# Case 2 Colombia
Strengthening temporary shelter coordination and management capacity of national authorities

Keywords

- Capacity building
- Coordination
- Data collection/analysis
- Displacement tracking
- Handover to national authorities
- Information management
- Inter-cluster collaboration
- Local adaptation
- Local capacities
- Multiple hazards
- National authorities
- Protection
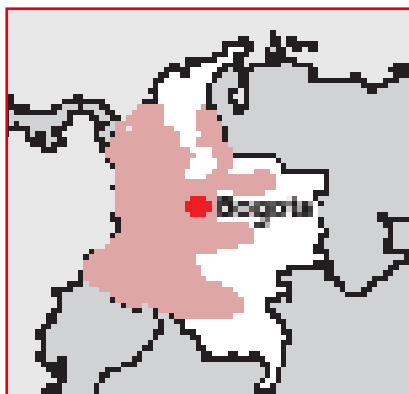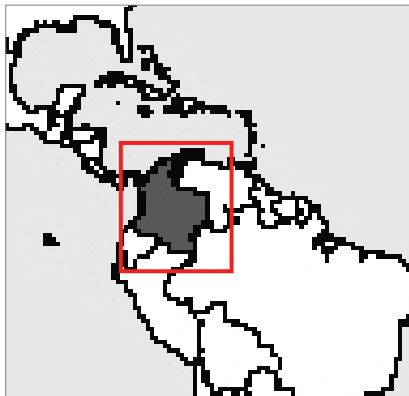
Displacement Data

Country: Colombia

Cause of displacement: Floods & Conflict

Disaster date: 2010-2011

People affected: 4 million (by floods), 4 million (displaced by conflict)

Project Data

Project location: Nationwide (Atlántico, Antioquia, Bolívar, Boyacá, Cauca, Magdalena, Nariño, Chocó, Risaralda, Sucre)

Project duration: 2011 to 2013

CCCM Cluster: Activated (combined cluster – CCCM and Shelter)

The CCCM Cluster in Colombia enabled existing community leaders to become temporary shelter managers.
2013 / IOM Colombia

Context

Colombia is facing increasingly severe weather events, and suffers from the ongoing effects of a 50-year internal conflict. An estimated 4 million people were affected by the unprecedented flooding of 2010-2011 that was linked to the La Niña weather phenomenon. Many people who were forced to leave their homes due to the flooding had previously been displaced as a result of the conflict.

The CCCM Cluster's efforts in Colombia provide a good example of strengthening the temporary shelter coordination and management capacity of national authorities. The CCCM Cluster in Colombia adopted a holistic strategy to achieve this, including: the development of information management tools; joint programs between the Government of Colombia and the United Nations System; the adaptation of CCCM tools to the Colombian context, including a focus on gender and cultural issues, and the needs of conflict and natural disaster affected populations; and the transfer of capacity building methodologies to national, municipal and local authorities. These CCCM methodologies have created a pool of over 100 managers, and 1,465 people have received CCCM training over the last three years.

Background

The 2010-2011 La Niña flooding highlighted gaps in preparedness and response, including:

- Improvements were required in temporary shelter planning to promote the inclusion of populations displaced by natural disasters.
- Weaknesses in temporary shelter coordination and the remoteness of many flood affected areas prevented timely information about displacement dynamics and the needs of affected persons residing in temporary shelters.
- The CCCM Cluster had insufficient capacity to lead the coordination and management capacity of temporary shelters by itself.

Following the La Niña flooding episodes, the Government of Colombia recognized the pressing need to improve the coordination and management of temporary shelters across the country. Subsequently, in December 2010, the government requested the activation of a combined CCCM-Shelter Cluster and the assistance of CCCM Cluster partners. The Cluster provided assistance to affected populations, supported national, municipal, and local authorities, and led the CCCM sectorial group. The Cluster's response had four major themes: information management; joint programming with the Government of Colombia; responding to the needs of people displaced by conflict and natural disaster; and the adaptation of CCCM materials.

Information Management

Population movements in Colombia's disaster-affected areas are complex. People displaced by flooding may not remain in temporary shelters due to onward movements or to return to assess damage to their property. Occasionally, persons initially forced to leave their homes due to flooding suffer secondary forced displacements in conflict zones.

Following the flooding of 2010 and 2011, the Colombian national authorities were interested in improving information management to monitor the dynamic nature of disaster-induced displacement, particularly in

The communities' participation to the CCCM training enhanced their 'ownership' of temporary shelter coordination. December 2013 / IOM Colombia

emergency contexts and in parts of the country that are difficult to access. The national authorities thus requested the assistance of the CCCM Cluster to develop an information tool called SIGAT (Sistema de Información para la Gestión de Alojamientos Temporales, or Information System for the Management of Temporary Shelters). Over a period of months the system was developed, piloted and refined according to lessons learned during the roll out phase.

The SIGAT is a web-based tool that collates information on displacement events, conditions in emergency shelters, gaps in assistance, and the day to day changes in temporary shelters. This information is collected by camp managers via identification, monitoring and follow-up forms completed in emergency shelters in affected areas. The data is subsequently validated at the municipal level before being logged into the SIGAT. Importantly, all persons handling this data are provided with training by the CCCM Cluster. The information provides valuable support to humanitarian partners and authorities in needs assessment, monitoring, and reporting on displaced populations located in temporary shelters.

The Cluster was initially tasked with rolling out the SIGAT in 49 municipalities. The national authorities Colombia were satisfied with results and requested the Cluster's assistance in providing SIGAT training to local authorities across the country in 2014. The CCCM Cluster has agreed that the SIGAT will be handed over to the country's Disaster Risk Management Unit by the end of 2014.

Joint program

A joint program between the Government of Colombia and the United Nations System was signed in 2011. The program formalized the development of the SIGAT, which was funded by the government, and the eventual hand-over of the SIGAT to the Colombian National Disaster Risk Management Unit (UNGRD).

After the serious flooding began in 2010, the government created Colombia Humanitaria, an entity that allowed it to have a dedicated humanitarian resource of its own to respond to the emergency (Colombia Humanitaria is now a government agency in its own right). This underlined the authorities' commitment to incorporate CCCM and temporary shelter methodologies into disaster response.

Through the SIGAT and its partnership with the United Nations System and the CCCM Cluster, emergency response capacity in areas of the country that were previously very difficult to access has improved, with the capacity to assist affected populations in a more systematic and holistic manner. The CCCM Cluster's coordination through the joint program thus contributed to the longer-term strategy of providing support to the Colombian authorities and strengthening their temporary shelter coordination and management capacity.

People affected by flooding and conflict

When planning the emergency response, priority was given to areas most impacted by both the conflict

and the flooding (Cauca, Chocó, and Nariño). SIGAT ensured that the authorities were aware of the double-affectedness of some individuals and could take this into account when providing assistance.

Adaptation of CCCM materials

Adapting global CCCM materials, such as the CCCM toolkit, to the Colombian context was a priority given the acute emergency response needs and Colombia's diverse cultural make-up. Through rapid and extensive inter-cluster, inter-agency and governmental consultations, a temporary shelter management guide for national authorities and a manual for camp managers were produced. These documents are extensions of the capacity building processes undertaken by the CCCM Cluster to train local authorities and civil society in temporary shelter management. The manual incorporates a gender and cultural focus (for indigenous groups etc.), and was rolled out and field-tested. In addition, the manual enables participants to have a

Global CCCM tools were adapted to the Colombian context so that residents of temporary shelters can have access to relevant information. Repelon, in the department of Atlantico.

substantive guide to consult following their workshops and trainings on temporary shelter management.

The CCCM Cluster in Colombia recommended approaching community leaders to act as temporary shelter managers. This approach sought to tap into pre-existing community leadership structures to improve the

management of temporary shelters through more direct and effective dialogue with affected populations. In Colombia, where many communities are very well organized, this innovative approach facilitated local acceptance of CCCM activities and cultural sensitivity in their implementation.

Lessons

- **Adopting a holistic approach to CCCM**

  CCCM Cluster activation in Colombia began with a focus on information management, but effective Cluster response in Colombia involved: cooperation agreements with the government; the implementation of a United Nations System joint program; the adaptation of CCCM training program and tools to the Colombian context; and the transferal of capacity building methodologies to local, municipal, and national authorities.

- **Working with multiple partners**

  Establishing clear responsibilities between government and humanitarian actors in a short period of time after the activation of the Cluster was key to enhancing temporary shelter coordination and management capacity in Colombia. Ensuring the active engagement of different levels of government, as well as the collaboration of international organizations, Cluster partners, and NGOs in the drafting of Colombia-adapted CCCM materials during an emergency required negotiation and effective leadership.

- **Adapting global CCCM tools to the Colombian context**

  The CCCM Cluster took steps to ensure the legitimacy and appropriateness of the CCCM tools, from the community to the government level. Collaboration on information management through the SIGAT notably improved the ability to understand and respond to forced displacement in previously less accessible areas of the country. The emphasis on gender, ethnic and cultural backgrounds in adapted CCCM materials made them relevant to the people most in need of assistance in temporary shelters in Colombia.

- **Promoting inclusive methodologies**

  The 'ownership' of temporary shelter coordination and management capacities at the local level was achieved by encouraging and training community leaders to be the managers of temporary shelters. Enabling community members to become the managers of their own temporary shelters and assuming responsibilities alongside the authorities benefited everyone, including displaced persons, the affected community, and the national authorities.

The overall goal of the CCCM Cluster is to improve living conditions of displaced persons. It does this by facilitating the effective provision of protection and services in camps and camp-like settings, advocating for durable solutions and ensuring organized closure and phase-out of camps.