

ESTABLISHING A SHELTER SELF-RECOVERY PROGRAMME: PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS



Resource mobilisation

An initial hurdle for any programme is the mobilisation of resources, and the securing of funds. Especially after sudden onset disasters, the funding window may only be open during a very short timeframe and often with restrictive conditions about what type of activities can be supported. It is important to discuss with donors at an early stage to ascertain if they would consider a proposal, and to explain the benefits of supporting self-recovery. The need for flexible budget lines related to adaptive programming should also be discussed with donors.

Time and budget should be allowed for staff training. With the shift in mindset, new skills and responsibilities may be required, such as:

- Building a good team in which additional skills such as social mobilisation or communication is essential
- Project planning and proposal should show this shift in mindset in relation to indicators, MEAL, adaptation to ongoing processes, schedule, etc.

Adaptive programming

At the heart of adaptive programming is flexibility. The objectives and indicators will be mostly qualitative and might be revised to reflect the priorities of the community and households. This will be informed through iterative and continuous monitoring and evaluation analysis.

It is likely that there will be a need for two parallel, but linked, monitoring mechanisms. One will be the community-led monitoring and learning, the other will be led by local or international agencies to fulfil donor requirements.

In a programme that supports self-recovery, the affected population retains the right to make their own decisions and this carries the risk of divergence from standards, such as Sphere. A ‘good enough’ argument must be employed to explain and justify people’s decisions.

Programme evaluation

Shelter is “more than four walls and a roof”. A community-led monitoring and evaluation process can collect evidence of the wider impacts that shelter can bring, including on health, livelihoods, education, psychosocial well-being and access to other services.

Ensuring continuity, sustainability and preparedness

Support to shelter self-recovery can address systemic and structural challenges, promote an enabling environment and empower people to better transition from emergency shelter to longer term development of adequate housing.

If linked with ongoing long-term programmes and development plans, the interventions will be more sustainable and have wider beneficial impacts. Identifying and addressing systemic problems will also remove barriers for future activities, mitigate and reduce risks and build long-term resilience in the community.

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*Supporting
self-recovery
requires
a shift in
mindset from
conventional
programming.*

Aim for the best impact

A shelter self-recovery programme should be designed in order to get the best impact on five main themes: Governance; Society; Environment; Culture; Economy.

Below is an example of three indicators per theme. This list is not exhaustive, each programme should determine its own relevant indicators.

GOVERNANCE

- > Iterative approach throughout the process
- > Consideration of local capacities and their potential evolution
- > Culture of dialogue

SOCIETY

- > Preservation of health and safety
- > Promotion of collective knowledge
- > Social cohesion

ENVIRONMENT

- > Minimization of the effects of natural hazards
- > Implementation taking advantage of the site features
- > Adaptation to the impacts of climate change

CULTURE

- > Protection of the cultural landscape
- > Enable local adaptability and replication
- > Respect for people’s ways of living

ECONOMY

- > Saving of material and energy resources
- > Promotion of the local livelihoods
- > Adapt to the local economic reality