cannot be achieved quickly, and often takes months, if not years, particularly when people are displaced far from their communities or the disaster affected a densely populated urban area, where the options to shelter people are often limited and rebuilding can take a long time. Providing shelter to those displaced, whether for a short or long period of time, is an immediate priority during humanitarian emergencies. Shelter should be a safe, secure, healthy, culturally acceptable, and habitable covered living space. Ideally, the shelter provided is part of a larger, progressive process that usually involves a range of outputs, including emergency covered living spaces, such as tents and camps, and transitional shelters, provided by humanitarian agencies, followed by permanent housing reconstruction provided by development agencies.

Affected populations typically cope with the lack of housing post-disaster by seeking accommodation with relatives and friends, occupying vacant or unfinished buildings, self-constructing basic shelters with salvaged and other building materials, or renting. The seeking of shelter after a disaster is often a spontaneous and self-resourced action on the part of disaster victims. Humanitarian actors have to understand and support these self-help coping efforts. Initially, the primary task is to support the displaced population with the minimum resources necessary for survival. For shelter, this effort involves creating a shelter responses that reflects local conditions and Sphere Project guidance, and providing, among other needs, concomitant health and sanitation measures and protocols.

The delivery of shelter during a humanitarian emergency does not happen in isolation. Rather, it is as part of a larger response framework that includes health, basic services, livelihoods, and larger economic activities, protection, environmental management, and disaster risk reduction (DRR). This linkage of shelter to related sectors is referred to as settlements. In combination, this serves as the basis for shelter and settlement (S&S) assistance. Particularly important to this text is the relationship between shelter, settlements, and health.

An important consideration for S&S programming is that every year, a larger percentage of the world's population moves to urban areas. Many of these people are poor and end up living in shantytowns or slums where they live in unsanitary conditions, exposed to hazards, and with limited access to basic services. At the same time, there has been an increase in the scale and severity of disasters, including storms, floods, and droughts that threaten cities, especially those located in coastal or low-lying areas. This combination of urbanization with larger and more frequent disasters results in an increase in the potential people vulnerable to disasters, particular the urban poor. S&S assistance in these urban areas presents unique, but increasingly common challenges for the humanitarian response community.

S&S assistance is most effective when it is based on a sound understanding of local context. This understanding is best developed through market-based assessments of damage and need, to better gauge impacts, constraints, resources, and opportunities in affected areas. The core target group of proposed actions will be the most vulnerable among affected populations, which often include households less likely to recover if unassisted, such as the elderly, disabled, orphaned/unaccompanied minors, minority groups, immigrants, foreign workers, traumatized, female-headed households, and others. Provision of support to these groups may require technical assistance and material support (e.g., construction materials and skilled labor) rather than a reliance solely on self-help capacity.

In addition to being safe, secure, healthy, and habitable, the shelter provided by humanitarian actors should be cognizant of international humanitarian and local/national guidelines. Where possible and appropriate, S&S activities should emphasize beneficiary participation and reliance on local materials and labor, as this will enhance prospects for acceptance, sustainability, cost-effectiveness, and livelihood.

Settlements Approach

The settlements approach, which includes multiple and integrated activities in socioeconomically defined spaces, such as neighborhoods, villages, towns, or cities, can serve as the much-needed spatial framework for multisector humanitarian activities. It is both a coordination tool and a means of compelling humanitarian actor accountability to affected populations living in settlements.

USAID/OFDA, for example, supports S&S sector interventions that feature a settlements approach, thereby permitting identification of, and linkages with, other sectors, particularly livelihoods, health, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), and protection. This approach is becoming easier to define, depict, promote, and implement now that geobased mapping technologies are more accessible.

The goal of S&S assistance is to ensure the expeditious access to safe, habitable, and culturally appropriate living spaces and settlements, where households affected by humanitarian emergencies are able to resume critical personal, familial, social, and livelihoods activities. This assistance facilitates a process of sheltering that focuses on both immediate and short-term economic, social, and physical vulnerability reduction of disaster-affected households and their communities, while also laying the foundation for longer-term recovery.

Linkage to Health

Humanitarian emergencies undermine the health of the affected population especially in areas with insufficient resources, lack of political will, and/or know-how required to prepare and respond. This includes lack of adequate shelter and basic services for those displaced. Consequently, humanitarian S&S interventions have the potential to impact health outcomes in this context by providing healthy spaces where survivors can work, play, rest, relax, and access basic services until more permanent solutions to their needs are secured.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The right to adequate housing can be traced to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was unanimously adopted by the world community in 1948 (Thiele 2002). Numerous international agreements since have provided further affirmation and guidance regarding this right. A core feature of the housing right is defining adequacy to include habitability and compliance with health and safety standards. The link between housing and health was recognized initially and supported subsequently.

Health Principles of Housing

The World Health Organization (WHO) forged a stronger link between health and housing in 1989 with the publication of the Health Principles of Housing, which viewed housing as the environmental factor most frequently associated with conditions for disease (Thiele 2002). The WHO identified six major principles governing the relationship between housing and health (WHO 1989):

- Protection against communicable diseases
- Protection against injuries, poisonings, and chronic diseases
- Reducing psychological and social stresses to a minimum
- Improving the housing environment
- Making informed use of housing
- Protecting populations at risk

The first two principles are particularly relevant to health, with the first focusing on basic hygiene and public services, and the second emphasizing construction materials, techniques, and safety and habitability issues.

While the international community had been contending with housing rights issues and the relationship between housing and health for decades since World War II, the international humanitarian community did not formulate a coherent and early path to addressing similar issues in emergency settings. Although numerous international, bilateral, and nongovernmental organizations had developed protocols on how to respond to humanitarian emergencies, there was no universally agreed-upon guidance for issues related to shelter and health until the adoption of the Sphere Project in 1997 (Sphere Project 2011).

Sphere identified basic levels of service to populations affected by humanitarian emergencies to improve the quality of assistance and provided guidance and accountability measures for humanitarian actors. Sphere guidance has evolved in response to new challenges and lessons learned and continues to serve as the benchmark for international humanitarian action.

The Sphere Project

Included in the 2011 *Sphere Project Handbook* is guidance on shelter, settlement, and nonfood items that strongly reflect the health concerns embodied in the WHO's Health Principles of Housing. Sphere states that the provision of 3.5 m^2 (approximately 38 square feet) of covered living space per person is a minimally adequate output of humanitarian action. Ideally, this living space is to be private, secure, safe, healthy, habitable, and linked to basic services, with reduced risk to hazards. The minimally adequate output of 3.5 m^2 of covered living space per person is not intended to replicate what was lost through disaster and crises and is often less living space than what affected populations had prior to the humanitarian emergency. The minimally adequate international humanitarian community living space for shelter is also truly minimal when compared to conditions in the US and other developed economies. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), for example, found in 2005 that at least 99.88 percent of American households lived in dwelling units that exceeded the Sphere Project living space guidance metric of 3.5 m^2 per person (HUD 2007). This is reflective of both the modest nature of humanitarian shelter output and the significant differences in housing conditions between those living in developed economies and those receiving humanitarian assistance, largely in developing economies. Sphere Project standards are a minimum standard to be attained. In some humanitarian responses, especially those dealing with displacement of a large population, these standards may not be attainable or practical. In this event, the responding entity should carefully document why Sphere standards can't be met.

Engineering in Emergencies: A Practical Guide for Relief Workers

In 1995, at roughly the same time that the Sphere Project Handbook was being developed by humanitarian actors, *Engineering in Emergencies: A Practical Guide for Relief Workers*, was published (Davis and Lambert 2002). The Guide provides detailed information on a wide range of humanitarian activities, and includes a chapter on "Shelter and Built Infrastructure," intended to guide the provision of shelter for displaced populations. The chapter provides "how-to" level information on assessment of needs and damaged structures, and the design, procurement, and installation of needed structures to support displaced populations, including health facilities. This how-to engineering focus served as a useful complement to the more general, principle-based guidance reflected in the *Sphere Project Handbook*.

These benchmark documents and several large-scale disasters, coupled with significant increases in international and national response capacity and organization, have led to changes in thinking and practice on how to provide shelter to populations affected by humanitarian emergencies. The advent of the United Nations Cluster System in 2005, for example, changed the organizational architecture of international humanitarian response. In the emergency shelter cluster, led globally by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), there is an increasing awareness of the linkage between shelter, settlements, safety, and health. The cluster system is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. Additional change also followed the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, which effectively introduced urban-based interventions to the humanitarian community, and generated considerable interest in revising guidelines and protocols that had heretofore been largely based on activities in rural areas.

Assistance Activities

The two main types of humanitarian S&S assistance are emergency and transitional assistance. Emergency S&S assistance is intended to meet the immediate survival needs of households who have been displaced by humanitarian emergencies. It is short-term, typically less than six months. Transitional S&S assistance often complements emergency S&S assistance and is intended to address short- to medium-term needs of disaster-affected households, typically up to three years.

Humanitarian emergency and transitional S&S assistance interventions share three main characteristics:

- Consistency with internationally recognized guidelines such as the Sphere Project, including provision of minimally adequate space, whenever possible
- Reduction of the social and economic impact of present and future disasters through integration of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) measures S&S activities
- Reflection of the particular needs of affected households, especially those considered most vulnerable such as the elderly, disabled, orphaned/unaccompanied minors, minorities, foreign workers, immigrants, traumatized, female-headed households, and others, in S&S activities

Traditionally, humanitarian S&S assistance often excludes linkages to longer-term needs, primarily because those needs are well beyond the mandates, expertise, and institutional practice and protocols of most humanitarian actors. Thus, humanitarian S&S assistance does not include, for example, the reconstruction of permanent housing, the development of new settlements, or efforts to resolve chronic market, policy, and institutional deficiencies related to the provision of housing and basic services, including housing financing.

However, recent humanitarian interventions, most notably in Haiti and Pakistan, have highlighted insufficiencies that need to be addressed to link humanitarian S&S assistance to the recovery of disaster-affected populations, particularly in urban areas. This includes, for example, guidance on how to incrementally improve and expand transitional shelters to turn them into permanent housing, how settlements-based interventions can bridge the gap between relief and recovery efforts, what are the political and security concerns in this region, and how a focus on DRR can inform settlements planning to create safer structures and spaces.

Which sheltering activity to pursue depends on the type and impact of a given disaster or crisis, the conditions of the affected settlements and populations, and the capacity of humanitarian and local/national agencies, which can vary greatly depending on the country or context. S&S activities can facilitate or jump-start the recovery of affected populations when they promote transitions or links to the longer-term housing development process.

High quality S&S assistance shares the following characteristics:

- **Consistency with relevant standards, guidelines, principles, and practices**

S&S assistance should be consistent with recognized guidelines such as the Sphere Project, and prioritize reliance on local building practices, regulations and building codes, and materials, to the extent possible. Whenever possible, S&S activities should include the provision of minimally adequate covered living space.

- **Integration of DRR measures**

S&S activities should integrate DRR measures to best reduce the social and economic impacts of present and future disasters. This is done by promotion of DRR mainly through the adoption of low-cost, nonstructural actions to reduce risks. For example, these actions may include watershed management, clean-up of waterways to improve management of flood waters, hazard-based site and settlements planning, locating and securing objects in homes and workplaces so they don't fall during earthquakes, as well as evacuation of buildings and settlements during earthquakes, tsunamis, and other hazardous events. In addition, technical assistance and rapid capacity building targeting local authorities can be provided, which can be linked to larger, recovery planning and DRR initiatives such as emergency urban planning. Awareness and capacity building activities can also be implemented to ensure that at-risk populations learn to live with contextual hazard risks.

- **Reflection of Beneficiary Needs**

S&S activities should incorporate the particular needs of affected households, especially those considered most vulnerable, based in part on their participation in decision-making. This is particularly true of those unable to self-build their own shelters. Use of building materials and site plans that provide adequate privacy, security, and dignity to the beneficiaries is considered a priority. Where possible and appropriate, assistance may take the form of supporting the self-recovery efforts of affected populations that commenced prior to the arrival of humanitarian actors. New settlements (camps) are constructed as a last resort only when other options have been exhausted and after a detailed market, damage, and needs assessment. When constructed, camps will be sited at an appropriate distance from areas of conflict, ecologically sensitive areas, and national borders, when possible have easy access to roads and town centers, and will be designed with consideration to promoting a sense of

community, creating recreational spaces, religious services, burial sites and acceptable aesthetics, mitigating economic and environmental impacts on surrounding settlements, and minimizing threats to safety and security, including those arising from tribal, ethnic, and religious tension. If at all possible, residents and/or recognized leaders should be consulted and their ideas incorporated into the site planning, management, and upkeep process.

Emergency Assistance

In humanitarian emergencies, the purpose of emergency S&S assistance is to complement community efforts to meet urgent needs. Emergency humanitarian S&S assistance should be delivered as soon as other more immediate needs such as food and water, depending on the context, are met. The five types of emergency S&S assistance are:

- Emergency shelter kits
- Emergency shelter
- Emergency tents
- Collective shelters
- Emergency settlements/camps

Emergency Shelter Kits

Emergency shelter kits include commodities such as plastic sheeting, ropes, and tools, as well as the dissemination of basic information needed to create a temporary living space. The provision of shelter kits is recommended under the following circumstances:

- It is likely that the target population would move several times within the next 3 to 6 months
- Poor road conditions, crime or violence limit access to recipients, making it difficult to provide more substantial forms of humanitarian S&S assistance
- Most recipients have the know-how, resources, and interest to use the items included in the kits to secure a temporary space to live

Communities are responsible to assist vulnerable households to secure a space to live.

Recommendations for distribution of emergency shelter kits include:

- Securely wrap the kits to avoid losing items during transportation or distribution
- Package kits flat, in a large and enclosed space such as a warehouse or stadium, before distribution to recipients
- Use a pictorial guide to illustrate the proper use of the materials included in the kits and keep written instructions to a minimum and favor use of the local language(s)
- Assist households lacking able-bodied members to transport the shelter kits to their locations
- Organize the community before kits are distributed, making sure that each recipient knows when and where the distribution will take place and what materials will be distributed, including possibly providing fliers showing items included in the kits before distribution
- Select multiple distribution sites within the target communities to shorten the distance that households will have to carry the kits
- Develop a registration system for kit distribution to eliminate duplication of effort and double-dipping of kit supplies

Emergency Shelter

Emergency shelter includes provision of shelter materials, training, and /or technical assistance, depending on the context. Emergency shelter assistance may include customized shelters for vulnerable household with mobility or other limitations. The provision of emergency shelter is recommended under the following circumstances:

- The recipients would remain in their current location for the next 3–6 months
- The implementing agency has unrestricted access to the recipients at least during the shelter construction
- The burden on vulnerable households is reduced by keeping required contributions to shelter construction, including materials and labor, to the minimum possible as vulnerable households may be unable to secure decent living space if no additional assistance is provided
- The shelter design includes features that reduce the likelihood of death, injury or disease

Recommendations for providing emergency shelter include:

- Favor the use of local construction materials, familiar shelter designs, and well-known construction methods
- Ensure the emergency shelters are constructed in sites with low exposure to hazards and/or ensure the shelter design includes features to increase the

shelter's resistance to prevalent hazards, thus reducing the risk of death and injury caused by the sudden collapse or damage of the shelter
- Select target recipients based on their social, physical, and economic vulnerability to future disasters
- Anticipate the need for the shelter to be adapted to changing climate conditions

Emergency Tents

The provision of emergency tents for emergency, short-term sheltering in the aftermath of disasters should be considered a last resort. Experience has shown that deployment of tents and/or prefabricated structures should not be considered as a default response, as these forms of shelter often perform poorly, are too small for typical families, too expensive, and logistically demanding. Many humanitarian agencies will only deploy tents and prefabricated structures after a field-based determination that no other shelter resources are available in affected areas, affected populations are willing to accept tents and/or prefabricated structures, and sufficient financial and technical resources are available to support purchase and deployment costs. Given these shortcomings, the provision of tents is recommended under the following circumstances:

- The recipients will change their location often during the coming weeks or months
- Extreme heat, cold, or other climate conditions such as wind and rain that may threaten the health of vulnerable recipients
- Good quality tents are locally available, at a reasonable price, and can be distributed to vulnerable households within hours or days
- The tents are large enough to provide a living space to the typical household in compliance with the minimum standard set forth by the Sphere Project
- The supply of construction materials both new or recycled is limited

Recommendations for providing emergency tents include:

- Tightly package all components before distribution
- Provide additional shaded areas to allow families to play or relax comfortably during hot days, unless specifically designed for hot climates
- Provide a means to protect valuables inside the tents from thieves or fire
- Ensure unaccompanied minors are under adult supervision day and night, especially in camp settings
- Ensure cooking and heating stoves are safe to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning and fires
- Provide well-lit and/or guarded latrines, pathways, and common areas to protect vulnerable groups, especially women and children
- Make sure space between tents is at least twice their height to avoid easy spread of fires

Emergency Settlements

Creation and management of emergency shelter in identified geographic areas, whether spontaneously or developed programmatically, should include site improvements and support services where needed. These emergency settlements should be promoted when:

- The disaster-affected households are unable to return to their communities for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, insecurity or hazardous conditions, and have limited access to basic services
- The affected population will remain living in the camp for only a few weeks unless the premises were originally designed for residential use (or could easily be repurposed) by providing needed access to private spaces for households, basic services, and livelihoods opportunities
- An organization will be responsible for the operation and closing of the settlement
- The land must be restored to its original condition after the displaced households leave the premises
- The site has low exposure to hazards such as floods, storms, and violence

Recommendations for providing emergency settlements include:

- Understand that emergency settlements often last longer than planned as the provision of basic services free of charge creates an incentive for households to remain
- Register all residents and document any special needs they may have such as chronic diseases and disabilities.
- Registration should include occupations: doctors, dentists, carpenters, electricians, etc. may

need to be identified to optimize the functioning of the camp.
- Restrict entry of nonresidents to the settlements to reduce crime and violence
- Understand the host government local policies on use of social services, employment, burial, and marriage regulations
- Include assistance to strengthen provision of services in the host community to avoid potential conflict between displaced population and host community
- Ensure that special needs of unaccompanied minors are adequately satisfied including in the areas of education, protection, and health
- Provide households with access to sources of income that fit their needs and lifestyle where possible
- Consult the residents on issues that impact them and include them in the design process, camp management, and upkeep
- Determine the need for an elected internal governing council to provide information on resident's needs and expectations and to the general population

Collective Centers

Collective centers provide short-term relocation assistance and maintenance or upgrading of structures and facilities where multiple households are sheltered in large buildings. In most cases, public buildings such as stadiums and schools can serve as collective shelter until displaced populations return to their homes, or can be relocated safely to other locations. Collective centers should be promoted when:

- Disaster-affected households are unable to return to their communities and homes due to insecurity, hazardous conditions, limited access to basic services, or government guidance
- They are structurally sound and able to sustain common hazards without the risk of collapse
- The affected population will remain displaced for a few days unless the premises were originally designed for residential use or they could be easily repurposed by providing heating, cooling, electricity, toilets, showers, kitchens, etc.
- The use of the building for residential purposes will not limit the provision of critical services to the host community such as education, health, security
- Organizations are identified to be responsible for operating and closing collective centers when the displaced leave, and to ensure that centers are restored to their original condition

Recommendations for providing collective centers include:

- Develop an exit strategy from the beginning to prevent collective centers from remaining occupied for longer than appropriate, to avoid creating an unnecessary burden for its residents or the host communities
- Register all the residents and document any special needs they may have such as treating chronic diseases or assisting with disabilities
- Restrict entry of nonresidents at least during the night to reduce crime and violence
- Strengthen basic services in the host community to provide adequate supply and equitable access to all
- Address the special needs of unaccompanied minors
- Ensure households have access to sources of income that fit their needs and lifestyle where possible
- Provide enough privacy and security to the residents
- Consult residents on issues that affect them

Transitional Assistance

Transitional humanitarian S&S assistance is intended to support the disaster-affected population until more durable solutions can be derived. Transitional S&S assistance contributes to the recovery of disaster-affected households and communities by providing the foundation for more permanent solutions. The main forms of transitional shelter and settlement assistance include:

- Transitional shelter
- Hosting support
- House repairs
- Technical assistance
- Transfers
- Transitional settlements
- Transit Centers (TC)

Transitional Shelter

Transitional shelter assistance includes the provision of inputs, sometimes including salvaged

materials, construction, technical advice, and oversight, which may be needed to create shelter in compliance with the minimum Sphere Project standards for living space. In addition, it is intended to reengage disaster-affected households in the longer-term incremental housing development process disrupted by the disaster, thereby accelerating the transition to recovery and reconstruction. It should be promoted when:

- Recipients will remain in their current location longer than 6 months
- The implementing agency has unrestricted access to the recipients at least during the shelter construction
- Locations have low exposure to hazards such as floods, strong winds, and landslides
- Most households would be able to contribute to the construction of their shelters through the provision of labor or construction materials
- Sufficient skilled labor is available in the target communities

Recommendations for providing transitional shelter include:

- Design the shelter to fit the local context including cultural practices, climatic conditions, local labor availability, and skills
- Utilize familiar construction techniques and materials to ensure that recipients are able to maintain, repair, and/or upgrade their units with minimal or no external assistance
- Ensure shelters will be able to withstand common hazards such as earthquakes, strong winds, or floods with minimum risk of injury to occupants
- Provide technical assistance to ensure the quality and safety of the shelters
- Encourage the use of salvaged and/or recycled construction materials
- Ensure local materials are extracted in a sustainable way to avoid irreversible environmental damage

Hosting Support

Hosting support assistance aims to sustain hosting arrangements and reduce strain on relations and finances through a range of activities such as creation of new shelter space, improvement of existing space, and livelihoods-based assistance. It should be promoted when:

- Recipients have spontaneously moved in with host families
- It is critical to preserve hosting arrangements to avoid secondary displacements

Recommendations for providing hosting support include:

- Allocate enough time and resources to find recipients and provide the hosting support, including identifying and vetting host families, especially in large urban areas
- Provide assistance that will benefit displaced individuals, their host families, and communities
- Allow recipients to decide how best to use assistance provided at the household level, such as upgrading shelters, paying for basic services including water, education or health, or buying needed commodities such as tools
- Track the evolution of the arrangement to ensure good use of resources
- Provide assistance in tranches to ensure use for specific purposes
- Ensure that local markets are able to provide good and services when cash is provided
- Develop alternate hosting solutions for vulnerable groups and unaccompanied minorities, possibly with local host country social service agencies

House Repairs

House repair assistance includes minor repair and improvement of existing, damaged housing to facilitate occupancy that is safe, secure, and private. This might include creation of "one dry, warm room" outputs. It should be promoted when:

- Most resources used are local, including labor
- Repairs are to be performed on residential buildings
- Repair cost is typically less than 10 percent of the replacement cost

Recommendations for providing hosting support include:

- Aim housing repairs at securing a living space that meets Sphere standards
- Ensure access to sanitation and drinking water, heating, and cooling where needed
- Understand that repairs may be time consuming and require custom design interventions and extensive supervision to ensure high quality

- When making repairs, minimize changes to the original design of the home unless for safety reasons

Technical Assistance

Provision of technical assistance including training on improved construction techniques and humanitarian settlement planning, facilitate rapid recovery and the creation of safer settlements. Technical assistance should be provided when:

- Recipients lack the knowledge and/or skills required to perform an activity, such as being unable to build their shelters without the help of skilled builders provided by humanitarian actors
- An untested technology or new approach to something is introduced during the disaster response

Recommendations for providing technical assistance include:

- Verifying that experts providing technical assistance are well versed in the local language and social and cultural practices of the recipients
- Ensuring experts are familiar with the technologies to the deployed and the local environment structure

Transfers

Transfers assistance include the provision of cash-grants vouchers, rental support, and in-kind materials to disaster-affected households to help them secure shelter in compliance with minimum Sphere Project guidelines for covered living space. Transfers are recommended under the following conditions:

- Markets are functioning and there is availability of products and services on a local, regional, and/or national level and within a reasonable distance from the affected communities
- There are available delivery mechanisms including secure methods to deliver transfers to beneficiaries in the program area
- Political acceptance. Host governments must agree that transfers are appropriate solutions to help disaster-affected communities

Recommendations for the use of transfers include:

- Develop customized bills of quantities and designs
- Train local builders to enhance local construction practices
- Address potential bottlenecks in accessing high-quality materials and other construction inputs
- Provide technical assistance to ensure a high-quality construction process

Transitional Settlements

Transitional settlements assistance supports the improvement of existing neighborhoods, including informal settlements to permit provision of shelter and basic services while reducing hazard risks and the need to relocate affected populations to new locations. These settlements-based interventions can also serve as platforms for subsequent recovery and reconstruction.

Transit Centers

When there are large numbers of displaced persons, they may pass through Transit Centers (TC) to facilitate safe and organized passage from one country or region to another. During this rapid movement of refugees, the host country and responding agencies are responsible for the provisions of services. Transit Centers are recommended under the following conditions:

- Refugees will remain at a TC less than 24 hours
- Host governments and UN agree on expedited movement of refugees through countries and across borders
- Mechanisms are available to safely and economically transport large numbers of refugees
- International and local NGOs are allowed to work in assisting the UN and host government in the provision of services
- There are mechanisms in place to monitor health, welfare, and security

Recommendations for providing rapid transitional shelters include:

- TC must be in an area that is easily secured and ideally next to transportation hubs such as bus, train, and air terminals
- Site must be well lit and guarded 24/7 and access to the site must be restricted to government and nongovernment relief workers with proper identification
- Movement of refugees outside the site is restricted
- There is clear signage (written and pictorial) with translators available depicting the steps to be taken for transit arriving refugees

- There needs to be a system of registration at the food and clothing distribution points ensuring that only one visit of the distribution point is allowed
- Embarkation and disembarkation of refugees onto trains and buses needs to be organized, managed, and monitored to protect vulnerable groups and line jumping
- Agreements should be reached with hospital, clinics, and airports for the rapid evacuation and care of critically sick refugees
- Contingency planning for refugees staying longer than anticipated in event the transit pipeline is halted
- Develop evacuation plans for staff and refugees in case of natural or man-made disaster

Healthy Shelter and Settlements

As discussed previously, the link between shelter, settlements, and health has long been understood. S&S assistance and activities are important for human health and well-being in the setting of humanitarian emergencies. They contribute to emotional and mental recovery of disaster-affected populations by providing conformable and dignified spaces where households play, rest, relax, and perform cultural activities. In addition, humanitarian S&S activities reduce exposure to hazards including tropical storms, floods, and earthquakes and other environmental stressors such as cold temperatures, rain, and snow, thus preserving the health of the recipients, especially the most vulnerable. To maximize the benefits of shelter and settlements interventions during humanitarian emergencies, it is important to control stressors including:

- Overcrowding
- Poor ventilation
- Pest infestations

Overcrowding

Humanitarian S&S assistance provided during a humanitarian emergency should minimize overcrowding in both shelter and settlements to preserve the health and well-being of the recipients of assistance. Overcrowding is associated with various adverse mental and physical health outcomes, including impaired social relationships and other mental health morbidities, as well as increased vulnerability to infectious diseases including respiratory tract infections and diarrhea.

Shelter and settlements are considered overcrowded when occupancy exceeds the maximum occupancies rates defined by standards and good practices. The Sphere Project defines overcrowding in humanitarian settings for shelter when the ratio between available indoor space expressed in square meters and the number of people living in a shelter is lower than 3.5 (Sphere Project 2011). For settlements, overcrowding in humanitarian settings is present when the ratio between gross settlement area, including streets, parking lots, recreation areas, schools, clinics, etc., expressed in square meters and the total number of people living in it is less than 45 (Sphere Project 2011). Simplified, a shelter is considered crowded when indoor space available per person is less than 3.5 square meters, and a settlement is considered overcrowded when each resident has access to less than 45 square meters of land where they live, including parks, roads, schools, clinics, etc.

Neighborhood Approach

Preventing overcrowding during a humanitarian emergency is often challenging unless suitable land for new settlements are identified. If land cannot be obtained, or if land can be reconfigured more efficiently after a disaster, an alternative is the provision of multistory transitional sheltering solutions accompanied by land redevelopment as part of a process known as the Neighborhood Approach: integrated, multisector programming in socially defined spaces. Multistory transitional shelters create additional living space within a fixed building footprint, thus freeing up land that could later be redeveloped to accommodate future population growth or the provision of recreation facilities, basic services, evacuation routes, and DRR infrastructure.

Poor Ventilation

Adequate ventilation provides psychological and physical health benefits by regulating indoor temperatures/humidity and managing contamination. Ventilation can be provided to shelter using either natural or mechanical means. Mechanic ventilation systems such as fans are rarely used during the response to humanitarian emergencies as they are often more expensive to operate and maintain than natural ventilation systems. Mechanic ventilation systems often require more specialized knowledge and tools to be installed, maintained, and operated compared with most natural ventilation systems. More

importantly, they often require a reliable energy source to operate that is rarely available during humanitarian emergencies. Natural ventilation systems are better suited than mechanical ventilation in the setting of humanitarian emergencies.

Natural ventilation systems work like a conveyor belt moving air through shelters powered by differences in air pressure and/or humidity. Either way, the amount of ventilation is directly related to the size and locations of the shelter openings including doors and windows. Larger and well-positioned shelter openings and increased unrestricted air flow result in better natural ventilation of the shelter.

Typical ventilation rate (outdoor fresh air inflow) for sedentary people is between 5 and 25 liters/second/person. When designing shelter, the desired rate of ventilation depends on how much heat, moisture, and pollution need to be removed.

In hot climates, natural ventilation relies on pressure differences created by the wind. Wind pushes air through the shelter openings on the windward side and sucks it out through openings in the roof and leeward side of the shelter. Properly-sized openings should be provided in three walls and the shelter roof to ensure proper cross-ventilation. In cold climates, chimneys ventilate shelters by flushing out contaminated air and sucking in fresh air. Openings are generally not required in cold climate humanitarian shelters, which are seldom air tight.

Pest Infestations

Depending on the context, it is important to control rats and other rodents, mosquitoes, and other indoor pests as they can spread a variety of diseases. Malaria, dengue, yellow fever, and Zika are examples of mosquito-borne disease while rats and rodents may spread leptospirosis, plague, and some hemorrhagic fevers.

There are other important considerations for provision of healthy shelter and settlements.

Relative Humidity

High levels of indoor relative humidity (RH) are caused by several factors, including high environmental humidity, daily activities such as sweating, cooking, and bathing, and defective construction materials and techniques that lead to infiltrations through roofs, walls, and foundations.

High RH makes shelters uncomfortable and potentially unhealthy. High RH causes thermal discomfort by making it difficult to sweat and, in turn, cool the human body off. The sweat is not evaporated fast enough to allow the body temperature to drop. In addition, high indoor RH leads to water condensation, creating an environment where mold, mildew, and other biological growth occurs. This may precipitate health problems such as allergic reactions and asthma exacerbations. RH that is too low can cause irritation of the eyes and airway.

In addition to health problems and uncomfortable environments, water condensation contributes to structural decay, increasing the risk of injury when common construction hazards strike the buildings.

The RH in shelters should remain between 30 and 70 percent under normal activity conditions. It is challenging to maintain RH in this range during humanitarian emergencies, especially during the heating season in colder climates or in hot and damp climates. Often, the affected populations have limited access to resources and know-how required to maintain the RH within the desired range.

During humanitarian emergencies, the RH in shelters is managed using a combination of measures including proper ventilation, use of the sun to dry moist objects, sealing off roofs, walls, floors, and foundations to prevent humidity infiltration, and limiting physical activities, cooking, and bathing indoors.

Temperature

The temperature inside a shelter is directly related to the rate it loses or gains heat to its surrounding environment. The more heat a shelter gains or losses, the warmer or cooler its indoor temperature. A shelter will lose heat when the temperature outside is lower than inside and it will gain heat when the outdoor temperature is higher. A shelter loses or gains heat until both the indoors and outdoors temperatures are the same, a phenomenon called thermal equilibrium.

The rate of heat that is exchanged in a shelter depends on its location, design, construction, and activities performed inside. Shelter design and orientation to the sun play a role in thermal comfort. Shelters with larger sides and openings facing south, in the northern hemisphere, are normally warmer that those facing north. The opposite is true in the southern hemisphere. Construction and materials also determine shelter thermal performance. Shelters with concrete walls are more comfortable than those with timber walls in colder climates. The opposite is true in warm conditions. Activities such as indoor cooking increase the

temperature within a shelter. These are all important considerations when planning shelter activities.

Extremes in temperatures are associated with a variety of health problems. Extreme cold can result in hypothermia, frostbite, and related cold illness. Extreme heat can lead to health complications including heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat syncope, and heatstroke. People with heart or respiratory disease may be especially vulnerable to health-related compilations due to extremes in temperature.

During a humanitarian emergency, the goal is to maintain the shelter temperatures as comfortable as technically and economically feasible by regulating the rate at which the shelter gains or loses heat. This is best done by reducing heat loss or gain by conduction through walls, doors, windows, floor, and the roof, often through the use of low thermal conductivity materials, such as timber or soil, and to fabricate structural shelter elements, such as the roof, walls, windows, doors, and floors, that are in constant contact with the external environment.

Commercial insulation products are available in many countries to reduce heat conductivity in structural elements, especially roofs. Cellulose-based products are often the most environmentally friendly insulation available.

Managing indoor temperatures during humanitarian emergencies is challenging in both hot and cold humid climates. Hot and humid climates are especially challenging as it is extremely difficult to cool shelters through natural ventilation. When the outdoor temperature is higher than the indoor temperature, it is impossible to cool off shelters using natural ventilation. Consequently, in places where using ventilation to control indoor temperatures is limited, shelter designs should minimize thermal loads. In hot climates, this may necessitate that the natural ventilation systems be assisted by low-powered mechanical means to ensure proper ventilation.

Contaminants

Depending on the context, S&S interventions should be designed to prevent or at least minimize exposure to contaminants. For example, in places where indoor cooking or heating stoves are used, poor ventilation may increase the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. If a shelter contains lead-based paint, children are particularly vulnerable to exposure and subsequent lead poisoning, and measures should be taken to minimize this potential.

Conclusion

Current humanitarian S&S assistance often overlooks linkages to longer-term needs, mainly because those needs are well beyond the mandates, protocols, expertise, and institutional memories of most humanitarian actors. Thus, humanitarian S&S assistance does not include, for example, the reconstruction of permanent housing, the development of new settlements, or efforts to resolve chronic market, policy, and institutional deficiencies related to the provision of housing and basic services, including housing finance.

Recent humanitarian interventions, however, most notably in Haiti, Pakistan, and the Philippines, have highlighted a number of emerging issues that need to be more coherently addressed to appropriately link humanitarian S&S assistance to the recovery of disaster-affected populations, particularly in urban areas. This may include guidance, for example, on how to incrementally improve and expand transitional shelters to turn them into permanent housing, how settlements-based interventions can bridge the gap between relief and recovery efforts, and how a focus on DRR can inform settlements planning to create safer structures and spaces. Humanitarian actors will continue to improve S&S practice so that the long-standing gap between relief and recovery does not continue to undermine efforts to assist populations affected by humanitarian emergencies.

To address this gap, some argue that transitional shelter should be viewed and promoted as both an appropriate humanitarian response and permanent housing reconstruction, thereby facilitating the recovery of disaster/crisis-affected settlements more rapidly and at lower cost than conventional housing reconstruction programs (Setchell and Argenal 2014). This is not a trivial matter, for humanitarian and reconstruction budgets are not inexhaustible, even as the frequency of humanitarian emergencies is increasing. Further, as the global population continues to increase at a notable pace, this growing population is becoming increasingly urban and becoming more vulnerable through occupation of hazard-prone areas, with low-lying coastal cities subject to sea-level rise and climate change being an ominous example.

Thus, it appears that there has never been a greater need for safer, healthier shelter and settlements. The link between shelter, settlements, and health forged in the past, and strengthened in the humanitarian community in recent years, will thus serve as

a strong conceptual and experiential basis to inform responses to the shelter and settlements needs generated by future humanitarian emergencies.

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Chapter 13

The emerging importance of the settlements approach

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> Mega-city. Metropolis. City. Town.
> Municipality. District. Neighbourhood.
> Village. Hamlet. Refugee camp.

There are many names for human settlements, with this small sample highlighting differences in size and scale. Some settlements could be characterized as urban, peri-urban, suburban or rural. We could provide, for example, additional detail to suggest levels of poverty or tenure status, with names like 'slums' or 'informal settlements' coming to mind. We could also add many more names in languages other than English, further reflecting the richness, diversity and complexity of settlements across the globe.

What these designations have in common is that they signify the places where people live – where our species lives. They are the places where the great impediments to development (such as climate change, poverty and poor governance) and humanitarian crises (including displacement, conflict and disasters) of our time are manifested. The sum of these people-based spaces represents the forum of human existence. Thus, they are far more than areas on a map, but rather reflect the interaction of dynamic social, cultural, economic, political and environmental features in space and time.

With settlements established as the forum or platform for human existence and interaction, this chapter discusses a settlements approach (SA), aimed at guiding humanitarian action in settlements, the relationship of the SA to current practice in the form of the cluster approach, barriers to adopting an SA, and how the SA can serve as a conceptual and operational bridge to close the historically dysfunctional gap between humanitarian response and development activities, the latest iteration being the 'humanitarian–development nexus'.[2]

The settlements approach

Although the SA is a relatively recent concept for the humanitarian sector, the SA itself is not new; development agencies have been involved

in settlements-based efforts for decades. One benchmark was the 1976 conference on human settlements held in Vancouver, Canada, commonly referred to as 'Habitat I'.[3] The conference focused world attention on the growing urbanization of the planet, and introduced settlements planning and management – integrated, comprehensive, coordinated action in the places where people live – as an important planetary endeavour to create and sustain human settlements. The conference also ushered into existence the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (known today as UN-Habitat) as the UN agency specifically mandated to find answers to the problems resulting from massive urban growth, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. So, for at least 40 years, 'human settlements', 'settlements', and 'settlements planning' have been commonly used terms and activities of the international development sector.

Although the humanitarian sector has also been undertaking settlements-based activities for decades,[4] it is only with recent, large-scale urban disasters and crises (especially the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal, and the long-standing urban-based conflict in Syria) that it has sought to embrace a means of understanding and responding to humanitarian needs in settlements, particularly amid the dynamics and complexity of urban spaces. This effort reflects perhaps the sector's first explicit recognition of a spatial framework or context to humanitarian action.

Housing is essential in any settlement, a critical resource for renter and squatter households, and for many perhaps their most valuable asset, with investment in housing repair and construction an important means of stimulating the economy and promoting overall development. Shelter, the humanitarian counterpart to housing, is critical to survival, generating other benefits such as health and protection. As important as shelter is, however, it doesn't exist in a vacuum. To emphasize and reinforce the centrality of settlements to humanitarian action, donors such as USAID/OFDA have promoted the mathematical-sounding phrase S > 4W + R, meaning shelter is more than four walls and a roof.[5] This phrase has been used widely in training, outreach and programming activities, to emphasize that the *setting* of a shelter (that is, settlements) is at least as important as the shelter itself, for the simple but vital reason that shelter and housing do not exist in a vacuum. USAID/OFDA has found that this not only results in new understandings about the multi-faceted character of settlements, particularly in densely populated, diverse and complex urban spaces, but also enables the identification of new resources, new opportunities and new options to assist those in need of shelter. Emphasizing both context and process, the SA:

- features integrated and coordinated multi-cluster programming in socially defined spaces, reflecting the multi-faceted character of context (that is, settlements)
- is opportunistic with regard to livelihood promotion and disaster risk reduction
- recognizes gender, environment and social relations
- is transitional, by linking relief and recovery concerns
- is accountable to local populations and governing structures.

One important characteristic of settlements, reflected in the list at the opening of this chapter, is scale. Neighbourhoods typically serve as a means of understanding, defining and subdividing urban places according to various social, economic and physical features. These features, in turn, often serve as the basis of administrative and political recognition in larger jurisdictions. Neighbourhoods provide their residents with an identity and foothold in the larger urban arena, thereby offering some measure of security, safety and familiarity in an often chaotic urban world. Neighbourhoods become even more valuable

to their residents in the wake of humanitarian crises and naturally triggered disasters, precisely because of these social and economic features.[6]

As a conceptual and operational means of meeting the humanitarian needs of affected populations in urban spaces, a neighbourhood approach (NA) essentially scales the SA to the intimate socio-economically defined spaces of urban neighbourhoods, involving affected populations, local officials, the private sector and others in establishing a decision-making and settlements planning process to respond to multi-cluster needs. This is based on the notion that the short-term recovery of neighbourhoods can be best achieved by adopting a longer-term view of configuring and reconfiguring land to best accommodate shelter and related services, reduce disaster risk, provide livelihoods, forge social connections and strengthen the health and security of affected populations.

Recent USAID/OFDA urban disaster risk reduction projects serve as examples of the utility of the NA in risk-prone cities of Latin America. In Guatemala and Honduras in particular, results have been so promising that national governments have embraced the NA as national policy for both post-disaster response and urban slum upgrading activities. While meeting short-term humanitarian needs, this approach can also pave the way for follow-on recovery. That is to say, neighbourhoods can also serve as platforms for recovery. When linked together, neighbourhoods become the units of analysis in city-wide response and recovery efforts.[7]

The rationale for a settlements approach

The SA is not only a means of promoting integrated and coordinated multi-sector programming in socially defined spaces; it also improves understanding of context, and informs activities intended to respond to needs in context. In establishing a process of engagement and action with affected populations, new information and understanding about settlements are generated, new opportunities arise, new options are created, and new resources identified and mobilized. Further, establishing this process of decision making and planning facilitates discussions that meld short-term response with longer-term recovery concerns, thus providing the strategic and operational bridge over the elusive relief–development gap. This is also known as the relief–development continuum, the response-to-recovery gap and, more recently, via the Grand Bargain (see Chapter 7), the humanitarian–development nexus.[8] Given the need to create a nexus that will close several gaps, it is incumbent upon humanitarian agencies to create and support a process capable of providing not only urgently needed humanitarian assistance, but that also fosters a longer-term development process sensitive to crisis and disaster issues. Thus, in establishing a process that is also developmental, the SA ceases to be relegated to 'best practice', and becomes a much-needed transformative practice.

Relationship to the cluster approach

The cluster approach (CA), established by the humanitarian sector in 2005 as a pillar of the Humanitarian Reform Agenda (further discussed in Chapter 11), created the organizational architecture to coordinate and mobilize resources to respond to needs, based on a division of labour defined by 'clusters' of activities, including health, nutrition, logistics, water/sanitation/hygiene (WASH), protection, shelter and others.[9] But the CA lacks a spatial framework to promote – if not compel – coordination, with the result being a tendency for clusters to work in isolation, in a silo-like manner, with greater emphasis on programmes than on the settlements where those programmes interact with other cluster activities. The presence of several humanitarian organizations working on different cluster activities in the same settlements has often led to uncoordinated efforts, gaps in coverage, and confusion and frustration among affected

populations, who do not know who is providing what. Numerous examples of this have occurred in recent years, from the large-scale (pre-cluster) Kosovo conflict response in 1999–2000 until at least the 2016–17 Hurricane Matthew response effort in Haiti.

The SA, with its focus on multi-cluster programming in a spatial framework, gives structure to cluster interaction, thereby complementing the CA in the very places where people live. As well as improving coordination, the SA enables affected populations to make humanitarian organizations accountable for their work. This should help avoid the 'white vehicle' syndrome that is a common complaint of many affected populations, whereby numerous organizations, each with its own fleet of vehicles, hurriedly move in and out of settlements, suggesting uncoordinated action and poor service provision.

Although an Early Recovery Cluster (ERC) has been a feature of the CA since its genesis,[10] the ERC has rarely generated a programmatic benefit commensurate with other clusters, undermining efforts to forge a link between humanitarian and development agencies. Again, by establishing a process of decision making and planning that melds short-term response with longer-term recovery concerns, the SA can complement the CA by ensuring that humanitarian and development organizations can work together to resolve those concerns. In so doing, the SA can complement the CA from the macro to the micro, reflecting the scale of settlements noted at the outset of this chapter, and the aggregation of settlements into national and sub-national settlements systems.

The relationship of SA to area-based approaches

In recent years, efforts to improve humanitarian response in urban areas have resulted in the development of area-based approaches (ABAs), defined as being geographically based in a specific area, applying participatory methods of project management, and multi-sectoral in nature (see Box 13.1).[11] These efforts have emphasized coordination of humanitarian activities in a given area, and appear to be influenced, at least in part, by:

1. The '3W' (Who, What, Where) Displacement Tracking Matrices of cluster lead agencies, particularly the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
2. Clarification of operations to facilitate implementation of the so-called 'out of camp' urban policies of IOM and UNHCR.[12]

Although the SA encompasses the full range of settlements beyond the urban focus of the ABA, the area and operational coordination focus of the ABA in urban areas appears to complement the strategic and conceptual focus of the SA. This linkage is imperative, given the need for humanitarian actors to both understand settlements and improve their prospects for effective and timely programmatic results.

Hurdles to overcome

The SA is still relatively new, different, and thus risky. Many humanitarian agencies, particularly those outside the Shelter Cluster and the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster, remain largely unaware of the SA. Even actors in those clusters have yet to achieve consensus on SA definitions.[13] Donors, cluster lead agencies, NGOs and others accustomed to current practice in shelter and CCCM activities may be unfamiliar with the priorities, operations and difficulties of other clusters, may have limited capacity in clusters other than Shelter and CCCM, and may find it difficult to integrate and coordinate multi-cluster activities internally. Creating teams with other agencies to augment cluster capacities, and organize and budget for these capacities, may also present real or perceived obstacles.

Finally, the Shelter Cluster in particular may have become a victim of its own success. In advocating for the adoption of the SA for some time, the Shelter Cluster is now viewed by other clusters as 'owning' the SA, as other clusters do not perceive, understand, or perhaps even welcome the relevance of the SA to their own activities.

Although the problems posed by the SA may seem daunting, *not* adopting it brings difficulties too. Funding, technical and organizational capacities are tested by the increasing frequency, intensity and duration of naturally triggered disasters and conflict-related crises. This at least suggests the need for a new approach aimed at coordination, collaboration, engagement and the cost-conscious merging of capacities and resources of humanitarian agencies, displaced populations, host country governments and economies, the private sector, the development sector, and others.

Conclusion as a prologue to improved assistance

The SA is rooted in the recognition that it is difficult to understand and respond to shelter needs in isolation from other cluster needs and from the setting of shelter: settlements – the places where people live. In reorganizing, integrating and coordinating multiple cluster activities in socially defined spaces, the SA can also establish a process linking response and longer-term recovery efforts, with significant potential for new and different results. These results can help redefine best practice, smooth the transition from response to recovery, and create the conceptual and operational bridge over the gap between humanitarian and development assistance that has existed for decades. Such results would represent more than best practice; they would be transformative, ridding the humanitarian and development sectors of the bipolar construct that divides them and undermines the response and recovery of affected populations.

The potentially transformative nature of the SA is critically important. Humanitarian needs grow ever larger and more complex, while response to those needs seems to lag further and further behind. The scale is daunting: the number of people displaced globally in 2017 was 65.6 million,[14] nearly the same population as France, with internally displaced persons accounting for 40.3 million of the total. This global displacement has generated a shelter demand for roughly 16 million living units, mostly in urban areas, posing a significant task for humanitarian and development agencies alike.

So, where to begin? In the short term at least, the typical response will continue to be an individual, less-than-multi-cluster project implemented by a single humanitarian agency. Although these seemingly isolated efforts are often criticized for being too limited, too organizationally demanding, or too expensive, they need not be so, and can generate significant benefits that can serve as templates for replication. Brazilian urbanist Jaime Lerner, for example, has long advocated for an 'urban acupuncture' that, like a pinprick, generates intense transformations in small spaces, which ripple through larger spaces to change and improve living conditions.[15] Lerner found that changes do not need to be large or expensive to be transformative. Understanding the local conditions and needs is critical to generating desired results, whether in a rural hamlet, urban neighbourhood or entire city. Adopting a settlements approach to understanding and acting in settlements, whatever their scale, increases the possibility of such transformation.

1 The views expressed here are the personal views of the author, and do not necessarily represent the official views of the United States Agency for International Development.

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3 UN-Habitat (2018) *History, Mandate & Role in the UN System*. https://unhabitat.org/history-mandate-role-in-the-un-system/.

4 For example, during the 1999 Kosovo response, USAID/OFDA viewed settlements as an integral factor in the comprehensive provision of shelter to displaced populations.

5 InterAction (2018) *Training: USAID/OFDA Shelter and Settlements Training Course*. www.interaction.org/training/USAID-OFDA-shelter-settlements-training-course.

6 US Agency for International Development Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (2011) *The 'Neighborhood Approach', a Means of Improving the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance in Urban Areas*. USAID/OFDA, Washington DC. https://humanitarianlibrary.org/sites/default/files/2014/01/USAID-OFDA%20Neighborhood%20Approach%20One-Pager%20'11%20Sept%2023.pdf.

7 Ibid.

8 See Interagency Standing Committee (2016), specifically Grand Bargain Work Stream Number Ten.

9 See for example United Nations (nd) *How Are Disaster Relief Efforts Organised? Cluster Approach and Key Actors*. United Nations, New York. https://business.un.org/en/documents/6852.

10 According to the Global Cluster for Early Recovery (GCER), 'Early Recovery (ER) is an approach that addresses recovery needs that arise during the humanitarian phase of an emergency; using humanitarian mechanisms that align with development principles. It enables people to use the benefits of humanitarian action to seize development opportunities, build resilience, and establish a sustainable process of recovery from crisis'. The GCER is chaired by the United Nations Development Program and comprises 31 UN and non-UN active global partners from the humanitarian and development sectors. Humanitarian Response (2018) *Early Recovery*. www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/clusters/early-recovery.

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14 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2017) *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2016*. UNHCR, Geneva. www.unhcr.org/5943e8a34.pdf. Total included 22.5 million refugees and 2.8 million asylum seekers.

15 J Lerner (2016) *Urban Acupuncture: Celebrating Pinpricks of Change that Enrich City Life*. Island Press, Washington DC.

World Cities Day 2020: Moving Beyond Shelter

USAID Saves Lives

2 days ago·4 min read [Posted 31 October 2020]

https://medium.com/@USAIDSavesLives/world-cities-day-2020-moving-beyond-shelter-f048db335fb0

After the 2010 Haiti earthquake struck, not only did USAID help put a roof over the heads of people affected, we also worked with communities to build a new, more durable vision for their neighborhoods to withstand future disasters.

After the 2010 Haiti earthquake devastated the Ravine Pintade neighborhood near Port-au-Prince, USAID worked with partners to use community input to meet immediate humanitarian needs and help locals recover. Photo credit: Project Concern International

The word *home* conjures all sorts of meaning: family, friends, warmth, comfort. We think that the word *shelter* should mean more, too. After a disaster hits, shelter is typically identified as an immediate humanitarian need. But to us, shelter is more than four walls and a roof.

For years, USAID has worked with people affected by disasters to help them through the immediate aftermath. However, USAID also helps neighborhoods and larger settlements think of their future and partners with communities to work through longer-term issues and find better ways to integrate other types of assistance — such as water, sanitation, health, and protection — so that these settlements can be better and stronger than they were before. We call this a "*neighborhood approach*." On World Cities Day, we celebrate how this approach helped a neighborhood in Port-au-Prince, Haiti build back safer.

Before (left): The Ravine Pintade neighborhood of Port-au-Prince was reduced to rubble when a 7.0 magnitude earthquake hit Haiti in 2010. Photo credit: Project Concern International. After (right): In the Ravine Pintade neighborhood, USAID worked with partners to remove rubble and help rebuild the neighborhood. Photo credit: Carol Han/USAID

Remembering the 2010 Haiti earthquake

In 2010, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake caused massive damage and destruction in Haiti, with the greatest impact on the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area. Up to 300,000 people were killed, and at least another 300,000 were injured. The quake also damaged or destroyed more than 180,000 buildings, displaced more than 1.5 million people, and destroyed much of the area's roads and buildings. In all, an estimated 3.5 million people were affected by the disaster.

While the earthquake was devastating, efforts to respond to it actually presented an opportunity to transform damaged neighborhoods into stronger, more resilient ones, while serving as models for how cities can recover.

Rebuilding the Ravine Pintade neighborhood

Ravine Pintade was one neighborhood in Port-au-Prince that was severely impacted by the earthquake. In this neighborhood alone, the earthquake left behind more than 100,000 cubic meters of rubble, creating a five-foot high debris field. Only seven percent of houses were considered safe to live.

These one- and two-story transitional shelters in the Ravine Pintade neighborhood built several years after the 2010 the earthquake are evidence of a neighborhood in recovery. Photo credit: Charles A. Setchell/USAID

USAID supported Project Concern International and Global Communities (formerly Cooperative Housing Foundation) to apply the *neighborhood approach* to help Ravine Pintade recover.

Through our "KATYE" project, the Haitian Creole name for "neighborhood," we worked closely with neighborhood residents and local officials to repair and improve the community. We joined to replace water kiosks, provide stronger retaining walls, install drainage pipes under repaired walkways, and improve the walkways for children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. We

also installed solar powered lights, and provided transitional shelter that could be upgraded or replaced with more durable housing when the community's focus could shift towards recovery and longer-term visions for development.

Safer Neighborhoods Lead to Safer Cities

The impact of the KATYE project was evaluated by USAID and Project Concern International on the tenth anniversary of the 2010 disaster. The study found that repairing the neighborhood through a holistic lens — addressing urgent humanitarian needs while also planning for longer-term improved neighborhood conditions — reduced vulnerability to future disasters and improved the overall health and safety conditions of community residents.

It also provided durable shelters for hundreds of families that are still in use today, including the two-story transitional shelter that helped respond to the challenge of urban population density by "building up". With low-cost sustainability in mind, the dwellings include a system to harvest rainwater, which can then be used in the home for washing clothes or bathing.

VIDEO: See how one Haiti neighborhood got the ultimate disaster makeover. Video credit: USAID

The theme of this year's World Cities Day, "Valuing Our Communities and Cities," celebrates the key contributions of local

communities in keeping people safe and maintaining economic activities. By working hand-in-hand with the Ravine Pintade community to rebuild their neighborhood, USAID helped lay the foundation for safer, longer-term development, while also strengthening the neighborhood to better withstand the next disaster.

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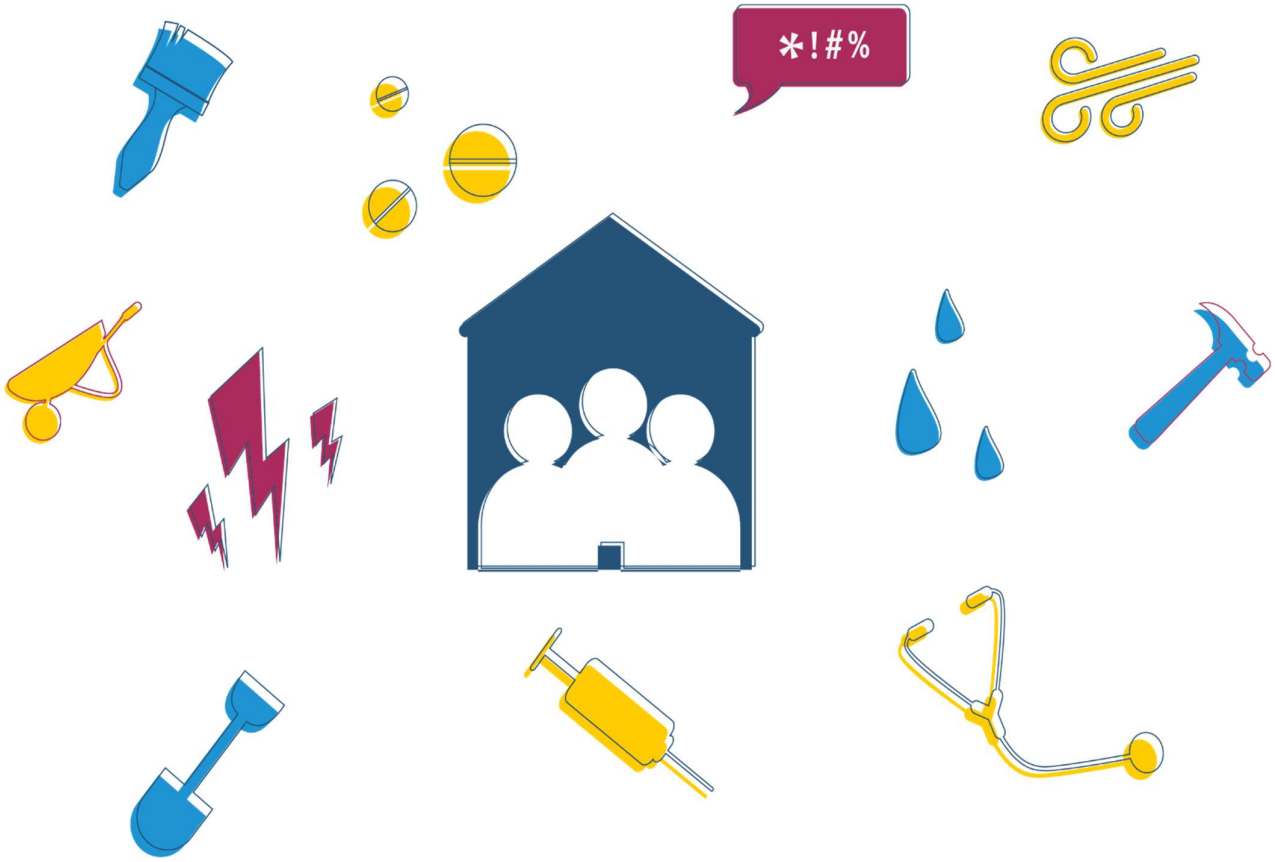
THE WIDER IMPACTS OF HUMANITARIAN SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS ASSISTANCE

Key findings report



InterAction

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This project was managed by Mohamed Hilmi, with the support of InterAction Humanitarian Policy and Practice and Communication Units. Infographics, Videos, and detailed ranking of evidence are available upon request. Please contact mhilmi@interaction.org.

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Annex A: List of detailed findings and Bibliography

Annex B: Methodology

1. Executive Summary

Humanitarian shelter and settlements assistance strives to meet one of the most essential and often lifesaving needs of conflict- and disaster-affected communities. Even the most basic shelter and settlements assistance can contribute to a sense of normalcy, provide physical and legal protection, improve psychological and socio-economic conditions, contribute to disaster risk reduction (DRR) and increase access to essential services such as health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and education. However, the overarching contributions of shelter and settlements assistance, and its impacts on other sectors are often less understood or overlooked.

This review and subsequent infographics aim to increase awareness of the wider impacts, contribute to improved inter-sectoral understanding, and encourage collaboration in emergency response and recovery processes.

From a review of over 190 documents of multiple sources and varying quality, the research explored the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of shelter and settlements assistance. Researched sectors/themes include physical and mental health, child development, well-being, education, livelihoods, employment, economic development, poverty reduction, food security, nutrition, gender, family life, crime, social cohesion, social capital, governance, disaster risk reduction, resilience, and the environment.

This publication is divided into three parts as described below:

i. Key findings and recommendations.
ii. Annex A: Full list of findings and references.
iii. Annex B: Methodology, including the quantity and type of information found.

A set of infographics and a series of video clips capturing community perspectives on shelter impacts are also available for use by the humanitarian community.

Impacts

The direct impacts of effective shelter and settlements assistance primarily include climate protection, immediate safety and security, privacy and dignity, and facilitating access to additional services. This report focuses on the majority of impacts outside of these immediate gains that are indirect or cumulative.

- The strongest evidences for impacts were found on health, including improved physical and mental health— particularly for children— and enhanced well-being and morale. However, due to limitations in the quality of data available, the evidence is not robust.
- Several specific impacts have been reported across the sectors of livelihoods, DRR, and society, including the provision of the basis for livelihoods as well as economic stimulation and skills training; cost-savings that allow redirection of income to other key needs; reducing underlying risks and vulnerability and stress on natural resources; and encouraging civic engagement and improving social relations.
- To a lesser extent, impacts have also been reported in education, food and nutrition, and gender, including providing a more conducive and stable environment that can support educational outcomes; facilitating access to more varied nutrition; and reducing vulnerability to sexual exploitation or abuse (SEA).

- Other important issues to come out of the research were the centrality of participation and the synergistic effects that can be created when integrated multi-sectoral assistance (across sectors, disciplines and themes) is provided to meets the multifarious needs of vulnerable populations.

Additionally, the research found that across humanitarian, housing, and development interventions, to varying extents, the links between shelter/housing and its impacts on other sectors are under-researched. There are multiple challenges in gathering reliable evidence not only on the correlations but particularly on the impacts that improvements to housing conditions make. As a result of how the majority of studies were conducted and reported, there is limited generalizability and transferability of the data. However, the potential for these impacts to be attainable more widely suggests that:

- Humanitarian shelter and settlements assistance has an important role to play as a supporter and enabler of non-shelter outcomes.
- A key finding of this research is the need to improve systems to monitor impact and increase the evidence base.
- The recommendations aim to assist in increasing the research capacity and the likelihood of future availability of evidence. To accomplish this, there is a pressing need to build capacity within the system, as well as strengthen partnerships between humanitarian agencies, donors, and research institutions.

2. Introduction

InterAction commissioned this research project with the objective of increasing the understanding and awareness of the wider impacts of humanitarian shelter and settlements, through evidence-based infographics, animations, video, and social media tools. The findings along with the information and communications materials are made available for InterAction Members and humanitarian stakeholders, aimed to be used in advocacy efforts, increase inter-sectoral understanding and enhance collaboration, both during emergency response and recovery processes.

Report aims and definitions

The report aims to provide an initial review of information that exists on the evidence of the impact of providing shelter and settlements assistance. To establish the impacts of shelter and settlements assistance, the following research questions were asked:

- What information exists that shelter and settlements assistance has an impact on other sectors/themes?
- What correlations are there between this sector/theme and shelter?
- How has the provision of shelter/housing assistance had an impact on this sector/theme (both positive and negative)?

Researched sectors/themes included health, mental health, child development, well-being, education, livelihoods, employment, economic development, poverty reduction, food security, nutrition, gender, family life, crime, social cohesion, social capital, governance, disaster risk reduction, resilience, and the environment.

What do we mean by 'impact'?

There is no standard definition of impact, which has been a contributing factor to the lack of impact evaluations carried out within the humanitarian sector.[72] With the increase in demand-led evidence, there has been an increased focus within the donors, United Nations Agencies (U.N.) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to have more robust monitoring and evaluation, with clearer descriptions of outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Nevertheless, there continues to be confusion over the use of these terms, particularly outside of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) units. Within this research, no distinction has been made between outcome and impact in terms of the change seen by recipients of assistance.

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions have been used:

- Direct impact: effect(s) caused by an action and occurring at the same time and place.
- Indirect impact: effect(s) caused by an action that is later in time or farther removed in distance, or as a result of a pathway of effects.
- Cumulative impact: effect(s) as a result of incremental changes caused by an action together with other actions.

Humanitarian shelter and settlements assistance

Shelter and settlements assistance facilitates a process of sheltering and associated neighbourhood and community interventions.[186] Traditional shelter responses typically involve non-food items (NFIs), plastic sheeting or tents, shelter kits of materials and tools, temporary or transitional shelters (t-shelters), technical support (information and guidance), rental and hosting support, and construction training.

They can also include repairs, provision of a core shelter, and, in some cases, retrofitting or upgrading of existing buildings through either in-kind or cash assistance, as well as measures to increase tenure security.

Settlements assistance addresses the setting of shelter, including site improvements and support services where needed, or the improvement of existing neighborhoods, including informal settlements, to facilitate the provision of shelter and basic services while reducing hazard risks. These Settlements approaches and interventions can also serve as platforms for DRR, as well as subsequent recovery and reconstruction.[186]

The shelter-housing continuum

The scope of this review includes data from housing development and slum upgrading programs, as well as from housing assistance in more developed contexts, to provide an overall view of existing evidence. This addresses the fact that there is minimal studies and evidence available within the humanitarian sector. While, both financially and programmatically, interventions continue to be divided along humanitarian, development (including slum upgrading), or social housing terms, there has long been a recognition of the continuum between initial disaster response and longer-term housing and city development. It is also important to acknowledge the incremental nature of the housing process (common outside the global north) as well as the long-term consequences of short-term assistance.

In light of the above, this report recognizes that there are clear links, if not broad similarities, in the types of assistance provided across humanitarian, development, and housing programs, despite the different contexts in which these interventions are taking place. As seen in the reviewed literature, the result of providing cash for rent in humanitarian contexts is not dissimilar to rental subsidies or housing vouchers in developed contexts in that both allow income to be redirected towards food and education. Likewise, some repair work carried out in humanitarian response or upgrading work in development interventions is similar—in terms of health benefits—to municipal retrofitting of poor-quality housing in the U.K., Europe, and Australia. This research, therefore, assumes that, notwithstanding the broader differences in climate, context and the challenge of the transferability of findings more generally, gains made in housing in development interventions can shed light on the potential impact in humanitarian settings, where such effects have been studied less. In doing so, it inherently recognizes the shelter-housing continuum and the place of shelter and settlements programming as part of the 'humanitarian-development nexus.'

Limitations

This section of the report provides a summary of some of the recorded impacts of shelter and settlements assistance from the available literature. Due to the overall quality and methodological limitations of the documents reviewed, the transferability of its findings is limited. With the information available it is not possible to predict that any particular finding may be replicated across locations, contexts, or between humanitarian, development and other housing interventions. Any individuals or agencies wishing to cite any of these impacts are encouraged to return to the source document to understand the specific context, limitations and transferability of the findings.

An expanded list of findings along with references are provided in Annex A. For a full discussion on the challenges of data reliability and limitations, as well as a breakdown of included documents, please refer to Annex B: Methodology.

3. Key findings

The key findings summarized here reflect the findings of several different authors across a range of contexts; further details of specific impacts, relevant statistics and full references can be found in Annex A. Given the varying quality of sources available, reports should be read in full to understand the context and limitations.

Direct impacts of shelter and settlements assistance

The objective of shelter assistance is to provide a safe, secure and dignified living environment for people affected by disasters or conflict. From the reviewed material, the direct impacts of shelter and settlements assistance can be summarized as:[110, 142]

- Climate protection.
- Immediate safety and security.
- Privacy and dignity.
- Facilitating access to additional services.

Indirect/cumulative impacts of shelter and settlements assistance

This report focuses on the majority of impacts of shelter and settlements assistance outside of these immediate gains that are indirect or cumulative. In sectors such as health, the change in living circumstances may take time to become apparent and wield benefits. In all sectors, any change in housing conditions may interact with other factors to either contribute toward or prevent a positive outcome.

The following table summarizes the strength of evidence for the identified sectors from the reviewed literature, according to the number of documents found cross-referenced with a weighted average ranking of the reliability of documents per sector (see Annex B for further explanation). An overview of the information available per sector, correlations between it and housing, and the range of impacts recorded are summarized below (see Annex A for detailed examples and sources).

Strong	Fair	Weak	Very weak

		Reliability (ranking of sources)			
		Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
Frequency (number of sources)	High	Health			
	Medium			Livelihoods	
	Low		Society	DRR/ Environment	
	Very low		Education Food		Gender

Table 1: Matrix of strength of evidence

Health

Overall, the evidence of the impacts of shelter and settlements assistance on health is STRONG.

The vast majority of evidence on health comes from the housing sector, supplemented by development interventions. Certain aspects of housing are well known to have significant health effects (e.g. damp, mold, pest infestation, toxins). In one meta-analysis the connection between poor housing and poor health is considered to be so well-established, it is said to be "unarguable".[168]

Despite having the highest volume of documents, many studies highlighted that the impact of housing improvements was hard to discern. Some meta-studies reported no discernible impacts—around 40% of examined reports revealed no association between housing assistance and health.[158] They also found that the higher the level of need, the more the assistance helped. Nevertheless, the direction of causality in many studies remains unclear, as health problems created by poor housing may be more indicative of social inequality. However, many sources attributed the significant gains in public health in developed contexts to improved shelter conditions in the 19th and 20th centuries. Information from humanitarian sources focuses more on self-reported mental health and well-being aspects. Below are the primary ways housing impacts health.

- Poor quality or inadequate housing has a substantial impact on the risk of ill health and life expectancy, especially as a result of poor air quality and thermal stress.
- Overcrowded housing increases the risk of infectious disease and child mortality.
- Good housing can reduce the entry and spread of air- and water-borne vectors.
- Providing access to green space has multiple health benefits.
- Housing is central to family life—children spend more time in the home and are more affected by negative health impacts as a result of poor housing.
- Poor housing conditions have negative effects later in life and contribute to developmental delays.
- The availability of affordable housing improves health outcomes for children.
- Poor quality housing and overcrowding causes mental distress and increases the likelihood of poor mental health.
- Tenure impacts health by either creating housing instability and reduced mobility or by creating a sense of ontological security.

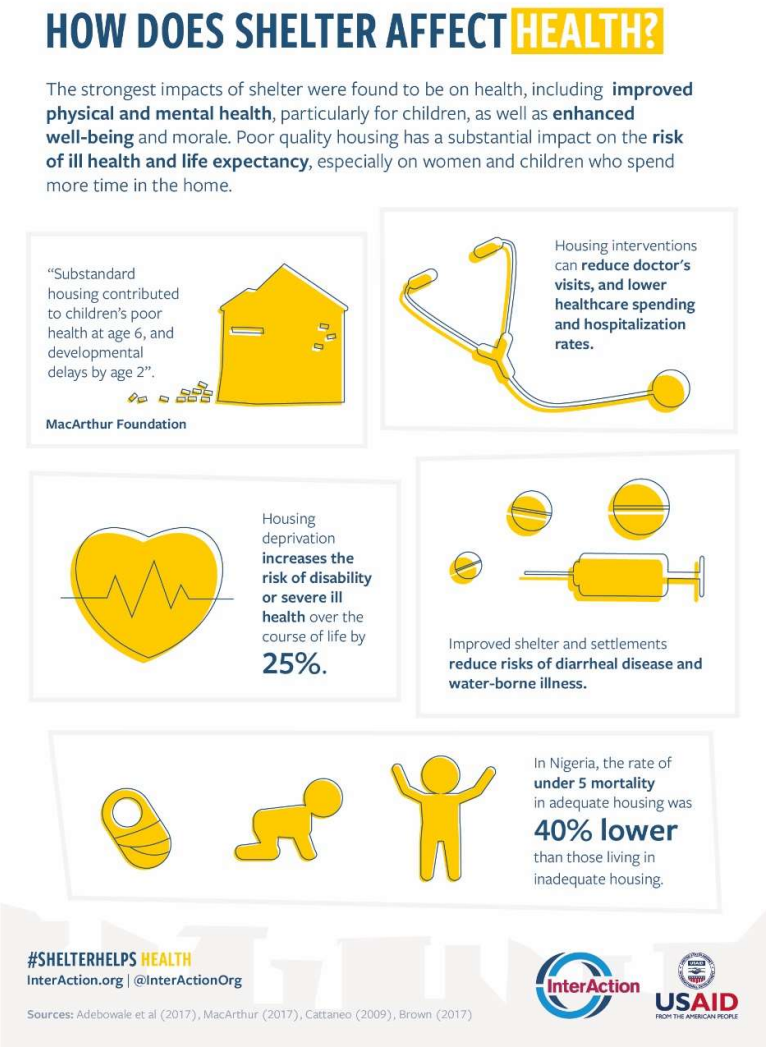
The rate of under-five mortality in adequate housing was 40% lower than for those living in inadequate housing in Nigeria. *(Adebowale et al., 2017: 11)*

Provision of a cement floor led to 78% reduction in parasitic infections and a 49% reduction in diarrhea in children in Mexico. *(Cattaneo, 2009: 3-4)*

The impacts of shelter and settlements assistance on health include:

- Limited measurements of improvements in physical health.
- Self-reported improvements in health.

- Lower healthcare spending and hospitalization rates.
- Reduced incidence of diarrheal disease and water-borne illness.
- Positive health effects as a result of reductions in overcrowding.
- Improved housing conditions, including reducing dampness and cold, have prevented deterioration in child health, reduced asthma symptoms, lowered healthcare visits and improved mental health.
- An increase in a feeling of control and reduction in stress, contributing to increased stability and improved overall wellbeing.
- Improved mental health and reduced intimate partner violence.
- Gains in morale, satisfaction, reduced stress, motivation, pride, self-worth, and hospitality.



Livelihoods

The evidence of the impacts of shelter and settlements assistance on livelihoods is WEAK.

Research on livelihoods constitute the second-highest number among referenced documents. The majority of these were from humanitarian evaluations, which are of lower quality and reliability and more open to bias. Nevertheless, livelihoods was recognized as a key factor in ensuring the success of shelter

projects, particularly during relocation. In addition, there is a need for wider recognition of the economic impacts of housing construction. In the research, livelihoods was disaggregated into: impacts on employment opportunities, wider contributions to the economy, and poverty reduction.

Housing primarily impacts livelihoods through:

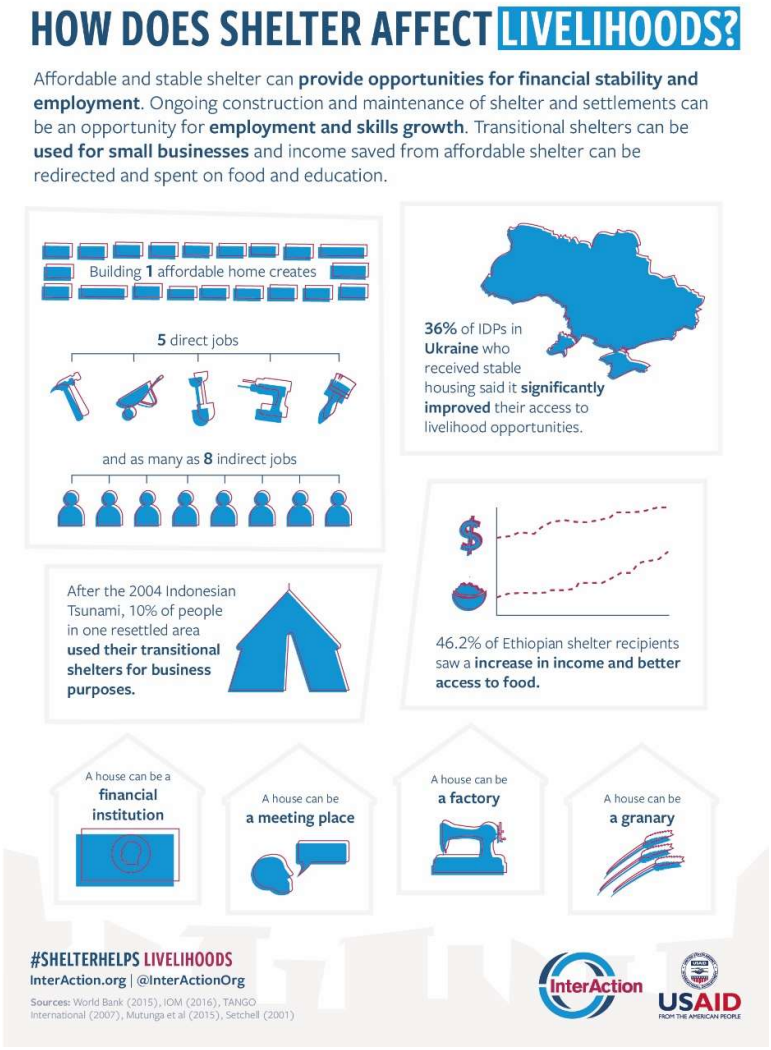
- Providing more than shelter—it is a place in which employment and home-based enterprises occur, providing direct income as well as income for those it employs.
- The relationship between location and employment opportunities and how tenure or assistance to relocate/upgrade can have positive or negative effects.
- Contributing to overall production activity, particularly through forward and backward linkages.
- Providing a way to accumulate assets/wealth for the future.
- Increases disposable income for other needs through affordable housing.
- Providing additional income through receiving rent.

Home-based enterprises are often the most important way that shelter can support economic development in post-disaster contexts.
(Sheppard and Hill, 2005: 8)

The impacts of shelter and settlements assistance on livelihoods include:

- Creation of employment opportunities through shelter construction.
- Improved livelihood opportunities through new or increased skills and training.
- Generation or maintenance of livelihoods through assets and assistance received (tools or physical space).
- Providing a crucial labor market entry point for young or lower-skilled workers.
- In developed contexts, there is conflicting evidence on the impact of housing assistance: some families report working more consistently, while other studies have shown a negative impact on labor force participation.
- Contributing to the development of local businesses by investing in small and mid-sized businesses, promoting the rapid economic recovery of affected communities.
- Creation of additional upstream and downstream jobs.
- Contributing to the overall housing supply and market availability.
- Providing an environment that stimulates or encourages increased market activity through settlement upgrading.
- Significantly higher increase in income for those who have received post-disaster shelter than those who have not.
- Reduced expenditure on housing or maintenance costs, freeing up income for other needs.
- Preventing the most severe forms of negative coping strategies.
- Can reduce absolute poverty but not have an impact on the ability to maintain a livelihood.
- Impacts on poverty reduction are often limited to households that can mobilize further resources, with less impact on the most vulnerable cases.

The construction of one affordable home creates 5 direct jobs and as many as 8 jobs indirectly.
(World Bank, 2015: 1)



Society

The evidence of the impact of shelter and settlements assistance on society is WEAK.

Society encompasses crime and safety, social cohesion, social capital, and governance. The evidence comes from across humanitarian, development and housing sources. There is a strong case to establish the links between settlement design and social interactions, safety, and crime made in the work of Jane Jacobs and Oscar Newman. There is less evidence on the impacts of particular interventions or the provision of assistance.

Housing impacts social cohesion, social capital, and governance by:

- Encouraging open spaces that can foster social inclusion and community development.
- Securing tenure to increase stability and investment in the local community.
- Encouraging participation in addressing local issues and establishing representative bodies.
- Building stronger communities and stimulating civic activism.

- Creating safe homes and neighborhoods that help build social stability and security.

Impacts of shelter and settlements assistance on society have been:

- An increase in the perception of safety at a household and settlement level, particularly among women.
- Some settlement interventions have led to a downward trend in crime and homicide rates.

75% of respondants reported that social infrastructure rehabilitation had positive effects on relationship between internally displaced people (IDPs) and host communities.
(Triangle, 2019: 75)

- Reduced social tension and improved integration of refugees/displaced and host communities or different racial groups
- Positive contributions towards peacebuilding efforts.
- Improved social relations and empowerment.
- Securing tenure that enabled the building of relationships to facilitate recovery.
- Facilitating better engagement with local government to promote the needs and priorities of the community and increase accountability in meeting them.
- Reduced power inequality and more localized control of space.
- Increased contributions to local taxes and share of resources allocated to poor communities.

HOW CAN SHELTER HELP SOCIAL COHESION?

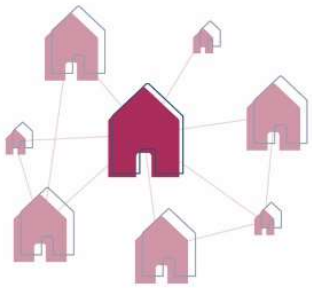
Shelter and settlements can **improve social cohesion and community engagement**. Improved public spaces foster social inclusion. Livelihoods benefit refugee and host communities to **recover and prosper.**

In Syria, **75%** of people said restored social services and infrastructure after conflict had a **positive effect on relationships** between IDPs and host communities.

46% of residents in Lebanon, who benefited from housing upgrading, reported

reduced community tensions

increased empathy and trust



Shelter and the larger concept of settlement are **inextricably linked** and should be addressed as a whole rather than separately.

> *We have good relationships with the hosts, we feel at home.*
>
> **Male shelter recipient, Ethiopia**

Affordable housing and settlement upgrading can increase

- involvement in neighborhood activities
- community leadership roles
- community connectedness

#SHELTERHELPS SOCIALCOHESION

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Sources: Brown (2017), Triangle (2019), Parker and Maynard (2018), ECHO (2017), Mutunga (2015)

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DRR / Environment

The evidence of the impact of shelter and settlements assistance on DRR and the environment is WEAK.

The strongest evidence comes through the humanitarian sector, but the reliability of documents is lower.

> ***Many households are willing to contribute financially in order to mitigate the impact of future shocks.*** *(Norton and Chantry, 2010: 43)*

Housing impacts DRR and the environment through:

- An opportunity to reduce underlying risks by building back better/safer.
- Reducing loss of life and level of damage in future disasters.
- Acting as a tool for local development planning.
- Avoiding or causing damage to land and resources that might contribute to exacerbating the impact of a disaster or place stress on natural resources.
- Leveraging household investments in shelter.
- Reducing the negative effects of climate change.

> ***The BHP program in Pakistan reduced the extent of damaged shelter by two times than those that were not improved***. *(Avdeenko and Fröhlich, 2019: 41)*

Impacts of shelter and settlements assistance on DRR and the environment have been:

- Incorporating proper building techniques that make homes better able to withstand shocks.
- Reducing the costs of periodic repairs.
- Reducing stress on local resources.
- People feeling safer and more self-reliant.
- Encouraging uptake in the broader population.
- Reducing the impact of recurrent shocks on settlements and infrastructure.

In addition, humanitarian studies reported a positive impact on resilience through catalyzing recovery, diversifying livelihoods, facilitating access to services, and increasing disaster preparedness.

Education

The evidence of the impacts of shelter and settlements assistance on education is VERY WEAK.

All the information on education comes from the housing sector, mainly from North America. There is no clear evidence of direct correlations, and the data on links that exist all come from research reports, which may be subject to bias or policy agendas. The evidence of impacts of assistance is minimal, but does include controlled groups or case studies and is of more reliable quality.

The literature recognizes the difficulties in finding evidence or even estimating the impacts of quality housing on education. Often, this is due to the intermediate variable of poverty—where socioeconomic status may have more of an impact on education than housing conditions (such as quality of school, parental involvement, or peer support). However, housing is recognized to play a key role in providing a stable environment in which policies targeting educational attainment are effective, e.g. it is an enabler for other interventions.

In the humanitarian sector, the link between shelter and education mainly relates to school construction, rather than household level shelter assistance. There is only anecdotal evidence that the provision of

shelter has allowed resources to be redirected to education, or that children have been able to remain in school as a result of a more stable housing situation.[60]

Housing primarily impacts education as a result of:

- Instability resulting in frequent home moves and the ability to perform.
- Poor quality of housing having an impact on health and, therefore, school absences.
- Lack of study space, or space which is overcrowded, loud, and lacking privacy.
- Location affecting the quality of school attended.

A housing assistance program in Ecuador saw a 19% decrease in drop-outs from post-compulsory education and 21% decline in working children in the corresponding age range. *(Rosero et al., 2012: 30)*

Impacts of assistance have been:

- Upgrading resulting in increased school attendance and lower dropout rates.
- Improved space to study and improve study habits.
- Lowering stress for parents, who are subsequently able to provide more support.
- Assistance did not necessarily translate into improved attainment/test scores—highlighting the complicated relationship between environment and education.

Food Security / Nutrition

The evidence of the impacts of shelter and settlements assistance on nutrition is VERY WEAK.

There is minimal data on food security, as only 5% of the total number of documents reviewed mention it. Information comes primarily from housing studies in the U.S. and U.K., although it also appears in some humanitarian reports. More research is required in this area.

Housing impacts food (in)security and nutrition through affordability:

- Excessive housing costs can mean insufficient funds to meet other—especially nutritional—needs, creating a link between poor housing conditions and malnutrition.
- Overcrowding or moving to poorer quality (cheaper) shelter may be a result of attempts to reduce housing costs to meet other needs.
- Strong correlations between debt and food insecurity.
- Potential for shelter providers to be a conduit to provide access to healthy foods and foster nutritional needs.
- In more developed contexts, food security is likely to suffer more to meet housing costs, where social security nets (e.g. food banks) may be more available to meet food needs. In developing or humanitarian contexts, housing may be more likely

Beneficiaries of a post-conflict shelter assistance program in Pakistan were able to afford two meat meals a week compared to less than one for non-beneficiary households. *(van Dijk and van Leersum, 2009)*

to be compromised to meet food needs. The correlation between poor shelter and food insecurity remains in both cases.

Impacts of assistance have been:

- Housing subsidies have resulted in improved child health, where the provision of housing assistance has led to lower rates of undernourishment.
- The provision of shelter has allowed beneficiaries to spend more on food and diversify diets (e.g. more meat and vegetables).

Gender

The evidence on shelter and settlements assistance on gender is VERY WEAK.

There is surprisingly little data available on gender, and that which exists is of generally low quality. Although specific searches were carried out, little information was found on the specific impacts of shelter or settlements assistance on gender-based violence (GBV) or intimate partner violence (IPV). Information gathered comes from housing, development and humanitarian sources, highlighting the need to adequately consider differential gender needs at all scales (household, settlement, society). It also highlights the need to acknowledge that a lack of housing can impede the ability to access other rights, particularly the right to family life.

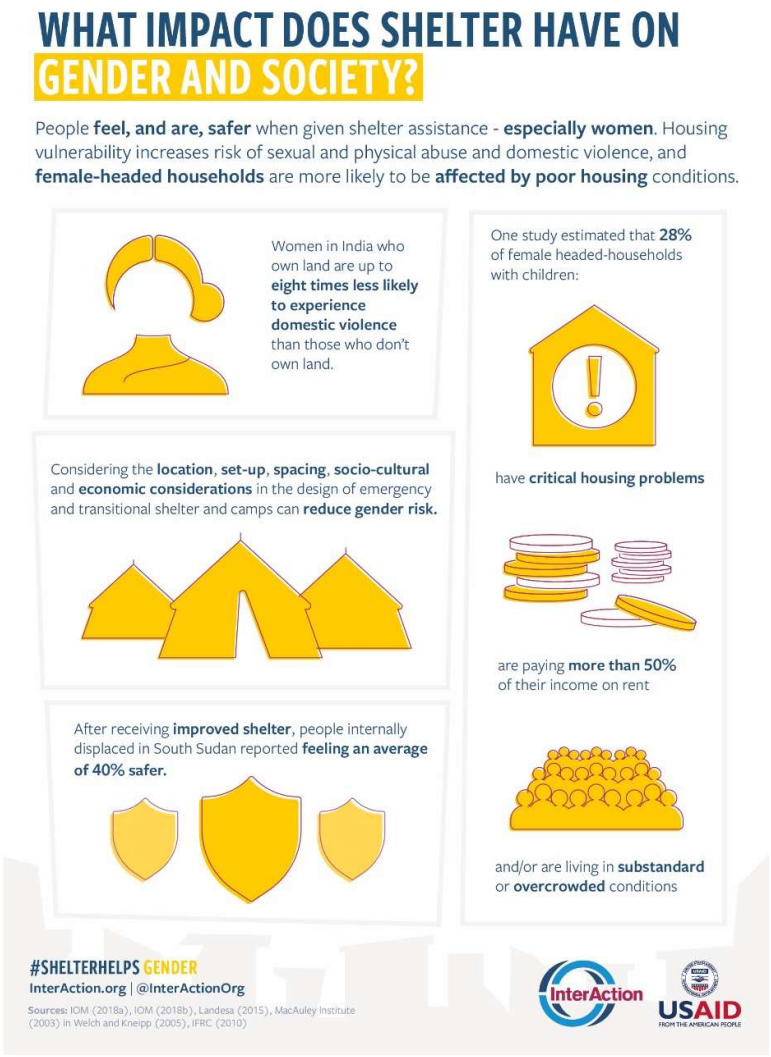
Housing impacts gender and family through:

- Vulnerability to sexual exploitation and abuse in accessing adequate shelter, this can be seen across humanitarian, development, and housing.
- Generally, poor quality conditions have a higher impact on women and children, particularly WASH and lack of privacy.
- Poverty has a more dramatic impact on female headed-households.

Women who own land are up to 8 times less likely to experience domestic violence.
(Landesa, 2015)

Impacts of shelter assistance have been:

- Shelter and settlement design can reduce gender-based risk and vulnerability, leading to improved feelings of safety.
- Shelter improvements can relieve the burden on women, particularly regarding household chores and access to services.
- Improving land ownership has subsequent benefits on education, resilience, health, safety, and nutrition.
- Increasing the skills base and position of women in the community.



WASH

Despite, or as a result of, the close relationship between shelter and WASH, it has not been possible to determine WASH outcomes as a result of shelter and settlement assistance. More often than not, shelter assistance included the provision of household-level water and sanitation—in fact, the findings highlight that where this is not included in shelter programs, the likelihood of the overall success of the project and both direct and indirect impacts is low.[91] European Civil Protection And Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) guidelines state there should be no shelter program without WASH components included,[50] and more organizations are moving towards combined shelter-WASH teams.

While some of the direct outcomes of shelter and WASH programs may differ, the indirect and cumulative effects merge in other sectors. Integrated shelter-wash assistance can be seen to make a major contribution to health outcomes, particularly related to hygiene and water-borne diseases and impacts on women and girls, which can go on to affect livelihoods capacity and education. Recent campaigns have highlighted the role that access to WASH plays in addressing antibiotic resistance, which is also relevant to facilitating access to WASH services through shelter projects.[44] Conversely, where shelter projects have not adequately addressed WASH needs, it can pose a risk to public health and

hygiene. Key Informants highlighted the problems that can be caused when shelter assistance does not adequately consult WASH experts.

Non-sectoral findings and impacts

In addition to impacts on specific sectors, following additional key themes emerged from the research.

The importance of participation

At all levels and across interventions, participation was highlighted time and again as a key part of any shelter and settlements response across humanitarian, development, and housing interventions. This was noted to have a positive impact on well-being, particularly mental health, as well as contributing to a sense of ownership and positive engagement with local authorities, social cohesion, and contributing to increased resilience and sustainable outcomes. Frühling[57] (2010) highlights that the impacts of poverty reduction and good local governance seen through slum upgrading are not caused through the technical components of physical infrastructure upgrading, but rather through the process: the set of methods and procedures based around long-term engagement timeframes and deep participation of community members.

The importance of context

Another important finding was the need to respond to the specific context or needs of heterogeneous groups. Even in housing studies, there was a need to acknowledge the differences between different groups and maintain the ability to provide different forms of assistance in response.[12] Similarly, particularly in humanitarian contexts, there was recognition of the interplay of different factors on the results of outcomes, for example, the timing of assistance relative to other assistance programs, the method of delivery in supporting the local economy and contributing to risk reduction, and the choice of assistance itself in affecting the vulnerability, dependency, isolation and recovery of populations.[15] This highlights the need to adequately consider context and its influence on the findings in any particular study: 'We always say context matters, but what is remarkable is how little effort has been spent studying contexts'.[137]

The effects of multi-sectoral or integrated assistance

Numerous studies also mentioned the need for shelter assistance or housing improvements to take place alongside other interventions in order to be effective. This highlights that, even though shelter assistance may contribute to impacts on other sectors, the most effective support addresses the diverse and interlinked needs of vulnerable populations. Positive effects of individual house upgrading are undermined if the neighborhood and surroundings remain in decline.[17, 66, 70, 50, 186] In other cases, treating issues as related problems and initiating an integrated response and building relationships between service providers was cited as key to the program's success.[64]

In some circumstances, assistance was only recognized to be effective if additional support was provided—this was especially important in the link between shelter and livelihoods.[147] Additionally, housing was more likely to generate a more powerful set of non-shelter benefits when other causes of disadvantage—such as low incomes associated with the presence of a disability—are less acute.[13] By assisting in parallel, a project may advance on the achievements of other interventions and initiatives to achieve a synergistic effect that accomplishes more than the sum of the individual parts. This recognizes and builds on the recognition of the need for coordination, collaboration and inter-sectoral assessment

and response and the efforts made in recent years to better integrate sectors due to the linkages between sectoral results.

Need for a holistic approach

Such an approach recognizes that the lives of people affected by disasters or poverty are a complex web of interactions, in which all sectors combine to create the lived experience.[95] However, responding to this reality continues to be a challenge for a sector-based industry. The siloing effect often bemoaned in humanitarian response can also be seen in other sectors or areas as well. One key informant interviewee (KII) mentioned how health researchers also need to reach out across internal boundaries and look at issues comprehensively. Another KII noted the challenge within the sector to do this as a result of competition for limited resources, alongside the lack of real incentive to produce evidence of impact when agencies were more interested in generating funds to help people, rather than the actual help of people (and therefore ensuring that the assistance they are providing has the intended or anticipated impact). At a system, organization, and individual level, work should continue to break down silos and understand the interdependencies between sectors to increase effectiveness. Creating linkages across sectors, disciplines, and themes would be to the advantage of the system as a whole, but notwithstanding other barriers. Doing so will only be possible when increasing the efficiency, effectiveness, and overall impact of assistance is genuinely at the heart of the motivation for its provision.

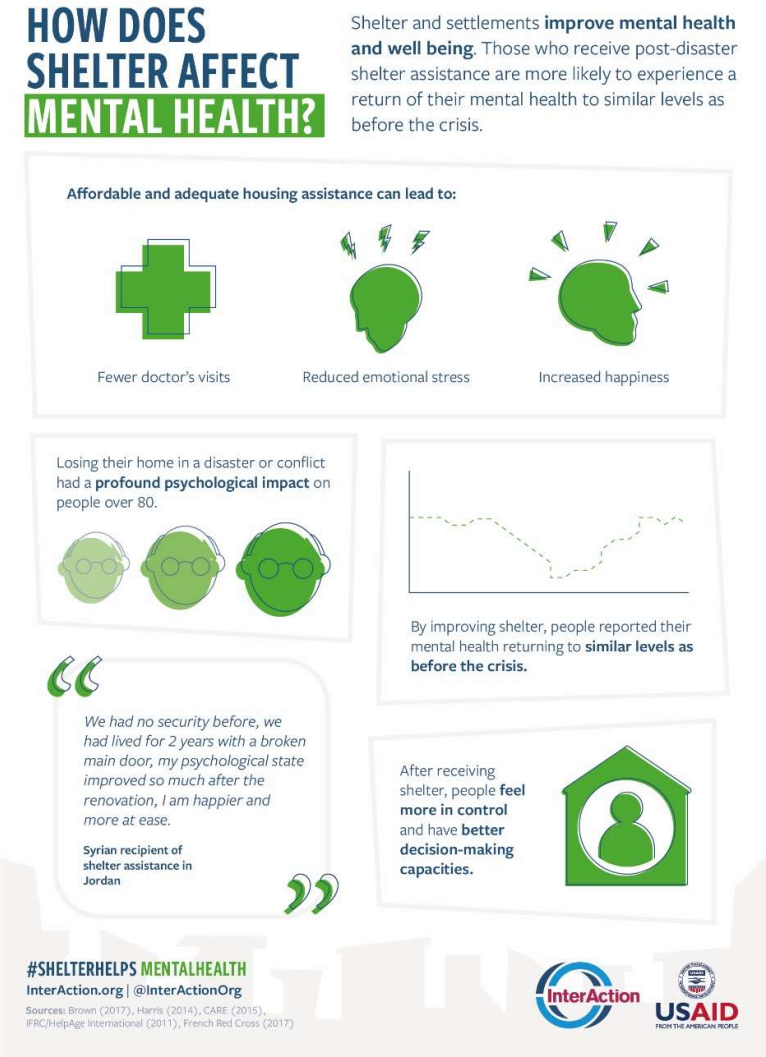
Need for a stronger evidence base

Faced with increasing need and decreasing resources, there has been an 'increasingly urgent need to generate knowledge about what works, both to inform decision making and demonstrate the effectiveness of interventions'.[110] The drive toward evidence-based programming and accountability has increased attention on outcome-monitoring, however, despite a wealth of tools and methods, there is a recognized lack of individual and organizational capacity to carry out proper impact assessment within the humanitarian sector, complicated further by high staff turnover, lack of a 'learning culture' and inadequate resources.[137]

Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP) states, 'Most organisations that claim to do impact assessments do not really appreciate what the terminology means—rather they feel that any measurement of results is a measurement of impact'.[137] Given the limited quality of information available, particularly in the humanitarian sector, a finding of this research is, therefore, the need for humanitarian practitioners to engage with how evaluations are designed and carried out, and reflect more deeply on the information being sought, in order to address the weaknesses and gaps that currently exist. This is not to diminish the challenges facing impact evaluation in the humanitarian sector or fall into the trap of valuing quantitative over qualitative data. It is also not to suggest that humanitarians become impact evaluation experts or academics, or that a randomized controlled trial is the only form of reliable evidence. Rather, it is to highlight the need to understand what constitutes good evidence and how to achieve it. This raises the question of organizational incentive and addressing the 'risk aversion' inherent in many organizations.

There is also reflection required over the most appropriate timeframes and how to facilitate this in changing contexts and mobile populations. While in some circumstances, timeframes may need to be shorter to capture effects,[137] in general, across the humanitarian and development and housing studies, timeframes were often mentioned as needing to be longer in order to measure impact adequately. However, the ability to demonstrate impact and production of good evidence will not emerge until there is a greater investment in the required skills and capacities: "It would not be helpful to expect over-

burdened programme managers to rigorously analyse impact without equipping them with the capacity and resources to do so."[72]



4. Conclusion

This research was carried out as an initial exploration into the range of impacts that shelter and settlements assistance has, and identification of areas where information is particularly weak, in order to inform selected infographic communications and to direct further research efforts. This report provides a summary of a range of examples of the wider impacts of shelter and settlements assistance, drawing on information from over 190 documents from humanitarian assistance, development/slum upgrading, and social housing interventions.

The strongest impacts were found to be on health, including improved physical and mental health, particularly for children, as well as enhanced well-being and morale. Although, due to limitations in the quality of data available, the evidence cannot be said to be robust, a number of specific impacts have also

been reported across the sectors of livelihoods, DRR, and society, including the provision of the basis for livelihoods, economic stimulation and skills training, and cost-savings that allow redirection of income to other key needs; reducing underlying risks and vulnerability and stress on natural resources; and encouraging civic engagement and improving social relations. To a lesser extent, impacts have also been reported in education, food, and gender, including providing a more conducive and stable environment that can support educational outcomes; facilitating access to more varied nutrition; and reducing vulnerability to sexual exploitation or abuse. Other important issues to come out of the research were the centrality of participation, the synergistic effects that can be created when multi-sectoral or integrated assistance is provided that responds to the multifarious needs of vulnerable populations, and the need for a holistic approach that works across sectors, disciplines and themes.

Specific examples and references can be found in Annex A, while an overall picture of the quantity and type of information found are included is Annex B.

Based on the studies found, the potential impact of shelter and settlements assistance can range from contributing to the economy to improved sleep to reducing the likelihood of future damage to shelters. However, due to the limited generalisability and transferability of the data, and as a result of the way in which the majority of studies were conducted and reported, the findings represent a range of examples of impacts in particular circumstances, rather than any conclusive statement about the overarching impact of shelter and settlements assistance more broadly.

The potential for these impacts to be attainable more widely suggests that shelter has an important role to play as a supporter and enabler of non-shelter outcomes. As such, a key finding of this research is also the imperative to generate stronger first-hand research, if we are to be able to better assess the wider contributions of shelter and settlements assistance.

In carrying out a review on the impacts of housing improvements, Bell[17] noted the "tendency to publish and republish simple, convenient numbers as universal rules of thumb when the original source research was…based on a very few or specific cases that were hard to disentangle or generalise about." While a useful summary of the potential impacts of providing assistance, to accept the examples collated in this report without engaging with the need to generate better evidence runs the risk of perpetuating the lack of information available and delaying the required investment in generating better data.

Implementing agencies and donors commissioning or producing evaluation reports are the key contributors to knowledge about the effects of humanitarian shelter and settlement interventions. While this can create a risk of bias, it also provides an opportunity for collaboration and sharing to improve the quantity and quality of evidence available in the sector. Partnerships between humanitarian agencies, donors and research institutions would increase the relevance and applicability of academic research. Given the lack of capacity, particularly within the humanitarian sector, and skills available elsewhere, the future seems to lie in identifying and establishing partnerships that introduce new actors and perspectives. In addition, partnership analysis can be carried out independently by institutions that are not directly invested in the implementation of programs. Success will require clear commitment from donors and implementing agencies alike, and likely require going beyond the usual M&E set up to establish a flexible learning system that sits half in and half out of project implementation structures.[45]

It is clear that the potential that shelter and settlements assistance holds makes this investment both important and beneficial. The findings collated in this report provide insights into the value that shelter

and settlements assistance provides, however, substantial, reliable evidence on the wider impacts will require a significant commitment to partnership and further research and analysis.

5. Recommendations

Given the limitations noted above, further primary research and meta-analysis are necessary to verify and extrapolate the wider impacts of shelter and settlements assistance. The recommendations below aim to assist in increasing the likelihood of future availability of evidence:

For humanitarian shelter providers and academics

- Systematically upload evaluations to shared knowledge repositories (ALNAP, Humanitarian Library, etc.) to contribute to the available knowledge base.
- Conceive evaluation designs at the same time as project planning and consider the availability of baseline data or need to collect it.
- Clearly define your theory of change and objectives of assistance to support evaluation.
- Invest in expanding the skills and capacities required to carry out impact evaluations by providing guidance and training on applying appropriate study designs, research methods, evaluation frameworks, and indicators.
- Weave efforts to document project impact into monitoring and surveillance activities, in order to reduce costs while improving program quality.
- Engage in dialogue on the priorities and feasibility of impact evaluations to remove myths.
- Seek to establish long-term partnerships between academics, donors, governments, practitioners, and recipients.

For donors

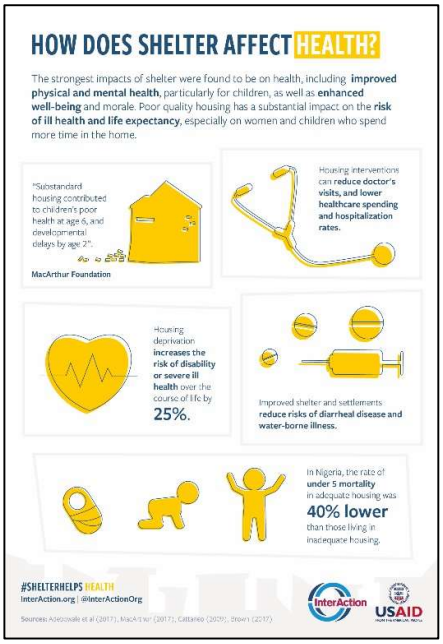
- Fund research to help answer the necessary questions to carry out efficient and effective programs, including longitudinal studies.
- Clearly earmark resources to contribute to a critical body of evidence on impact.
- Do not expect already over-burdened M&E teams or managers to be able to analyze impact without equipping them with the capacity and resources to do so.
- Invest in partnerships between academics, governments, practitioners, and recipients.
- Refocusing humanitarian M&E to produce more meaningful data has to be linked to a re-think of the incentives of providing such data.

For future research

- Further research should focus on improving the quality of primary research and evaluations undertaken in the humanitarian shelter and settlement sector.
- Narrow the scope and do a more in-depth meta-analysis of specific sectors, including primary research where possible.
- Pilot impact evaluations in specific topics to help demonstrate feasibility and practice.
- Build relationships with other organizations carrying out similar research and share findings.
- Ensure context is adequately accounted for and analyzed in evaluations and assessments.

Please refer to Annex A and B for detailed findings, bibliography, and methodology.

Contact us: shelter@interaction.org


HOW DOES SHELTER AFFECT HEALTH?
The strongest impacts of shelter were found to be on health, including improved physical and mental health, particularly for children, as well as enhanced well-being and morale. Poor quality housing has a substantial impact on the risk of ill health and life expectancy, especially on women and children who spend more time in the home.
Substandard housing contributed to children's poor health at age 6, and developmental delays by age 2.
MacArthur Foundation
Housing interventions can reduce doctor's visits, and lower healthcare spending and hospitalization rates.
Housing deprivation increases the risk of disability or severe ill health over the course of life by 25%.
Improved shelter and settlements reduce risks of diarrheal disease and water-borne illness.
In Nigeria, the rate of under 5 mortality in adequate housing was 40% lower than those living in inadequate housing.
#SHELTERHELPS HEALTH
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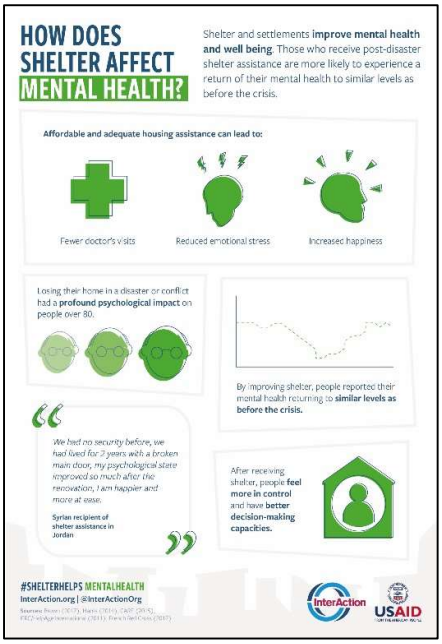
HOW DOES SHELTER AFFECT MENTAL HEALTH?
Shelter and settlements improve mental health and well being. Those who receive post-disaster shelter assistance are more likely to experience a return of their mental health to similar levels as before the crisis.
Affordable and adequate housing assistance can lead to:
Fewer doctor's visits
Reduced emotional stress
Increased happiness
Losing their home in a disaster or conflict had a profound psychological impact on people over 80.
By improving shelter, people reported their mental health returning to similar levels as before the crisis.
We had no security before, we had lived for 2 years with a broken main door, my psychological state improved so much after the renovation, I am happier and more at ease.
Syrian recipient of shelter assistance in Jordan
After receiving shelter, people feel more in control and have better decision-making capacities.
#SHELTERHELPS MENTALHEALTH
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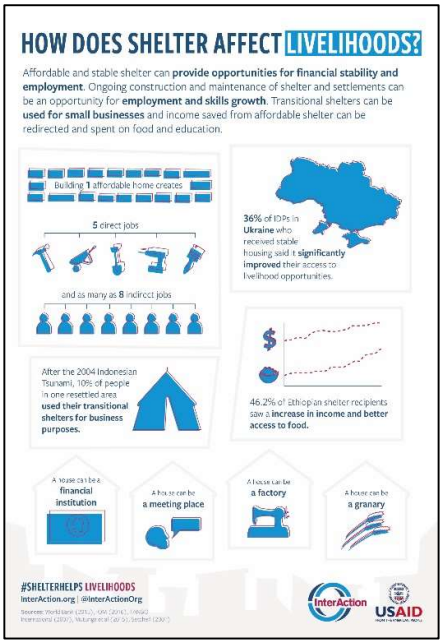
HOW DOES SHELTER AFFECT LIVELIHOODS?
Affordable and stable shelter can provide opportunities for financial stability and employment. Ongoing construction and maintenance of shelter and settlements can be an opportunity for employment and skills growth. Transitional shelters can be used for small businesses and income saved from affordable shelter can be redirected and spent on food and education.
Building 1 affordable home creates
5 direct jobs
and as many as 8 indirect jobs
36% of IDPs in Ukraine who received stable housing said it significantly improved their access to livelihood opportunities.
After the 2004 Indonesian Tsunami, 10% of people in one resettled area used their transitional shelters for business purposes.
46.2% of Ethiopian shelter recipients saw a increase in income and better access to food.
A house can be a financial institution
A house can be a meeting place
A house can be a factory
A house can be a granary
#SHELTERHELPS LIVELIHOODS
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HOW CAN SHELTER HELP REDUCE RISK FROM HAZARDS?
Improving shelter and settlements can reduce vulnerability and build resilience. It can reduce the cost of shelter repairs and stress on local economy and can make people more self-reliant.
New and improved shelters in Pakistan experienced 50% less damage than shelters that were not improved when faced with extreme weather conditions.
Improving settlement level infrastructure in Haiti reduced the intensity of impacts and duration of emergency after Hurricane Irma 2017.
Our new home is definitely an upgrade in terms of security when there is a typhoon. And because this property is ours, we can put our effort into making it more resilient.
Survivor of Typhoon Haiyan, Philippines
None of the shelters built for a project in Vietnam collapsed over a ten year period, including during extreme weather events...
...whereas other houses in the community did.
People with shelter assistance are safer and more self-reliant when faced with future extreme weather events.
#SHELTERHELPS DRR
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HOW CAN SHELTER HELP SOCIAL COHESION?
Shelter and settlements can improve social cohesion and community engagement. Improved public spaces foster social inclusion. Livelihoods benefit refugee and host communities to recover and prosper.
46% of residents in Lebanon, who benefited from housing upgrading, reported
*!#%
!#1#
reduced community tensions
increased empathy and trust
In Syria, 75% of people said restored social services and infrastructure after conflict had a positive effect on relationships between IDPs and host communities.
We have good relationships with the hosts, we feel at home.
Male shelter recipient, Ethiopia
Shelter and the larger concept of settlement are inextricably linked and should be addressed as a whole rather than separately.
Affordable housing and settlement upgrading can increase
• involvement in neighborhood activities
• community leadership roles
• community connectedness
#SHELTERHELPS SOCIALCOHESION
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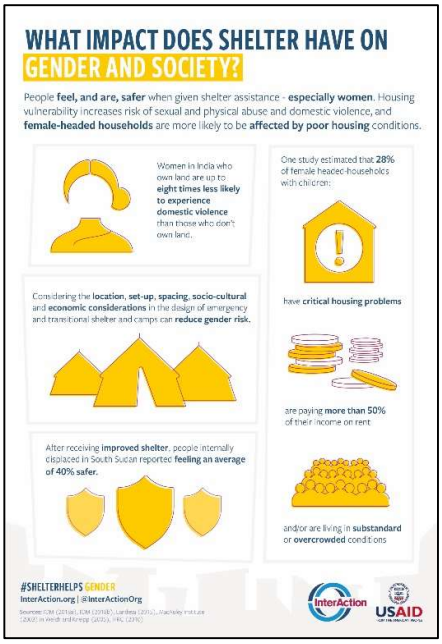
WHAT IMPACT DOES SHELTER HAVE ON GENDER AND SOCIETY?
People feel, and are, safer when given shelter assistance - especially women. Housing vulnerability increases risk of sexual and physical abuse and domestic violence, and female-headed households are more likely to be affected by poor housing conditions.
Women in India who own land are up to eight times less likely to experience domestic violence than those who don't own land.
One study estimated that 28% of female headed-households with children:
have critical housing problems
are paying more than 50% of their income on rent
and/or are living in substandard or overcrowded conditions
Considering the location, set-up, spacing, socio-cultural and economic considerations in the design of emergency and transitional shelter and camps can reduce gender risk.
After receiving improved shelter, people internally displaced in South Sudan reported feeling an average of 40% safer.
#SHELTERHELPS GENDER
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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Fiscal Year (FY) 2021

Shelter and Settlements Sector Update

USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) members inspect shelter programming following the 2021 earthquake in Haiti. Photo courtesy of USAID.

OVERVIEW

USAIDs Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) remains at the forefront of the humanitarian community's shelter and settlements (S&S) activities, providing S&S to populations displaced by climatic shocks, complex emergencies, livelihood disruptions, natural disasters, and other displacement events. USAID/BHA continues to champion the sector's best practices through relying on experienced and dedicated staff with technical expertise related to S&S programming, operational support, and research. Effective S&S programming not only provides four walls and a roof to displaced households, but also facilitates access to stable S&S solutions informed by the interdependent, localized, and multi-sector needs of displaced populations. In FY 2021, USAID/BHA and partners implemented S&S activities in 32 countries.

USAID/BHA S&S Funding in FY 2021

$197,626,338

The Settlements Approach

In FY 2021, USAID/BHA continued to support the Settlements Approach, which promotes integrated and multi-sector S&S program planning and the phased implementation of humanitarian activities in defined locations. This process—informed by community-based decision making—can also serve as a disaster risk reduction tool in high-risk urban settlements or help link humanitarian interventions with long-term development goals, among other positive effects. To encourage the use of the Settlements Approach, USAID/BHA supported partnerships with academic, diaspora, private sector, and professional development actors on S&S activities and to engaged with Global Shelter Cluster and Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster actors on a range of related activities at the national and global level, with an emphasis on promoting understanding and adoption of the Settlements Approach.

Tailoring Shelter Solutions to Context-Specific Needs Worldwide

In FY 2021, eleven USAID/BHA UN and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners continued a years-long effort in northern Syria to establish, maintain, and rehabilitate camps and settlements for one of the world's largest internally displaced populations. During the fiscal year, USAID/BHA also supported S&S activities to respond to emergent needs in northern Ethiopia's Afar, Amhara, and Tigray regions through Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Samaritan's Purse, and World Vision, as well

as the IOM Rapid Response Fund. USAID/BHA's FY 2021 S&S response in northern Ethiopia included airlifting 1,500 rolls of plastic sheeting to Ethiopia, contributing to emergency shelter efforts for more than 82,500 conflict-affected people. Meanwhile, in flood-prone areas of Bangladesh, USAID/BHA continued a multi-year effort to provide vulnerable households with disaster-resistant shelter using plinths—raised mounds of earth that elevate homes above flood waters. The plinth-building effort began after severe floods hit Bangladesh in 2019 and continued in FY 2021, during which USAID/BHA partnered with CARE to raise plinths in more than 20 community areas, benefiting nearly 460 households. Overall, USAID/BHA partners implemented S&S activities in 32 countries in FY 2021, reaching vulnerable populations affected by natural hazards, conflict, and other crises with S&S interventions targeted to local, context-specific needs.

Responding to Shelter Needs Resulting from the 2021 Haiti Earthquake

On August 14, 2021, a magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck southwestern Haiti, generating humanitarian needs in Grand'Anse, Nippes, and Sud departments. The earthquake resulted in at least 2,248 deaths, injured an additional 12,800 people, and damaged or destroyed more than 137,000 houses, according to the Government of Haiti. Subsequently, on August 16, Tropical Depression Grace made landfall over southwestern Haiti, resulting in heavy rains and strong winds that further exacerbated humanitarian needs. In response, USAID/BHA deployed a DART and activated a Washington, D.C.-based Response Management Team (RMT) to coordinate U.S. Government relief efforts, which included providing emergency S&S assistance to those whose homes were damaged or destroyed by the disaster. USAID/BHA also supported IOM to maintain pre-positioned relief supplies—sufficient to support nearly 50,000 individuals—in Haiti for distribution in response to sudden-onset disasters, which IOM distributed in the days immediately following the earthquake. USAID/BHA also transported at least 10,000 plastic sheets for shelter and 10,000 shelter repair kits from its warehouse in Miami, Florida, to Port-au-Prince for transfer to and distribution by IOM. USAID/BHA NGO partners ACTED and CRS also provided approximately 85,000 disaster-affected people in Haiti with life-saving shelter and settlements programming.

Mentoring the Next Generation of S&S Leaders Through Outreach

In FY 2021, USAID/BHA worked to mentor the next generation of leaders in the S&S field through the Virtual Student Federal Service Internship (VSFS), a nine-month remote internship which engages university students on issues pertinent to U.S. Government policies and practices. During the period, USAID/BHA supported VSFS interns in a localization research project that assessed local actors' involvement in S&S program development and implementation. USAID/BHA technical specialists and VSFS interns analyzed the importance of adapting consultative processes to account for community norms and examined potential modifications to USAID/BHA's proposal processes to better support local engagement, among other localization measures. Additionally, USAID/BHA technical specialists presented about S&S to students and faculty at Johns Hopkins University, the University of Washington, the University of San Francisco, the University of Oregon, and the University of California, Berkeley.

Additional information on USAID/BHA's activities can be found at: **usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work**