Two Ss and Three Rs: Genesis of USAID/OFDA Urban Shelter and Settlements Activities, and Re-conceiving the Road to Recovery in Urban Places

Contribution to InterAction Forum 2012 Session on Post Disaster Response in Dense, Urban Environments: Shelter and Settlements

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FOUR “BENCHMARK” URBAN EXPERIENCES TO DISCUSS...

• Kinshasa, 1998
• Goma, 2002
• Kabul, 2006,
  and
• PAP, 2010
Some CONTEXT... The **TRENDS** Affecting Settlements Are Many, and Include...

- **The Future Is Urban.** Global population will increase from 6.2 billion to 8.3 billion, ‘03-’30; equiv. of 100% located in the cities of developing countries, increasing pop. from 2 to 4 billion!

- **Persistent Poverty.** Over 3 billion people -- approx. 40 percent of humanity -- survive on per capita incomes of no more than $2/day, up from 2.5 billion in 1987. Millions more earn only slightly more.

- **Increasing Strains** on Basic Social Services and Institutions

- **Growing Environmental Decline,** Coupled with Limited Economic Growth
ANYONE SEE

slumdog millionaire

- Conditions depicted are experienced by nearly 1 of every 6 human beings
- By 2030, nearly 1 of every 4!!!
SETTLEMENTS at the Center of Climate Change and Environmental Degradation Debates
Globally, Many Hazard-Prone, Unserviced & Unplanned Urban Settlements
Typical Issues Include Drainage & Sewerage...
And Lots and Lots of “Informal, Slum, Squatter, Unauthorized, Illegal” Housing...
All of This **ALSO** Characterizes Much of Our (Newly Discovered?) Workplace... “Urban”
Settlements Often Feature Flood & Flash Flood Risks
THE IMPACTS OF “HYDROMET” DISASTERS ARE NOT TRIVIAL

- From ’00-’09, 2.46 billion affected, or 97% of total affected by natural disasters
- 2.46 billion = equivalent to 36% of ’09 global population!
- 782,648 people killed, or 78% of total killed by natural disasters
- $788 billion in damages, or 81% of total caused by natural disasters

Source: WDR 2010, IFRCC
KINSHASA, 1998: EARLY EFFORT AT URBAN “DRR”

• Floods in two communes of city
• More than clean-up; looked at causes, and not just effects
• Watershed management focus, featuring 17 check dams *(bamboo, grass, stone)*
• Similar storms six months later; could compare cause/effect, outcomes. *THIS IS VERY RARE!*
• For every $1 of “DRR” investment, $46 “saved” by residents of communes
• Also, 90% reduction in cholera
GOMA, 2002

Another Flow: Not Water, but Lava, which covered 13% of city, or 1.8 sq. miles, in < 24 hours
Causing 300,000 to Flee in Panic to Rwanda
Destroying up to 15,000 Houses
... And LOTS of Jobs
But Where to Respond?

- Do Nothing?
- Move City to New Site?
- Move People Out of Region?
- Move People West?
- Move People into Camps?
- Opt for a “City-focus”? 
Displaced didn’t want to leave city, or live in camps
87% of city not covered
Only area with services
50-60k lots; low coverage %
If all displaced sheltered in town, density = 10 du/ac
Would concentrate livelihoods
At a More Micro Level...

- 5,000-family shelter project
- Two-year, community-based volcanic hazard mitigation program
- Two-year support program to the “GVO”
- LOTS of livelihoods generated

AND... “ten years on,” nearly 100% of shelters transitioned to permanence.
KABUL: Significant Growth Since 9/11, Yet All But Stealth!

- Kabul Area Population has grown from 1.5 mill to roughly 5.0 mill since 9/11
- Until very recently, however, only a handful of orgs worked in Kabul and other Afghan cities. No needs?
Location of Returnees, ‘02-’07

- 398 Districts in Country
- 2 Accounted for 21% of Returns
Kabul, ‘00-’11: >3X Pop., and >4X Area
In 2006, “KASS”...

- $4.4 million project featuring shelter assistance, “shelter opportunities survey” (SOS), and seismic preparedness & mitigation

- Based, in part, on OFDA’s 2004 shelter activities in Kabul (18,234 families assisted over 8 months, @ approx. $4.5 million)

- Located in and near existing neighborhoods, at notable scale, preferably in informal areas

- Close collaboration with Kabul Municipality

Transitional Shelters

S and S Livelihoods

DRR
DRR by Design

(at 18% per sq. m. Less than Conventional)
BRICKS -- and More BRICKS -- as Shelter-Livelihood Link
Significant Livelihood Generation
Addressed humanitarian and DRR issues in perhaps the world’s fastest growing city. **Also** saw the emergence of the “neighborhood approach”: integrating multi-sector activities in socially defined space. This is critical to working in Afghan cities, which will at least triple in size by 2020, only adding to backlog of current needs, but requires major institutional/technical capacity upgrades to scale up output.
PORT-AU-PRINCE, 2010
Death and Destruction...
Rubble & Garbage Everywhere
1,000 Truckloads a Day for 1,000 Days – Minimum!
Initial Sheltering Effort: Bed Sheets to Plastic Sheets
USAID/OFDA “S&S” Outputs

- **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
Major Lesson, Likely Overlooked: Hosting Works!

• It’s been around a long time, and OFDA has supported it in numerous disaster/crisis responses for years

• Context, Context, Context! Adopting “big picture” Market Approach is critical to understanding context – and “seeing” Stealth Shelter

• OFDA Hosting support widespread, greater than anticipated, and occurring in BOTH rural AND urban areas

• In Haiti, 70% of OFDA hosting support apparently evolving into permanent housing solutions
The Utility of Transitional Shelter

- More than a tent, less than a house
- Jump-starts and re-engages affected populations in the incremental, longer-term process of housing development
- Means of Promoting DRR and Livelihoods (platform for other sector interventions), and
- Unlike other sectors, however, no easy handoff to development. With programmatic vacuum, all the more reason to emphasize CONTEXT and TRANSITION, and provide guidance on incremental development.
Re-conceiving the Road to Recovery: The Centrality of Settlements

- Settlements provide context for shelter interventions ($S > 4W + R$)
- Unit of Analysis changes with settlements approach; no longer a near-exclusive focus on households and shelter, but neighborhoods and larger communities (area-based), and
- Change in Unit of Analysis particularly useful in urban areas.
RRR: LINKING SECTORS A KEY TO RESPONDING TO CONTEXT

- Shelter-led yes, but multi-sectoral, reflecting multi-faceted character of context
- Overcomes “stove-pipe” approach that is often a feature of humanitarian action, and
- Complements Cluster Approach on the ground: “Areas of Operation” vs. “Areas of Cooperation”
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
- Surgical, neighborhood-based focus preferred over “clear cut” efforts; requires creative “S&S” work (e.g., settlements planning and land readjustment)
Support of Settlements-based Activities Provides Structure for “Scaling Up”

- **Macro-level**: Creation & Support of Diaspora Haitian Professionals Program *(architects, engineers, & planners; 1st OFDA, now Mission)*

- **Macro-level**: Support of UN Habitat to engage in “emergency urban planning”

- **Micro-level**: Support of Neighborhood-based projects
Neighborhood Approach: Getting From This...
...To This:
Multiple Shelter Solutions in Context
First-ever Two-Story “T-Shelters”, Reflecting Context
HOWEVER, GETTING FROM THIS...
To This *NOT* the Responsibility of the Humanitarian Community, but...
**RRR:**

Need to “Frame” the Future

- Conditions in settlements are increasingly complex, and vulnerabilities are increasing, and

- The 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.
**RRR:**
EVEN BASIC GUIDANCE (SPHERE) IN NEED OF RE-THINKING

**Shelters for displaced people**
Agencies aim for 3.5 sq m per person

**Target living space per person:** 3.5 sq m

**Average space of a single bed:** 1.71 sq m

Most Haiti shelters are even smaller than these international standards.
**RRR:**
To Scale Up, Need to Train Up

- Increased training and outreach for *multiple audiences*, including the private sector

- Increased training and outreach for *multiple tasks* (e.g., shelter, DRR, settlements planning), and

- Training in *multiple outlets*, leading to Certification of Shelter and Settlements Advisors.
Some “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”!

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

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

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