

GUIDANCE NOTE

Sustainable Shelter Solutions

KISMAAYO



GUIDANCE NOTE

SUSTAINABLE SHELTER SOLUTIONS KISMAAYO



Shelter Cluster Somalia
ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter

Introduction to Sustainable Shelter Solutions

The Shelter Cluster's main target population for 2016 is restricted to internally displaced persons. The current SC strategy targets 480,000 displaced persons. The Shelter Cluster strategy has three main objectives: Emergency, Transitional and Durable Solutions. Capacity-building and a coordination component has been embedded within all of the pillars.

The Somalia Shelter Cluster (SC) has historically provided emergency assistance to newly displaced people affected by natural and human-caused disasters (e.g., flood, fire, drought, conflict and evictions). However, with the overall security situation having improved since the beginning of 2013, the cluster is placing more of an emphasis on sustainable shelter solutions for protractedly displaced persons and is moving away from ONLY lifesaving activities. As durable solutions are not achievable in all protracted situations, there is also a need to stabilize the living conditions of these communities through a sustainable approach. Transitional shelter solutions that are relevant to the displacement situation, and which take into account prevailing tenure considerations will be provided in protracted IDP settlements that have traditionally been located in and around the urban centres of Somalia. The concept of transitional shelter¹ covers all interventions from upgraded shelter kits to hybrid solutions. The typology will depend on factors including land tenure, funding levels, specific needs, agency experience, support from local authorities and location of the internally displaced persons settlements, and beneficiaries' preferences.

Sustainable shelter solutions are a strategic focus of the SC. The needs to accomplish durable solutions in rural and urban settings vary widely in the Somalia context and is challenging for long-term programming. It would be impossible in the near-term to accomplish all the criteria required to achieve durable solutions for IDPs and returnees (IDPs and refugee returnees). This is mainly due to problems related to land tenure, IDP legal rights status, and low humanitarian funding levels. The SC, as a humanitarian coordination body, focuses on sustainable shelter solutions to ensure that communities are more resilient to future shocks. Sustainable shelter approaches need to be addressed as a holistic package and need a strong integrated approach with all other sectors (e.g., water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), education, health). The Shelter Cluster has identified 7 key concepts that show that "*A shelter is more than a roof*": (1) HLP (2) Site and settlement planning (3) Owner Driven Approaches and community participation (4) Protection Mainstreaming (5) Localized Solutions (6) Building Back Safer and (7) Modalities.

¹ See definition paper on Sustainable Shelter Solutions: www.sheltercluster.org

Background and overview Kismaayo

The largest city of Jubaland is Kismaayo, which is situated on the coast near the mouth of the Juba River. The Lower and Middle Juba regions comprise the districts of Kismaayo, Jilib, Jamaame, Hagar, Afmadow, Badaadhe, Bua'ale and Sakow. They have a combined area of 1085sq Kms with a coastline of 530 Kms. The regions are bordered on the south by Kenya, on the north by the Gedo region, Bay and Lower Shabelle regions, with an estimated population of 852,228 people (Population Estimation Survey of Somalia (PESS) 2013-2014).

The IDP population in Jubaland is estimated to be 135,000 IDPs (UNHCR total IDPs per region report, September 2014). Kismaayo is believed to have the largest IDP population in the region mostly located in Farjano and Fanole areas. Recent IDPs profiling conducted by NRC indicated that there are 6,059 IDPs households in Kismaayo towns in 80 settlements. Kismaayo, the second largest city in South - central Somalia has been devastated by civil conflict, floods, famine and the prolonged presence of Al Shabaab, until October 2012.

In 2013, most IDPs in Kismaayo lived in former government buildings, or in ad-hoc temporary settlements which occupy the former government land. Some IDPs have spent over 21 years in these camps. In November 2013, the Interim Juba Administration (IJA) issued an eviction order to occupants of public property in Kismaayo and approximately 23 IDP settlements (2,578 Households) were affected. The evictions were deemed necessary by the administration due to lack of space for public facilities and the evictees were not allocated any substitute land or shelter, but were to receive cash compensation from the IJA. Recurrent clan conflicts, rampant evictions, minimal humanitarian assistance, the embargo of charcoal business by the United Nations and also local ban by Al Shabaab, minimal income sources and high unemployment rate have interrupted the livelihood sources, weakened resilience and coping mechanisms of especially IDPs. Kismaayo experienced heavy rains in June 2014 which affected most IDPs in Kismaayo, the IJA provided land for IDPs at Dalxiiska area for temporary for those hardest affected by the flooding . More than 2,000 families were relocated with the help of humanitarian organizations in the region. IDPs in Kismaayo are mostly from Lower Shabelle, Middle and Lower Juba, Banadir, Gedo and Bay. The majority of the IDPS are of Bantu origin.

Since 2014 (correct date?), the Juba administration has worked closely together with the Shelter cluster and partner organizations in securing more longer term land tenure solutions. In a first pilot project, ARC had received permanent land in an area called Dhagax Jabinta. Although communities were involved in the location of the site and the typology of the shelter, many IDPs eventually felt un-safe to move there due to multiple reasons: lack of basic services (latrines, school, health...), proximity of the presidential palace, salty water-points and distance to the town for livelihoods opportunities. After many consultations, the shelters were transferred to areas where the IDPs felt safe due to their clan affiliation, in existing settlements closer to town. They were also able to negotiate 5 year land tenure solutions with the host community.

Improved understanding and advocacy of Land Tenure (HLP)

Housing, Land and Property is an overarching thematic of the Protection Cluster and has taken a strong leadership in 2015 to get all relevant actors working together in better understanding the under-lying reasons behind land tenure. This has been translated in an active working group.

The lack of access to housing, land and property rights (as well as insecurity of tenure) is major obstacle to more sustainable solutions to displacement. As a result, increasing forced evictions are likely to further rise as the security situation stabilizes, urbanization continues, land values rise, and foreign and domestic investment increases. There remains an urgent need for improved

transitional and permanent shelters that offer more protection, privacy and dignity over longer periods of time; this in turn requires improved security of tenure that Shelter and Protection clusters are striving to enhance.

Most land in Somalia is privately owned. Dominant clans control land and are often hesitant or unwilling to sell land to outsiders or members of other clans. Lack of access to land and insecurity of tenure are major obstacles to durable solutions and represent a root problem that must be addressed in order to affect change. In urban areas of Somalia, evictions are common and likely to increase as the security situation stabilizes, urbanization continues, and foreign and domestic investment increases. Rural-urban migration and growing urbanisation add their own complexity to the situation, as these are global phenomena in developing countries that need to be taken into account. The Protection is leading the HLP working group in Somalia and

The SC uses the concept of due diligence as a standard for all sustainable shelter solutions decisions pertaining to Housing, Land, and Property (HLP). This concept requires shelter actors to: (1) achieve as much legal certainty about land rights as is reasonable, given the context and constraints on resources and time; and (2) reduce, as much as possible, the risk that the construction of shelter causes or contributes to increasing tensions and conflicts around land; and (3) avoid future eviction of the beneficiaries.

In the Kismaayo setting, it will be important to continue to advocate to government counterparts for longer term land tenure solutions, but nevertheless taking into consideration the community's voice in the decision making process. Land looking at local integration should take the following recommendations:

- Commitment from the government to provide permanent (and individual) land title deeds.
- Joint decision with the IDPs to see if the land would be suitable to them, taking into consideration security, distance to town, access to services...
- Discussions with the host community that is surrounding the relocation site and looking at peace-building processes (for example sharing of local resources that could be used for shelter and housing construction).
- Sufficient space for communal services (schools, health/community centre, water points, roads...)
- Agreed minimal living space for household members (Sphere standards state 45m² per person in relocation sites, and 3.5m² per person for housing).
- **PLEASE COMPLEMENT**

Improved understanding of Localized Solutions, Building Back Safer and Owner Driven approaches

Linked to the move toward owner-driven approaches and community participation is the concept of **localized shelter solutions** for transitional and permanent shelter. This concept prioritizes the local building practices and materials in shelter construction. The assumption is that local communities know best what materials work for their local environment, what shelter design is most appropriate for the culture and climactic context, and how to maintain shelters built in these ways. The role of the SC is to use localized solutions as a foundation upon which to provide technical and financial support for the highest quality and most appropriate shelter possible. Community participation and ownership are underlying themes that are embedded in all cluster activities, with a strong focus on shifting away from contractor-driven to owner-driven approaches.

A key concept to ensuring sustainable shelter solutions are, indeed, sustainable is that of **building back safer**. Often when vulnerable groups are displaced and decide to settle in a new location, resources and knowledge are limited to ensure that the new shelter is resistant to future natural

hazards. When SC partners employ the concept of building back safer, they are ensuring that households and communities understand how to be prepared, find a safe location to build, consider the house's shape and position when constructing the shelter, build a strong foundation, tie-down the structure from the bottom-up, include bracing, form strong joints, and construct a strong roof. The SC advocates that building back safer be integrated into all SC partner designs. More information can also be found on the training pages on the sheltercluster.org.

In the Somalia context, contractor-driven approaches have been the preferred labour assistance method due to difficult access, clan-based tensions, political support, availability of skilled labour and existing capacity. Since the beginning of 2011 in Somalia, there has been a step-by-step approach to increase the inclusion of the beneficiaries in all parts of the process, from the project set-up until the construction itself and the handover. In **an owner driven approach**, the prioritization of needs and the decision-making are in the hands of the affected families, giving them ownership of their project. Owner driven does not imply that the affected family should provide construction labour, but it requires that they manage the reconstruction with technical assistance. Owner driven projects are defined by three fundamental requirements: (1) participatory process of decision-making, (2) adequate technical support, and (3) adequate financial assistance.

Specifically for the Kismaayo (and other Somali) context, it has been very difficult to promote the use of local materials, like mud and soil blocks. This has been due to different reasons:

- In the past, land tenure was a major hurdle to provide longer term solutions to the IDPs. All IDP settlements were located on public land and have faced a constant threat of evictions. Evictions have also been triggered (mainly in Mogadishu, but also in Kismaayo) by Somali diaspora returning and investing in their former properties. Due to the eviction threats and weak land tenure agreements, the most logical choice regarding Transitional shelter is the Corrugated Iron Sheet house (CGI) as it is resalable, moveable and easy to construct.
- Government stakeholders see the use of mud as a low-technology and lesser qualitative construction material. There is a general (worldwide) perception that earth construction is less durable than more modern technologies like the cement block, reinforced concrete, inter-stabilised soil blocks,... Nevertheless, earth has been used as a construction material for more than 6000 years and is used worldwide to create low-cost housing possibilities.
- The traditional housing structure is called the Carish (spelling?). Sadly enough the Carish is a wattle and daub construction that uses a lot of local sticks. If this technique would be used at large scale, it could have a destructive force on the surrounding environment.
- There is a mis-perception of the link in-between local building culture and owner driven approaches. An owner driven construction does not mean that the beneficiary needs to provide labour for free. An owner driven construction includes the cost for labour. If this would not be included, you would be depriving the household of his only source of income (which could be begging, working as a casual labourer, working in the port...). If the labour cost would not be included, you would be doing more harm by taking away the only livelihood that the beneficiary has. For example: *The cost of a CGI shelter is similar to the cost of an adobe block construction (on average). Nevertheless, in the case of the CGI, the materials would add up to 80% of the costs while in an adobe construction, the non-locally resourced materials would add up to only 30% of the cost, while 70% would be invested in local labour markets like making the sun dried bricks, masonry construction, plastering of the walls, collection of soil mortar...*
- **PLEASE COMPLEMENT**

Recommendation: pilot design in Kismaayo

The Shelter Cluster is suggesting to work with all Shelter partners in Somalia and the government counterparts to come up with a better understanding of the above mentioned topics: land tenure, localized solutions and owner driven approaches. The Shelter Cluster suggests to organize a technical working group in Kismaayo to address these issues with a strong leadership of the Juba administration.

The following work-plan and work flow has been suggested:

- Advocacy to the government how humanitarian donors can support local integration projects and sustainable shelter solutions. *Humanitarian donors are not immediately interested in funding permanent shelter. They are willing to contribute to sustainable (or durable) solutions, but they always take into account value for money. By putting too high standards on humanitarian partners/donors, could have a reverse effect on the funding levels for shelter projects looking at longer term solutions.*
- Advocacy for land tenure and peaceful coexistence with the host community lead by the Protection Cluster in close collaboration with the Shelter Cluster:
 - Organize meetings and field visits with community committees and leaders to discuss the location of the relocation site to ensure that they are part of the decision making process.
 - Facilitate discussions with host communities on the relocation site and what consequences it could have for them.
 - Organize meetings with government stakeholders, host communities and IDP communities to discuss on the use of local resources at the relocation site and ensure an equitable approach that benefits both host and IDP communities.
- Localized solutions
 - Pilot three to four different typologies (of same cost) to give choice to the beneficiaries on the different construction techniques. It will be important to give the beneficiaries an informed choice, meaning giving them a choice that has a same financial value. *For example: do not compare a 20m2 CGI house with a 20m2 ISSB (Interlocking Stabilized Soil Blocks) as the cost of both is different. You can compare a 40m2 CGI house with a 16m2 ISSB structure as they are of the same size.*
 - For this pilot, it will be important from the start to agree with all stakeholders on the amount that we can easily advocate for through humanitarian donors taking into account ‘value for money’. This will help to advocate to humanitarian donors to provide support in the initial stage for durable solutions, while getting the more development actors on board to complement the activities of the humanitarians.
 - The following typologies can provide some ideas to kick off the discussion, but it will be necessary to adapt these to the situation in Kismaayo and to the local market. Remember, the cost of all prototypes should be the same and should provide the beneficiaries with an informed choice. For more information on the typologies see the sheltercluster.org website and the new Strategic Operating Framework.
 - CGI shelter with improved foundation: The government has asked to change the typology of the CGI due to its un-suitability to the climate and living.
 - Adobe block building (with adobe foundations): this also should be a cheaper version like nr 1
 - Adobe block building with improved foundation: this typology will be smaller than nr 1 and 2 as the cement in the foundation will cost more.
 - Hybrid shelter (like Puntland); proper foundation, cement block walls (1m high) and upper structure of (ply) wood that can be re-used later as inner walling or a ceiling.
 - Carish I don't think we want to promote this one due to environmental impact.

