



**BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)  
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

## **SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS SECTOR UPDATE – MARCH 2011**

### **SECTOR OVERVIEW**

USAID/OFDA is at the forefront of the humanitarian community's shelter and settlements activities, all of which revolve around a common goal: the expeditious and appropriate provision of covered living space to adequately shelter displaced populations. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2010, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$129 million in humanitarian shelter assistance and shelter-related risk reduction activities in 16 countries, up from nearly \$40 million in FY 2009. In addition, FY 2011 USAID/OFDA shelter and settlements sector spending through February 2011 totaled approximately \$53 million for projects in six countries: Burkina Faso, Haiti, Iraq, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Sudan. The following are selections of recent USAID/OFDA-funded projects.

### **INDONESIA: POST-EARTHQUAKE SHELTER FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

On September 30, 2009, a magnitude 7.6 earthquake struck off the western coast of Sumatra, killing more than 1,100 people and injuring approximately 3,000 others. The earthquake damaged nearly 250,000 houses, including nearly 115,000 houses assessed as heavily damaged. In response, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$3 million in transitional shelter assistance, including funding to Handicap International (HI) to provide newly disabled persons and extremely vulnerable individuals and their families with home-based care and training, as well as safe and accessible transitional shelter. Between November 2009 and April 2010, HI provided transitional shelter to 375 families with newly disabled and extremely vulnerable family members. The project is an example of continuing USAID/OFDA efforts to provide assistance to persons with disabilities during crises and in the aftermath of disasters.

### **HAITI: ENGAGING DIASPORA HAITIAN PROFESSIONALS IN RESPONSE AND RECOVERY**

The January 12, 2010, earthquake in Haiti posed significant challenges to both the Government of Haiti (GoH) and the international humanitarian community. In an effort to address some of these challenges, USAID/OFDA supported the Emergency Community Assistance and Planning (ECAP) project from July 2010 to March 2011. Implemented by Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) and the Development Innovations Group (DIG), ECAP was the first international community initiative to tap the expertise of the Haitian diaspora and apply it to post-earthquake response and recovery efforts. The ECAP team screened more than 150 Haitian diaspora applicants from the U.S., Canada, South and Central America, and the Eastern Caribbean, and deployed 11 experts in urban planning, engineering, and architecture to work with GoH agencies, local governments, the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC), and USAID/OFDA-funded non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Under the guidance of USAID/OFDA, HFHI and DIG focused on providing critical expertise and capacity to shelter and settlements efforts at the local and community levels, enabling local authorities to make informed decisions regarding land use planning in order to identify suitable sites for shelter. HFHI and DIG also identified and developed hazard risk guidelines for response and recovery efforts at the neighborhood level. The ECAP project also supported the following national-level activities:

- Creating a national hazard risk map with overlays for seismic, flood, landslide, and wind risks as a tool for prioritizing appropriate locations for recovery and construction
- Developing a comprehensive policy framework and strategy for debris management
- Developing a curriculum and delivering training for Haiti's first cadre of municipal engineers, training 66 engineers, architects, and planners

- Developing a mapping system to delineate Port-au-Prince neighborhoods, and setting up the first information management system to inventory neighborhood level response activities in Haiti
- Developing a curriculum for the nascent profession of urban planning in Haiti
- Developing handicapped accessibility guidelines at the neighborhood level

The utility and impact of ECAP has not gone unnoticed. USAID/Haiti recently agreed to provide funding to extend the project so that ECAP professionals can continue to facilitate the transition to reconstruction.

### **KYRGYZSTAN: PROVIDING TRANSITIONAL SHELTER IN TIME FOR WINTER**

Ethnic unrest beginning in April 2010 peaked in June, when nearly 470,000 people were displaced in the southern districts of Osh and Jalalabad. Most of the displaced population eventually returned home or sought shelter with family and friends in home areas. The violence damaged or destroyed nearly 1,800 housing compounds, according to the U.N. More than 95 percent of damaged houses required demolition and reconstruction.

In response to shelter needs generated by conflict, USAID/OFDA allocated approximately \$4.4 million of its nearly \$10 million response program to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to support a transitional shelter project. Through a cash voucher system, recipients purchased building materials and renovated their homes with assistance from engineers and technicians. By early December 2010, CRS had built more than 250 transitional shelters featuring foam insulation panels for walls and ceilings. Large families and vulnerable households in the Osh and Jalalabad areas received these innovative “panel” structures, along with repairs to 125 damaged homes. Thus, CRS provided approximately 3,000 individuals with shelter prior to the onset of winter. In addition, CRS also provided nearly 2,000 conflict-affected families, representing 14,000 individuals, with winter supplies of coal and cash grants to support the purchase of winter commodities, such as coal-burning stoves, coats, kitchen items, and blankets.



*Individuals stand next to a CRS “panel” transitional shelter in Jalalabad, Kyrgyzstan (Charles A. Setchell, USAID).*

The design of the “panel” transitional shelters was different from the more conventional “brick and mortar” shelters implemented by other members of the Shelter Cluster, the coordinating body for shelter activities. USAID/OFDA viewed the “panel” shelters as a superior response to the high-level seismic hazard risk in the conflict-affected area. The “panel” design was also built in less time and at a lower cost than the “brick and mortar” shelters, provided the same or superior insulation to ward off winter temperatures, and looked the same as other shelters once the foam was covered with plaster, making the design popular among beneficiaries. The foam insulation proved so popular that two local building supply vendors began to provide the foam as an alternative to conventional building materials, and the Government of Kyrgyzstan State Directorate for Rehabilitation and Reconstruction considered the adoption of the “panel” design as the model for future post-disaster and crisis shelter responses.

### **HAITI: DEVELOPING A NEW APPROACH TO URBAN DISASTER RESPONSE**

The devastating magnitude 7.0 earthquake that struck Haiti in January 2010 resulted in the loss of more than 230,000 lives and massive destruction, with Port-au-Prince sustaining considerable damage. The earthquake affected many of the city’s neighborhoods, including Ravine Pintade. In Ravine Pintade, the quake generated roughly 115,000 cubic meters of rubble—enough rubble to cover the entire neighborhood to a depth of approximately 1.6 meters (5.5 feet). The earthquake killed or injured

numerous neighborhood residents, damaged or destroyed approximately 75 percent of neighborhood housing, and negatively impacted livelihoods and basic service provision in Ravine Pintade.

USAID/OFDA initially supported Project Concern International (PCI) to commence rubble removal work and provide basic health and protection services in Ravine Pintade, but quickly realized that a more integrated, multi-sectoral approach was needed to address the complex, multi-faceted challenges posed by the enormous losses. These challenges, as in most disaster-affected urban areas, were numerous, complex, and pervasive, and included rubble removal; inadequate pre-event urban planning; unsafe pre-event living environments; ambiguous land tenure and rights to build and occupy shelter; poor access to neighborhood health, water, and sanitation services; limitations of space and high population density; vulnerability to flooding, landslides, high winds, and seismic activity; and a lack of protection services.

In response to these challenges, USAID/OFDA approved the \$8.6 million KATYE (“neighborhood” in Creole) project, a combined effort of PCI and CHF International intended to more systematically respond to needs using an integrated, multi-sectoral, community-based approach to not only address short-term needs, but also establish a basic platform for longer-term neighborhood recovery. This approach is driven by the notion that addressing significant challenges requires humanitarian organizations to combine efforts to maximize expertise and capacities, and work closely with affected residents through a participatory neighborhood planning and consultative process. Such a process allows for informed decision making on providing safer and healthier transitional settlements while promoting disaster risk reduction (DRR) through improved land use planning and other measures. Selected activities include:

- A professionally managed, consultative, and efficient approach to rubble removal using light and heavy equipment that can maximize the effectiveness of cash-for-work activities and safeguard the property of residents
- Neighborhood upgrading, including basic site planning and community infrastructure, based on geotechnical analysis and access to safe shelters using various designs adapted to the challenges of context, such as one and two story shelters that are appropriate responses to both the constraints of dense settings and the need to minimize future risks related to flooding, wind, fire, and other hazards
- Access to basic services for water, sanitation, and hygiene at the household level and in key neighborhood locations
- Support for mainstreaming health and protection programming into the longer-term reconstruction process

USAID/OFDA is also supporting similar activities in other Port-au-Prince neighborhoods to address the profound challenges generated by the earthquake. This combined experience will likely create numerous lessons and inform future neighborhood-based response and DRR activities in urban settings.

## **USAID/OFDA CONTACT**

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