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

The USAID/OFDA Approach to Shelter and Settlements Sector Activities

GOAL: The goal of any USAID/OFDA Shelter and Settlements (S&S) activity will be occupancy of covered living space that can serve as minimally adequate shelter for disaster/crisis affected populations in an expeditious and appropriate manner.

APPROACH: USAID/OFDA emphasizes the use of market-based assessments of damage and need to better gauge impacts, resources, and opportunities in disaster/crisis affected areas. The core target group of proposed actions will be the most vulnerable among affected populations. Provision of support to this group may require technical assistance, rather than a reliance on self-help capacity.

Shelter will be adequate, habitable, safe, private, and secure, cognizant of Sphere Project and USAID/OFDA guidelines, and the related, possible need to engage in disaster risk reduction.

Where possible and appropriate, USAID/OFDA will emphasize community-based approaches and reliance on local materials and labor, to enhance prospects for sustainability, cost-effectiveness, and livelihood generation. USAID/OFDA will, therefore, support shelter sector interventions that feature a settlements approach, thereby permitting identification of, and linkages with, other sectors, particularly agriculture and food security, livelihoods, WASH, and protection.

Deployment of tents and/or pre-fabricated structures will not be considered as a default response, but will only be deployed after a field-based determination that no other shelter resources are available in affected areas, affected populations are willing to accept tents and/or pre-fabricated structures, and sufficient resources are available to support purchase and deployment costs.

Shelter sector interventions will be designed to facilitate or "jump-start" the recovery of affected populations by emphasizing transitions to the longer-term housing development process.

USAID/OFDA will also:

- Continue to integrate disaster risk reduction into S&S interventions, to include training programs where possible and appropriate, enhance prospects that interventions reduce long-term hazard risk in affected settlements
- Continue to engage with development entities such as USAID Bureaus and missions, World Bank, U.N. agencies, and the private sector to better integrate S&S activities into development policy, and
- Continue to work with other humanitarian community actors on relevant policy and technical issues to enhance organizational capacity and highlight transition concerns.

ON THE HORIZON: Upcoming S&S activities include support of a North American shelter sector network, possible support of an electronic "scrapbook" of Better Shelter Practices to provide specific, project-based information on humanitarian shelter activities, support of research on livelihood-shelter linkages, and support of research on urban displacement.

WEBSITE RESOURCES: USAID/OFDA reference material on S&S, as well as other program information, appears on-line at:

- http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/sectors/shelter.html

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SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS SECTOR UPDATE – MAY 2010

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) 2009, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$40 million in humanitarian shelter assistance and shelter-related risk reduction activities in 12 countries, compared to \$33.5 million in FY 2008. Between October 2009 and May 2010, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$81 million for shelter and settlements projects in nine countries, including Burkina Faso, Chile, El Salvador, Haiti, Indonesia, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, and Yemen. USAID/OFDA also continues to contribute to the broader shelter and settlements strategic framework within the international humanitarian community, including current support of the Sphere Project handbook revision effort.

HAITI: SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS, BUT CHALLENGES REMAIN

USAID/OFDA adopted a shelter and settlements sector strategy shortly after the devastating January 12 earthquake in Haiti, which has been the basis for development of a nearly \$77 million USAID/OFDA program. This program contributed significantly to the humanitarian community's achievement of a May 1 objective to provide some form of basic shelter assistance, primarily two pieces of plastic sheeting, to an estimated 300,000 earthquake-affected households. In addition, the program features support to more than 100,000 households with a range of activities, including transitional shelter, home repair, habitability assessments, and host family/community support. Roughly half of this effort will entail provision of transitional shelter. Although progress has been made, land availability and tenure issues are slowing the overall shelter provision effort. With conventional means of accessing land yielding limited results, a concerted effort will be needed to identify public, Diaspora, religious, and private lands to facilitate shelter provision, perhaps through land sharing agreements linked to rubble removal.

INDONESIA: POST-EARTHQUAKE PROVISION OF TRANSITIONAL SHELTER KEY TO RECOVERY OF AFFECTED SETTLEMENTS

On September 30, 2009, a magnitude 7.6 earthquake struck off the coast of West Sumatra, killing more than 1,100 people and injuring over three thousand others. Nearly 250,000 homes were damaged by the earthquake, including 114,797 assessed as heavily damaged. In response, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$4,000,000 in transitional shelter assistance, including a project for nearly 1,600 households implemented by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Walhi, a local non-governmental organization. The project featured the provision of cash grants valued at \$267 to target beneficiaries, which supplemented salvaging of building materials from damaged homes. The project is being completed on schedule and budget, and is generating Sphere-compliant shelter. In addition, nearly 75 percent of the project budget has been spent in the affected economy, which is providing a jump-start for beneficiary households and others to take charge of their own recovery.

SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS SECTOR RESOURCES

Recent activities have included organization of "Year in Review" and Haiti response workshops, publication on shelter responses to urban displacement in *Monday Developments* (October 2009) and *Humanitarian Exchange Magazine* (December 2009), and lectures, including a Skype presentation to the Incremental Housing Group at MIT (May 2010). Additional information is available at: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/sectors/shelter.html

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