

Shelter and Settlements (S&S)

OBJECTIVE

USAID/OFDA's S&S strategy is designed to provide adequate, habitable, safe, and secure shelter in an expeditious and appropriate manner in countries affected by natural disasters and humanitarian crises, cognizant of Sphere Project and USAID/OFDA guidelines, as well as natural and other factors, which may require some degree of mitigation.

APPROACH

USAID/OFDA emphasizes the use of market-based assessments of damage and need to better gauge impacts, resources, and opportunities. Interventions based on these assessments are designed to address the needs of the most vulnerable among affected populations, which might require technical assistance, rather than a reliance on self-help capacity. Where possible and appropriate, emphasis will be placed on community-based approaches and use of local materials and labor, to enhance prospects for sustainability, cost-effectiveness, and livelihood generation.

USAID/OFDA will also:

- Continue to integrate hazard mitigation into S&S interventions, to include training programs where possible and appropriate, enhance prospects that interventions reduce long-term hazard risk in affected settlements, and engage with development entities, such as USAID bureaus and missions, World Bank, U.N. Human Settlements Program (U.N. HABITAT), and U.N. Development Program (UNDP), to better integrate hazard mitigation concerns into development policy;
- Continue to support shelter interventions that feature a settlements approach, allowing identification of, and linkages with, other sectors, particularly agriculture and food security, livelihoods, protection, and water, sanitation, and hygiene; and
- Continue to work with Emergency Shelter, Camp Management, and Early Recovery Cluster stakeholders on policy and technical issues to enhance organizational capacity and highlight transition concerns.

ON THE HORIZON

Upcoming S&S activities for USAID/OFDA include participation on peer review panels, such as revision of Sphere Project and plastic sheeting guidelines, and support for a North American shelter sector network, which further builds on the September 2006 USAID/OFDA and InterAction Workshop on Shelter and Settlements. Other initiatives include support of an electronic "scrapbook" of Better Shelter Practices to provide specific, project-based information on humanitarian shelter activities.

WEBSITE RESOURCES

- USAID/OFDA reference material on S&S, as well as other program information, appears online at: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/resources/
- Setchell, Charles A. "Post-Crisis, Long-Term Shelter is Vital", *Habitat Debate*, Dec. 2006 (V. 12, No. 4), p. 9, <http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/getPage.asp?page=periodView&period=2301>
- _____. "Promoting Sustainable Development Through Hazard Mitigation: Bamako, Mali", *Disaster Risk Management in Asia*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (July-October 2003), <http://www.adpc.net/infores/newsletter/2003/07-09.pdf>, pp. 21-22.
- _____. "Thinking Outside the Tent: New Directions for Shelter Sector Activities", Keynote Remarks Delivered at the Second Session of the Shelter Project and Sphere Project Shelter Sector Peer Review Groups, Geneva, Switzerland, 3 October 2002, <http://www.sheltercentre.org/shelterproject/attached/peer2/CSkeynoteppeerreiew2.pdf>
- _____. "Reducing Vulnerability Through Livelihoods Promotion In Shelter Sector Activities: An Initial Examination For Potential Mitigation and Post-Disaster Application", Tufts University Feinstein International Famine Center Working Paper No. 5, September 2001, http://famine.tufts.edu/download/pdf/working_paper_5.pdf