Lessons from Haiti: Innovations in Sheltering Earthquake-Affected Populations

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Shelter, the Humanitarian Counterpart to Housing, Doesn’t Exist in a Vacuum, but in...

SETTLEMENTS

(the Places Where People Live, from Transit Centers to Mega-Cities)
The Location, Condition, and Management of Settlements...

Will largely determine whether they become the sites of future disasters -- and possible humanitarian community responses
BY NOW YOU’VE SEEN

- Conditions depicted are experienced by nearly 1 of every 6 human beings
- By 2030, nearly 1 of every 4!!!
\[ S > 4W + R \]
Basic Q: Who “Owns” the Debris??
How Much Debris?

From WP, 3-7-10

If Port-au-Prince’s estimated 78 million cubic yards of rubble were placed on the Mall, the pile would rise 727 feet.

Note: Upper-range estimate shown

IMAGE SOURCE: Google Earth

GENE THORP/ THE WASHINGTON POST
WHERE to Dispose of Minimum 1,000 Truckloads a Day for 1,000 Days??
A Critical Initial Challenge: Exchanging Bed Sheets for Plastic Sheets
USAID/OFDA “S&S” Outputs
($106.1 million, 26 percent of $404.3 million total)

• **Emergency Phase:**
  -- Plastic sheeting distributed to estimated 500,000-600,000 people

• **Transitional Phase (as of 11-15-11):**
  -- Hosting Support to 26,523 Households
    (Approximately 70% evolving into permanent housing solutions)
  -- House Repairs Benefitting 7,601 HHs (living in 5,501 damaged structures)
  -- Transitional Shelter for 28,524 HHs
  -- Total of 62,648 Beneficiary HHs 32%
    Greater than 47,500 “Shelter Solutions” Objective (approx. $1,695 per HH)
Tracking Displacement as Clue for Assistance
Hosting ("STEALTH" Shelter) Really Does Work

- Primarily socially defined, based on family, friends, neighbors, etc.
- Commences before humanitarians arrive on the scene, i.e., self-selected, often not seen, thus "Stealth Shelter"
- Cost-effective, flexible means of sheltering, and
- Often transitions to permanent shelter. In Haiti, 70% of OFDA hosting support apparently evolving into permanent housing solutions.
Assessing Damage to Inform Repair Programs
“TS” Not New; Rooted, in part, in “Earthquake Refugee Shacks,” San Francisco, 1906
“EQ Shack” (actually two, and raised), being upgraded (again), 2003
The Utility of Shelter Assistance to Response and Recovery

• Even Modest Forms of Shelter (TS More So) jump-start and re-engage affected populations in the incremental, longer-term housing development process

• Means of Promoting Livelihoods and DRR, and

• **Unlike other sectors, no easy handoff to development.** With programmatic vacuum, all the more reason to emphasize TRANSITION and CONTEXT.
Settlements-based Activities

- **Macro-level:** Support of GoH, UN, and NGO Agencies to Engage in “Emergency Urban Planning”

- **Micro-level:** Support of Neighborhood-based projects
Neighborhood Approach in Concept
...To This:

Multiple Shelter Solutions in Context
First-ever Two-Story "TS" Produced by "HA" Community, Reflecting Context
BEYOND THE TWO-STORY T-S AND HOOPLA OF THE “NA” EFFORT IN HAITI...

• 20 percent of 18-acre site reconfigured through settlements planning process
• Permitted new accessways, evacuation routes, improved drainage, etc., i.e., safer shelters and a safer settlement
• This ALSO increased the area to be used for shelter, and ALSO changed market for land, making pre-event vacant land more valuable. We’re facilitating the upgrading of lots to permanent housing!
Also Beyond the Hoopla: Upgrading Side-by-Side, with “Complete” and “In Progress” Stages, Based on Re-engaging Pre-Event Processes
“TS”
Upgrading to Permanence
GETTING FROM THIS...
To This **NOT** the Responsibility of the Humanitarian Community, but...
Re-conceiving the Road to Recovery Requires Re-conception of Core Processes

• “Standard” Approach: ES + TS + PH

• Some Now Promoting: ES + PH

• Our Alternative: ES + (TS → PH) + PH
**RRR: Recognizing The Centrality of Settlements**

- Spatial framework provided by focus on Settlements provides the “catch-all” context for shelter interventions.
- This Area-Based approach changes the focus from households and shelter to neighborhoods and larger communities, and
- This change in Unit of Analysis particularly useful in urban areas.
RRR: FOCUSING ON SETTLEMENTS SIDE OF SECTOR

- Shelter is the Easy Part; the Much Tougher Issue is LAND
- However, if Land Issue was Impossible, Nothing Would Happen, so Something’s Afoot. We Need to do Better Job of Figuring it Out Sooner
- In PAP, Affected Area “lost” an estimated 30% of land area due to Rubble, making sheltering all the more difficult, and
- Surgical, neighborhood-based focus preferred over “clear cut” efforts; requires creative “S&S” work (e.g., settlements planning and land readjustment)
RRR: HA Actors Can Help “Frame” the Future

- Need for “framing” follow-on reconstruction is critical; this includes “emergency master planning,” as most official plans are aspirational, perhaps even inspirational, but not operational

- **Haiti**: GoH plan for PAP assumed removal of 1.2 million people from city, based on view that it was “too big”. 
RRR: URGENT NEED TO PLAN THE CONFIGURATION AND RECONFIGURATION OF RISK-PRONE SETTLEMENTS
Challenges Remain: Exchanging Plastic Sheets for Longer-term Shelter
... and the Transformation of “Pledged Funds” to “Completed Projects”

Status of $5.3 B Pledged at March 2010 International Donors Conference for Recovery:

- Pledges for ‘10-‘12, as of Sept. 2012:
  - Disbursed - 53.2%, $2.837 B
    (up from 45.3% in April 2012)
  - Committed - 38.7%, $2.063 B
  - Pending - 8.1% $432.69 M

Note: This analysis does not include funds pledged for humanitarian relief activities. It is also exclusive of pledges made by privately funded organizations at the New York donors’ conference.

Some Final “Take-Aways”…

-- Context, Context, Context! Adopting “big picture” Market Approach is critical to understanding context

-- “S&S” can “frame” response, recovery, AND other sectors; it’s “foundational”!

-- “RRR” features focus on TS → PH

-- Shelter is the “easy part”; the tough issues are on the settlements side of the sector, and

-- Urban disasters pose a MAJOR challenge to humanitarian community AND development community actors.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ATTENTION.

QUESTIONS?

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