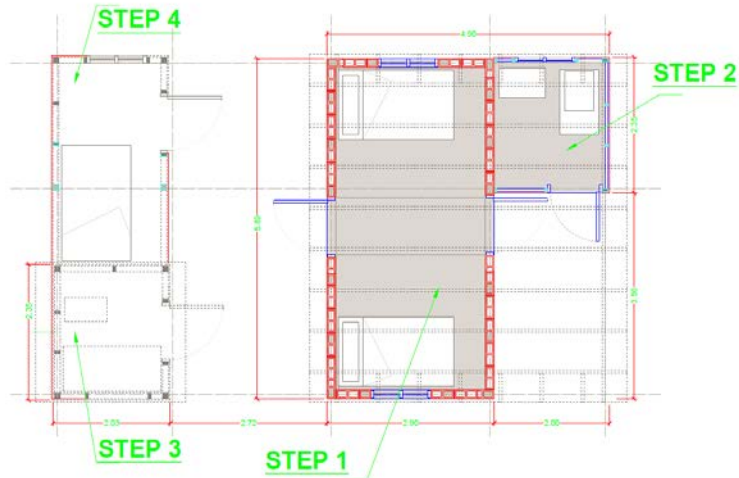


SHELTER & SETTLEMENTS SECTOR UPDATE



An illustrative design concept depicts the incremental expansion of transitional shelter into a permanent home. *Diagram courtesy of the USAID/OFDA-funded GOAL Barrio Resiliente project*

Humanitarian Shelter & Settlements Activities Around the Globe

During FY 2017, USAID/OFDA S&S advisors deployed to serve on USAID Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs), conduct field assessments, design sector strategies, and monitor project activities. Travel to disaster-affected areas often entail conducting land and housing market analyses to better understand impacts, needs, and resources, as well as engaging with affected populations, cluster lead agencies, host country institutions, and implementing partners. Following Hurricane Matthew in October 2016 and Hurricanes Irma and Maria in September 2017, S&S advisors deployed on DARTs to ensure timely shelter assistance and develop strategies that enable disaster-affected populations to Build Back Safer. S&S interventions included extensive project monitoring and hands-on trainings, as well as online, radio, text, and mobile audio programming.

In FY 2017, S&S advisors also worked closely with regional and field teams to provide guidance on sector strategies, including in Iraq, South Sudan, and Syria. Related to this work, the S&S Team reviewed more than 700 grant proposals, providing input to regional teams and implementing partners to improve both proposal and project quality (additional discussion on page 2). S&S advisors also participated in discussions with colleagues and other stakeholders in clarifying and applying USAID's policies and procedures on construction, environmental compliance, and disability. In addition, the advisors were increasingly active in engaging Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) lead agencies and actors on several priorities, including a growing focus on recovery issues and more effective promotion of the transition from humanitarian shelter to housing reconstruction. Central to nearly all efforts throughout FY 2017 was the identification of opportunities for the incorporation of DRR measures into S&S sector projects, where needed and appropriate. Finally, S&S advisors continued to participate in the research and evaluation of plastic sheeting, solar-powered lights, stoves, kitchen sets, and other non-food items, in concert with other humanitarian agencies.

Sector Overview

USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) remains at the forefront of the humanitarian community's shelter and settlements (S&S) activities, which focus on a common goal: the expeditious and appropriate provision of covered living space to adequately shelter displaced populations, while also promoting safer, healthier settlements that link emergency S&S assistance to longer-term recovery efforts.

USAID/OFDA contributes to the international humanitarian community's broader S&S strategic framework through participation in the S&S Working Group, an open membership group hosted by InterAction; the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP); and the Global Shelter and Camp Coordination and Camp Management clusters. USAID/OFDA also recently participated in the Sphere Handbook revision effort.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$122 million for S&S disaster response and disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities, including \$121.6 million for S&S interventions in 29 countries and nearly \$800,000 for global and regional S&S initiatives.

In addition, USAID/OFDA allocated more than \$4.1 million to purchase more than 10,500 rolls of plastic sheeting and more than 18,600 plastic sheeting tarpaulins—sufficient to provide emergency shelter for an estimated 123,700 households, or 618,600 people.



USAID/OFDA provided closing-off kits to help turn multi-story, unfinished commercial buildings in northern Iraq into adequate emergency shelter for displaced populations. *Photo by USAID/OFDA*

Promoting Settlements, the Setting of Humanitarian Assistance and Platform for Recovery

USAID/OFDA continues to support the Settlements Approach, which promotes integrated, multi-sector programming in defined locations. While current project activity is located primarily in the Asia and Latin America and Caribbean regions and features a “neighborhood approach” (the Settlements Approach applied to urban settings), settlements-based humanitarian assistance activities are becoming increasingly common in both disaster and conflict settings in many countries, with numerous projects and strategies now informed by the spatial framework established through this approach. As such, USAID/OFDA and the InterAction S&S Working Group co-hosted a conference on “Operationalizing the Settlements Approach” in June 2017, which focused on how humanitarian agencies can implement S&S interventions in complementarity with other sectors, such as livelihoods, protection, and water, sanitation, and hygiene. Further, the S&S Team continues to interact with GSC and Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management actors on a range of related activities at both the country and global level, including participation in the recently formed GSC Donor Advisory Group.

The S&S Team seeks to build upon the expanding application of the Settlements Approach in a number of countries by emphasizing its utility as a pre-event, DRR-based upgrading activity in high-risk urban informal settlements. The highly vulnerable populations in these hazard-prone areas will continue to experience an increasing frequency of disaster events unless efforts are implemented to address identified needs. This will require the adoption of an evidence-based, multi-sector process with participation from residents, local and national officials, the private sector, and other actors to create safer shelters and settlements. To encourage this process, the S&S Team increased engagement with some of these actors in FY 2017, funding projects to work with diaspora and private sector groups on S&S DRR activities. Plans for FY 2018 include outreach to academic, professional, and fraternal organizations.

Training and Outreach: One-Day Events, Online Courses, Presentations, and Products

Throughout FY 2017, S&S advisors presented the one-day USAID/OFDA S&S training course for both in-house staff and personnel from numerous other humanitarian organizations. The online version of the course, which launched in April 2015, is available on OFDA and USAID training platforms and is [publicly accessible](#). The course also recently became available in Spanish. FY 2018 plans include updating the course, followed by translation into other languages.

USAID/OFDA also supported the GSC’s production of the *Shelter Projects 2016-2017* publication and contributed a co-authored article in FY 2017. In addition, USAID/OFDA’s S&S Advisors worked with implementing partner J/P Haitian Relief Organization to develop a [YouTube video](#) documenting best practices in emergency shelter provision.

S&S advisors developed an informal guidance note, *Common Comments on S&S and Non-Food Item Proposals During the Fiscal Year 2017 Proposal Review Season*, based on the review of more than 700 proposals and revised proposals between April and August 2017. Several comments on proposed activities were repeated often enough during reviews to serve as the basis for the guidance note, which is intended to inform implementing partner proposal preparation efforts and improve project outcomes. The note is available [here](#).

During FY 2017, USAID/OFDA advisors discussed or presented on a multitude of S&S and DRR topics for various organizations, including national and local government officials, the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the GSC, Shelter Centre, The World Bank, InterAction, Aid and Development Summit, Johns Hopkins University, Emory University, Texas A&M University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Harvard University’s Humanitarian Academy.

Graduate Student Fellowships in S&S

USAID/OFDA awarded two graduate student fellowships in July 2017, as part of larger efforts to improve S&S sector programming, increase awareness of the sector in North America, and expand career options for S&S activities. The successful candidates—from graduate programs in civil engineering at the University of Colorado and urban studies and planning at MIT—are focusing fieldwork on post-Haiyan S&S recovery activities and local adaptations to large-scale displacement, respectively.

USAID/OFDA CONTACTS:

Peter Morris, Director, Preparedness, Strategic Planning, and Mitigation Division, pmorris@usaid.gov

Charles A. Setchell, Senior Shelter, Settlements, and Hazard Mitigation Advisor, csetchell@usaid.gov

Eddie Argenal, Shelter and Settlements Advisor, eargenal@usaid.gov

Lee Malany, Shelter and Settlements Advisor, lmalany@ofda.gov

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