



## SETTLEMENTS' APPROACH

# Tacloban local Consultation

Tacloban, Philippines  
November 2019

USWG

Urban  
Settlements  
Working Group



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## Urban Settlement Working Group

Tacloban field consultation

26<sup>th</sup> November 2019

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### Event details / Participants

A consultation in Tacloban was held on the afternoon of Tuesday 26 November 2019. The consultation followed 4 days of field visits to several NGO projects and provided an opportunity for humanitarian and development agencies implementing shelter projects to discuss the application of the settlements approach in their own programming, including the programmatic implications, challenges, successes and lessons. The consultation also allowed USWG co-chairs to outline the work of the USWG undertaken to date, including:

- The USWG case study compendium
- The development of the settlement-approach guidance notes, and
- The application of the approach in different contexts – including Iraq, CAR and the Philippines.

Approximately 18 participants joined the 3-hour consultation, with representation from NGOs, International Organisations, local government, the RCRC Movement, and donors. See annex 1 for a participant list. The event started with a preliminary presentation of the Wider Impacts of S&S Assistance by InterAction.

### Shelter & Settlements Impact Research Report:

The report aims to provide an initial review of information that exists on the evidence of the impact of providing shelter and settlements assistance. To establish the impacts of shelter and settlements assistance, the following research questions were asked:

- What information exists that shelter and settlements assistance has an impact on other sectors/themes?
- What correlations are there between this sector/theme and shelter?
- How has the provision of shelter/housing assistance had an impact on this sector/theme (both positive and negative)?

(Since the consultation the report has been completed, and [available here](#))

### Key points from the presentation included:

- To realize the multi-sectoral implications of shelter – shelter must be connected to entire community infrastructure. The report may be useful in advocating for better shelter and settlements funding/investment and collective advocacy.
- Housing vs. Lifesaving: No major research done on the role of emergency shelter in saving lives and a **direct correlation between shelter and saved lives is hard to make. However, some work in Nigeria shows the impact of adequate shelter in infant mortality.**
- Fewer evidence **on how Shelter and Settlements can shorten recovery time, while noting** word “recovery” means different things to academics and humanitarians.

- Participants commented that understanding the links between livelihood and shelter would enable us to invigorate markets, livelihoods and income as well as better tailor programs to achieve those goals.
- Several questions centered around the difference between shelter and housing impacts as well as contextual differences. These concerns will be addressed in the report. (eg. Impact of cement floors vs. transitional/emergency shelter)
- Additional concern of generalization of impact is the duration of any transitional/emergency shelter (construction period and 'product-live')
- An example is 3.5m<sup>2</sup>. We need better evidence to convince practice. But others argued, **even if minimum standards are not met, people are still better off** – need to consider the source, emergency context etc.

## Settlement Approaches – Introduction

- Comes from a community based urban planning realm – using a DRR lens as well
- USWG w/in GSC – came out of many conferences, attempt to tackle within existing humanitarian architecture
- The approach is multi sectoral, considers whole population, focus on specific geographic area, high level of need
- The presentation is very similar to regional and country presentations held in BKK and MNL.

## Discussion and comment:

- **Where does the national Government come in?** How do you tackle **coordination issues?** Our intentions may be constrained by national structures. The guidance must include national level involvement and **should recognize national structure is some way (including regional and local Government as well).**
- *Plan International presentation on neighborhood approach (ABA project):* NIT and MOU with barangay was completed. Plan and city Government agreed and everyone's responsibility mapped out. This is more of an idea of "social contract" to complete 364 full houses and transitional shelters with:
  - 5 years lease
  - Community mortgage program
  - Agreements with landowners to allow informal settlers to rent/offer to buy (secure tenure)

## Discussion on Settlement Approaches – is the approach important/relevant for a city like Tacloban (TAC)?

- It has to do w/ resources – an example is some donors only want to fund shelter and not WASH, livelihoods, protection etc. We need flexible multi-year funding and longer duration. **Resources are a major challenge!**
- The challenge of local and national structures: It's really a challenge to provide for holistic needs of populations. National Housing Authority (NHA) had drawn up a **Resettlement Action Plan** and has been working w LGUs on drafting and implementation. We don't have strong coordination w LGUs re basic service provision as there are many different POCs. **A lack of continuity in LGU leads to overlapping, duplication or scarcity of programming.**
- City gov, regional agencies, councils etc. (DPWH, DSWD also private sectors) – ALL must be involved in the planning process.
- **LGU is most important because of eventual transfer of program**
- National response coordination mechanism – ICS (Incident Command System) must be aware of these.
- Orgs implement programs based on current cluster approach. Organizations specialize in certain sectors, such as shelter, protection, WASH etc. Some in a few sectors. We really need cross sector discussion and partnership, and a functioning central command system like ICS.
- Registering with ICS, or other Govt. entity could get you what you need to know (baseline, demographic, economic data)
- **Private sector to better understand humanitarian space, do no harm etc.**

- **ICS is for first response and the cluster system/cluster coordination mechanism fits w/in that BUT as emergencies become protracted, ICS fades away and we get into siloed sector response.**
- TAC city context had an opportunity to be highly functional and effective but there are a lot of actors.
- Question about the timing of Settlement Approaches? **When do you implement – in emergency phase? Secondary phase? Also need to demonstrate effectiveness of the approach compared to other approaches:** Hilmi: A technical advisor (focused on multi-sectoral, settlements level planning) at the onset of a disaster could help with a strategy. **We need to figure out how to make this approach more appealing to local governments, who have a vested interest in area-based development.**
- Does Settlement Approaches mean we need to be prepared to do everything? **How holistic is holistic enough?** Or does it just mean we need to be better at coordination – ie making sure other agencies are involved? – Seki: Not exactly prepared to do everything – **just a greater sense of accountability to local population.** I.e. determine what people need in certain areas – that is what they should get and if you can't do it, make sure you advocate for it to someone else to do it. At the city scale, yes, it's more about coordination of actors.
- **There are a large number of affected people who can return but don't get the timely support to do so. Resettlement location gets the majority of resources – this emphasis drags out displacement because people have less support to return and agencies unable to facilitate returns.**
- Most orgs rely on minimum standards – major issue w/ cluster partners sometimes building “incomplete” homes? (run out of resources). This is a function of how siloed we are. (WASH advisors don't want to come to meetings so homes are missing key WASH considerations. We must emphasize that the core partner is local govt.
- What the reality is that when the national Government enters a crisis, they're in charge. We become supporting actors. **We don't have the resources to compete w national response.**
- NGOs give resources to easily accessible groups, barangays near roads etc. Eg. TAC North is a major resettlement project, it's moving “piece by piece”. 74,700 people will relocate to the North, have used an integrated development plan/model. This is the local plan.
- The difference between the national and local plans are sometime can be contradictory.
- We should take a v community-based approach. Beneficiaries v eager to move into the relocation sites, or transitional shelter built near permanent location and get used to new area, barangay integration, new circumstances. This may help with adjustment period (social preparations).
- **Social preparation** needed for the host community as well, specifically around **cohesiveness when it comes to access to resources and cultural differences** when urban populations relocate to rural areas in North (ie curfew)
- **Basic services makes people more resilient**
- **Consultations w/ affected and host communities** is requirement of shelter programming – priorities are housing, then water, then power and then livelihood gaps – when there is no water/electricity people tend to go back to their original dwellings.
- People often move to resettlement sites in absence of power/water in original dwellings. We must ignite coordination among agencies (NGOs as well as local government agencies).
- During a response, people typically loose between six months to a year of livelihoods. Additionally, resettled populations are not represented at stakeholder meetings. **Settlements die w/out access to livelihoods.** Eg. fisherfolk can't live in forest

## Summary of main discussion points

- Conceptual model but when it hits the ground it's not as easy as planned. We need flexibility and coordination
- ICS: more buy-in needed
- CRRP, reigniting
- A much larger resources pool needed for settlements level interventions. (both monetary as well as technical capability)
- Projects fail w/out proper assessment/consideration of population/host population/demographic (Can't forget people in situ, relocation as secondary option!)

## Final Reflections -- What can you offer to this topic? How can we do better? As an org, agency?

- Gov/LGU considers **land banking**, (Inner city land banking - away from danger zones in particular; considers this as best practice in long run; expensive but saves a lot (of lives) in long run)
- Consider vulnerable groups in implementation!
- **Camps w better living situations are those where communities are activated and committees are formed** (lesson for future temp. sites)
- USAID needs to continue to **promote the legitimacy of the LGU**. While humanitarians need to be principled, LGU is the lead organization.
- We need to better **demonstrate benefits of the approach**, look to beneficiaries for concrete examples
- Take a partnership approach to resources and support/options
- Ensure the participation of local communities, and **ensure assistance is appropriate for community** – not too much or too little
- No silver bullets. **Must be based on context, scale, capacity – settlement approaches possibly more relevant in development programming?**
- Need to bring in department of disaster resilience –as they govern how humanitarians work in disaster (Philpp. Context?)

## Other suggestions

- Facilitate creation of local housing board and maximize corporate social responsibility in private sector/gov partnerships
- **500 families will have 500 solutions - Resettlement should be the last resort.** Let beneficiaries choose location and budget for basic services.
- Consider long term engagement.
- **Cash can't be only option** – humanitarian sector is moving toward all-purpose cash but do we have the capacity to handle? Creates an additional strain on the system while expected outcomes are not being met?
- **Take a whole of gov approach** – role of community is very important and necessary for effectiveness of approach – **must also apply to regular gov programs, not just emergency**
- **Data (banking)** is very important
- Need to have **clear mandate** as participating agency
- ABA is good if it works in the context – should introduce **actor mapping**, try to come out w comprehensive roles and responsibilities first, and have **clusters to provide technical support second.**
- **ABA becomes relevant when looking at those beneficiaries that are less accessible**
- Volume in shelter is impressive, but we're still struggling w/ quality and beneficiary satisfaction
- ABA helps us look at who our client is – disaster-affected people
- Need to emphasize LGU participation/coordination

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