

# SHELTER PROJECTS

## 8<sup>th</sup> edition

CASE STUDIES OF HUMANITARIAN SHELTER AND SETTLEMENT RESPONSES 2019-2020

*Shelter Projects Working Group partners and supporting agencies for this edition*



## Shelter Projects 8<sup>th</sup> edition

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# FOREWORD

2020 saw the outbreak of COVID-19, a global pandemic and crisis. In the face of this major public health emergency, global humanitarian shelter and settlement needs continued to increase, with over 30.7 million people being newly displaced by disasters and 11.2 million people being newly displaced by conflict and violence during 2020.

Not only did assisting organizations need to adapt to new ways of working to reduce COVID-19 transmission risks, they were also faced by a world where needs continued to greatly exceed their capacities and resources to support. Perhaps more than ever, there was a clear need to learn from the past so that we can better respond in the future. *Shelter Projects* is a Global Shelter Cluster initiative to help address this gap. It has the primary goal of documenting and sharing lessons from past responses in order to improve current and future practice.

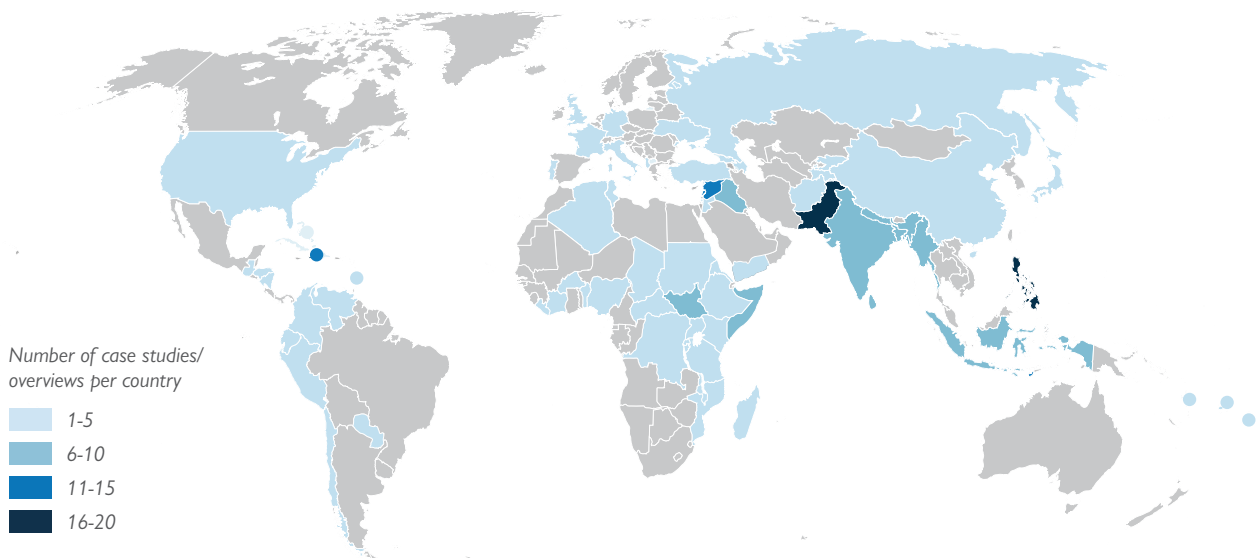
*Shelter Projects* is written by practitioners for practitioners, through a collaborative and consultative process. The case studies are based on the hard work of thousands of people, primarily those affected by crises, but also those working for governments and supporting organizations. In compiling this publication, we are keenly aware that crisis-affected people are the primary responders after crises and the primary actors in any subsequent recovery. The people in these projects are seldom passive recipients of aid, but active participants. Good shelter projects consistently recognize the role of crisis survivors.

Previous editions of *Shelter Projects* have been used to inform response and recovery strategies and to develop shelter projects and proposals. They have been used for global advocacy on issues such as how best to use cash in humanitarian response. They have been used to promote shelter programmatic approaches and prove that there is a precedent for government strategies at both ministerial and local authority levels. They have been used in discussions with civil protection agencies and local municipal authorities in preparedness and response, to show what can be done. They have been used with private sector organizations to explain what shelter is (as a process, not a product), and they have been used in humanitarian trainings, and by universities as core reference in courses and as a basis for further research.

Given this broad range of uses, we encourage you to browse through the publication to get an idea of the diversity of shelter and settlements programs that have been implemented. Case studies and response overviews aim to showcase different response options and reflect on the challenges faced, and the strengths and shortcomings of each, as well as on the wider impacts of projects and the lessons that can be learned.

Although it can be read as a standalone document, and individual case studies can also be read in isolation, *Shelter Projects* is intended to complement other publications, such as the Sphere Handbook.

## INDEX OF CASE STUDIES/OVERVIEWS BY COUNTRY PUBLISHED IN SHELTER PROJECTS (2008-2020)



# FOREWORD



**a** Context is everything



**b** Shelter and settlements assistance is part of a process. It has long-term impacts



**c** People are active participants in their own response and recovery



**d** Shelter and settlements assistance must be inclusive



**e** There is a balance between scale, coverage, quality and impact



**f** Security of tenure underpins all shelter response



**g** Shelter and settlements go hand in hand



**h** Shelter and settlements assistance must link to other sectors and priorities



**i** Local environmental damage is long-lasting



**j** Locally appropriate technical solutions work best



**k** Good projects reduce the impacts of future shocks



**l** Effective projects are coordinated and planned

Messages distilled from previous editions of *Shelter Projects* and shared in the publication: *Shelter Projects Essentials* (2021).

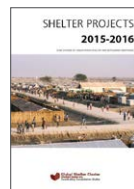
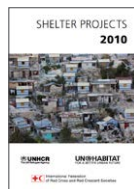
This is the eighth edition in the series of publications that started 13 years ago, contributing to a total repository of nearly 300 project case studies and response overviews, from programs implemented by over 60 organizations in over 70 countries overall. The case studies vary greatly in scale, cost, duration, response phase and project design. Although they are not statistically representative of all shelter responses, this growing body of knowledge represents a source of learning and reflects the highly contextual nature of individual shelter and settlements responses. Overall, it reflects many years of experience of about 500 field practitioners who have contributed across the editions.

This eighth edition contains 22 new case studies and five overviews of responses. It also contains five opinion pieces, which explore specific pertinent thematic areas in more detail.

So what are the themes that we can draw from all of these case studies? During the development of this edition of *Shelter Projects*, all previous editions and case studies were reviewed, and the recurring points of learning and good practice were distilled into a series of essential messages. These are summarized in the illustration above, and are explored in more detail in the first edition of *Shelter Projects Essentials* that was published in 2021.

In reading this book, or browsing different case studies, we hope that readers will be able to draw their own lessons and identify useful response options and approaches. We encourage readers to share this publication widely, and contribute their own project case studies for future editions. In this way, the humanitarian community can continue learning, avoid doing harm, and help improve the lives of some of the world's most vulnerable people.

## The Global Shelter Cluster Shelter Projects Working Group, August 2021.





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Photo credits appear over each figure or in the captions. All photos used on the covers and in the introduction section of this book were entries for the Shelter Projects Photo Competition 2021.

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We wish to dedicate this book to Petya Boevska, who contributed to two of the pieces within this book, and tragically passed away prior to its publication.

**For comments, feedback or questions, please visit the website or contact [shelterprojects@sheltercluster.org](mailto:shelterprojects@sheltercluster.org)**

# ACRONYMS

<b>3/4W</b>	Who does What, Where (and When) Matrix	<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>BBS</b>	Build Back Safer	<b>IEC</b>	Information, Education, Communication
<b>BoQ</b>	Bill of Quantities	<b>IM</b>	Information Management
<b>CBI</b>	Cash-Based Interventions	<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Governmental Organization
<b>CBO</b>	Community-Based Organization	<b>IP</b>	Implementing Partner
<b>CFW</b>	Cash-for-Work	<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>CGI</b>	Corrugated Galvanized Iron	<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>CCCM</b>	Camp Coordination and Camp Management	<b>NFI</b>	Non-Food Item(s)
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction	<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>DTM</b>	Displacement Tracking Matrix	<b>PDM</b>	Post-Distribution Monitoring
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence	<b>SAG</b>	Strategic Advisory Group
<b>HH</b>	Household	<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>HLP</b>	Housing, Land and Property	<b>TPM</b>	Third Party Monitoring
<b>HNO</b>	Humanitarian Needs Overview	<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>HRP</b>	Humanitarian Response Plan	<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

## A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

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

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

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

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



Lake Chad Province, Chad, 2020.

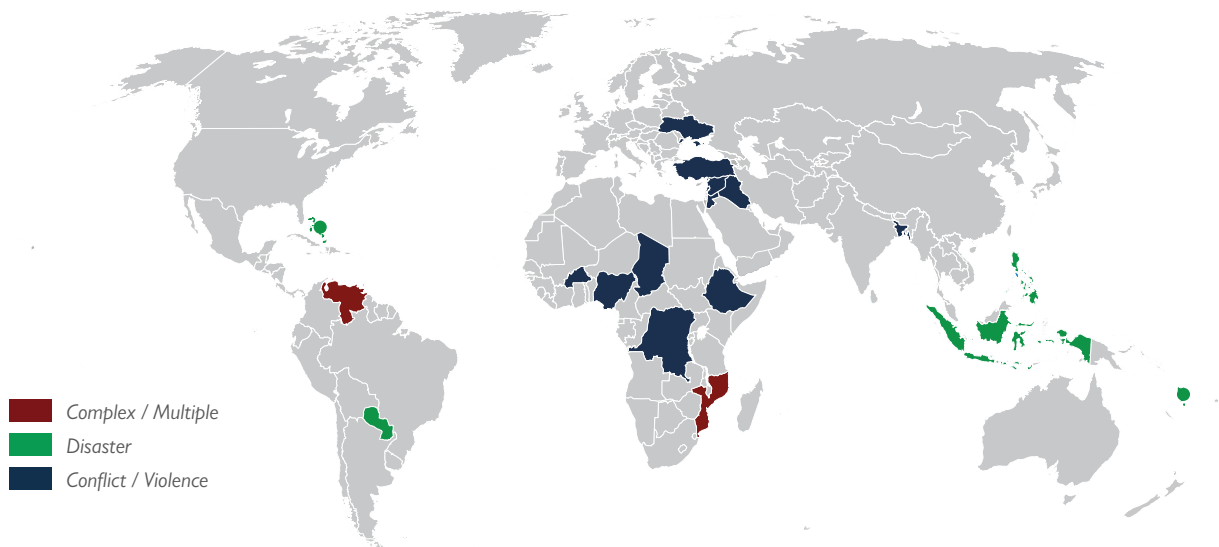


Bachoura area, Beirut, Lebanon, 2020.

# CONTENTS

FOREWORD	iii		
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v		
ACRONYMS	vi		
CONTENTS	vii		
INTRODUCTION	viii		
<b>A / CASE STUDIES AND OVERVIEWS</b>			
<b>AFRICA</b>			
A.1 BURKINA FASO / 2019-2020 / CONFLICT / OVERVIEW	2		
A.2 CHAD / 2019-2020 / CONFLICT	7		
A.3 CHAD / 2018-2020 / CONFLICT	14		
A.4 DEM. REP. OF THE CONGO / 2019-2020 / CONFLICT	19		
A.5 ETHIOPIA / 2019-2020 / CONFLICT	26		
A.6 MOZAMBIQUE / 2020-2021 / COMPLEX CRISIS / OVERVIEW	31		
A.7 NIGERIA / 2017-2020 / CONFLICT	37		
<b>AMERICAS</b>			
A.8 BAHAMAS / 2019-2020 / HURRICANE DORIAN	44		
A.9 PARAGUAY / 2019-2020 / FLOODS	49		
A.10 VENEZUELA / 2020 / COMPLEX CRISIS / OVERVIEW	54		
<b>ASIA-PACIFIC</b>			
A.11 BANGLADESH / 2018-2021 / ROHINGYA CRISIS	59		
A.12 BANGLADESH / 2019-2020 / ROHINGYA CRISIS	65		
A.13 INDONESIA / 2018-2020 / EARTHQUAKE	72		
A.14 PHILIPPINES / 2016-2020 / TYPHOON HAIYAN	78		
A.15 VANUATU / 2018-2019 / AMBAE VOLCANO	83		
<b>EUROPE</b>			
A.16 UKRAINE / 2016-2021 / CONFLICT			89
<b>MIDDLE EAST</b>			
A.17 IRAQ / 2019-2020 / CONFLICT / OVERVIEW			94
A.18 IRAQ / 2018-2021 / CONFLICT			99
A.19 IRAQ / 2019-2021 / CONFLICT			104
A.20 JORDAN / 2018-2020 / SYRIAN CRISIS			109
A.21 LEBANON / 2018-2021 / SYRIAN CRISIS			114
A.22 NW SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC / 2014-2020 / SYRIAN CRISIS / OVERVIEW			119
A.23 SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC / 2019-2020 / SYRIAN CRISIS			125
A.24 SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC / 2019-2020 / SYRIAN CRISIS			131
A.25 SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC / 2018-2020 / SYRIAN CRISIS			136
A.26 SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC / 2019-2020 / SYRIAN CRISIS			142
A.27 TURKEY / 2017-2020 / SYRIAN CRISIS			148
<b>B / OPINION PIECES</b>			
B.1 A HEALTHIER HOME IS A BETTER HOME			156
B.2 DESIGNING SHELTER PROGRAMS THAT EMPOWER COMMUNITIES			159
B.3 WHAT IMPACT?			162
B.4 A BURNING ISSUE FOR SHELTER PROGRAMMING			165
B.5 ALL THE WAYS HOME			168

## INDEX OF CASE STUDIES AND RESPONSE OVERVIEWS PUBLISHED IN SHELTER PROJECTS 8<sup>TH</sup> EDITION





# INTRODUCTION





# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT THIS BOOK

This edition of Shelter Projects contains 22 new case studies: 21 of these case studies focus on the implementation of shelter and settlements projects, and one case study focuses on the transition and handover of Shelter Cluster coordination. There are also five response overviews of large responses during 2019–2020. These case studies and overviews have all been written by practitioners who have been involved in each of these projects and responses. These pieces are all included in Section A.

In Section B of this edition, there are five Opinion Pieces. These explore a range of topics including the relationship between shelter and settlements assistance and physical and mental health (B.1); how shelter assistance can support community empowerment (B.2); measuring the impacts of shelter and settlement programming (B.3); reducing fire risk through better shelter and settlements programming (B.4); and an exploration of the links between shelter and settlements and concepts of “home” and of “community” (B.5).

The case studies in this book deal with projects implemented by many different organizations, a full list of which can be found in the acknowledgements section. In order to allow strengths and weaknesses of projects to be openly shared, the case studies are not directly attributed to individual organizations. Since projects are implemented in diverse and challenging conditions, case studies illustrate both good and bad practices. From each one, there are lessons that can be learned, and aspects that may be repeated or avoided. These are highlighted at the end of each case study. The objective of this publication has always been to encourage the learning process, advocate for following good practices and avoid “reinventing the wheel”.

If you wish to find out more about the specific projects, please contact [shelterprojects@sheltercluster.org](mailto:shelterprojects@sheltercluster.org)

### WARNING

#### PROJECTS ARE CONTEXT DRIVEN

Any shelter project should take into consideration the local context and the needs, capacities and priorities of the affected population, which will differ in every case. Projects should not be directly replicated without proper consideration of the specific context, or there will inevitably be programmatic weaknesses and failures resulting in negative impacts and/or missed opportunities.

## CASE STUDY SELECTION

The case studies were selected using the following criteria:

- The project was a) wholly completed or, if not, b) solid learning elements could be gained from the project implementation by late 2020.
- Given the scale of shelter needs every year, case studies must have had large-scale impacts. Discontinued trials, pilot projects or design concepts were not included.
- Most of the project must have been implemented within the first year following a disaster, or over longer time frames for recovery processes. For conflict, chronic emergencies and return processes, longer time scales were considered. In this edition, there are also three case studies on permanent new-build housing construction.
- Accurate project information was available from staff or individuals involved in the implementation. In most cases, content was provided directly by project field staff and program managers.
- The case studies illustrate a diversity of approaches to meet shelter and settlements needs, as providing shelter assistance is more than simply designing architecturally impressive structures or constructing individual houses.

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



Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, 2021.

GLOBAL OVERVIEW OF DISPLACEMENT AND RESPONSE

CONFLICT

During 2020, an estimated **11.2 million people** became newly displaced because of conflict or violence – a total that includes people displaced for the first time as well as people displaced repeatedly. This includes 1.4 million people who sought protection outside their country,<sup>1</sup> plus 9.8 million people newly displaced within countries.<sup>2</sup> An additional **30.7 million people** were newly internally displaced by disasters.

At the end of 2020, a total of **82.4 million people** were forcibly displaced worldwide, as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order. As shown in Figure 1, this includes 26.4 million refugees, 48 million internally displaced people, 4.1 million asylum-seekers, and 3.9 million Venezuelans displaced abroad.<sup>3</sup>

While global data for returnees and non-displaced people (such as affected host communities) was not available, projects in this book also include assistance to these groups.

In 2020, 68 per cent of all refugees and other people displaced internationally came from just five countries: The Syrian Arab Republic (6.7 million), Venezuela (4 million), Afghanistan (2.6 million), South Sudan (2.2 million) and Myanmar (1.1 million). The countries with the highest number of IDPs due to conflict and violence as of the end of 2020 were the Syrian Arab Republic (6.6 million), the Democratic Republic of Congo (5.3 million), Colombia (4.9 million), Yemen (3.6 million) and Afghanistan (3.5 million).

The countries with the highest number of people being newly displaced in 2020 were the Democratic Republic

of Congo (2.2 million), the Syrian Arab Republic (1.8 million), Ethiopia (1.7 million), Mozambique (592,000), and Burkina Faso (515,000).<sup>4</sup> This edition has case studies and/or response overviews from all five of these countries (see A.4, A.22-26, A.5, A.6 and A.1 respectively). Figure 2 shows the countries where there were new internal displacements due to conflict and violence, and disasters.

4 IDMC (2021), Global Report on Internal Displacement 2021



Lebanon, 2016.



Lake Chad Province, Chad, 2020.

1 UNHCR (2021), Global Trends - Forced Displacement in 2020  
 2 IDMC (2021), Global Report on Internal Displacement 2021  
 3 UNHCR (2021), Global Trends - Forced Displacement in 2020

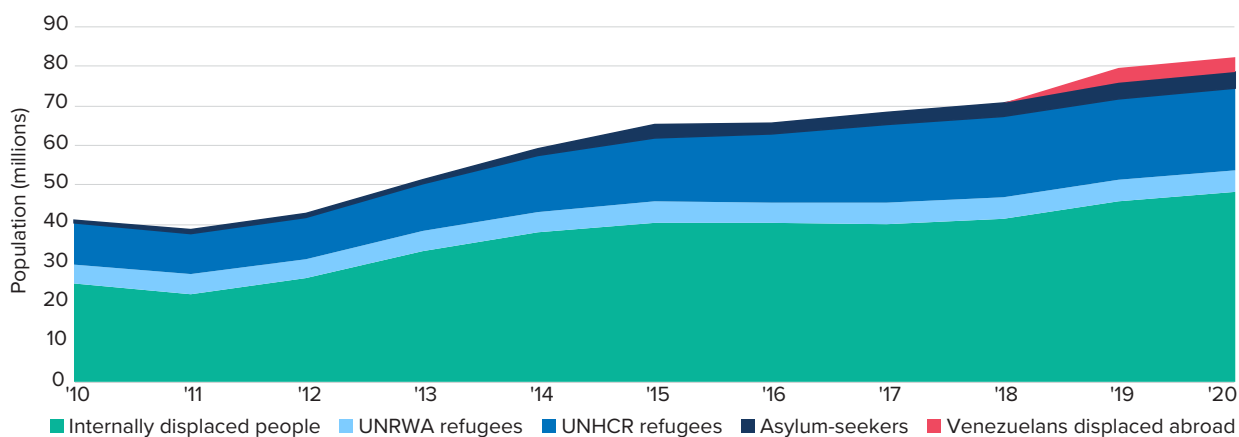


Figure 1: Number of people displaced at the end of each year, including people displaced due to conflict and violence, and Venezuelans displaced abroad (Source: UNHCR).



**DISASTERS**

In 2019 and 2020, disasters affected 94.9 million people<sup>5</sup> and 98.4 million people<sup>6</sup> respectively. However, the numbers of people affected do not necessarily mean that all had shelter needs. In both 2019 and 2020, the three types of disasters affecting the most people globally were storms, floods and droughts. 30.7 million people were newly internally displaced by disasters in 2020. China (5.1 million), the Philippines (4.4 million), Bangladesh (4.4 million) and India (3.9 million) accounted for the highest numbers of people internally displaced due to disasters during 2020, mainly due to floods and storms.<sup>7</sup>

In both 2019 and 2020, the three types of disasters affecting the most people globally were storms, floods and droughts.

5 UCLouvain, CRED, USAID (2020), Natural Disasters: Now is the time to not give up

6 UNDRR, UCLouvain, CRED, USAID (2021), The Non-Covid year in disasters: Global trends and perspectives

7 IDMC (2021), Global Report on Internal Displacement 2021

Multiple case studies in this edition show responses to storms. This includes a project responding to Hurricane Dorian which hit the Bahamas in 2019 (A.8), and recovery programming following on from the response to Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) (A.14) which hit the Philippines in 2013. Additionally, the Mozambique response overview (A.6) involves responses to multiple cyclones and tropical storms. The Paraguay case study (A.9) shows a response to large-scale flooding.

While geophysical disasters such as earthquakes and volcanic activity affected far fewer people globally than weather and climate-related disasters such as storms and floods, there were still numerous significant geophysical disasters in 2019 and 2020. The Indonesia case study (A.13) shows a project responding to the combined effects of an earthquake, tsunami, liquefaction and landslides, whereas the Vanuatu case study (A.15) outlines the response to Ambae volcano in 2018.

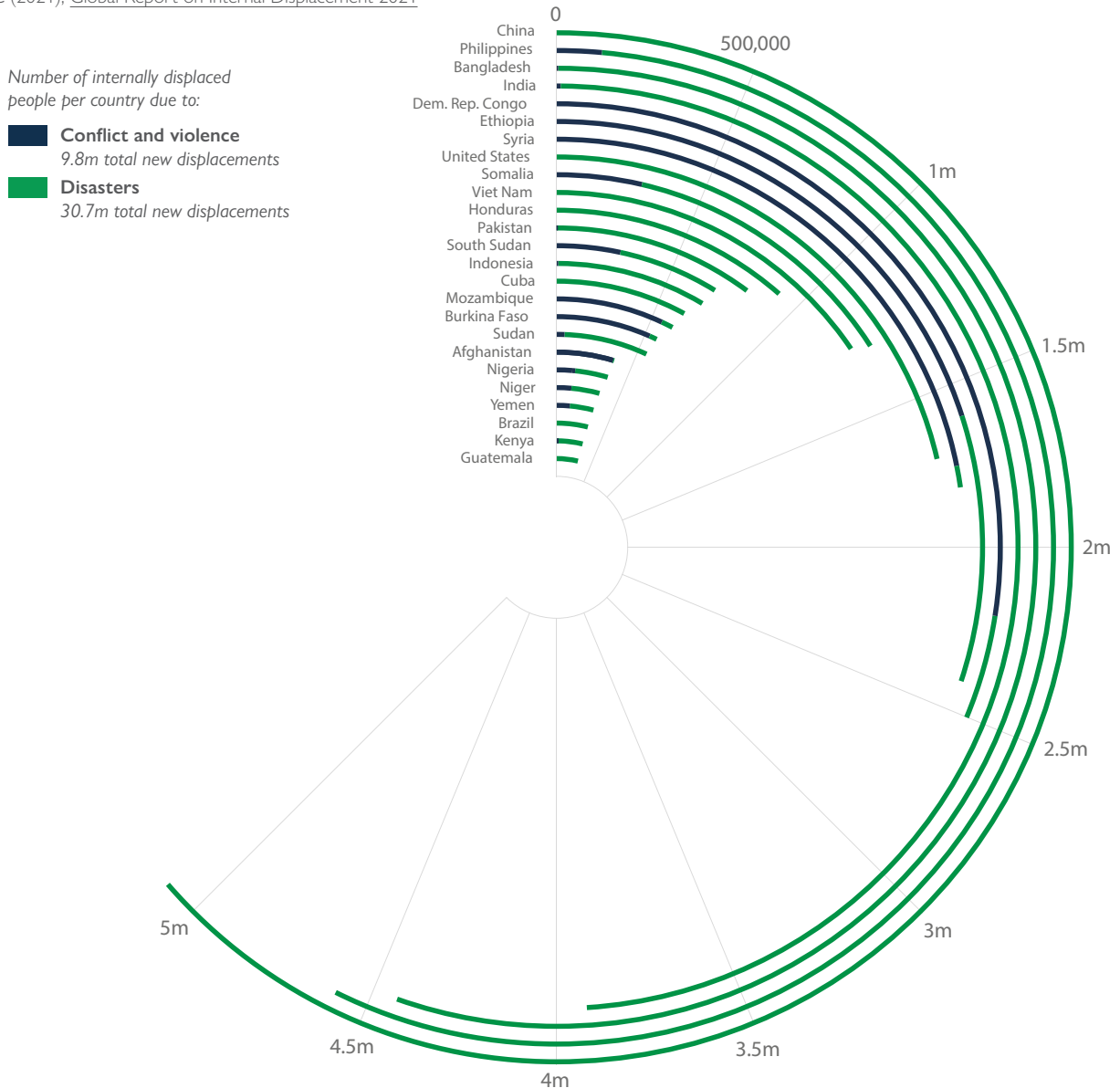


Figure 2: Twenty-five countries and territories with the most new internal displacements in 2020 (Source: IDMC).

**SHELTER RESPONSES IN 2019 AND 2020**

In 2019 and 2020, the Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) reported that 14.2 and 14.7 million people respectively had been reached in countries where a cluster or cluster-like coordination mechanism was active.<sup>8</sup> It is important to note that this excludes, among others, some refugee responses such as the Rohingya crisis response. These figures represent an increase in people reached when compared to the three preceding years, but they are not as high as the 18.1 million people reportedly reached with Shelter-NFI assistance in 2015 (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 shows the total people targeted and reached with Shelter-NFI support since 2015. These figures should also be considered in relation to the overall number of people in need of Shelter-NFI assistance, which was 37.8 million people in 2019 and 58.5 million people in 2020. Overall Shelter Cluster responses met 25% of the total needs in 2020 and 38% of the needs in 2019. In both years responses assisted 57% of those people targeted. The large majority of this assistance was in NFI only. These figures do not include responses outside the Cluster system.

<sup>8</sup> All data in this section is from the Global Shelter Cluster <https://www.sheltercluster.org/operations>

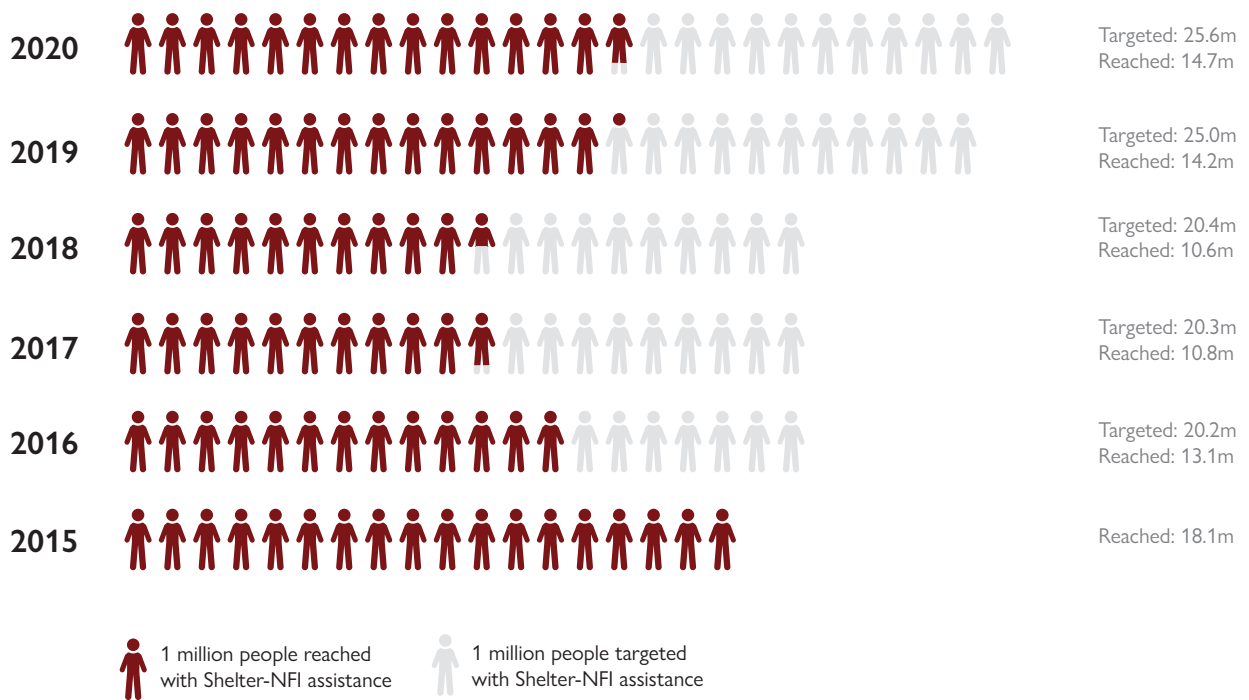


Figure 3: Total people targeted and reached with Shelter-NFI support from 2015 to 2020, in responses where a cluster or cluster-like mechanism was active.



Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, 2019.



Shyala, Gorkha District, Nepal, 2020.



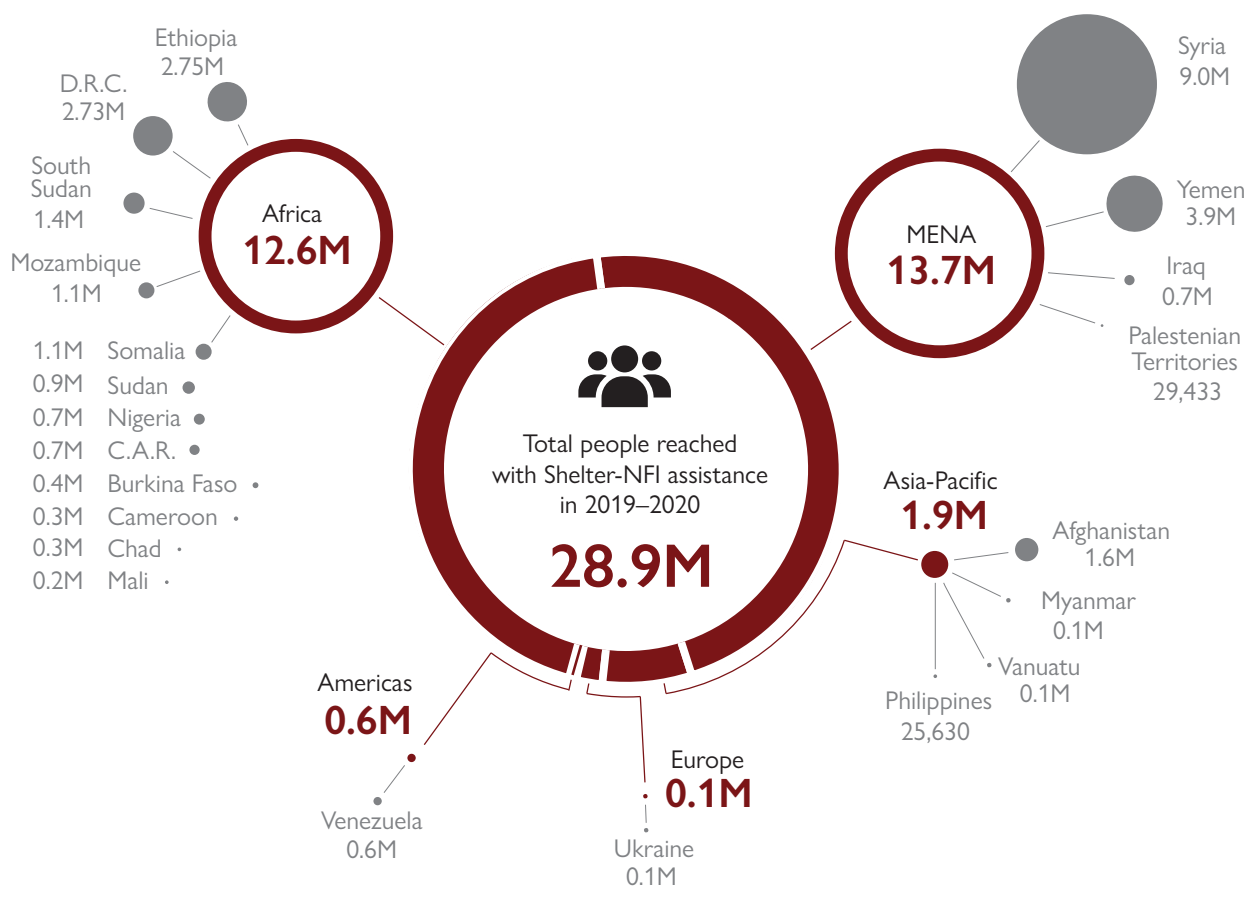


Figure 4: Total people reached with Shelter-NFI support by region and country in 2019-2020, in responses with a cluster or cluster-like mechanism active.

Figure 4 shows the combined total of people reached in 2019 and 2020 split by region. It shows that the majority of people supported with Shelter-NFI assistance were in either in MENA (13.7 million people reached) or in Africa (12.6 million people reached).

The major humanitarian Shelter-NFI responses in 2019-2020 were in the Syrian Arab Republic (see A.22-A.26), Yemen, DRC (see A.4), Ethiopia (see A.5), South Sudan, Mozambique (see A.6), Somalia, Afghanistan, the Central African Republic (CAR) and Nigeria (see A.7). The Shelter-NFI response to the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh was also one of the largest in those years. The majority of Shelter-NFI assistance in 2019-2020 was related to conflict and violence, in some cases combined by the additional damage and displacement caused by exposure to natural hazards.

Figure 5 also shows the split between NFI assistance and Shelter assistance across these responses.<sup>9</sup> It is possible to note for example that some responses, such as the response in Ethiopia, have reached a relatively large

<sup>9</sup> Note that the overall number of people reached noted in Figure 5 is in most cases not equal to the sum of the breakdown of people reached with NFI assistance and people reached with Shelter assistance. This is because some people will have been reached with both NFI and Shelter assistance.

number of people with NFI assistance but have reached a much smaller amount of people with more substantial Shelter assistance.

In 2019-2020, as per Global Shelter Cluster figures, the sector received just 34 per cent of the funding required across all countries. Figure 6 shows the regional breakdown of funding requested and funding received.



Tabaco, Albay, Philippines, 2021.

**INTRODUCTION**

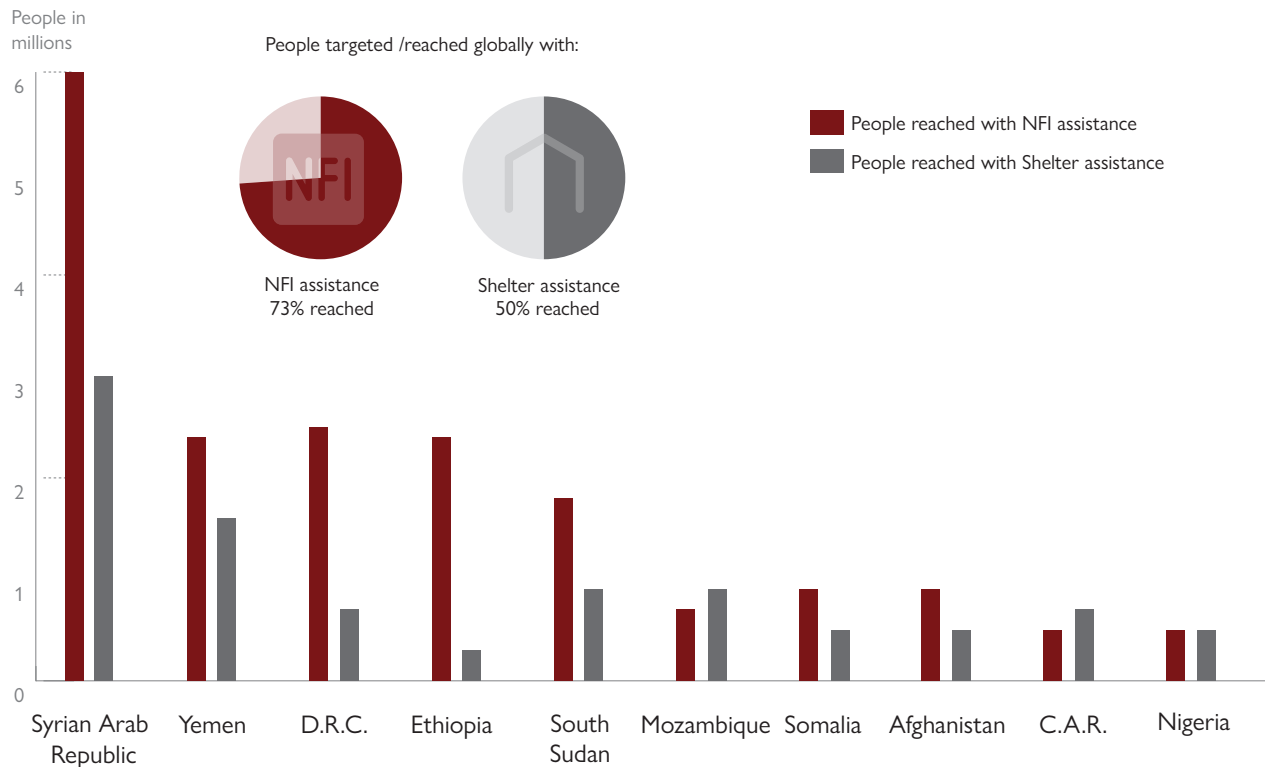


Figure 5: Top ten responses by people reached in 2019-2020 with Shelter and NFI assistance in countries where a cluster or cluster-like mechanism was active.

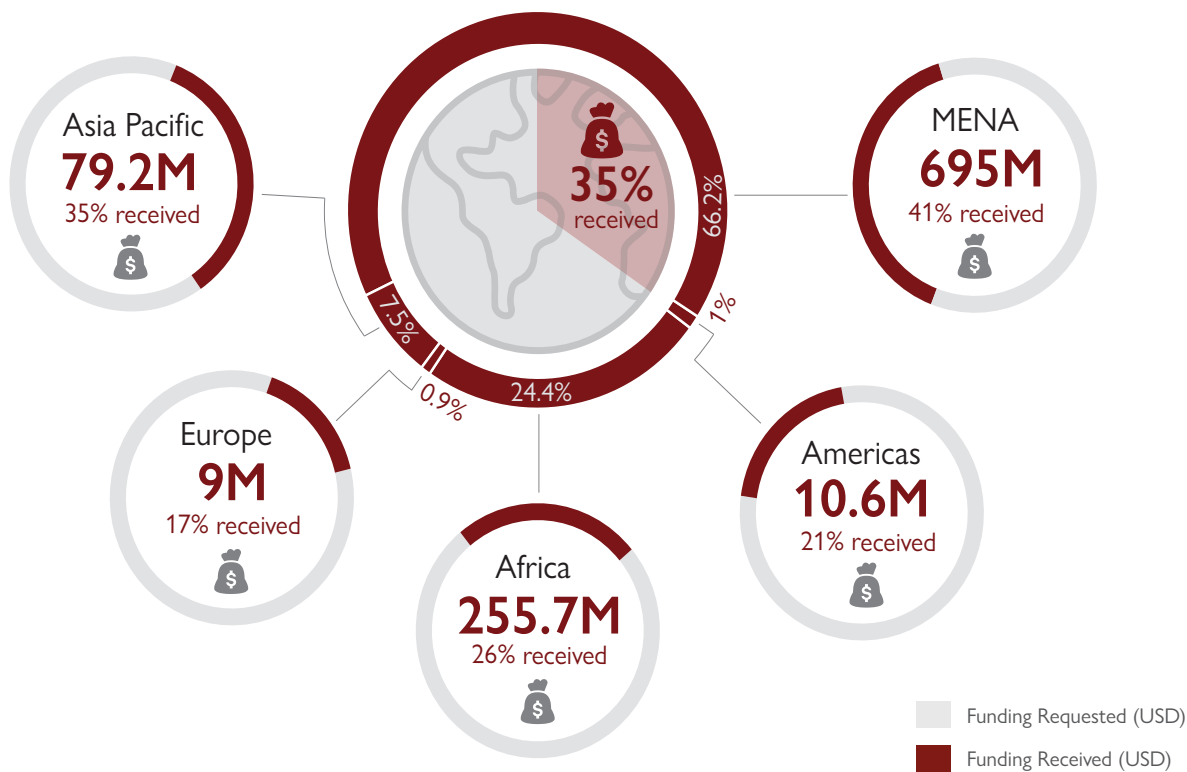


Figure 6: Regions by funding received for Shelter-NFI in 2019-2020 in responses where a cluster or cluster-like mechanism was active.





Baidoa, Burheybe, Somalia, 2020.



Virac town, Catanduanes Island Province, Philippines, 2020.

## OVERVIEW OF CASE STUDIES

### DIVERSITY IN RESPONSES

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

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

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

### TYPE OF CRISIS AND DISPLACEMENT

Seven of the case studies are of projects that supported refugee populations: two case studies in Chad supporting refugees from Sudan (A.2) and from the Central African Republic (A.3); two case studies of projects in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, supporting Rohingya refugees from Myanmar (A.11 and A.12); and three case studies of projects supporting Syrian refugees in Jordan (A.20), Lebanon (A.21), and Turkey (A.27).

Ten case studies are of projects that were implemented in support of people internally displaced due to conflict or violence. These include case studies from the Democratic Republic of Congo (A.4), Ethiopia (A.5), Nigeria (A.7), Ukraine (A.16), two case studies from Iraq (A.18 and A.19), and four case studies from Northwest Syria (A.23-A.26).

Five case studies are of projects that responded to disasters (flood, storm, earthquake, volcano) at different phases of the response. These include emergency responses in case studies from the Bahamas (A.8), Paraguay (A.9)

and from Vanuatu (A.15); transitional shelter support in Indonesia (A.13); and longer-term resettlement support in the Philippines (A.14).

Many of the projects in this edition that respond to a specific disaster take place in contexts that experience multiple different types of natural hazards, such as in Vanuatu (A.15). Additionally, many of the case studies of projects implemented in response to conflict and displacement, particularly those in contexts of protracted displacement in camps, involve significant focus on disaster risk reduction and the ongoing response to seasonal hazards such as storms and flooding (see for example A.12 in Bangladesh and A.23 in Syria).

### CONTEXT AND SETTLEMENTS OPTIONS/SITUATIONS

People assisted by the projects in this edition found shelter and were reached with shelter support in different types of locations. This includes 9 projects that were implemented in urban areas, 10 projects in peri-urban areas, and 13 projects in rural areas (though the definition of what is "urban" varies from one country to another). From a shelter perspective, the location and typology of settlement where people are can be considered amongst the main determinants in selecting appropriate response options.

Over half of the projects in this book were implemented in communal displacement sites. These included collective facilities which are often in existing public buildings (A.25); planned sites and settlements for large populations fleeing conflict and disasters (A.2, A.4, A.7, A.9, A.11, A.12 and A.15); spontaneous camps where people self-settled (A.9, A.11, A.15, A.21, A.23 and A.25); and planned resettlement sites designed to provide longer-term shelter solutions for people who had been displaced (A.3, A.14 and A.26)

Many projects also supported populations in dispersed locations, including people in rental accommodation (A.8, A.19, A.20, A.21, A.25 and A.27), people staying with host families (A.4, A.19, A.24, A.25 and A.27), and people who self-settled in dispersed locations (A. 4 and A.25).

Many projects also assisted people who were not displaced but whose homes had been damaged or destroyed (see A.13, A.18, A.19 and A.24), or helped households who had been displaced to be able to return to their homes and communities (A.5, A.18, A.19 and A.24). Some projects also assisted people who had not been directly affected by crisis but who were members of host communities with significant housing needs (A.20 and A.27).

**SHELTER ASSISTANCE TYPES**

The case studies in this edition show a range of different types of shelter assistance. Eight projects offered support in providing materials for or directly constructing emergency shelters (e.g. A.4, A.9 and A.25). Five projects supported the construction of transitional or semi-permanent shelters (A.3, A.5, A.12 and A.13). Two projects supported host families (A.15 and A.19).

Eight projects supported housing repair, retrofit and/or rehabilitation in support of a combination of displaced people who were renting accommodation (e.g. A.20, A.21), returnees and non-displaced local populations (e.g. A.5 and A.18), and vulnerable host community members (e.g. A.20).

Three projects provided direct rental assistance (A.8, A.20 and A.21). Many other projects supported renters through negotiating rent reductions or rent freezes either for a set period of one or two years, or in perpetuity (A.26).

Four projects supported the construction of permanent housing: two projects supported the permanent reconstruction of severely damaged or destroyed homes (A.18 and A.19), and two projects built permanent new-build housing as part of new housing developments (A.14 and A.26).

One project (A.11 in Bangladesh), was specifically focused on improving material supply chains namely through the setup of a bamboo treatment facility. One case study (A.16 in Ukraine) focusses on coordination and on the transition and handover of the Shelter Cluster in Ukraine.

**SUPPORT METHODS**

Projects adopted a variety of support methods to deliver shelter assistance. These include the distribution of household items or shelter materials, tools and kits (e.g. A.9, A.15), the use of cash-based interventions (CBI) for example through conditional cash transfers (e.g. A.5, A.18, A.27), and non-material form of assistance, such as capacity building (e.g. A.13, A.15), technical assistance (e.g. A.19, A.20) and advocacy and legal advice for example in relation to Housing Land and Property Rights (HLP) (e.g. A.5, A.20 and A.27).

Many projects also provided settlements-level support. Nine projects involved site or settlement planning, including planning for the development, growth and upgrading of new and existing displacement sites and settlements (e.g. A.3, A.4, A.7, A.12), and supporting planning in existing urban and peri-urban areas (e.g. A.19). Eleven projects supported infrastructure improvements, including improvements to roads, drainage, communal spaces, and access to local services and amenities. Site and settlement planning, and infrastructure support was often implemented with aims to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards, mitigate protection and health risks, and promote social cohesion.



Lebanon, 2016.

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**CASE STUDY ANALYSIS AND RECURRING THEMES**

Building on the analysis conducted in Shelter Projects Essentials publication, the 22 case studies that follow were analyzed by subject experts. For each case study, the strengths and weaknesses highlighted in the case study were taken as the unit of analysis. Each strength and weakness was assigned up to two themes at the intervention/output level and up to two themes at the outcome level.

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

The strengths and weaknesses of each project were assigned themes from a list determined by the Shelter Projects Working Group, based on those used in the previous edition of Shelter Projects. In the case study development and review phases, contributors were encouraged to discuss these themes in the data collection form, and the peer reviewers of the case studies provided commentary to make sure the strengths and weaknesses were justified in the project description. The results of the classification were validated and then analyzed to extract findings. These are presented below and in the table on pages xxvi-xxvii.

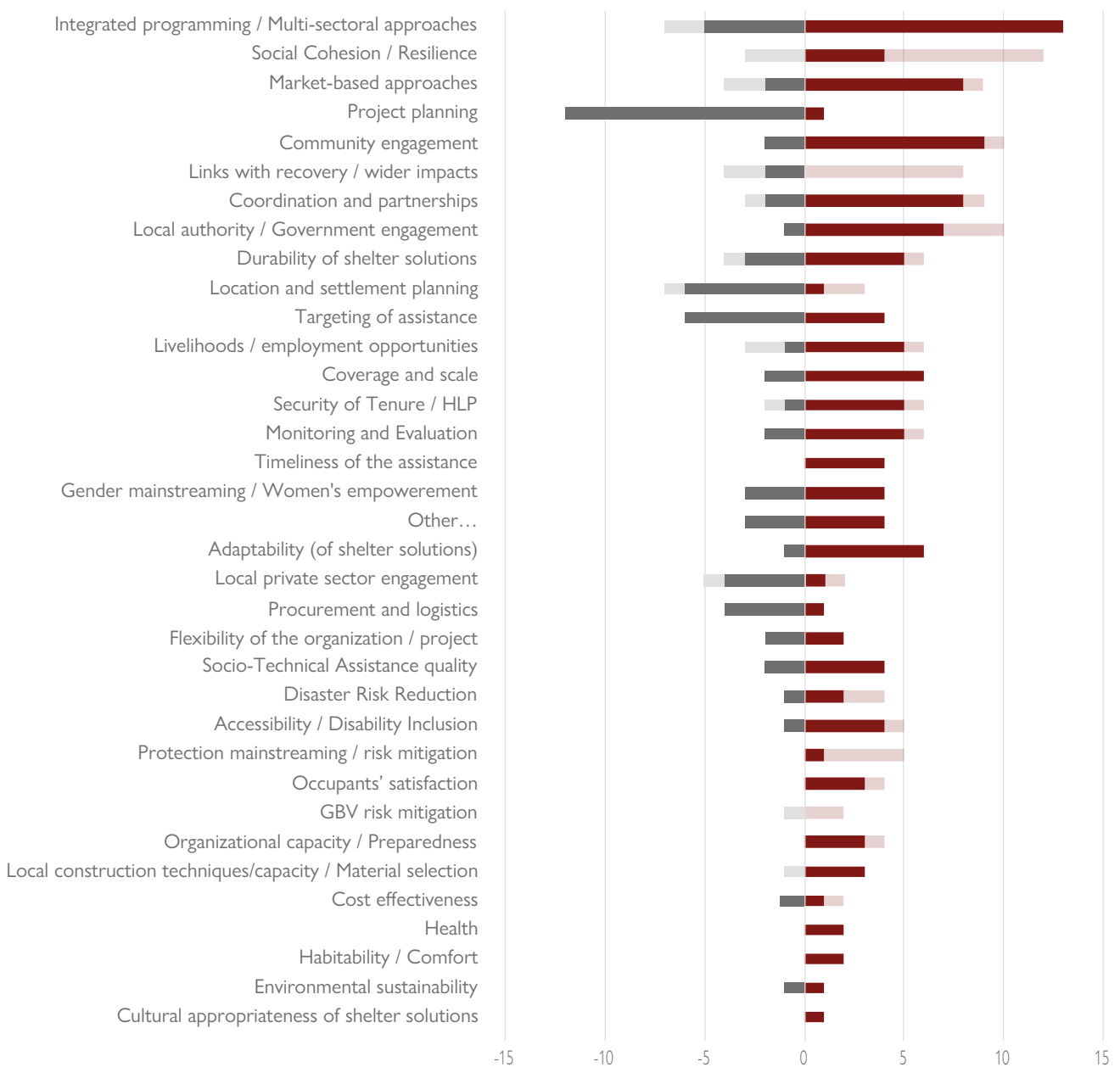


Figure 7: Strengths and weaknesses reported in the case studies, by theme.



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE ANALYSIS

Top three strengths overall	Integrated programming / Multi-sectoral approaches, Social Cohesion / Resilience, Local authority / Government engagement
Top three weaknesses overall	Project planning, Location and settlement planning, Market-based approaches
Top four strengths in disaster responses	Community engagement, Coordination and partnerships, Local authority / Government engagement, Social Cohesion / Resilience
Top weakness in disaster responses	Project planning
Top two strengths in conflict responses	Integrated programming / Multi-sectoral approaches, Social Cohesion / Resilience
Top three weaknesses in conflict responses	Project planning, Location / settlement planning, Integrated programming / Multi-sectoral approaches

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

From the analysis, the most reported theme was *Integrated programming / Multi-sectoral approaches* (reported in 16 out of the 22 case studies). The next most reported themes were *Social cohesion / Resilience* (12 case studies), *Project planning* (12 case studies), *Community engagement*, (11 case studies), *Links with recovery / Wider impacts* (11 case studies), *Coordination and partnerships* (10 case studies), *Market-based approaches* (10 case studies), and *Local authority / Government engagement*, (9 case studies). The most recurring themes found through the analysis described above, are briefly expanded below.

**INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING / MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACHES**

Integrated programming was twice as likely to be reported as a strength than a weakness. Where it was reported as a weakness, the issue was usually that there was an absence of integrated programming. As a strength, collaboration with other sectors contributed to adequate standards in camps and settlement planning (A.2, A.4, A.7 A.12) through integrating site planning, site development, access, and WASH. Site-wide improvements in flood risk mitigation led to improved living conditions in A.23. Programs were described as more comprehensive in scope (A.19, A.24) by working with other sectors on WASH, infrastructure and food security. Integration with Protection was positive in A.15 and A.18. Outcomes were aided by multi-sectoral approaches, such as social cohesion (A.14) and self-sufficiency (A.3).

When reported as a weakness at output level it was mentioned when there was no WASH support (A.5), and in A.7 site preparation and development was initially stymied in part due to a lack of clarity over which sector was responsible. There were more comments on integrated programming as a weakness at output level. A.20 says that linkages with other sectors would have increased the positive impact of the intervention, A.26 reports that energy integration was not properly planned leaving households without energy access, A.21 highlights how the project built relationships with Protection actors, but mentions that further outreach and relationship building efforts were still needed. A.16 points to a lack of inter-sectoral coordination creating a missed opportunity in the transition from humanitarian to development actors.

In this analysis, a number of other themes which highlight specific areas of integrated/multi-sectoral approaches overlap with the broader theme. This is the case with the themes on accessibility/disability inclusion, GBV risk mitigation, gender mainstreaming, protection mainstreaming and security of tenure/HLP. A.21 and A.25 take the approach of linking shelter interventions with protection risks, which show specific outcomes in better inclusion and reduction of gender-based violence. Other inclusion strengths are in A.13 which demonstrates the importance of project flexibility and A.20 which shows the value of inclusion kits.



Petare, Venezuela, 2019.

In A.3 the shelter approach prioritizing personal security contributed directly to a reduction in the risk of gender-based violence, however in the same project, the lack of community engagement in site planning and other aspects of the project were reported as a missed opportunity to strengthen support networks and further mitigate safety and security risks such as gender-based violence. Gender mainstreaming was a weakness in A.3 and A.13 where there was a missed opportunity to include women and girls in workshops and the construction process. In A.4 and A.25 the inclusiveness of the project approach was a positive for gender mainstreaming. A.15 showed the value of coordination with the Protection Cluster for gender outcomes. There were a number of approaches in the case studies that contributed to protection mainstreaming: A.2 links protection mainstreaming to engagement of host and displaced communities in the settlement planning process; A.24 and A.25 prioritize sensitive consultation; and multiple case studies such as A.5 and A.20 highlight the strengthening of tenure security.

### SOCIAL COHESION / RESILIENCE

This theme was reported in 12 of the 22 case studies. In 9 of the 12 cases it was reported as an outcome strength or weakness, and in 2 of the case studies it was reported as both a strength and a weakness at outcome level, for different reasons. These case studies are a useful addition to the development of evidence to support the wider impacts of shelter programs.

Reported strengths: In case study A.3 the shelter component of the project provided an enabling environment for social cohesion, local integration and the peaceful co-existence of refugees and the host communities. A.4 describes how the inclusive implementation process involving both host and displaced communities led to collaboration and tolerance between the groups. Rehabilitation of unfinished houses belonging to host community members (A.19) were used for hosting IDPs and refugees, which helped in building peaceful coexistence among various groups. Case study A.24 reported that transparency of assistance for local, returnee and IDP groups enhanced trust between these communities and

with local councils. In A.26, it was recognized that while also supporting IDPs, the provision of permanent new infrastructure would be an asset for the local authority, as well as providing livelihood and skills opportunities for both host and displaced populations.

This linkage between host community support and social cohesion is perhaps one of the most important conclusions from this analysis. Support to host families and host communities including local authorities, for example through building community infrastructure or completing unfinished buildings was reported in multiple case studies to have an effect on social cohesion between displaced and host communities. Host community support is a clearly articulated theme which emerges from the data as significant and which does not have a specific category in the analysis framework. It is possible that this has been a long-standing characteristic of shelter programming, but one that has not previously emerged in analysis of Shelter Projects publications as it was not highlighted as a specific category for case study write-ups.

Specific to case studies in disaster contexts were strengths highlighting ongoing community identification of hazards and resilience strategies (A.13), as well as the sustainability of the community itself (A.14), and building common interests between host and displaced populations (A.15). Other strengths mentioned were that grouping households led to practical support for vulnerable groups (A.5) as well as collective strength in negotiations for resources; and the importance of understanding social networks and communities of origin when allocating shelters in relation to site/settlement planning (A.7).

For weaknesses, a lack of community engagement in some aspects of the project in A.3 was a missed opportunity to strengthen support networks, encourage ownership and buy-in, and mitigate additional safety and security risks. Shelter and settlements assistance has the ability to create division as well as the ability to foster social cohesion, especially if there are groups who are excluded from assistance. A.5 for example recorded a cash for shelter program in a volatile region which left out some of the bordering villages, which caused community tensions.



Borena, Ethiopia, 2020.





Naivasha IDP camp, Wau, South Sudan, 2021.

## PROJECT PLANNING

The theme with most reported weaknesses is project planning, which includes a number of diverse issues dealing with program design. These include: no training on repair or maintenance (A.3); lack of awareness of wider needs and priorities, which impacted the shelter provision (A.5); weakness in verification procedures (A.8); lack of consideration of Cash-for-Work incentives (A.12); and implementing a large scale, multi sector housing project without a pilot (A.14). Timing was a weakness, with many projects reporting having not foreseen and planned for delays: in A.13 Project planning didn't consider harvest time; the "train the trainer" approach in A.9 had limited success due to time shortages for trainers; and A.16 underappreciated the pace of decision making and action by local authorities. Other weaknesses reported were: lack of understanding household's intent to return and the program's ability to determine their level of vulnerability in the location of displacement (A.18); and phasing of technical and vulnerability assessments (A.19). There was one sole positive comment on project planning: a realistic timeline in A.16.

Many of the case studies highlighted processes of remote management and remote monitoring, mainly in the context of cross border programming between Turkey and Northwest Syria (e.g. A.23, A.25), and also in relation to adapting to working in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (A.9). More broadly, although not mentioned significantly within the strengths and weaknesses sections, a recurring theme mentioned within the majority of case studies was the need to adapt project planning, implementation modalities and monitoring processes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Strengths reported related to community engagement included participation of both the displaced and the host communities in the settlement planning process (A.2) which had wider effects of promoting linking with social cohesion (as described on page xxii). A.14 demonstrated wider effects of community engagement where community participation in the design of the new community layout using social network analysis enabled the community to maintain the existing social fabric. A.19 reported close coordination with community leaders which helped in avoiding tension between host communities and the targeted IDPs and refugees.

Project A.4 engaged local communities as well as the IDPs in the shelter construction process, with particular efforts on including and empowering women. A.9 was particularly successful at incorporating many suggestions from communities into the project design and the distribution processes. Trust building made A.13 and A.24 successful by building good relations through intensive communication. In A.13 the organization worked in partnership with an existing community group to collectively implement the project and to support their capacity development. In A.18 the development of community representation structures, through Community Working Groups enhanced communication with communities significantly and facilitated community engagement and consultation, as communities were mobilized from the onset and throughout the project.

Weaknesses reported were that lack of community engagement in site planning, and layout resulted in a missed opportunity to strengthen support networks, encourage ownership and buy-in, and mitigate additional safety and security risks (A.3). A.7 reported the lack of time available to carry out community engagement in the early stages of the project.



**LINKS WITH RECOVERY / WIDER IMPACTS**

This theme, like social cohesion, is more often reported at outcome level (9 out of the 11 case studies, 8 as a strength and 1 as a weakness). As a strength, A.2 reported long-term planning for the settlement provided opportunities for economic development, in A.3 the durability of the shelters gave a sense of safety and security. A.8 reported ongoing links with local authorities. A.11 reports that the program has become a catalyst for research on the potential of treated bamboo. A.13 comments that households were enabled to adapt their shelter so that it could best fit in with their intentions for recovery. A.24 reports that markets were enabled to function sustainably. In A.21, positive psychological effects were reported due to the support provided.

As a weakness A.7 commented that more efforts could have been made to support returns and recovery and A.9 states that the project was not able to adequately address the longer-term needs of the affected population.

Many other themes overlap to a certain degree with this theme, as they highlight specific wider impacts of shelter and settlements programming. For example, there was one reported strength mentioned specifically about health outcomes in A.21. The project reported that the wider impacts of rehabilitation interventions were measured and positive psychological effects were reported by more than 50% of the respondents. Rehabilitations at a relatively modest cost had positive direct and indirect effects on reducing protection and health risks, reinforcing the economic environment in the area of intervention and contributed to the reduction of negative coping mechanisms.



Siem Reap, Cambodia, 2019.

**COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS**

Many of the strengths and weaknesses highlighted under the theme of coordination and partnerships also support initiatives within the themes of local authority/government engagement (A.3, A.16) and community engagement (A.13). They form the basis for successful cross-sectoral collaboration with humanitarian and development actors (A.4, A.12, A.21) and among Shelter Cluster agencies (A.15), and they facilitate market-based approaches (A.11, A.25). Weaknesses in coordination and partnerships were highlighted in relation to Cluster transition to government (A.16), examples of where greater efforts were needed to improve coordination with other sectors (A.21) and challenges in implementing as per donor standards in certain contexts (A.25).



Ngurno camp, Monguno, Nigeria, 2020.





Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, Quito, Ecuador, 2019.

### MARKET-BASED APPROACHES

An equal number of strengths and weaknesses were mentioned in relation to market-based approaches. Strengths included cash as a modality (A.5) meaning that money was spent locally, supporting local markets, with pro-active efforts to put in place predictable prices in agreement with the local market vendors. Empowerment of crisis-affected households was reported by payments being made to the tenant (A.8) rather than the landlord in Cash-for-Rent programming. Cash assistance (A.18) enabled households to drive the reconstruction process, and choice created by cash-based modalities (A.20), enabled tenants and landlords more flexibility on the choice of material, quality and design.

Many weaknesses highlighted were in relation to Cash-for-Rent programming and a lack of exit strategy. Case study A.8 comments that while rental assistance can “buy time”, stronger linkages with other programs, supporting repairs or livelihoods were needed to help catalyze recovery. A.20 says Cash-for-Rent was only provided as a one-off assistance package and without linkages to other types of assistance to address the root causes of vulnerability. A.21 points out the risks to tenure security of rental programs in environments of crisis characterized by severe financial contraction and loss of purchasing power. This is an issue of known concern in shelter practice and recently guidelines have been released.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See for example Shelter Cluster guidance on [Rental Market Interventions](#), and the [IFRC Step-by-step guidance for rental assistance](#).



Thevipuram, Mullaitivu District, Sri Lanka, 2019.

### LOCAL AUTHORITY / GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT

This theme was mostly reported as a strength. Aspects of this theme included addressing HLP concerns for allocation of land (A.2, A.24) and building the capacity of the local government on the protection of HLP rights (A.5). A.8 reported that an agreement with a government ministry in relation to referrals was useful to ensure that at the end of the project continued support could be provided to households with ongoing needs. A.14 reported capacity building of the local authority was important. A.15 noted strong collaboration and resource mobilization between local authorities and the Shelter Cluster coming from experience and capacities built from previous disaster responses in the region.

A.16 and A.19 noted that formal agreements were useful as a quality control measure to ensure that both parties agreed on their specific responsibilities and there was continuity in case of a change in leadership due to elections or change of personnel. A.27 noted that a positive result was achieved due to infrastructure projects being implemented collaboratively and co-funded by the town hall.

### THEMES THAT WERE UNDER-REPORTED

It is interesting to reflect on themes which are considered important by the shelter community but are not reported often as strengths and weaknesses within the case studies. Cultural appropriateness is mentioned only once, environmental sustainability twice, cost effectiveness only three times, occupant satisfaction four times, and Disaster Risk Reduction and private sector engagement are mentioned only five times. As mentioned above, due to the limited length and specific scope of Shelter Projects case studies, the lists of reported strengths and weaknesses are not exhaustive, and the reality is more nuanced. More information is needed to understand the reasons why these themes are not widely reported.

