Post-disaster shelter in India: A study of the long-term outcomes of post-disaster shelter projects
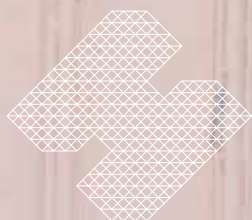**Conclusions & recommendations**

The Happold Foundation

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FOREWORD

BY MR RAJAN BAHADUR, MD & CEO CARE INDIA

CARE has been operational in India since 1950 and currently operates in 14 states of India. Emergency response is a core part of CARE's mandate and CARE India responds to major disasters by providing humanitarian aid and rehabilitation interventions. Core areas of focus in emergency response are food security and livelihoods, shelter, WASH, sexual & reproductive health.

In the wake of disasters (specifically Tsunami, Earthquake, Cyclone and Floods) thousands are displaced and rendered homeless. The need for shelter becomes of utmost importance for the disaster affected population, without which they are exposed to numerous life-threatening risks. Women and children are the worst sufferers and require special attention. For CARE India Shelter is not just a structure. It is a place that provides security, privacy and a sense of dignity. In India, CARE has been responding to shelter needs of disaster affected people both in the immediate aftermath of a disaster as well as during the early recovery phase. The range of activities under shelter and rehabilitation support provided by CARE India include provision of shelter, non-food items (NFIs), emergency shelter (temporary), transitional shelter (semi-permanent), permanent shelter, community shelter and repair and construction of public buildings. CARE has also organized training of its own staff as well as for peer organisations. CARE is a member of Shelter Forum and recognizes the holistic nature of shelter programming and will make efforts to integrate the linkages with other sectors like WASH and protection maintaining focus on women and girls.

CARE is committed to quality and standards in shelter programming with efficiency and effectiveness. With this very intention CARE has conducted a Post Disaster Shelter Evaluation in order to evaluate the medium – to long-term effectiveness of CARE's shelter programmes and recommend measures to strengthen future shelter programmes, whether undertaken by CARE or other agencies, to most effectively address the complex and interconnected needs of disaster-affected women, girls, men & boys.

I would like to thank Happold Foundation for their support to the Post Disaster Shelter Evaluation project which is for sure going to turn a new leaf in the progress of Shelter sector as a whole. I hope this report will benefit key stakeholders like peer NGOs, Government agencies, academicians as well as implementing agencies nationally and internationally in increasing their knowledge and understanding of improvising on Shelter construction.

I also understand that this is the beginning of an onward journey to ensure safer shelter post disasters. I also see this as an important tool to advocate for the shelter needs with a prime objective to respect our fundamental right to Life with Dignity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Study team

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KEY

- Field Study location/sites
- Desk Study of Emergency Response Projects
- Study Areas of Christian Aid

JAMMU & KASHMIR

UTTARAKHAND

UTTAR PRADESH

RAJASTHAN

Chornia
Munni Dih
Satghatta

BIHAR

GUJARAT

WEST BENGAL

ODISHA

Berhampur
Ujanga

TELANGANA

Amaragiri
Sunkesula

ANDHRA PRADESH

Kalaingar Nagar
Palayar
Madavamedu

TAMIL NADU

Andaman & Nicobar Islands
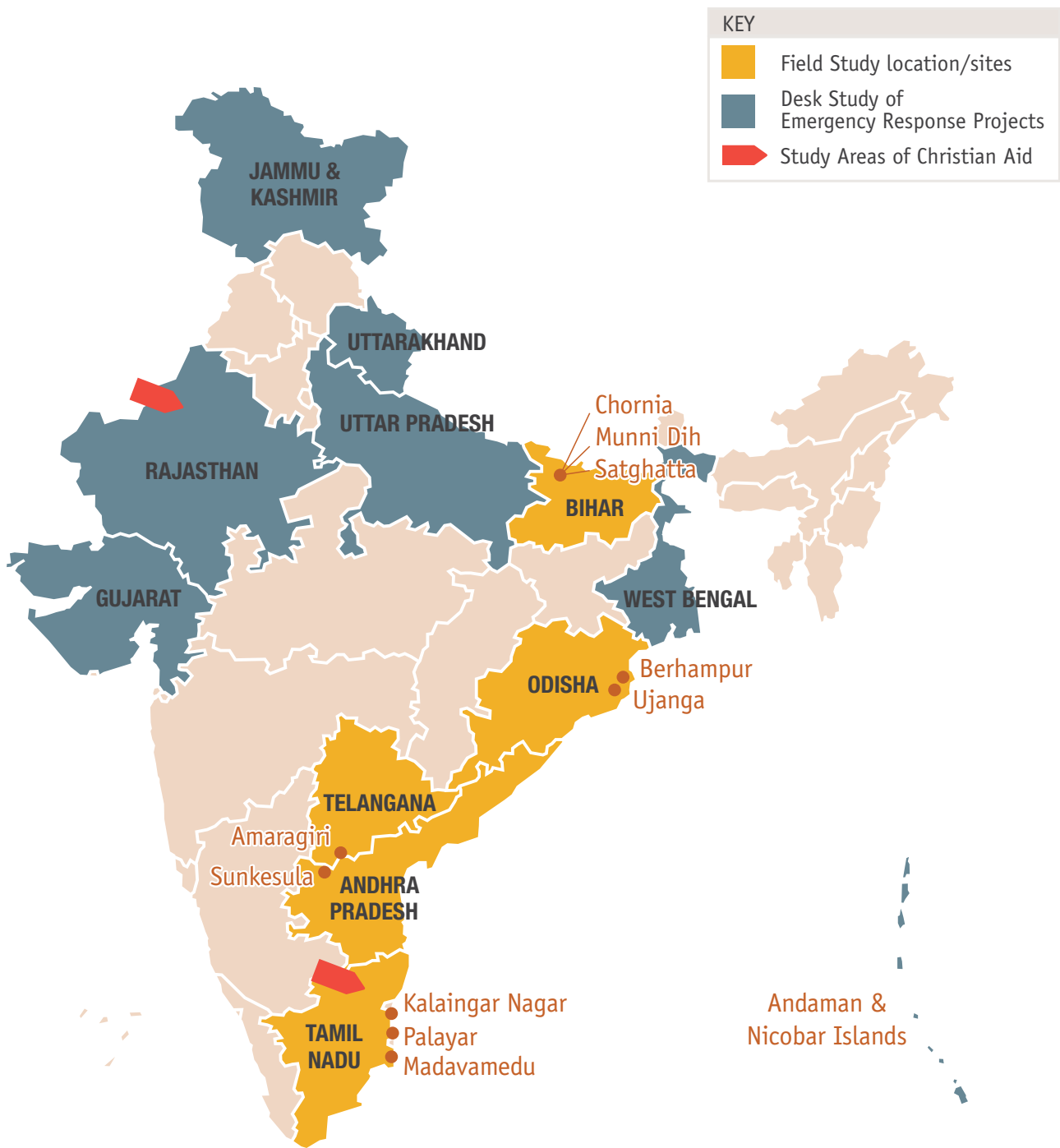
The study covered shelter programmes implemented by CARE during the last 15 years in ten States/Union Territories of India, and furthermore includes reviews of programmes implemented by Christian Aid and SEEDS in 2 states.

An overview of the programmes which are included in the study is given in Table 1, and the locations of the programmes are shown in Figure 1.

INTRODUCTION

Between 2004 and this study in 2015, India has faced a number of disasters, including the tsunami, earthquakes, floods and cyclones. These have resulted in widespread loss of life and loss of public and private property. Affected populations have often been displaced and left homeless.

Over this period CARE and other NGOs have repeatedly responded with both the provision of short-term emergency shelter and construction of more durable housing, often designated transitional or permanent.

While there have been individual evaluations of some of CARE's programmes immediately upon completion, there has not been a comprehensive study of the medium- and long-term outcomes of post-disaster shelter programmes undertaken by CARE or many of its peer agencies. This study aims to evaluate the medium- to long-term effectiveness of post-disaster shelter responses and to recommend measures to strengthen future shelter programmes, whether undertaken by CARE or other agencies, to most effectively address the complex and interconnected needs of disaster-affected women, girls, men & boys.

Ten of CARE India's disaster responses in the last decade (see Table 1), and many other responses by CARE's peer agencies, have included construction of shelter for affected people. Implementation of all ten of these projects was done in partnership with local NGOs, an approach which has over many years of experience been shown to improve active community participation, monitoring and on-going engagement with communities after completion of projects. Furthermore, some were in partnership with government (such as the tsunami response in Tamil Nadu in 2004) or the armed forces (such as the response to the Jammu & Kashmir Earthquake in 2005). The study includes projects following tsunamis, earthquakes, floods and cyclones.

This summary report presents conclusions and recommendations from the study.

Objectives

The overarching objective of this study is to evaluate the medium – to long-term effectiveness of post-disaster shelter responses and recommend measures to strengthen future shelter programmes, whether undertaken by CARE or other agencies, to most effectively address the complex and interconnected needs of disaster-affected women, girls, men & boys and to assess whether shelter programmes have indeed achieved the aim to 'Build Back Better'.

The study aims to study the following themes in order to obtain lessons and make recommendations for future programmes:

- Programme design
- Technical design of projects & shelters
- Habitability / relevance of projects & shelters
- Significance and long term impact of projects
- Comparison with other agencies' projects
- Accountability to affected people

The overarching objective of this study is to evaluate the medium- to long-term effectiveness of CARE's shelter programmes and recommend measures to strengthen future shelter programmes.

Table 1: Overview of the CARE shelter projects included in the study

Year	Type of disaster	Geographical area	No. & type[1] of shelters	NGOs	Level of Study
2001	Earthquake	Gujarat	4999, permanent	CARE, SEDF	Literature review only
2004	Tsunami	Tamil Nadu	1713, permanent	CARE, CREED, SEVAI, Voice Trust, MATA, SOSOD	In-depth
2004	Tsunami	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	286, permanent	CARE, MAM	Literature review only
2005	Earthquake	Jammu & Kashmir	352, transitional	CARE, CEE	Literature review only
2007	Floods	Bihar	145, transitional/ temporary	CARE, NIRDESH, ADITHI	In depth
2007	Floods	Uttar Pradesh	75, transitional	CARE, BGSVS	Literature review only
2009	Cyclone	West Bengal	115, transitional	CARE, HDC, RKLS	Literature review only[2]
2009	Floods	Andhra Pradesh	148, permanent	CARE, SVK, APARD	In depth
2011	Floods	Odisha	200, transitional/ temporary	CARE, Gram-Utthan	In depth
2013	Floods	Uttarakhand	83, permanent	CARE, SHARD	Literature review only

1) The type of shelters given is the description in the project design and does not necessarily reflect the actual durability of the structures

2) Originally it was intended to also visit the response to Cyclone AILA in West Bengal in 2009 but due to the Nepal earthquake on April 25th 2015 the field visits had to be postponed until after the onset of the monsoon season. Consequently, the West Bengal project areas were inaccessible at the time of the field visits.

STUDY CONCLUSIONS

This extensive study has looked at a wide range of different shelter interventions in different communities and situations. **If there is one, clear lesson from the findings it is that every shelter intervention must be unique in order to adequately respond to the needs of the disaster-affected people and the situation they find themselves in.**

Household level impact

The construction of durable houses as part of post-disaster shelter recovery programmes delivers both essential safe and dignified shelter, and a valuable asset, to the beneficiaries. This gives beneficiaries the security to focus on other urgent priorities and prevents them falling into destitution. The basic needs of vulnerable people for safe shelter have been met in all the projects studied. Projects have generally increased the robustness of houses and successfully reduced risk of future natural disasters. There are several examples of houses built in the projects studies surviving significant natural hazards. **Post-disaster shelter programmes which provide durable housing successfully meet humanitarian needs and protect the vulnerable after disasters.**

Delivering shelter recovery programmes is complex and often subject to significant competing interests and obstacles. The needs of women, girls, men and boys, and the needs of different households, can vary significantly. A one-size-fits-all shelter design has limited flexibility to meet these varied needs. **Generally projects have focussed mainly on the shelter product to be delivered and not enough on building capacity and agency of the beneficiaries.**

The durability of shelter is a critical component of the longer-term success of shelter recovery programmes. **Maintenance, burden, costs and the economic capacity of beneficiaries are key drivers for, or obstacles to, good long-term outcomes of shelter programmes:**

- Those who can mobilise the economic resources have built upon the asset they have been given (often literally) to make their house provide for all their needs, including the specific needs of women, girls, men and boys, and often to grow their income. The shelter assistance they have received has both protected them and given them the opportunity to improve their lives and reduce their poverty.

- Those who cannot mobilise economic resources – the very poorest, most vulnerable people in society – have been unable use their housing in this way. Secure shelter has allowed them to use their economic resources to survive, has protected them and met their urgent needs, but it has not led to a reduction in their poverty and the risks and vulnerabilities that come with this. They remain trapped in what many consider unsuitable housing which provides basic shelter but not much more. The specific needs of women, girls, men and boys in households remain unmet.

The projects studied have a limited range of approaches to delivering shelter assistance, essentially contractor-built durable, pukka houses or contractor-built houses with a mixture of durable and temporary materials. Importantly, designs used always considered local construction practice and used local materials and were

appropriate to the context and local hazards. This improved acceptance, ownership and ability to maximise the value of shelters, and contributed significantly to effective disaster risk reduction, and should be encouraged in any future projects.

The scale and reach of the projects studied varied significantly. Some projects met a significant portion of the need in the context of a disaster where with many actors coverage of assistance was very good. Others met a very small proportion of the need in a context where there were no other actors. Inevitably in the projects with fewer resources the value of assistance must be reduced and the resources must be focussed on the most vulnerable. Projects did this by targeting both geographically and based on vulnerability (Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes, religious minorities etc. in remote locations). Where budgets are insufficient, approaches combining durable and robust primary structure with temporary walling and cladding are appropriate to increase the cost effectiveness and reach of projects for the most vulnerable. However, decisions about the type, value and quality of shelter assistance cannot be taken in isolation from the capacity of beneficiaries to effectively use, maintain and upgrade their houses. Little support was offered to partners and beneficiaries to do so.

Greater long-term improvements in safety and strength of buildings and greater support to partners and beneficiaries could have been delivered with more technical programme staff.

Shelter & settlements

There were notable attempts, led by women, to deal with settlement-wide problems in an organised manner and to represent their largely disenfranchised communities to those in positions of power. However, these were largely unsuccessful. **There was insufficient attention as part the shelter projects, especially the relocation projects, to institute good governance and representation for communities.** Had this been in place communities, and women, may have been more able to solve some of their lasting problems, and to do so even after projects end, funding disappears and NGO staff leave.

It is widely accepted that shelter projects will not be successful without addressing settlement-wide issues. This study supports that, but furthermore highlights that from the point of view of most disaster-affected people in the locations studied **it is livelihoods and WASH that most affect the wider success of projects:**

- Shelter assistance delivered in combination with effective livelihoods assistance can have transformative effect, improving not only housing and incomes, but also education, health and other areas. In particular it can have an empowering effect on women and girls. Where projects have provided effective livelihoods assistance alongside shelter assistance there are examples of people transforming their lives and the prospects of their children. **Combined shelter**

and livelihoods interventions can lead to empowerment, belief in the future and higher aspiration.

- **Ensuring adequate access to safe water must be considered in shelter programmes.** Several relocation projects studied have resulted in communities without acceptable water supply, leading to poor sanitation and additional burden on all members of society, but particularly on women and girls.

- **The construction of toilets has largely been a wasted opportunity.** Provision of toilets, without adequate water supply, and above all without complementary hygiene promotion programming, does not lead to changed behaviour or reduction in open air defecation. Avoding open air defecation is not a priority in the majority of communities visited. It is a priority of government, of NGOs, and importantly of many women in in particular adolescent girls. Women and adolescent girls have insufficient voice and influence in their communities to change the status quo by themselves and they in particular suffer as a result of inadequate sanitation.

In most projects women raised the fact that alcohol abuse was a problem amongst men, older boys and some women, and that this led directly to an increase in domestic abuse. In some projects this had become worse, and in others better, since the disaster. largely due to factors outside the control of the projects.

Accountability: Whose choices? Whose risk?

Projects generally reflect the priorities of donors, government and NGOs and generally do not take sufficient account of the priorities of disaster-affected people. All the projects studied were agency-driven and largely contractor-built. The form projects and shelters took was driven by donors, government and agencies and not by disaster-affected people. The funding available per household varies significantly and leads to great variation in the assistance delivered. Robustness of buildings or speed of delivery has generally been prioritised over beneficiary choice and participation. **Physical risk of future natural disasters has been successfully reduced, but other vulnerabilities have not been so well addressed.** For example, houses may not provide appropriate space for households with adolescent boys and girls, or relocations may have reduced access to education (especially for girls) or sustainable livelihoods. The long-term risks faced as a result can be significant, and perhaps greater than the risk of structural failure.

There were examples of meaningful participation processes in which affected people felt able to significantly influence projects, leaving a lasting and positive impression. In most cases however communities are grateful for the significant support they have received, but do not remember being able to greatly influence the form it took. In no projects

were affected people able to significantly affect the design of houses, but in most relocation projects communities had significant say in the settlement planning. Largely due to the nature of post-disaster projects, but also due to insufficient consideration of how it could work, participation was less meaningful in the project design and beneficiary selection and more meaningful in the project implementation.

Donor mandates and priorities, coupled with insufficient technical understanding in agency programme teams, can lead to the almost arbitrary designation of houses as 'temporary', 'permanent' or even the highly confusing phrase 'semi-permanent'. These have the effect of obfuscating the true value and nature of what is being delivered. Temporary shelters are almost never temporary (whether in India, sub-Saharan Africa, the West or anywhere else). Similarly, no building is ever entirely permanent, as without maintenance any structure will degrade and eventually fail. Approaches that sought to maximise cost efficiency by designing buildings with durable primary structures and less durable cladding are entirely appropriate but were often lost in translation and not sufficiently understood, or agreed to, by beneficiaries. **It is not appropriate to deliver 'temporary' buildings to vulnerable people without their understanding and without a viable plan to replace them.**

None of the projects studied in detail involved specific consideration of the needs of disabled people, whether physically or mentally

disabled. None of these projects involved specific consideration of the needs of elderly people. This has resulted in the needs of some of the more vulnerable people in society for safe shelter not being adequately met.

Various documentation was provided to recipients of houses, including title deeds and in some cases insurance documents. These were valued and well looked-after by beneficiaries. However, where documents were in English it disempowered people, who could not read the documents themselves. In the case of insurance documents this left people practically unable to claim.

Women's empowerment

Women's participation in projects, although deliberately included in all projects, has been somewhat formulaic, with women usually having minority representation on committees and undertaking some menial construction tasks but not being empowered to take a leading role should they wish to. Projects generally did not recognise or use specific opportunities for women to take a leading role, for example in supervising construction and acting as a client.

Often following successful lobbying of government, all projects attempted to empower women by ensuring they had sole or joint title to the houses that were provided (although not always to the land). The act of doing this generally did not empower women, but where the process involved

the whole community, including men, and developed good understanding of the rights that come with ownership, giving title to women improved their status and confidence. **Giving land or property title to women is not in and of itself something that will empower women, but if done in a meaningful way it is a positive part of a wider process of gender equality and women's empowerment.**

A significant hurdle to achieving gender equality in property rights in the longer term is the fact that boys are almost always prioritised over girls when property is passed down to the next generation. Girls rarely inherit land or property title.

Reduced household and maintenance burden generally benefits women, who often bear responsibility for recurrent household tasks. In some cases women have been able to start businesses and generate their own income (sometimes with support from CARE livelihoods programming, sometimes without).

Relocation projects

It is well established that relocation of disaster-affected communities is very difficult to do successfully. This study generally supports that conclusion. It is clear that relocation projects are risky, with the risk primarily carried by the affected people. Creating new settlements is extremely complex and requires many resources and organisations to come together to make them a success.

Relocation projects can be successful and have a transformative effect if:

- They take place in close cooperation with and in line with the wishes of the relocated people
- The whole community is relocated
- The relocation site has access to adequate water supply, livelihoods, markets and services

Projects which reduce access to services, and in particular to education, negatively affect girls in particular.

Relocation projects which prioritise reduction in vulnerability to particular natural hazards at the expense of increasing other vulnerabilities, and do so without sufficient input from affected people, are likely to cause lasting problems.

Relocations that happen against the wish of the affected people are very unlikely to be successful.

The shelter sector in India

It is clear that the effectiveness and capacity of the humanitarian system in India has been greatly strengthened in recent years, as evidenced by the remarkable difference in the death toll from the extremely severe cyclones which hit Odisha in 1999 and 2013. However, funding for humanitarian response in India from international humanitarian donors is limited and reducing, and with it the role of NGOs is changing. It is clear from this study that the most vulnerable in society in India are frequently excluded from access to services and assistance, and humanitarian shelter actors have strong role to play in ensuring they are included in post disaster shelter and recovery programmes.

There is considerable experience and knowledge of post-disaster shelter within CARE and other actors in shelter in India, and there is a good level of collaboration between different shelter actors, including civil society, NGOs, private sector and government agencies. However, there is little active research or development of new approaches to shelter, and the shelter sector in India is only weakly linked to the global shelter sector. **There is a need and opportunity for the shelter sector in India to collaborate more closely to share knowledge both in India and globally, and to take a more leading role in the global shelter sector, the leadership of which is currently too heavily concentrated in Europe and the US.**

Case study, Tamil Nadu: investing in business

Sonia Indrani is a widow who lives with her son and daughter in Palayar. She lost her shelter and all her possessions in the tsunami. Ms Indrani's family used to rely on fishing before her husband died, and was very poor, but now she has her own prawn business, cleaning, packing and selling prawns. She borrowed Rs 100,000/– (1 lakh) to set up this business, by mortgaging her gold ornaments. She now has a healthy income, and her son is studying for a Bachelor of Engineering in Chennai and her daughter attends school in Cuddalore.

Ms Indrani said that due to the shelter she could keep whatever she earned after the tsunami, and could invest this in her prawn business and grow it. Indrani said things were changing for the community, and within a decade it would be difficult to find a traditional fisherman. All families were prioritising education for their children and did not want to send their children to the sea.

Case study, Bihar: Girija Devi

Girija Devi took an active part in one of the focus group discussions. She is married and has one son and four daughters. Sulinder Majhi, her husband, is a migrant worker and earns Rs 6-7,000/– per month. During the agricultural season they both work as labourers, earning Rs 50/– per day.

Photo credit: CARE/Lata Krishnan

Girija was only able to study until third standard, but she understands the importance of education and sends all her children to school. Her children study every evening and she never allows their studies to be compromised.

"I will try my best to educate my children as far as possible and allow my daughters to marry only after 18 years".

Girija explained that:

"this house has brought economic benefits to our family. Earlier my family use to spend around six to seven thousands in repairing our shelter every year."

Girija is now able to save much of that money, increasing their resilience against periods when they have no work. Girija is concerned about her family's health, as they are unable to use the toilet and there is no functioning health centre nearby.

Case study, Andhra Pradesh: first generation at school

The lives of Nagayya and his family members have been greatly changed by the shelter project in Amaragiri. The father, mother and four sons live together in the shelter, and the mother explained that "even if it rains now, still I'm safe here". Previously they lived in a leaky simple wooden hut, with one door and no lighting. Because of the lower costs of maintaining their shelter they have been able to save money, and as a result bought a TV two years ago, a rice cooker 1 year ago and now they are saving for a bed and some ornaments. They have electricity 24 hours a day and said the lighting in the shelter and the street-lighting outside makes them feel safe.

Previously they would leave before dawn and return at dusk in order to make a living, and they never saw anyone or socialised. Now they can socialise, have meetings and take part in festivals

The father explained that his eldest son is the first in his family to attend school, and will also go to high school 20km away, because it has a special hostel for tribal communities. His son will get a job in the forestry department or become a teacher:

"However I have to do it I will earn the money to educate my child. We have faced problems; we will not let our children face the same problems" - Nagayya

RECOMMENDATIONS

Impact: Scale and coverage

While the significance of shelter assistance for those who receive it cannot be doubted, the scale and coverage of shelter programmes varies greatly depending on resources available. The projects studied have a limited range of approaches to delivering shelter assistance, essentially contractor-built durable, pukka houses or contractor-built houses with a mixture of durable and temporary materials.

Where funding is limited, CARE India and other shelter actors need to develop ways to meet a larger proportion of the unmet needs without compromising on the inclusion of key disaster risk reduction features in shelters and projects.

Future programmes should consider approaches which empower more disaster-affected people to build dignified shelters incorporating features to make them safer and more robust:

A. More use of technical assistance to people building their own houses, provision of key materials, conditional cash grants or vouchers in projects using an owner-built approach should be explored to increase relevance and coverage.

B. There should be an analysis of both physical and social hazards faced by disaster-affected people, leading to a clear prioritisation of disaster risk reduction measures to be included in buildings and projects. To do this agencies need to be able to draw on sufficient expertise.

C. Flexibility in levels of assistance to give minimum assistance to large numbers and more intensive assistance to the most vulnerable could also assist achieving greater relevance and coverage.

Shelter and settlements: Complementary programming

Shelter programmes should, wherever possible, be delivered with appropriate complementary programming which addresses the wider needs of the household and the settlement and ensures that the shelter recovery assistance given is effective in delivering lasting protection and resilience. For relocation projects it is essential that this complementary programming is delivered. This is very eloquently put in the Christian Aid conclusions:

"There is a strong need across the board to look beyond shelter as shells and consider the entire housing ecosystem, with WASH, DRR, CCA, livelihood spaces, social interaction and recreational spaces, women and child friendly spaces, and green areas. Shelter programmes need to be based on processes that start from the context. Project teams need to have the complete range of skill sets."

"A larger initiative of repositioning shelter aid in itself as a process needs to be looked at collectively."

Christian Aid study

While it is recognised that funding is rarely available for comprehensive programmes, and different actors and agencies provide different services to people in need, humanitarian actors have a responsibility to avoid harm, to meet unmet needs, and to empower disaster-affected people.

Actors working to support communities to recover shelter must ensure that they, or others working in partnership with them, provide sufficient support to enable sustainable settlements. This should include at least:

A. Supporting and establishing good governance in settlements, with strong inclusion of women and disadvantaged groups, will both strengthen the direct outcomes of any shelter project and also leave the community able to represent itself and work effectively to solve other problems. **Addressing governance should be integrated into all projects as part of the standard community engagement and participation approaches.**

B. Without water supply shelter projects and settlements will fail. It is critical that shelter projects address water supply at a settlement and household level. **All shelter projects must ensure adequate safe water supply.**

C. Livelihoods support given in combination with shelter programming can increase the ability of households to adapt and upgrade their shelter to meet their needs, and ensure that households can meet the costs of maintenance. Without sustainable income beneficiaries of shelter programmes are likely to be forced to sell or move away in search of work. If they cannot maintain their houses, beneficiaries will see their asset whither in front of them. Where a house or shelter provides the secure, safe base for recovery after disasters, it is sustainable livelihoods that allow people to make the most of that house or shelter. **Livelihoods support is particularly important to ensure shelter assistance given to the most vulnerable can lead to lasting recovery.**

D. It is often stated that shelters should not be built without toilets, but the evidence from this study confirms something well understood in the WASH sector, which is that without hygiene promotion and behavioural change building toilets will not work. Toilets are vital for improved public health, but they are also a key issue for women and especially adolescent girls who can have their lives improved and can be empowered by having toilets. **Shelter projects should build toilets. Shelter projects should not build toilets without a complementary hygiene promotion programme.** This means that the personnel and expertise needed for delivering a shelter programme needs to widen, as shelter specialists delivering toilets has been shown not to work.

E. **Housing, land and property rights, in particular addressing the property rights of women and girls, must be more strongly addressed in shelter programmes** to avoid continued marginalisation and increased vulnerability.

Accountability: Community & individual ownership

Delivering shelter recovery programmes is complex and often subject to significant competing interests and obstacles. The needs of women, girls, men and boys, and the needs of different households, can vary significantly. A one-size-fits-all shelter design has limited flexibility to meet these needs.

CARE India and other shelter actors should greatly strengthen their approaches to community engagement in shelter projects, with the aim to improve community ownership of projects and individual ownership of shelters.

Future programmes should aim to empower people to take charge of their own shelter recovery, including giving them meaningful control and choices over shelter design and construction, hence leading to improved outcomes overall. To do so will require developing a communal understanding of the different risks disaster-affected people face and ensuring they have the knowledge to make choices about these risks for themselves. This will require strong community engagement and technical support capacity. As the Christian Aid study which fed into these conclusions reported:

"Significant emphasis needs to be put on educating the local communities, involving them in all stages of the process, training masons and construction workers and advocating with local governments. While the jargon exists at all levels, effective communication strategies and tools need to be deployed to have a deeper impact resulting in action."

A. **CARE, together with other shelter actors in India, should develop a community engagement approach for shelter programming, incorporating rapid community assessment of shelter needs and capacities, project and shelter design, implementation and monitoring.** This may use Participatory Approach to Safer Shelter Awareness (PASSA) and similar tools as a basis, and as suggested by Christian Aid it can include Participatory Vulnerability Capacity Assessment (PVCA) and Value for Money (VfM) tools, but it should be contextualised for India. A standardised approach, with sufficient flexibility, could greatly increase community participation and ownership and hence outcomes of shelter programmes, and could address the large variation in community engagement approaches resulting from working with partners and with staff working remotely in different areas. The approach developed must comprehensively address women's and girls' participation and empowerment through community engagement processes, while recognising any additional burden this may place on women. All staff should be oriented on the approach at the onset of projects, including CARE's approaches to poverty, gender and diversity.

B. **CARE and other agencies should develop clearer language to describe what they deliver, and avoid the simplistic use of temporary and permanent.** The Christian Aid study recommends that the shelter sector in India should "promote permanence in housing rather than focussing on immediate and intermediate needs". This

studied prefers a more nuanced approach which can address immediate and intermediate needs but recognises that buildings are very rarely temporary, are always in some way transitional, and that this is largely outside the control of donors or implementing agencies. Rather, the nature of any shelters or buildings being delivered must be clearly and openly understood by donors, agencies, programme teams and most importantly, by beneficiaries. Beneficiaries can then understand what they are receiving, provide meaningful feedback as to its suitability and plan for the future. Shelters should be delivered with estimates of the durability of the main elements of the building (life to first maintenance, and maintenance period), which may be different depending on needs and budgets. In combination with this it is necessary that there are clear instructions on maintenance, and hence;

C. **CARE should develop a standard template for a maintenance manual, to be delivered with all shelters.** This will empower occupants to look after and maximise the value of their houses and additionally aid the transparent and clear hand over of responsibility, and risk, to beneficiaries. It is important to understand that this approach does not mean all shelters must be pukka buildings, it just means that all parties must be clear and transparent about what is being delivered and what burden of risk and responsibility it places on beneficiaries.

D. **All documentation provided to beneficiaries and communities must be translated into their own language.** CARE should consider retrospectively distributing translations of

insurance documents to those households in the projects studied for whom it is still in force.

E. **Projects must have adequate budget for adequate staffing and technical capacity to support partner NGOs and communities and hence to achieve consistent quality.** When working with partners, partner capacity assessment must be carried out to ensure both CARE and the partner NGO have adequate capacity in place to meet their responsibilities. Donors & NGOs must understand and be accountable for the consequences of reducing personnel budgets on the capacity to deliver quality.

Specific needs & capacities: Women, girls, men & boys

Shelter projects should not be seen as the simple delivery of products, and their design must address the different needs of individuals.

A. **All shelter programming should be based on a gender analysis in addition to a more general needs analysis, and should include a gender action plan**, in order to ensure programmes meet the needs of women, girls, men and boys (including adolescent girls and boys), and opportunities to empower women are recognised and taken.

B. **Women should play a leading role** in community participation, in receiving assistance and in monitoring implementation of projects at a household level, recognising that women mostly lead on all household responsibilities and are therefore often well placed to take on these roles.

    i. All project planning and monitoring committees should be gender balanced (half women, half men).

    ii. Child care arrangements should be provided to ensure women are not prevented from participating because of their child care responsibilities.

C. **All shelter projects should give have an integrated strategy for ensuring women have meaningful and equitable ownership of housing and land.** This should be coupled with discussions about the meaning and rights entailed with owning property, involving men and boys as well as women and girls. Wherever possible sole title for housing and land should be

given to women. Women should be empowered to take a leading role in managing shelter projects to increase their meaningful ownership of assets.

    i. CARE and other agencies should investigate ways to address inheritance of shelters they provide in future projects, and how they can encourage the inheritance of property by girls.

D. **Shelter project design and implementation should incorporate the IASC Global Protection Cluster Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action**[1], and in particular the Thematic Area Guides for Shelter, Settlement and Reconstruction and for Housing, Land and Property.

    i. Violence against women and girls should be discussed with women, in women-only safe locations, early in the project design process, in order to incorporate measures to address gender-based violence in shelter and settlement design. (CARE and IOM are developing guidance on addressing GBV in shelter projects, and CARE India should use this to incorporate in their programming).

E. **All projects must have sufficiently flexibility to deliver shelter that meets the specific needs of older people or people with disabilities, whatever these may be.** Assessments should identify the proportion of people with disabilities and specific access needs and all projects should include a budget line to allow amendments to shelters and assistance for disabled people or elderly people who require it. Initial budgeting should assume 15% of people have specific access needs, but this figure must be verified by assessments as it can vary significantly.

Relocation projects

Relocation projects must be a last resort, and CARE and other agencies should fully explore all options that avoid relocation, together with the community, before proceeding with relocation projects. Communities being relocated must have a good understanding of the risks of relocation and what resources are available to support them.

1. www.gbvguidelines.org

Madavamedu, Tamil Nadu. Left: A woman explains the alterations she is making. Right: Unaltered house with a house with major extensions behind.

A. **Where relocation is clearly contrary to the wishes of the community concerned, CARE should not participate in the project** and should instead concentrate on supporting the community to access effective representation and supporting them in other ways.

B. Where relocation is unavoidable and is in line with community wishes:

   i. **Relocation sites should be selected which have existing infrastructure and access to essential services.** Instating these later rarely happens. It is not acceptable for project lead agencies, whether governmental or NGO, to assume others will take responsibility for this or that resources will be identified later. Resources for critical infrastructure and services must be identified and committed at the onset of any relocation project.

   ii. **The entire community should be included in the relocation project.** Projects which relocate only parts of communities lead to fragmentation of communities. Where only vulnerable groups are relocated it tends to further isolate and disadvantage those communities. Sustainable communities cannot be made up only of highly vulnerable people, so projects should promote integration. Targeting of support should consider the needs of the whole community and not just the needs and vulnerabilities of individuals.

   iii. **Significant extra attention must be paid to developing good governance and access to representation for communities in new settlements.**

The shelter sector in India

A. **CARE & other NGOs and civil society organisations must continue to work closely and effectively with government agencies, and where appropriate the private sector, to ensure effective response which reaches and meets the needs of the most vulnerable.** This will require strong cooperation and strong advocacy based on expert knowledge and experience:

   ii. Along with enhanced governance approaches in shelter responses, NGOs should strengthen their ability to be a voice for the most vulnerable after disasters and ensure strong advocacy capacity. See also Christian Aid's recommendation that humanitarian shelter should be advocacy-led (section 12.2).

B. **A strong and sustainable India Shelter Forum should be formed** to foster discussion, learning and knowledge management amongst shelter actors in India in order to improve the relevance and effective of shelter responses and to allow the Indian shelter sector to engage in global discussions, access global research and learning and take a leading role in the global shelter sector. See also Christian Aid's recommended areas for research, which are endorsed by this report (section 12.2).

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CARE has been working in India for over 65 years, focusing on alleviating poverty and social injustice. We do this through well planned and comprehensive programmes in health, education, livelihoods and disaster preparedness and response. Our overall goal is the empowerment of women and girls from poor and marginalised communities leading to improvement in their lives and livelihoods. CARE India works in 126 districts, in a total of 11 states across India.. We are part of the CARE International Confederation working in more than 85 countries for a world where all people live with dignity and security.

CARE's emergency shelter team is hosted by CARE International UK in London and provides technical support and expertise around emergency shelter to the entire CARE International Confederation. The emergency shelter team can be contacted on emergencyshelter@careinternational.org.