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U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

BASIC ELEMENTS OF A GOOD SHELTER PROPOSAL

Note: Adherence to the following does not guarantee USAID/OFDA funding.

BACKGROUND

GOAL: The goal of any USAID/OFDA Shelter and Settlements (S&S) activity will be occupancy of covered living space that can serve as minimally adequate shelter for disaster/crisis affected populations in an expeditious and appropriate manner.

APPROACH: USAID/OFDA emphasizes the use of market-based assessments of damage and need to better gauge impacts, resources, and opportunities in disaster/crisis affected areas. The core target group of proposed actions will be the most vulnerable among affected populations. Provision of support to this group may require technical assistance, rather than a reliance on self-help capacity.

Shelter will be adequate, habitable, safe, private, and secure, cognizant of Sphere Project and USAID/OFDA guidelines, and the related, possible need to engage in disaster risk reduction.

Where possible and appropriate, USAID/OFDA will emphasize community-based approaches and reliance on local materials and labor, to enhance prospects for sustainability, cost-effectiveness, and livelihood generation. USAID/OFDA will, therefore, support shelter sector interventions that feature a settlements approach, thereby permitting identification of, and linkages with, other sectors, particularly agriculture and food security, livelihoods, WASH, and protection.

Shelter sector interventions will be designed to facilitate or “jump-start” the recovery of affected populations by emphasizing transitions to longer-term housing.

SPECIFICS

Overall Mandate: Do proposed activities relate to the overall OFDA mandate of saving lives, relieving human suffering, and reducing the economic impacts of disasters?

Assessment Data: Do baseline data appear to be reliable benchmarks for evaluating identified issues and needs? Who did the studies? Is a damage profile presented, showing the range of shelter damage (from none to total)? Are market impacts and opportunities discussed? What is the size of the total housing stock in the affected area? How are the data linked to others, in terms of sharing, coordination, analysis, linkage to sector coordinating agencies?

Terminology: Are important terms (e.g., houses, dwelling units, households, families, vulnerable households, etc.) defined clearly, and used consistently in discussions and

Charles A. Setchell

Shelter, Settlements, and Hazard Mitigation Advisor, USAID/OFDA

csetchell@usaid.gov, 17 Feb. '09

documents?

Households and Linkage to Sphere Project and OFDA Guidelines: What is the average household size of the affected population and proposed beneficiary group, if different? Is this figure linked to the Sphere Project- and OFDA-identified "minimally adequate" total of 3.5 square meters of "covered living space" per person? In this regard, please refer to S&S Sector Indicators in the USAID/OFDA Proposal Guidelines "APDR"s to ensure that proposed activities are consistent with OFDA guidelines.

Shelter Design: To ensure cost effectiveness, cost consciousness, and the presence of shelter framing, sketches of proposed shelters are requested, along with a detailed Bill of Materials (BOM) needed to create the proposed shelters. The BOM must include, indeed feature, framing material to support use of the plastic sheeting or other materials in a manner that creates adequate, habitable, safe, private, secure, and appropriate shelter for identified beneficiaries.

Sheltering Process: How was housing built in the area before it was damaged? Who built the housing? Describe the process of provision, to include a discussion of who has been selected for assistance, based on what criteria. Who participated in identifying beneficiaries? Who will construct the shelters? Over what time frame? How will proposed implementing partners ensure that those who may be unable to construct shelter are assisted as a priority activity?

Supply-side Issues: Have local homebuilding "industry" capacity/capabilities been examined? What is the availability of local building materials? What are industry constraints? To what extent can industry engagement in repair activities help stimulate economic recovery/growth? How will this be documented/monitored?

Disaster Risk Reduction: Have opportunities for mitigating/preventing FUTURE disasters been identified (e.g., seismic-resistant construction)? Have they been made integral components of proposed activities?

Shelter Transition and Sustainability: Please discuss proposed locations of shelters, the sustainability of those shelter locations over time, the possible need for risk reduction measures, how shelter and supporting services (e.g., water, sanitation, etc.) are linked to support beneficiary existence over time, i.e., how proposed activities link to longer-term efforts.

Government/Authority: To what extent is relevant host country government support/tolerance of proposed actions reflected in the proposal? What role is identified for local governments/organizations, if present? How do proposed actions relate to Sphere Project and OFDA Guidelines? How are any differences between these guidelines and local regulations/practices/expectations reconciled? What role will local authorities have in identifying beneficiaries? How will the proponent ensure the interests/needs of beneficiaries throughout the duration of the proposed activity?

Reporting/Monitoring: How, how often, and where, will results be reported? Is occupancy progress (e.g., "people assisted") being reported, in addition to logistical progress (e.g., "materials distributed," or "shelters completed")?

Charles A. Setchell
Shelter, Settlements, and Hazard Mitigation Advisor, USAID/OFDA
csetchell@usaid.gov, 17 Feb. '09