

Promoting Safer Building Working Group

January Workshop – Activity Report

21st January 2021
Online



The Promoting Safer Building Working Group met on 21st January 2021 online. The workshop was attended by several NGOs, international organisations, researchers from universities and independent consultants. The aims of the workshop were:

1. Updates on Working Group activities and progress
2. Update on the GCRF Translations self-recovery project
3. Workshop on Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning for shelter self-recovery projects

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1. Workshop Agenda

| # | Session | Time |
|---|---|-------------|
| | Welcome | 1000 – 1010 |
| 2 | PSB Working Group Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● IOM Shelter Compendium Project update (Joseph Ashmore, IOM) ● GCRF Translations Project Updates (www.self-recovery.org) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self-Recovery Protocol (Sonia Molina /Olivier Moles, CRAterre) - Malawi testing and webinar series ○ Self-recovery Guidance development - Part A and next steps (Beth Simons, CARE) ○ CRS replication study (Lorenza Esquinca, CRS) ○ Miscellaneous GCRF updates | 1010 – 1100 |
| 3 | Introductory discussion to self-recovery guidance workshop – Monitoring and Evaluation of Shelter Self-Recovery Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MEAL approaches to consider (Meave Murphy, CARE) ● Iterative shelter programming (Eugénie Crété CRAterre) | 1100 - 1140 |
| | <i>Break</i> | 1140 - 1155 |
| 4 | Breakout Rooms Rotation 1 | 1155 - 1235 |
| | <i>Lunch</i> | 1235 - 1315 |
| 5 | Breakout Rooms Rotation 2 | 1315 - 1355 |
| | <i>Break</i> | 1355 - 1400 |
| 6 | Breakout Rooms Rotation 3 | 1400 - 1440 |
| | <i>Break</i> | 1440 - 1455 |
| 7 | Feedback & discussion | 1455 - 1550 |
| 8 | Closing comments and next steps | 1550 - 1600 |

2. List of Participants

- **CARE International:** Bill Flinn, Step Haiselden, James Morgan, Meave Murphy, Vicky Murtagh, Amelia Rule, Beth Simons, Emma Weinstein-Sheffield
- **CENDEP:** Charles Parrack, Sue Webb
- **Consultants:** Rob Fielding
- **CRAterre-AE&CC:** Eugénie Crété, Florie Dejeant, Olivier Moles, Enrique Sevillano Gutiérrez.
- **CRS:** Lorenza Esquinca
- **German Red Cross:** Sonia Molina Metzger
- **HRRP:** Minar Thapa Magar, Rupesh Shrestha
- **IFRC:** Pablo Medina
- **IOM:** Mohammed Abdelmoneim, Joseph Ashmore, Laura Heykoop
- **Open University:** Lizzie Babister
- **ShelterBox:** Malcolm Shead
- **University College London:** Lucila Carbonell

3. Working Group Updates

a. IOM IEC Project

Joseph Ashmore, IOM (Geneva) provided an update on the IEC Material Compendium project which aims to collate, review and store IEC in a searchable online database. 30,000 initial files were collected which underwent two rounds of filtering to remove duplicates, irrelevant file types, photographs, and any file not within the scope of the project. 700 files remain, of which 30 reviewers assessed 200 key IECs against criteria including technical accuracy, clarity, adaptability, and chance of unintended harm.

An overview publication of the compendium has been drafted and includes 9 case studies and opinion pieces on topics including politics of developing IEC materials, the impact of different communication channels and accessible and inclusive IEC material. During review of the IECs and compilation of the publication, it was noted that there are very few evaluations testing the effectiveness of IECs and very few IECs are tested with communities themselves, before being distributed. The IEC compendium website is coming soon at IEC.sheltercluster.org.

b. The Self-Recovery Protocol – Malawi testing and webinar series

Sonia Molina (Consultant) and Olivier Moles (CRAterre) updated the group on ongoing work testing the [Self-Recovery Protocol](#) in Malawi. The Protocol consists of seven steps after formation of a TWiG, to (1) establish the shelter context, (2) define IEC scope, (3) identify stakeholders, (4) determine communications pathways, (5) develop messaging, (6) define roll-out strategy and (7) MEL frameworks.

Since September, a rapid KAP (Knowledge Attitudes and Practice) survey based on the extended context analysis (step 1) is under development. Tools relating to steps 2-4 have been piloted locally by CRS/CADECOM with workshops held on Step 3 in November and December. The Protocol process has been scaled from the local pilot with CRS/CADECOM to the national level through the TWiG and testing has commenced with Step 2.

As part of scaling-up the Self-Recovery Protocol, a series of webinars from January to April on understanding and using the tools from the Protocol are upcoming. These webinars are informed from the ongoing piloting of the tools in Malawi. The webinars are open to anyone who wishes to learn more about the Protocol, please contact Olivier for more information (olivier.moles@neuf.fr).

c. Shelter Self-Recovery Guidance

Beth Simons (CARE International) provided an update on the Shelter Self-Recovery Guidance development. The 'Overview' and 'Part A: Shelter Self-Recovery Explained' sections are almost drafted and contain an overview of the guidance, how and when to use the document and outline key self-recovery concepts. 'Part B: Shelter Self-Recovery Programming' is structured like a programme cycle and informed by the guidance workshops on Context Analysis (April 2020), Implementation (September 2020), with the MEAL section to be outlined from this meeting. Links to existing tools, such as the Protocol, have been included and people will be contacted to input their case studies to help illustrate recommendations or common pitfalls to avoid. For more information on the guidance, please contact Beth Simons at CARE (simons@careinternational.org).

d. Replication study in Malawi

Lorenza Esquinca, CRS, updated the working group on the planned replication study in Malawi by CRS. This study follows on from the [Extending Impact](#) work which investigated the choices people made during

reconstruction and how people might be encouraged to adopt hazard-resistant construction practices of their own accord. Factors such as access to resources and perceived risk were influential in behaviour change and adoption of DRR measures, including in communities who were not direct beneficiaries.

The new study aims to determine awareness of housing risks and factors influencing adoption of DRR measures caused by rain and floods for communities who have been involved in CRS shelter recovery programmes in Malawi, as well as those who have not. Physical building assessments will gather information on housing design, existing DRR features, construction methods and health issues such as ventilation and vector control. Household surveys will then investigate people's experience of hazards and receiving shelter assistance alongside factors impacting their decision-making during reconstruction.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) for Shelter Self-Recovery projects

a. Introduction

Following on from the last working group guidance workshops on context analysis and implementation, this workshop focussed on MEAL approaches for shelter self-recovery projects. As supporting shelter self-recovery is people-led as a principle, MEAL practices should therefore seek to be people-led. This means a potential divergence from pre-determining programme goals and measuring outputs, towards one working with communities to set goals and successes. As community priorities and plans change during recovery, programmes need to consider how best to monitor changes and adapt accordingly.

b. MEAL approaches to consider

Meave Murphy, MEAL Advisor (Inclusive Governance) at CARE International UK introduced several different approaches that could be considered for shelter self-recovery for discussion in the workshop. A link to Meave's presentation and additional MEAL resources can be found [here](#).

Adaptive Management programme design builds in mechanisms for learning and evidence-based adaptation throughout the programme. This style of management links to self-recovery as it accounts for shifting contexts and changing priorities for communities, whilst also developing learning about what is working in a particular context and why. Adaptive programmes require flexible budgets, milestones, and targets, along with strong monitoring and learning systems.

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) is a collection of MEAL approaches that support people with analysing their own situations, rather than having it analysed by outsiders. Tools, such as community hazard mapping, daily routine diagrams and ranking exercises can be used to determine programme indicators of success at outcome level. PLA approaches emphasise active participation of all groups and recognises that people have different challenges and priorities.

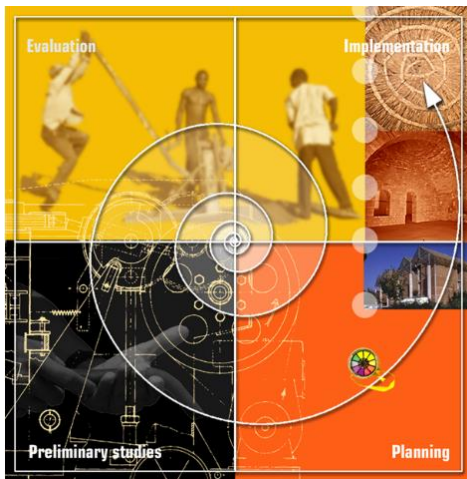
The **Community Score Card (CSC)** is a two-way, ongoing tool for assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation that aims to positively influence the quality and accountability with which services are provided. Whilst not typically applied to shelter, community-based networks, like committees, score services provided by an organisation or identify issues within their communities. The information can be used to identify gaps and improve services or create an enabling environment for activities.

Outcome Mapping (OM) is a participatory planning method used at the start of programmes. Working with communities to understand their priorities, OM helps programme design be specific about who and / or what it intends to target, the changes it hopes to see and the activities appropriate to achieve these.

OM does not seek to show direct attribution for change from a single source, so is appropriate for programmes where there might be multiple inputs.

Most Significant Change (MSC) involves the collection and selection of personal stories of change. It is most useful in contexts where it can be difficult to predict with any certainty what the outcome of a programme will be and outcomes vary widely across beneficiaries, like shelter self-recovery. MSC is used for monitoring and / or evaluation and gathers stories from communities about changes during the programme. These are then collated, and people select the most significant changes collectively.

c. Iterative monitoring and evaluation of flexible programmes – food for thought



Eugénie Crété (CRAterre) provided some thoughts on iterative monitoring and flexible programming. Eugénie outlined how use of a **project spiral** logframe (see left) starting with smaller scale activities, testing, evaluating, and defining new actions can support a flexible approach, reviewing and adjusting as new information is obtained and the context evolves. Spiral, rather than linear thinking, encourages continual upscaling, as lessons learned, and approaches identified can be replicated.

Flexible approaches differ from current practices. They commit strongly to goals, values, approaches, and methodologies, rather than specific activities to achieve results, and are focussed more on **outcomes** than outputs. For example, a project goal could become supporting people to access a home, rather than a focus on the number of houses

constructed.

There can be challenges with iterative approaches. Other stakeholders may misinterpret flexible approaches as unreliable or time wasting as it might be perceived the same activities are repeated. Clear communication about the approach is required with all stakeholders, including donors, alongside strong tracking mechanisms in place to record decisions made and the reasons why. Monitoring and evaluation in flexible programmes is more challenging. Causality links are difficult to prove without delivery of a product and establish to what extent support effectively contributed to changes in self-recovery situations. Additionally, appropriate indicators vary and may not match other stakeholders or projects.

Ultimately, flexible approaches are strongly connected with **accountability** by working to listen to the views of communities, influence project design and implementation modalities. These approaches are more participatory, holistic, based on learning from people and adapted to local contexts whilst promoting people taking responsibility for their self-recovery. They allow for **continual upscaling** and learning throughout self-recovery and support recovery from early recovery to longer term development objectives.

b. Summary of discussion tables

The virtual flipcharts developed on each table are summarised below and found in the appendices.

Community-led MEAL

In the previous workshop, people discussed how community-led implementation is well aligned to the self-recovery agenda. This is true for MEAL – whilst there may be a need to still have organisational approaches, there are many aspects of MEAL that could be led (e.g. working collaboratively to set goals) or implemented (e.g. community accompaniment teams) by people from the communities in which we

work. There are challenges with understanding communities, particularly in urban contexts, and ensuring there is sufficient trust and communication to ensure people are embedded in MEAL processes from the start of a programme. Care needs to be taken to not perpetuate exclusion of marginalised groups.

Use of tools such as PASSA, MSC and outcome harvesting were suggested as being appropriate for self-recovery. Whilst it was acknowledged that people-led MEAL is likely to identify more approaches that work with local capacities and are possibly more accountable due to being more relevant, there are challenges with managing expectations and ensuring that the basics of MEAL are not forgotten.

Measuring success and the wider impacts of shelter

Measures of success in shelter programmes are often limited to outputs, such as the number of houses reconstructed, or people receiving construction training. Additionally, the wider impacts of shelter are often not considered or anticipated. Workshop participants identified a number of possible indicators that could act as proxy indicators for recovery, such as beautifying homes, that could be co-developed with communities to understand shelter self-recovery. There were suggestions that stronger recording of indicators relating to linked sectors, for example addition of ventilation measures (health), or impact on policy, could better support the “wider impacts of shelter” narrative.

Challenges relating to minimal baseline data and differing understandings of success by different stakeholders were mentioned by workshop participants. It was thought that approaches such as Most Significant Change (MSC), outcome harvesting and obtaining feedback through alternative means, such as WhatsApp, could support a better understanding of success to different people within communities. Questions of scale and coverage of more intensive evaluation approaches were raised, and the lack of long-term evaluations to provide a complete picture of recovery.

Monitoring and making programme changes

As shelter self-recovery may change through time according to people’s capacities, plans and priorities, there is a need to use strong monitoring tools and apply adaptive or flexible programme management. There are different possible levels that may be monitored differently at different timescales with differing purposes, for example: access to resources, technical learning, activities, and evaluations to understand outcome or change. Workshop participants came to the consensus that monitoring who might not be able to recover and why through mechanisms like community meetings and understanding communication and uptake of safer building practice was valuable for self-recovery. Monitoring changes in external factors, such as policy changes that impact housing (e.g. new building regulations), can inform whether changes are needed to programmes.

Workshop participants noted that often people adapt their programmes. However, more could be done to build flexibility into proposals, for example through allowing pivot points in programme schedules to ensure this is a foundation of the approach, rather than a forced action. Inclusion of participatory planning or monitoring methods within activities at the proposal stage and use of tools such as MSC, community action planning and seasonal timelines can help understand the factors influencing self-recovery and understand where programmes might need to be adapted.

c. Themes emerging

Across the different groups, some key themes kept emerging that should be considered for the Shelter Self-Recovery Guidance and for further exploration:

Change in mindset: It was considered across all virtual tables that a change in mindset – ourselves, donors, and governments – was important in adapting shelter MEAL processes to support self-recovery. Ensuring that MEAL processes and resources are consistent throughout a programme, rather than being

seen as an end of programme process was also another mindset. Alongside changes in mindset, there was discussion of changes in language. Changing terminology to reflect focus on capacities and moving from “measuring success” to “understanding successes” were identified as important for the guidance.

Barriers to self-recovery MEAL can be numerous and may relate to funding structures, government and community expectations, perceived time pressures, limited resources for MEAL, in common with barriers identified for self-recovery context analyses. The guidance should acknowledge these barriers but provide support on how to navigate. Aligning the self-recovery approach with global agendas, such as the nexus dynamic and localisation, could support people in advocating for additional resources and trying new approaches.

Multi-disciplinary teams: The “more than just a roof” phrase is established in the sector but there is still a need to better understand and document the wider impacts of shelter programming. There is value in broadening team skillsets to include social scientists who may bring perspectives on MEAL approaches such as outcome harvesting and MSC.

Honesty, trust and transparency: Managing expectations of communities, donors, governments, and other stakeholders is paramount. Being transparent and realistic about support modalities with communities is important. Appropriate communication mechanisms and recording of decisions during iterative programmes are important to ensure transparency and accountability.

Scale: As with context analyses, how best to scale and avoid capturing small scale successes and challenges? Ensuring consistency and scale people-centred approaches may be a challenge and due to the process of self-recovery differing for each person, it is also difficult to measure.

Cash: Cash has been a major theme of all of the self-recovery workshops. For MEAL, understanding the role of access to finance and additional resources from the diaspora were two factors suggested as being key for monitoring in self-recovery programmes. Understanding how and why people spend their cash in multi-purpose cash programmes as part of programme monitoring was considered key to better understanding people’s plans and priorities. This could also support identifying challenges to shelter recovery outside of our sector.

Donors: Donors and their often-rigid structures have been a topic of all workshops. For MEAL, iterative approaches and programmes that have alternative indicators could be a challenge. Piloting smaller projects to strengthen the case for flexible approaches was considered as a method for advocacy with donors over additional support for more iterative programming. Taking the opportunity with smaller projects to pilot different aspects of MEAL to use as evidence to support a change was considered important; showing the value of different approaches could lead to widespread change.

5. The way forward

a. Possible ways forward and aspects to include in the guidance

The workshop participants provided several ideas for inclusion in the self-recovery guidance:

- **Participatory MEAL approaches** such as those presented (section 4b) could be useful for self-recovery with suggestions of how they could be adapted for humanitarian contexts, where appropriate.
- **Advocate for flexible programming** through using examples, dispelling myths and highlighting the accountability of the approach.
- Consideration of **alternative feedback mechanisms** such as messaging services and community scorecards, moving beyond the feedback box.

- Consideration of **alternative indicators** reflecting wider impacts and community goals.
- Keep it simple and don't forget the MEAL basics – explain new approaches and why they are important for self-recovery.
- Highlight the importance of MEAL processes by including throughout the guidance and not as a standalone section on MEAL at the end.
- **Case studies** to support learning, including:
 - o Examples where programmes have used participatory MEAL processes
 - o Case studies that include programme adaptations and the challenges faced
 - o Examples from development that could be adapted.
- Reiterate that shelter self-recovery is not an excuse for doing nothing or simplifying programming, but is effective and efficient, and support people's current actions (and is therefore relevant).

Further testing is required to see whether these approaches can work – exploring a **hybrid model** of typical donor-driven shelter indicators relating to outputs and those more linked to community goals could be an approach to consider. Seeking out people who are applying approaches such as MSC, outcome mapping and community scorecards in humanitarian contexts would be beneficial for learning. **Does the sector need a working group to work on different approaches to shelter MEAL?**

Additionally, for the self-recovery “donor guidance”, which is designed to be a summary of self-recovery approaches, participants considered the following should be highlighted:

- Need for flexible MEAL approaches tailored to community priorities and plans.
- Need for flexible funding to adapt to changing contexts.
- The wider impacts of shelter, and how this might differ from person to person.

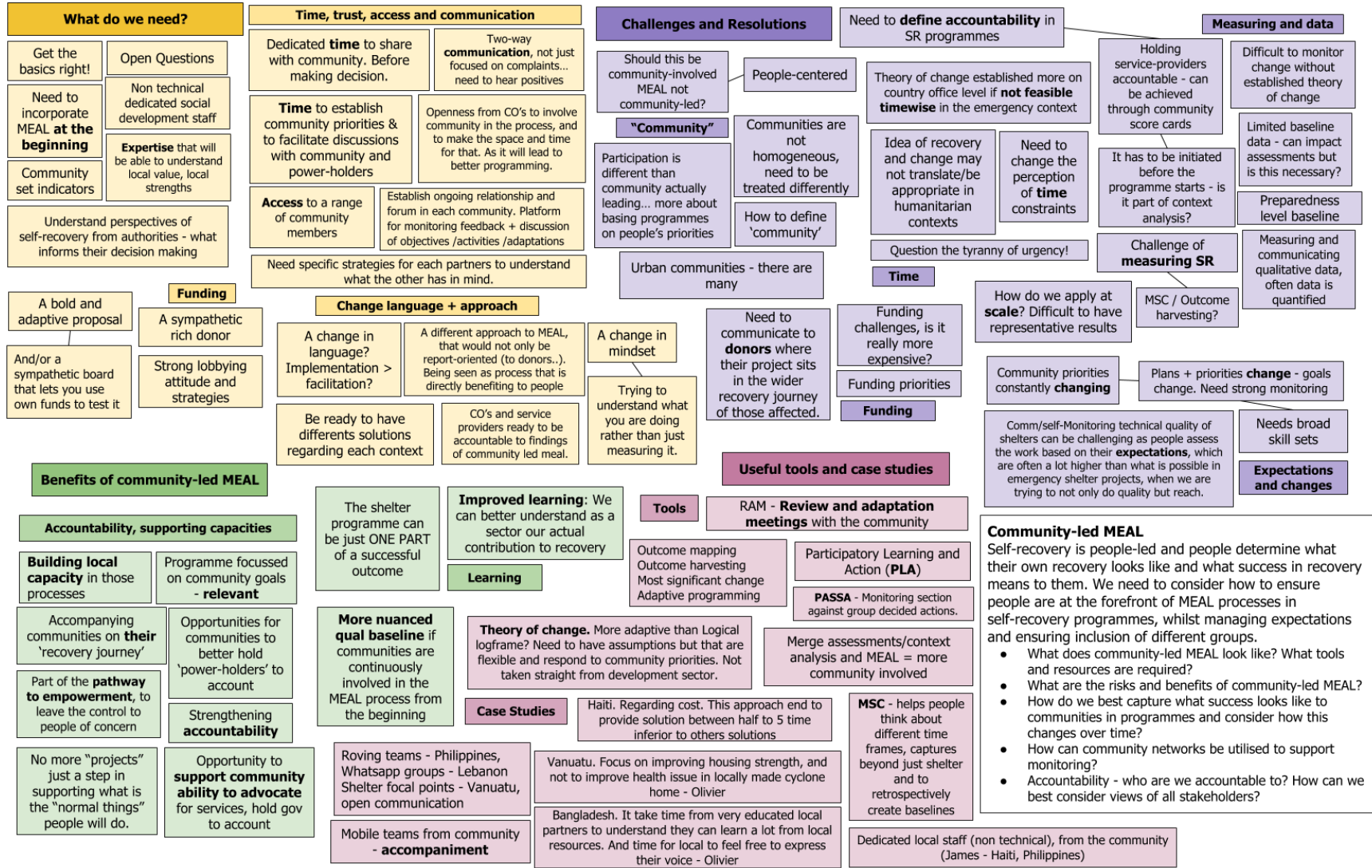
b. Actions

- We would like to have more participants from outside of Europe contributing to the discussions, informing working group activities and guidance development. If anyone has any ideas (other than holding meetings at a different time, which we are aware limits people's participation), please get in touch
 - o **Action: Ideas to CARE / CRAterre please.**
- If you have a case study that you would like to contribute to the self-recovery guidance, or any ideas of tools that would be useful, please contribute. Case studies can be anonymised or written in such a way that agencies, and the crisis, are not identified.
 - o **Action: Please contact Emma (Weinstein-sheffield@careinternational.org) at CARE International with input.**
- Next meeting date: TBC

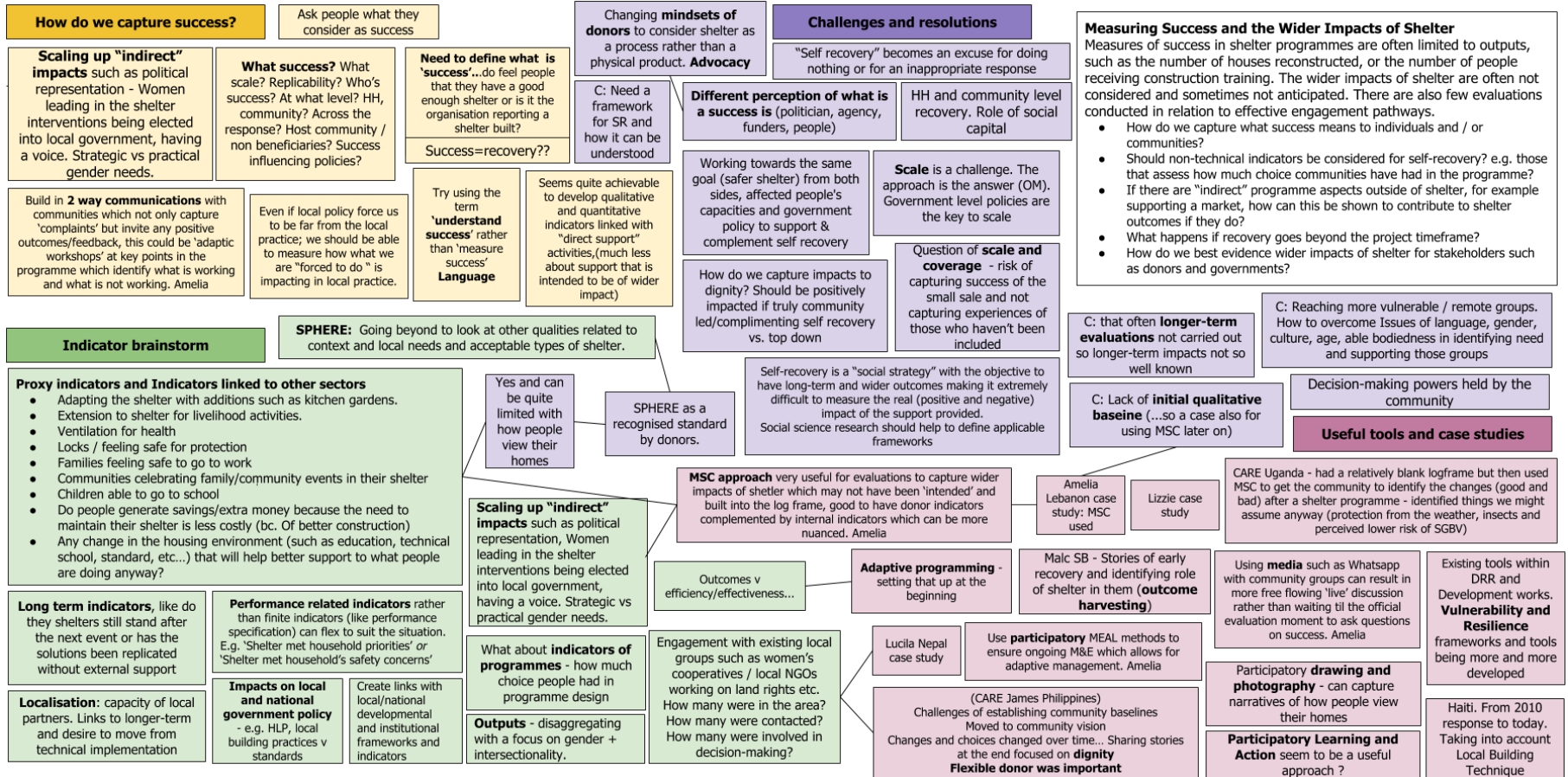
Appendices

Please see the following pages for the virtual flipcharts developed during the workshop.

Community-led MEAL table flipchart



Measuring success and the wider impacts of shelter table flipchart



Monitoring and making programme changes table flipchart

