

FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2019

# SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS SECTOR UPDATE



DART staff unload plastic sheeting and other shelter supplies provided by USAID/OFDA in Marsh Harbour, The Bahamas, during the Hurricane Dorian response. Photo by Alison Harding/USAID.

## Humanitarian Shelter & Settlements Activities Worldwide

During FY 2019, USAID/OFDA S&S advisors deployed to serve on USAID Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs), conduct field assessments, design sector strategies, and monitor project activities. Travel to disaster-affected areas often entails conducting land and housing market analyses to better understand impacts, needs, and resources, as well as engaging with affected populations, cluster lead agencies, host country institutions, and implementing partners. In FY 2019, S&S advisors served on DARTs responding to Hurricane Dorian in The Bahamas and to cyclones Idai and Kenneth in Mozambique; DART S&S advisors supported the timely provision of emergency shelter assistance, as well as government-led efforts to develop longer-term shelter solutions. USAID/OFDA also airlifted emergency relief commodities, including rolls of plastic sheeting, to disaster-affected populations in The Bahamas and Mozambique. Complementary S&S interventions included project monitoring and hands-on trainings, as well as online, radio, and text programming to ensure that the plastic sheeting was utilized for maximum benefit.

In FY 2019, S&S advisors worked closely with regional and field teams, as well as implementing partners, to improve both proposal and project quality. S&S advisors also participated in discussions with colleagues and other stakeholders to

## USAID/OFDA Shelter and Settlements Activities

### FY 2019 FUNDING

Stand-Alone Global and Regional Shelter and Settlements Programs	<b>\$4,161,284</b>
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Shelter and Settlements Interventions Worldwide	<b>\$199,240,929</b>
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**\$203,402,213<sup>1</sup>**

## Sector Overview

USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) remains at the forefront of the humanitarian community's shelter and settlements (S&S) activities, which focus on a common goal: the expeditious and appropriate provision of covered living space to adequately shelter displaced populations, while also promoting safer, healthier settlements that link emergency S&S assistance to longer-term recovery efforts.

FY 2019 USAID/OFDA S&S support included funding for global case studies on shelter response in emergencies and Information, Education, and Communication campaigns designed to strengthen information sharing during emergencies, among other activities.

<sup>1</sup> USAID/OFDA supported humanitarian S&S activities in 32 countries during FY 2019, including Ethiopia, Iraq, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Syria.

clarify and apply USAID's policies and procedures on construction, disability, and environmental compliance. In addition, the advisors engaged with Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) lead agencies, focusing on recovery issues and more effective transitions from humanitarian shelter activities to longer-term housing reconstruction. Identifying opportunities to incorporate disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures into S&S sector projects, where needed and appropriate, also remained a priority. Finally, S&S advisors continued to participate in the research and evaluation of plastic sheeting, plastic sheeting alternatives, solar-powered lights, stoves, kitchen sets, and other non-food items, in concert with other humanitarian agencies.

## Promoting Settlements as a Platform for Response, Recovery, and Risk Reduction

USAID/OFDA continues to support the Settlements Approach, which promotes integrated, multi-sector program planning and accompanying phased implementation in defined locations. The S&S team seeks to build upon the expanding application of the Settlements Approach in a number of countries by emphasizing its utility as a DRR-based upgrading activity in high-risk urban informal settlements. The highly vulnerable populations in these hazard-prone areas will continue to experience the impacts of an increasing frequency of disaster events unless efforts are implemented to address identified vulnerabilities. This will require the adoption of an evidence-based, multi-sector process with participation from residents, local and national officials, private sector actors, and others to create safer shelters and settlements. To encourage this process, the S&S team supported partnerships with academic, diaspora, private sector, and professional development actors on S&S DRR activities. The S&S team continues to interact with GSC and Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster actors on a range of related activities at the national and global level, with an emphasis on promoting understanding and adoption of the Settlements Approach.

## Strengthening Hurricane Preparedness in Haiti

With a three-year, \$4.8 million USAID/OFDA award provided in FY 2019, the World Concern Development Organization (WCDO) is assessing and rehabilitating several hundred evacuation centers in Haiti. The project will focus on evacuation facilities in the country's Sud, Sud-est, Grande Anse, and Nippes departments, where structures remain in significant need of repair and upgrading after sustaining substantial damages during Hurricane Matthew in 2016. Once rehabilitation activities are completed, the evacuation centers will provide a vital safe haven and basic services for communities under hurricane threat. In tandem with structural rehabilitation efforts, WCDO is also supporting local communities and government officials with neighborhood-level evacuation planning, including training on disaster preparedness. The WCDO project complements other ongoing USAID/OFDA DRR activities in Haiti.

## Engaging Diaspora Communities in the U.S. in DRR Efforts Abroad

In FY 2019, USAID/OFDA partnered with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to engage diaspora communities, including from Haiti and the Philippines, living in the U.S. in efforts to reduce the socioeconomic vulnerabilities of their families abroad and promote investment in DRR measures in their home countries. Remittances from diaspora communities generally outweigh international humanitarian aid for a given country and provide a strong, sustainable financial and social network that extends beyond times of disaster. IOM's research and awareness-building activities aim to increase diaspora communities' understanding of DRR practices and encourage the utilization of remittances for improved shelter construction and other activities that strengthen emergency preparedness and resilience.

## Academic Partnerships and Graduate Student Fellowships in S&S

As USAID/OFDA continues to develop capacity to address worldwide S&S issues, the S&S team has partnered with InterAction—a U.S.-based alliance of international non-governmental organizations and partners—to strengthen linkages between humanitarian practitioners and the academic community. The collaboration aims to better integrate academic research into programming, while fostering increased awareness of field-based approaches among academic professionals.

In July 2019, USAID/OFDA awarded two graduate student fellowships as part of larger efforts to improve S&S sector programming, increase awareness of the sector in North America, and expand career options for S&S activities. The two fellows are analyzing local shelter-related policy in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria and assessing the safety of single-family housing in the Philippines after Hurricane Yolanda, respectively.

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USAID/OFDA is now part of USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA). Historical USAID/OFDA information products are available at: <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/responding-times-crisis>