

CASE STUDY **SOUTH SUDAN 2017–2018 / CONFLICT (IDP)**

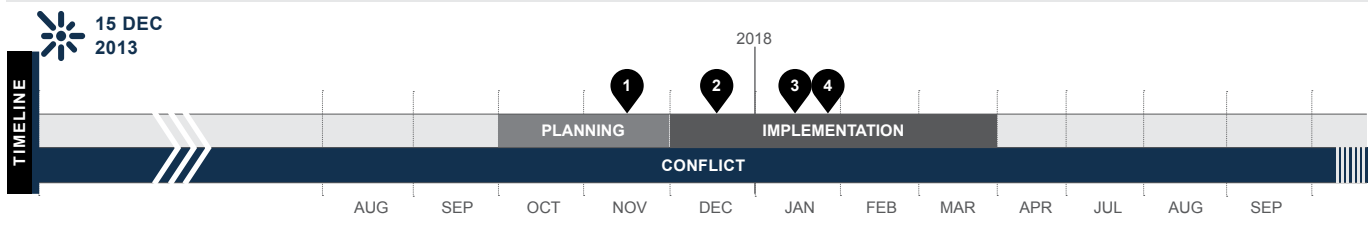
**KEYWORDS:** Shelter upgrades, Voucher fairs, Cash for work, Community engagement

<b>CRISIS</b>	South Sudan Civil War, December 2013–onwards	
<b>TOTAL PEOPLE AFFECTED*</b>	7 million individuals, as of Dec 2017	
<b>TOTAL PEOPLE DISPLACED*</b>	1.9 million individuals displaced (over 265,000 individuals settled in PoC sites)**	
<b>TOTAL PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS*</b>	1,673,044 individuals in 2018	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	Wau PoC site, Western Bahr el Ghazal state	
<b>PROJECT BENEFICIARIES</b>	5,362 households (22,579 individuals)	
<b>PROJECT OUTPUTS</b>	804 communal shelters upgraded/maintained (624 and 180 respectively)	<b>MATERIALS COST</b>
	300 individuals trained 3,012 households received cash for work	USD 50 for upgrades per shelter partition (USD 24 per household) USD 21 for maintenance per shelter partition (USD 13 per household)
<b>OUTCOME INDICATORS</b>	92% of beneficiaries said their shelter needs were addressed, with an 84% satisfaction rate	<b>PROJECT COST</b>
<b>SHELTER SIZE</b>	Communal shelters of 75m <sup>2</sup> (15m by 5m), comprising five partitions of 15m <sup>2</sup> each	<b>SHELTER DENSITY</b>
		USD 42 per household 2.6m <sup>2</sup> per person

\* Figures as of December 2017. South Sudan HRP 2018.  
\*\* DTM, April 2018.

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

The project upgraded 804 communal shelters in the Wau Protection of Civilians (PoC) site as part of a large-scale rehabilitation, by using local materials to protect tarpaulins. All procurement was local and a consortium of small-scale traders within the site was established. Materials were distributed through voucher fairs and the beneficiaries were responsible for installing the upgrades themselves. The project also included skills training on bamboo thatched walls and a cash-for-work grant.



- 1 Nov 2017: Baseline, market assessment and analysis completed.
- 2 Dec 2017: Community consultation and registration of beneficiaries completed. Terms of engagement signed with local traders.
- 3 Jan 2018: Beneficiary registration, identification of local traders and completion of first phase of shelter upgrades.
- 4 Jan 2018: First round of voucher distribution, 10 market days organized and verification of first phase of shelter upgrades completed.



View of zone C in Wau PoC with shelters upgrades realized on 176 communal shelters between January and March 2017.

**STRENGTHS**

- + Engagement of beneficiaries strengthened their self-sufficiency.
- + Local procurement through multiple small traders led to savings.
- + Increased economic activity in the local market.
- + Shelter lifespan was increased, reducing maintenance costs.
- + High beneficiary satisfaction.

**WEAKNESSES**

- Low community interest in the skill-development component.
- The gender roles and responsibilities were not properly assessed.
- Limited covered living space.
- Contracts did not include applicable penalty clauses.
- Some materials were not properly used.



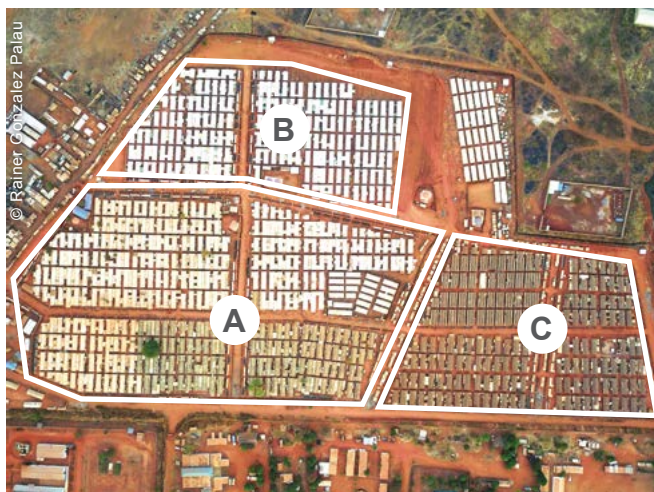
One of the upgrades consisted of adding a layer of dry elephant grass to rooftops to increase protection from the elements, improve ventilation and lower inside temperatures.

### CONTEXT IN WAU

See overview A.23 in *Shelter Projects 2015-2016* and A.6 in this edition for more background information.

The Protection of Civilians site (PoC) in Wau was established in June 2016 after intense fighting in the country's north-western region prompted tens of thousands to flee their homes in search of refuge near the existing UN Mission base in Wau town. By the end of 2016, more than 30,000 people were living on less than 100,000 square meters of land in what was the most congested PoC site in South Sudan. Following conflict in Wau town and periphery in April 2017, the site experienced a large IDP influx of up to 18,000 persons, significantly worsening living conditions. An intention survey carried out in November 2017, indicated that two thirds of interviewees intended to remain in their current displacement site because of access to security. Whilst some households left the site, the security environment did not improve significantly in Wau and high levels of congestion were likely to persist. By March 2018, the PoC site hosted 22,579 IDPs, while a further 12,796 IDPs sought shelter at five collective sites in Wau Town.

Due to the extreme density of the site, IDPs occupied communal shelters hosting five households each, as per the design approved by the Shelter-NFI Cluster. The shelters were covered in plastic sheeting and organized in blocks, further grouped in three zones.



Following the success of the shelter upgrade pilot in Zone C, the organization replicated the project in Zone A of the site by upgrading 375 newly constructed communal shelter.

### PROJECT GOALS

Fitting into the resilience-based approaches of the Shelter-NFI Cluster, mainly built around cash-based interventions, the project goal was to improve the living conditions of IDPs through the provision of shelter upgrades, using a participatory approach and local solutions. It also included multisectoral activities, such as protection, food security and livelihoods.

### PILOT PHASE

From January to March 2017, the organization conducted a cash-based pilot project in zone C, to upgrade communal shelters improving the lifespan of plastic sheets used for roofs and walls from three to six months. Following the success of the pilot, the organization replicated the project in zones A and B from December 2017 to March 2018, as part of a large-scale rehabilitation of the site.

### PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project was implemented by a team of 11 staff: one operation officer, two project assistants, four enumerators (gender-balanced) and four supervisors. The team was coordinated from Juba and had the support of the camp management unit of the organization.

The upgrades consisted of adding a layer of dry elephant grass – found naturally in surrounding areas – to rooftops to increase protection from the elements, improve ventilation and lower inside temperatures. Further, bamboo-thatched walls and doors were installed around the shelter exterior, increasing privacy and further extending the durability of shelters.

All materials required for the upgrades were delivered through voucher fairs. Materials were procured locally through small-scale traders residing within the site – many of whom were struggling to maintain business due to the crisis. The beneficiaries themselves undertook all labour associated with installing the upgrades and were incentivized by a cash-for-work programme.

**SKILLS TRAINING.** The project involved a three-day skills training for 300 individuals on how to construct bamboo-thatched walls and doors for shelters. The team selected participants (50% women) from within the whole site and worked closely with community leaders, block leaders, women and youth committees to ensure equal representation of participants. Training participants were identified from each block. At the end of the training, each participant was provided with a training completion certificate and a grant of USD 9.

**VOUCHER DISTRIBUTION.** Commodity vouchers were designed for both phases of upgrades and were restricted to the specific type of material and quantity needed. The vouchers were used not only as legal tender for the exchange of upgrade materials during the market fairs, but also to act as proof of registration for eligible participants. It was through the vouchers that the traders kept track of the households they served and the project team verified the traders' claims before redeeming the vouchers.

The process below was followed:

- To keep track of each household's address, a system of numbering shelters and partitions within each shelter was established;
- The targeted beneficiaries were registered by linking the serial number of the voucher to a specific name and their address within the PoC. This was done by means of making house-calls on the voucher distribution day;

- The serial number and address were noted by project staff on each voucher before the distribution;
- All traders were provided with a specific vendor identification number which they noted on each received voucher;
- Project staff then used the beneficiary name, serial number and address along with the vendor ID to verify the list of served beneficiaries as per traders. Each voucher was attached to the list as a receipt;
- Traders were only reimbursed after the verification exercise, which started as soon as the vouchers had expired and were handed over by the traders.

**VOUCHER FAIRS AND INSTALLATION.** From each shelter, one household was elected to be responsible for receiving shelter materials and completing the required work. A designated space was prepared in the market where traders lined up the materials and beneficiaries brought their vouchers in exchange for these materials. Upon reception of the elephant grass and bamboo-thatched walls in two different phases, beneficiaries were responsible for their installation, with the technical guidance of supervisors from the project team.

MATERIALS LIST FOR UPGRADES OF ONE SHELTER				
Items	Units	Qty	Unit cost (USD)	Total cost (USD)
Elephant grass (bundles Ø30-40 cm)	bundles	50	1.53	76.50
Rubber rope (20 strings per bundle/50cm length)	bundles	10	1.36	13.60
Bamboo (300 cm x Ø3-5 cm), 10 pcs per bundle	bundles	4	6.40	25.60
Thatch bamboo for walls (170x200cm)	pcs	10	5.10	51.00
Thatch bamboo for door (170x100cm)	pcs	10	2.97	29.70
Thatch bamboo for side walls (10.5m²)	pcs	2	26.00	52.00

**VERIFICATION AND CASH-FOR-WORK.** Project staff supervised the upgrades and ensured these were completed in a satisfactory manner before approving the beneficiary to move on to the next phase of the voucher distribution. In case the upgrade was incomplete or inadequate, the staff provided feedback and instruction as to what had to be done before the next visit. To guide the verification process, the staff made use of a simple monitoring checklist, designed to ensure quick and consistent assessments. Upon successful completion and verification, beneficiaries were given a cash grant worth USD 5 to supplement household income.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.** The community played a central role in almost all aspects of programme implementation, proving a crucial partner in the process of selecting traders, responding to feedback and complaints and organizing the skills trainings. Project staff initiated a comprehensive sensitization campaign at the outset, starting by presenting the project to the community leadership in the site. Community consultations were designed to encourage the population to actively participate in the project design and implementation. As a result of such consultations, it was decided to engage the women and youth committees in identifying both participants and trainers for the bamboo thatch skills trainings.

The chiefs' committee assisted in verifying the selected traders, by providing documentation confirming their legitimate right to conduct business within the PoC. The block leaders were tasked with going door-to-door in their respective blocks to explain the nature of the project to the community.

**MAIN CHALLENGES**

**LOW PARTICIPATION.** Although women installed bamboo thatched walls, they did not participate actively in elephant grass installation on the roof, mainly because in the local culture this task was conducted by men. Men's participation was comparatively low all throughout shelter upgrades, primarily because of lack of willingness and sense of ownership. Although regular follow-ups and sensitization activities were conducted, the levels of participation did not improve.

**LIMITED SPACE TO SET UP A MARKET.** Due to limited space within the site, initially the organization could not establish a marketplace within the PoC, which would have reduced the distance between market and targeted shelters. Later, the market was placed inside the gates.

**DELAY IN MATERIALS SUPPLY.** Regular follow-up meetings and visits were conducted with the traders and, as a last resort, transportation support was provided by the organization to ensure the timely delivery of supplies.

**MISUSE OF MATERIALS BY THE COMMUNITY.** Women took part of elephant grass intended for the roof and used it to cook. Although shelter supervisors conducted regular field visits to ensure the proper use of materials, more mobilization would have been required. Nevertheless, the materials distributed were enough to complete the works even in such cases.

**WIDER IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT**

The project was highly participatory and built on local capacities. Through active engagement with traditional and informal leadership structures, business leaders and women and youth groups, the project transferred expertise and knowledge to improve people's living conditions and equip the community with new skills. Allowing the community to assume increased responsibility in this process served to restore dignity and strengthen their self-sufficiency. 11 out of 15 traders engaged in the project were able to expand their business, primarily in selling a variety of items such as seeds, shoes and timber (four traders), or expanding their shelter material business (three traders). Traders also found the process of cooperating with other traders useful and beneficial and they were planning to collectively open a multi-purpose shop in the town soon.



Project staff supervised the upgrades and ensured these were completed well before approving households to move on to the next phase.

## STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED



People on the site lived in communal shelters. The project upgraded the walls and roofs to extend their lifespan by protecting the plastic sheets.

### STRENGTHS

+ **Active engagement of beneficiaries** in improving their living conditions contributed to the restoration of dignity and strengthened community self-sufficiency.

+ **Procurement of locally available materials involving multiple small-scale local traders** through a cash-based modality, which was 40 per cent cheaper compared to in-kind distribution.

+ **Increased economic activity in the local market**, creating employment opportunities and stimulating entrepreneurship within and outside the site. As a result of the project, 73 per cent of traders expanded their business or ventured into new lucrative areas.

+ **The lifespan of shelters was increased from 3–6 to 12–18 months**, thus maintenance was reduced to once rather than twice a year. This represents a USD 433 savings per communal shelter, or approx. USD 87 per household.

+ **High beneficiary satisfaction** (84% versus 52% before the project) measured through seven metrics (quality and shelter type 94%; comfort 92%; privacy 82%; environment for children to study 67%; sense of security 86%; weather impacts / heat in the shelter 77%; social interaction within the shelter 91%).

### WEAKNESSES

- **Low community interest and participation in the skill-development component** of the project. Firstly, this was due to limited community mobilization for the specific component. Secondly, people did not see much use of the skill and trade beyond the shelter upgrade activities within the camp.

- **The gender roles and responsibilities were not properly assessed, leading to low male participation** in the shelter upgrade and the need to hire labourers. This was mainly because the project was conducted during the dry season and men were engaged in other remunerated activities outside the site.

- **The project could not address the issue of insufficient covered living space of the communal shelter solution**, which was due to the high influx of population within the enclosed perimeter of the site.

- **Contracts did not include applicable penalty clauses** to be imposed on the traders in the event of any delays and substandard quality.

- **Some materials were not properly used.** More mobilization should have been carried out with the community to ensure proper use of the assistance.



The project engaged local traders and trained beneficiaries on the upgrades, which included the addition of grass to rooftops and bamboo-thatched walls.

### LESSONS LEARNED

- **In-depth analysis should be conducted for the gender role and responsibilities** in different ethnic groups of the community and should be incorporated in the project. For future interventions, the organization aimed to address the above issues of participation by developing a calendar with the community, to understand their gender roles and seasonal activities throughout the year.
- Detailed studies should be carried out – after training needs assessment have been conducted – to **identify skills and trades that are appropriate to the local contexts**, specifically the trades that generate livelihoods and those which can be useful outside camp settings, such as carpentry, masonry, welding, etc.