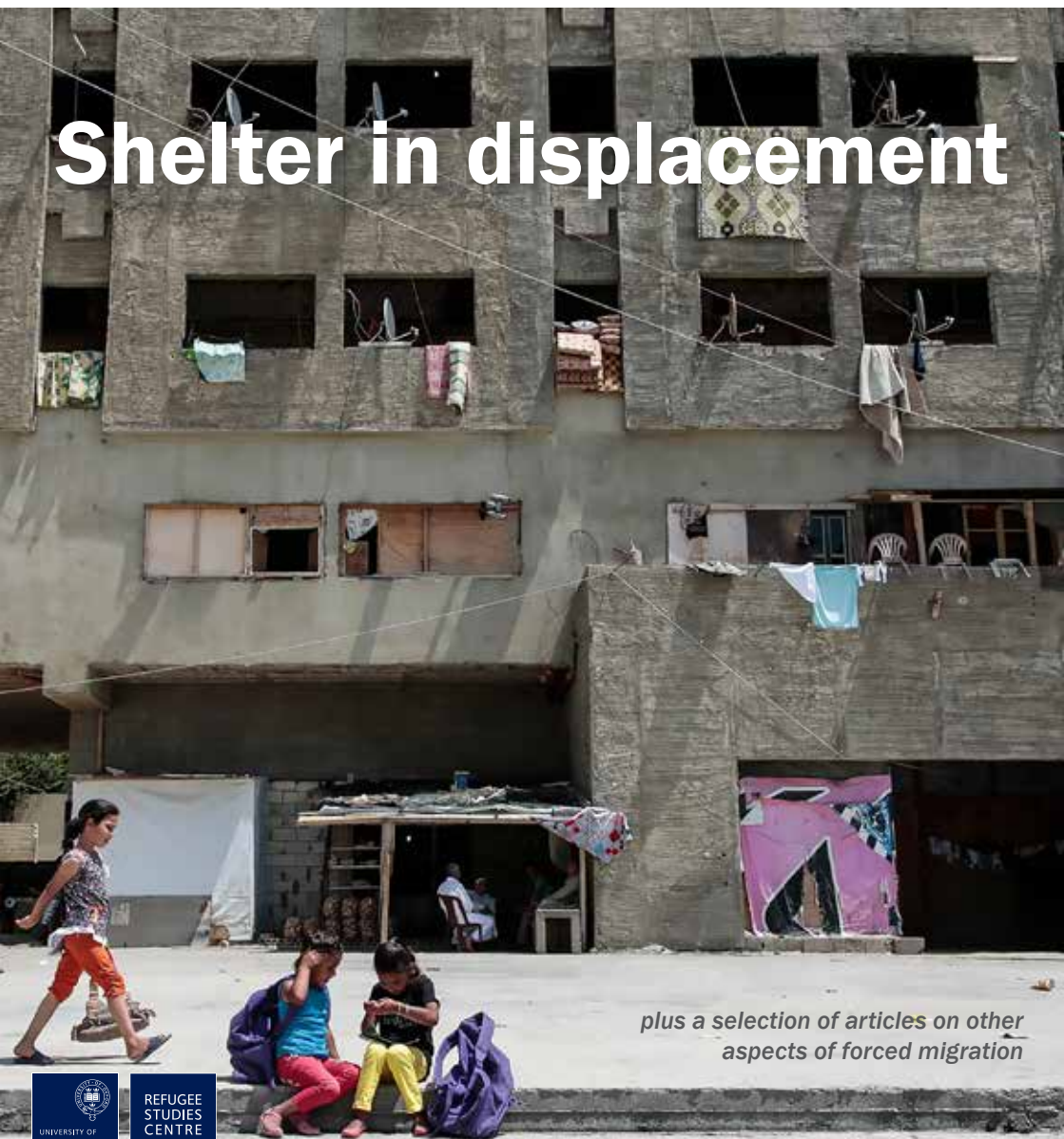# FORCED MIGRATION review

Shelter in displacement

plus a selection of articles on other aspects of forced migration

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

REFUGEE STUDIES CENTRE

From the editors

All displaced people need some form of shelter, and circumstances dictate that in reality not much of it conforms to the typical picture of a tent or tarpaulin nor meets official standards. The types of shelter and settlement responses found, employed and created by, and created for, displaced people profoundly affect their experience of displacement. It should provide some protection from the elements and physical security for those who dwell in it, and the articles in this issue of FMR give a glimpse of just some of the many ways this is possible.

But displaced people also seek safety, comfort, emotional security, some mitigation of risk and of the unease that accompanies being displaced, and even, as time passes, some semblance of home. Displacement also disrupts community but even a temporary shelter can conform to people's notions of home and belonging. The re-forming of community – whether from among one's own people or among other displaced people and, importantly, among those into whose place one has been displaced – is an essential part of successful, satisfactory and sustainable shelter.

The articles in this FMR address these factors from a range of points of view: those of hosts, of agencies, of designers and of displaced people. The complexity of approaches to shelter both as a physical object in a physical location and as a response to essential human needs has engaged many humanitarian actors and, increasingly, designers, architects and innovators too.

Technical shelter guidelines are widely available, so we have not attempted to include them here; instead we have selected articles that show some of how the guidelines play out in reality. Other articles show where and how displaced people establish themselves, how design considerations relate to the social and cultural reality of those who will live in the shelters, and how people make, inhabit, transform and adapt their shelter and settlement.

Forthcoming issues and feature themes:

- FMR 56: Latin America and the Caribbean
  (due out October 2017)

- FMR 57 : The Middle East
  (due out February 2018)

Handover:
Maurice Herson, who has been one of the Co-Editors of FMR since the beginning of 2008, is retiring at the end of June. We thank him for his contribution to FMR as Co-Editor, and welcome Jenny Peebles as the new Co-Editor.

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Marion Couldrey and Maurice Herson
Editors, Forced Migration Review

Forced Migration Review issue 55 • www.fmreview.org/shelter

Housing for Syrian refugees, who are being supported by CARE International Lebanon.
Fulvio Zanettini/
Aktion Deutschland Hilft

Front cover image: Throughout this issue of FMR we have used images depicting a wide variety of types of shelter, including shelters constructed by displaced people, architect-designed housing units, and urban structures 're-purposed' for refugees' use. Some of the shelters are based on the concept of 'building back safer'. Others reflect the paucity of suitable materials available. In other images displaced people are being hosted in local families' homes, while elsewhere they are clearly renting sub-standard accommodation. There is no one image that defines 'shelter in displacement'.

So how did we decide what image to use on the front cover of this issue? We wanted to avoid the classic image of the destitute refugee living in a makeshift twig shelter covered in rags and bits of plastic – although for some people such shelters are still their only option. And yet the neat prefabs springing up in various locations around the world are also not the reality for most IDPs and refugees. In the end we decided to reflect the fact that over recent years displaced people increasingly find their own shelter, particularly in urban areas, where their comparative invisibility may be both an asset and a risk.

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Refugee settlements and sustainable planning

Brett Moore

We need to develop refugee settlement planning processes that not only facilitate long-term planning but also allow for incremental upgrading. The case of M'Bera in Mauritania illustrates this.

It is estimated that the average lifespan of a refugee camp is 17 years, with such settlements developing gradually and usually organically from an emergency camp into what is fundamentally a new town. With this reality in mind, what role do host governments and the humanitarian community have in the initial camp planning process? How can long-term planning issues be incorporated? How can sustainable planning approaches be utilised? How can settlements be managed so that the physical and social environment is enhanced over the long term?

Most camps are swiftly constructed as a response to rapid displacement, and in many cases are planned incrementally, and even retrospectively, in attempts to impose order on a chaotic, ad hoc camp layout. Even when the initial spatial planning incorporates water and sanitation, shelter, drainage, access roads and physical locations for provision of health, education and other services, it is difficult to take into account the whole lifespan of the camp during the design phase; political resistance, funding limitations and lack of agreement on duration are key factors that prevent longer-term planning.

The political context is a key determinant of the adequacy of a refugee settlement. The attitude of host communities, security concerns and the willingness of a host government to meet their obligations have a direct impact on the viability and adequacy of refugee settlements. In many cases the displaced population is relegated to the poorest land, far from host communities, isolated from services and possessing few natural resources. This limits the reality of integration with existing services, and places a longer-term burden on donors to fund settlements that have little chance of being viable without continuous programmatic support.

The factors for a refugee settlement to thrive, rather than merely to exist, are rarely explicit and easily determined, nor are they stable, but a resilient refugee community will invest in a settlement if enabling factors such as their legal status, security of tenure and economic opportunity exist. If political assurances are possible and resources exist for the gradual development of a camp into a sustainable settlement, coordination of long-term investments from humanitarian and development actors could enable the strategic planning of a community, emulating conventional urban planning approaches as much as possible. Spatial planning approaches where a refugee settlement is seen as a 'node' – connected to the physical, social and economic life of adjacent territories – rather than as an 'island' is a helpful concept both in short-term planning and in strategically organising subsequent interventions.

The case of M'Bera in Mauritania

Around 46,000 people who have fled conflict and insecurity in northern Mali since 2012 live in M'Bera camp in south-east Mauritania, with around 100 people per week still arriving. The shelter approach taken in the camp was initially to provide tents and simple shelter kits consisting of plastic sheeting and fixings. Beginning in 2015, the entire camp has been upgraded using a system of canvas and timber frame construction. This has allowed refugee families an improved shelter that can be put together in ways that emulate the traditional nomadic shelter in materials and size, and which is adaptable from day to night, and able to be easily extended, modified, repaired and rearranged as the needs of refugee families evolve.

UNHCR/Brett Moore

An example of vernacular architecture – local mud-brick buildings – that would be used as a prototype for upgrading M'Bera camp.

As the longer-term needs of M'Bera become clearer, the potential for spatial rearrangement is critical; the increasing formalisation of the settlement will inevitably require some movement of shelters, roads and infrastructure, and re-thinking of the relationship of some critical elements. In this sense, the current shelter design and the overall settlement have the capacity to undergo a rearrangement more suitable to longer-term needs. This material and spatial flexibility also requires a strategic shift from a humanitarian approach to a phased developmental approach. The refugees have indicated that even if a reasonable degree of peace and stability could be achieved in Mali in the near future, a number of them would not return but would remain in M'Bera. In any case, the consensus is that the security situation in Mali will remain unchanged in the medium term and refugees have a realistic understanding that they will remain in M'Bera for several years to come.

The vernacular architecture utilises local materials to make a rectilinear, mud-brick construction with a flat roof and small openings – suited to the climate – that can be readily erected using local knowledge available to both refugee and host communities. Ample opportunity exists for participation in design and construction and as such this is a suitable housing type for a longer-term plan that includes the spatial reorganisation of the settlement.

Around 2,000 people remain from an earlier refugee crisis of the early 1990s in what is known as M'Bera 2 village, adjacent to the current M'Bera camp. The ongoing presence of this refugee community supports the assumption that a core group from M'Bera will also remain and that a long-term settlement upgrade is viable. Some fundamental spatial planning questions therefore arise. Is it feasible to upgrade part of the existing settlement to cater for those who remain? Will this action also encourage others to remain? Would it be better to concentrate efforts in M'Bera 2 in order to benefit the existing long-term displaced and those of the current refugee

population who intend to stay? Such critical considerations have long-term implications for the viability of the settlement and the well-being of the refugee population.

The aspirations of the refugee community and the host community need to be jointly taken into consideration for any long-term solution. Refugees are currently well-integrated socially (inter-marriage occurs and there are kinship linkages) and economically (with shared commercial activities and livestock trade). Joint planning processes between refugees, host community and government need to be established early in the development plan so that social cohesion

and resource management are central to planning decisions, with inclusion of the settlement into district and regional funding and governance structures. This is critical in a context where, for example, livestock numbers, vegetation management and water resources are potential flash-points. Effective consultation and engagement that connect policy, process and spatial planning with the long-term needs of the settlement will need to be developed early on in order to ensure a sustainable process and outcome.

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Shelter in flux

Charles Parrack, Brigitte Piquard and Cathrine Brun

Current humanitarian guidelines do not sufficiently cover what shelter means in volatile and protracted conflict settings, particularly outside organised camps. We propose improved tools that will address that gap.

Humanitarian guidelines and standards for how to work with shelter in displacement have been formulated but in practice are often understood in too general terms and do not always take into account fast-changing and diverse conflict contexts. There is little or no discussion about the relationship between the characteristics of a conflict and how different types of shelter provision will influence the conflict. Guidelines are also still mainly oriented towards more organised approaches to shelter rather than self-built and spontaneous settlements. Additionally, many initiatives concentrate on provision of shelter rather than the building process and the activities that take place around shelter.

Specific characteristics of conflict settings and conflict-induced displacement may directly influence shelter-related projects and initiatives. In our research project on 'shelter in flux', we are particularly concerned with the spatial and temporal dimensions of conflicts. Even in cases where causes or patterns of displacement look similar, there will be variations between types of violence, categories and interests

of stakeholders involved or embedded in conflict, and the risks, assets or vulnerabilities of populations. The particularity of each case makes systematisation of experiences and learning more challenging and the search for common or global guidelines complicated.

A crucial element of the relationship between conflict and shelter is the contestation of space related to land ownership and access to (land) resources – which are often root causes of the conflict. Humanitarian interventions that require access to and use of land will thereby be embedded in the conflict, politicised and may put humanitarian principles at risk. The planned and deliberate destruction of homes or the destruction of cities or land as an instrument of war gives shelter its political nature. This can be witnessed in attitudes of parties to conflict towards specific shelter responses in cases such as Gaza, Syria or South Sudan. Restrictions on access to land, the right to settle, freedom of movement or the use of building materials or building techniques may restrict opportunities for shelter and sometimes force

interventions to be limited to distribution of temporary shelters and Non-Food Items.

Approaching shelter in conflict

Intensity and flows of displacement, trust built between humanitarian organisations and local actors, density of settlements, remaining infrastructure, and policy of host governments at local and national levels are aspects that influence shelter interventions. In our work on 'shelter in flux' we emphasise the inclusion of dimensions of volatility, space and time in understanding the interactions between stakeholders. Shelter in flux works with the shelter sector's already established understanding of 'sheltering' – a process as much as the finished product. Here, shelter is not just about finding safety but about risk mitigation and adaptation to the changing realities on the ground. To enable the integration of sheltering into current guidelines, and with the aim of enhancing

opportunities for changing current practices, we need to document how shelter practices and meanings of shelter in conflict settings have evolved, adapting to actual shelter needs.

Conflict sensitivity and the analysis of spatial dimensions of conflict are key elements, but relatively new trends. Conflict-sensitive shelter programming will enable increased recognition of the risks linked to the politics of shelter by more systematically taking into account relationships between land rights and conflict, restrictions on mobility in conflict zones or disputes over territories. To develop existing shelter practices in conflict settings we thus suggest emphasising three dimensions: integrated responses, resilience and pragmatism.

First, given the spatial and temporal nature of conflicts, shelter specialists and other humanitarian actors are forced to merge rights-based approaches with material needs-based approaches and, in

IOM/Muse Mohammed

A makeshift shelter in the Malakal Protection of Civilians site, South Sudan.

the process, to re-think the boundaries and the possible coordination between shelter and protection. In the Protection of Civilians sites in South Sudan the tension between protection needs and the humanitarian imperative generated just such challenges of prioritisation and coordination.[1] One pilot example of an integrated shelter programme, developed by the Norwegian Refugee Council in Jordan, combines an urban shelter programme and an information counselling and legal assistance programme.[2] Integrated shelter programmes are based on a holistic understanding of shelter and have been applied in post-disaster settings but offer, as in this case, an interesting use of the notion of 'sheltering' in conflict settings. Currently a more systematic approach to the dynamics between gender-based violence and shelter is being adopted by numerous organisations and institutionalised in the Global Protection Cluster's advice on gender-based violence in shelter, settlement and recovery.[3]

Second, while there is some debate over the notion of 'resilience' – the creative capacity of community or society exposed to conflict to resist, adapt, transform and recover from the impacts of conflict in a positive and efficient manner – we suggest further development of its meaning as an integral part of sheltering to 'transformative resilience', which enables the linking together of short- and long-term interventions as well as bridging needs-based and rights-based approaches. Roles and interactions of and between protection, shelter provision and recovery need to apply the lens of resilience to build on local actors' capacities and local practices, or to give displaced people the means to do so. The shift towards cash transfers or investigation into self-recovery can be read through that lens.

Finally, being pragmatic is an interesting starting point for approaches to shelter in flux. Pragmatic humanitarianism is not a new approach and some consider it a move away from, or in opposition to, humanitarian principles. It is consequently criticised as a tendency to think about what works in a shorter-term perspective rather than in the long term. However, pragmatism may also make a more flexible and contextually based approach to humanitarianism feasible. Pragmatism opens up the possibility of using conflict sensitivity in programming to identify what is possible within a given context, to permit the flexibility that is required in volatile settings. Additionally, a pragmatic approach enables more emphasis to be put on what relevant actors are doing – that is, how civilians and humanitarian actors define and approach shelter in their day-to-day lives in the context of a conflict.

Conclusions

Providing shelter in conflict requires an understanding of the temporal and spatial dimensions of a particular conflict setting. With a 'shelter in flux' approach an analysis of the situation on the ground can be used to formulate more locally grounded approaches to shelter, complementing general global guidelines. Provision of shelter takes place in conflict and sometimes with dimensions of integrated responses, elements of resilience and pragmatism. With improved tools to analyse the specific local context in its relationship to shelter provision, humanitarians can develop better understandings of what is both realistic and possible in a given situation.

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An architectural investigation into the provision of refugee accommodation

Plácido Lizancos and Evaristo Zas

When challenged to investigate accommodation options for refugees in their city, architecture students found that there are simple and plausible architectural answers for the integration of refugees in medium-sized European cities such as A Coruña.

As teachers in a school of architecture, we challenged our students to consider how our city – A Coruña, in north-west Spain – would cope if we had to accommodate a large number of refugees. We all felt that what a school of architecture needs to contribute was not the design of yet another new type of emergency shelter. Anyway, most of the existing solutions for emergency shelter appear not to have been used for the purpose for which they were designed; in refugee camps shelters have in reality been built from a limited number of types of accommodation or are huts or shacks that have been improvised by their own residents.

An analysis of the capacity of A Coruña to host groups of people in need of shelter led us to identify a variety of hypothetical possibilities, each of which needed to be looked at from the point of view of their availability, potential for resilience, capacity and suitability for facilitating integration. While we were looking at all possible locations throughout the city, our goal was to design a methodology that could be replicated in any other city similar to ours. We identified three possible solutions:

1. Setting up a camp on a vacant plot of land: This is only possible away from the city centre, since that is where the city's large vacant spaces are. This solution would not be suitable because it would hinder the residents' local integration, particularly that of women, by distancing them from what the city has to offer. It would possibly turn the new settlement into a ghetto and the response would be slow since it would require prior preparation of the land, connecting it to public utilities and building the camp itself.

2. Using unoccupied housing stock: According to official data from 2011, there were 19,228 empty housing units in the city, scattered throughout all the neighbourhoods. This being the case, it would be difficult for social support services to provide care for the newcomers and it would prevent the formation of a critical mass of new residents and thus the creation of their own self-help networks.

3. Using an existing public building: We looked for a building of approximately 5,000 square metres, located in any area, in any state of repair and in any state of use. We excluded privately owned buildings (although the local housing crisis has left many buildings unoccupied) because of legal issues. We also rejected buildings of a type that would be difficult to adapt for permanent residential use, such as sports centres, cultural or religious centres, schools or industrial buildings. Four potential buildings were identified. One is the former provincial prison, now in disuse. Another was an old tobacco factory, currently undergoing transformation into a court building. The third was a former boarding school, now under construction to be turned into a hall of residence for university students. The fourth was a vacant part of a military barracks located in the city's historic centre.

Of these four, the former prison was rejected because it is symbolically charged – a building whose original purpose would be well-known among the city's inhabitants – and we did not consider this appropriate for use for refugees. The second and third cases were already being adapted for public

use. Therefore, the barracks presented the best option for re-purposing.

We visited the building in order to corroborate its potential for adaptation to the residential use we had in mind. We found that part of its facilities are dormitories, and under the same roof kitchens, dining areas and rooms of differing sizes make up a residential compound that could be ready for use at any time. (The rest of the building is still in use by the military.) In our assessment these facilities could immediately be made available for residential use, while the remaining buildings that are currently vacant – halls, warehouses and administrative buildings – could easily be re-purposed at little additional cost.

The structure of the barracks is a regular grid of substantial spans, with two large terraces. The whole compound has an unbroken surrounding wall with windows at regular intervals. These qualities allow for almost any architectural response, free of technical complications. Together with the positive urban qualities of its surroundings, this means that it would satisfy our requirement for the architecture, and its potential for the formation of an inclusive community. The members of that community would then be free to decide on its organisation and management, and how its members interact with each other and with the community that hosts them. Finally, it would allow for modifications that might be required over time.

Conclusions

We are told that there have always been refugees and that they have always suffered. But international law and the most basic ethical principles require the reception of these persons by those of us who should be hosting them. As academics and as an integral part of the general public, we used our particular capacities to identify organisations, donors and individuals related to our discipline that are addressing the refugee situation by developing a variety of architectural artefacts.[1] As a consequence of the development of this research, our students have understood the landscape of existing stakeholders and of

the solutions offered, identifying their own place as future designers (and citizens).

The objective of defining the process and the tactics to be followed in accommodating a large group of refugees in our city led us to the conclusion that the best possible option, given the urgency of the situation, was to use an existing public building located in a central area in order to facilitate the integration of the new neighbours into the existing city, and that would be sufficiently flexible to allow for the interaction of the users themselves with the building. There are simple and plausible architectural answers for the integration of refugees in medium-sized European cities such as A Coruña, provided they are supported by appropriate functional, technical and urban planning considerations.

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The case for self-recovery

Bill Flinn, Holly Schofield and Luisa Miranda Morel

Most families recovering from the catastrophe of a disaster rebuild their own homes. This practice of self-recovery by non-displaced communities has potential for displaced populations too.

Along with over half a million Filipino families, Erica and John Rey and their twelve children saw their house blown away by Typhoon Haiyan. Two years on, they had designed and rebuilt their house. They received some materials, a small amount of cash and technical assistance from an international NGO working with a local partner, but essentially the control, the decision making, the day-to-day building were all their own. They are 'self-recovering'. International and national aid agencies tend to reach between 10 and 20% of those whose housing has been damaged or destroyed in a major disaster.[1] By implication, 80-90% self-recover. With little or no outside support, these families will, in most cases, rebuild their houses with the same vulnerabilities and bad building practices that had been contributory factors to the damage, economic loss, injury or death.

Increasingly, the shelter sector has become aware that the conventional approach to post-disaster housing recovery is only partially fit for purpose. This approach is characterised by an emergency phase typically of three months, followed by early recovery, and then reconstruction. The adoption of transitional or temporary shelters has been popular in recent emergencies – one-room dwellings which are only intended to bridge a gap of a few years until the family rebuilds a permanent house but which frequently exhaust the aid budget and consequently become sub-standard long-term homes. Self-recovery programmes, by contrast, propose that all support should be directed towards the ultimate aim of a safer, permanent house. Although the process is currently little understood, the shelter sector is beginning to develop effective and appropriate approaches to supporting the practice.

The Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan highlights many of the advantages, and some of the pitfalls, of a self-recovery programme. First among the positives is the control, agency and choice exercised by the family. The most striking visual evidence of the sense of ownership stimulated by self-recovery is the delightfully designed woven bamboo screens and the bewildering array of potted plants that adorn the front of every house. A self-recovery approach

CARE International UK

Self-recovery in Vanuatu.

also reconciles choice and control with an emphasis on safer building methods, through training and community accompaniment. By training local builders in 'build back safer' techniques, there is a legacy of better building practice and long-term disaster risk reduction. Each family builds according to its needs (and also, of course, according to its means – a potential negative). By contrast, the off-the-shelf, one-size-fits-all approach of many conventional programmes struggles to assimilate this diversity of need.

Furthermore, many rural Filipino families supplement their income with tiny general stores that are easily incorporated into these self-built, self-designed homes. Thus control over design makes an important contribution to the recovery of livelihoods. Self-recovery has the potential to be quick and effective: a very large number of families can be reached swiftly with cash, some materials and technical assistance and training. As the quantity of cash is much less than the actual cost of the house, the budget can reach many more households than a conventional complete-house programme. Investment in self-build housing in Pakistan after the 2010 floods was found to be comparable, per house, to the cost of a tent.[2]

The Philippines experience also demonstrates some of the challenges confronting a self-recovery programme. Inconsistent technical quality is the most evident. 'Building back safer' was in this case promoted through four simple construction messages but compliance was variable. Beneficiary families were subject to a selection process that inevitably excluded a significant portion of the population. The legacy of better building practice therefore failed to permeate throughout the community: many families rebuilt with no improvements to safety. While shelter and livelihoods were integrated, water and sanitation were not; the opportunities to harvest rainwater from new metal roofs and to further the government's 'zero open defecation' campaign were missed.

What works well in the Philippines may not work elsewhere. It is also certainly true that the widespread practice of community self-help in the Philippines and fairly ready access to markets create good conditions for a self-recovery approach. Nonetheless, recent disasters caused by storms, earthquakes and floods in a variety of contexts have shown that a self-recovery approach is often appropriate. Communities are never passive, and the initiation of reconstruction and recovery is an inevitable process.

In 2015, Cyclone Pam devastated the southern islands of the Pacific nation of Vanuatu. Some villages lost almost every house. Within days the families were salvaging material, drying out the palm thatch and beginning to rebuild their homes. There are no markets and few roads on the most affected island of Tanna, and so it was clear from the outset that cash would not be appropriate. The houses there are made almost entirely from natural materials gathered from the nearby forests. Despite considerable logistical challenges, a training programme coupled with distribution of a fixing kit (nails and cyclone strapping) began within a few weeks to support the self-recovery process.

By contrast, self-recovery after the 2015 Gorkha earthquake in Nepal was much less in evidence. A number of factors influenced both the self-recovery process itself and organisational support to it: the stone construction of the housing, the logistics of the mountainous terrain, the delayed delivery of government subsidies, and the need to comply with building codes and standards.

Self-recovery for displaced populations

Research into self-recovery after disasters is fairly recent and has largely concentrated on rural communities that have been affected by 'natural' events such as storms, earthquakes and flooding. On the whole these families were not displaced, although disasters are also a cause of forced migration. There are clear differences between the family that has lost its house in a storm and the refugee or IDP family fleeing their home. The former can build back on its own land; the latter may have to settle in a camp or precariously on the edge of a city. Are there, nonetheless, potential benefits from looking at shelter solutions for displaced and migrant populations through the lens of self-recovery?

Only some 30% of refugees and IDPs across the world are housed by international organisations. The remaining 70% are in rented accommodation, hosted by friends and family, sleeping rough or in home-made makeshift shelters. In one way or another they are 'self-recovering' – if by that we mean the process of recovery, or coping, using the family's own resources, without significant outside intervention and with considerable control over their pathway to recovery. There are many examples of refugees, IDPs and disaster-displaced people – particularly in urban settings – who have by this definition self-recovered.

Refugees from the former Spanish colony of Western Sahara have lived in camps in Algeria since 1976. The harsh desert climate and their nomadic heritage demand very specific solutions to their housing needs. With temperatures reaching 50°C during the day but it being cold at night, the Sahrawi have two dwellings: a large green tent and a mud-brick house with windows close to the ground for cool ventilation. The solidity and thermal mass of the mud bricks and the well-ventilated airy tent provide a suitable combination of environments. International NGOs and solidarity groups provide canvas for the tents but the design, fabrication and siting are entirely controlled by the refugees. In terms of control, choice and agency – at least with respect to their housing – they are self-recovering.

In the Kakuma refugee camp, opened in north-west Kenya in 1992, many residents have developed a deep sense of pride in their houses. They have decorated them to their individual tastes and values, and planted trees and flowers outside, even engaging in competition with neighbours over the personalisation of living spaces.[3] Such actions demonstrate the ways in which self-recovery, as understood here, also occurs in situations of protracted displacement.

It is evident that self-recovery in the context of a natural disaster is a spontaneous process. It is also evident that many displaced populations too exercise choice and agency over their housing options. Frequently refugees and IDPs are left with no other choice than to cope on their own. Both the potential for self-recovery programmes and the benefits of an approach that has more to do with empowerment than actual construction might be relevant – although undeniably different in nuance, detail and context from post-disaster situations – to the circumstances of refugees, IDPs and those displaced by disaster.

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Low-cost, locally available shelters in Pakistan

Ammarah Mubarak and Saad Hafeez

Flooding in 2010 affected 18 million people in Pakistan. With declining donor funds and flooding again in 2011 and 2012, the humanitarian community required low-cost solutions that could be scaled up to meet both the immediate and the transitional needs of large populations in differing geographical areas.

The approach of the One Room Shelter Programme that IOM (the UN Migration Agency) Pakistan implemented to meet the recovery needs of affected populations in 2010 marked a move away from the usual emergency response. It favoured vernacular building methods and working with practitioners and communities alike to achieve large-scale ownership of low-cost houses, and was able to help over 77,000 disaster-affected families to construct disaster-resilient shelters. The construction used local traditional techniques and materials, thereby minimising the adverse environmental and labour-related impacts of shelters that use industrial materials and fired bricks. By advocating for a locally produced solution, the programme took on two other major challenges: convincing humanitarian stakeholders to adopt new guidelines and effecting long-term behavioural change in communities.

Constructing for disaster risk resilience

The overriding preference of humanitarian actors for using industrial materials for shelters stems from assumptions regarding the superiority of modern building materials over local materials and building traditions, ignoring the adverse environmental and social impacts of the former. The One Room Shelter model also gives scope for personalising the resulting shelter and can in effect mainstream disaster risk reduction (DRR).

The One Room Shelter is a low-cost, indigenous shelter solution with minimal environmental impact. Through detailed village-level training, the programme encouraged communities to adopt DRR techniques such as raising the plinth, reinforcing the base of the wall with a 'toe'

and using a low-cost mud-lime combination to plaster walls. This building method allowed women to participate in the re-construction of shelters, as opposed to the contractor-driven approach where industrialised materials were either handled directly by NGO teams or by builders. People's participation in their own recovery – 'self-recovery' – increased their ownership of and pride in the new shelters, evident in the decorations and designs on wall surfaces. The One Room Shelter programme demonstrated that locally appropriate, safer shelter solutions which capitalise on indigenous techniques and capacities can be implemented at low cost.

Achieving consensus and buy-in of national and provincial government counterparts and NGOs in the shelter working group regarding the proposed approach was a key challenge for the programme. It was widely considered, at the time, that such shelters were not *pukka*, that is, of good quality, but built in a traditional way and therefore not robust. Significant political back-and-forth between national and provincial disaster management agencies followed, as the realisation of the vast need and limited funding made the One Room Shelter approach more palatable.

During the pilot, aid recipients were given a range of options in terms of materials they could use. However, providing a choice of the materials to be delivered, detailed technical advice and capacity building was impossible to provide at a sufficient scale. IOM advocated strongly for households to choose a vernacular design that suits the local terrain and environment better than modern manufactured materials, and at a lower cost. Detailed data-collection exercises and consultations with technical stakeholders led to guidelines promoting

a mud-lime one-room structure as the model, adapted to the local context.

Nearly 11,750 community training sessions were carried out for over 500,000 individuals and community members including more than 130,000 women. Based on learning from the pilot, the training was explicitly hands-on and practical and was often complemented by building of demonstration shelters. At this scale, standardisation of the quality of training packages across implementing partners proved challenging but controls such as community focal persons, direct monitoring and complaints mechanisms ensured quality as far as possible.

Community ownership through cash

In contrast to the standard modality for providing shelter materials, the programme provided direct cash support that enabled households to make choices regarding design, use of materials and the nature of the construction process while at the same time receiving technical training. Cash support was conditional on interim milestones in the construction process being met and tranches were paid out after quality assurance monitoring.

An evaluation of the 2011-12 programme found that respondents overwhelmingly used the cash grants exclusively for shelter construction. However, even though it also reported that the grants were sufficient, anecdotal evidence pointed to recipients having to spend extra for transportation of materials and procurement of additional materials, primarily doors and windows. However, this cash-based approach allowed people choice, supported the communities' own self-help capacities and contributed to the revitalisation of local markets and supply chains.

IOM utilised good practice from micro-finance projects and exchanged the One Room Shelter committee at village level for a focal point for each group of beneficiary households. This person was nominated by the people constructing shelters as someone they trusted to represent them with the local partner and IOM. This was found to be more effective in taking advantage of peer pressure to ensure completion of all buildings within an agreed time-scale in a particular community.

Often this individual was a local leader – a local religious leader, teacher or businessman/woman. They had to be literate and be able to open a bank account. They received the cash payments on behalf of the group and distributed them. By having these nominated leaders undertaking the cash disbursement and monitoring progress, the programme greatly increased coverage to include women, the elderly, the disabled and others not otherwise able or, due to cultural constraints, not willing to be part of the programme.[1]

Local procurement was challenging for project participants in 50% of cases, primarily because of inflated material costs during the emergency, problems with transport and poor quality materials. However, in most cases, the involvement of community focal persons and NGO staff in local mediation and mass procurement on behalf of consenting communities mitigated these challenges.

The ability to build the shelters was also strongly influenced by the agricultural season, as households hard-pressed for financial resources could not afford to lose their main source of income. In most cases, this meant that women undertook much of the construction work while the men worked in the fields. Despite this, there was no reported community resentment of the self-recovery model. In fact, high levels of ownership were evidenced by beneficiaries even expending resources in personalising buildings.

Conclusion

To strengthen the evidence base for future responses, the Shelter Working Group in Pakistan is undertaking research to understand the relative resilience, sustainability and acceptability of differing shelter types. This will enable them to provide scientifically tested guidance on low-cost shelter solutions that are flood-resistant, compatible with vernacular architecture and indigenous construction techniques, minimise environmental impacts

and offer the best value for money, even though the question of durability has not yet been comprehensively answered.

The One Room Shelter strategy introduced a low-cost construction model to communities in rural Sindh who were previously unaware of flood protection measures, and using cash enabled them to 'learn by doing'. When evaluated, the programme was said to have "met its objectives in general and [to be] universally appreciated by beneficiaries […] especially women who are the traditional builders in southern Sindh".[2] Interestingly, in addition to the programme's achievements, there were a few anecdotal cases of women later complementing their incomes using masonry skills learnt during construction. In addition, beneficiaries talked about multiple DRR features that they had learnt about and applied during the construction process. However, evidence of, for example,

copying of the techniques of the One Room Shelter by people not receiving assistance remains limited. Nevertheless, this apparently successful 'occupier-driven' reconstruction process helped maximise coverage of the most vulnerable households; and similar implementation strategies continue to inform shelter recovery programming in 2017.

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Pre-fabricated or freely fabricated?

Irit Katz

The architectural forms of emergency shelters and the ways they are created play a significant role in the ability of their inhabitants to deal with their displacement and to perhaps feel, even temporarily, at home.

The human need to dwell involves a form of feeling 'at home' in inhabiting, even for a short time, a place which we feel belongs to us and in which we belong. This feeling is fractured by displacement. First it is fractured by the urgent necessity to leave home and homeland, accompanied by the fear that what is left behind will be changed forever. It is then damaged again by the uncertainty of the temporary shelters along the way. In this troubled situation the meaning of shelter is often stripped down to its basic function of physical protection while its more complex roles in security and belonging are suspended. Emergency shelters cannot compensate for this rupture and for the multiple uncertainties in the lives of forced migrants; however, their architectural differences and the distinct spaces they create significantly influence their dwellers.

The multiple forms of emergency shelters can be broadly divided into two main types, involving different actors and creating distinct spatial forms. The first type could be defined as the pre-fabricated, or 'pre-fab', shelter, created from industrially manufactured components which can be easily transported and quickly assembled on site. The second type is a shelter which is often built by the displaced people themselves with the use of available materials and building techniques, a shelter which we can call 'free-fab', freely fabricated not according to a specific design and specification but relying on the improvisational skills and available resources of the forced migrants.

Architectural debates are often concerned with the relations between form and function. However the importance in the identification of these two shelter types is not

only in understanding their more obvious architectural characteristics but also in identifying the relation between their mode of inhabitation and their mode of production, which has important effects on people's lives.

Pre-fabricated shelter

The history of the pre-fabricated shelter goes back to the period of early modernity when industrially manufactured tents and huts were used for colonial expansion and rapid military deployment. More recently, timber, canvas or steel huts were transported across the globe to house soldiers or resettle civilian populations, a method which was later adopted by humanitarian agencies in the creation of the first displaced persons camps. This method continues today with other pre-fab shelters such as re-purposed shipping containers or the refugee housing unit flat-pack.[1] While there is huge variety in the design of these humanitarian shelters, they tend to respond to a very basic architectural brief. They need to shelter the bodies of a certain number of individuals in varied weather conditions

for a temporary period; they need to be fairly cheap; and they should be easily transportable to different parts of the world. For these reasons these shelters are usually designed as pre-fabricated kits which can be rapidly erected, often by unskilled labour.

While these pre-fab shelters are sometimes 'state of the art' building technology, they are designed to answer general needs in no particular location and for no particular people. The materials used are often suitable to some climates better than to others; their methods of construction often resist alteration and appropriation by their users and cannot be easily adjusted to particular human needs and habits; and their deployment on site in large numbers, often in a grid which is easy to create, control and manage, usually produces repetitive and low-quality spaces which serve a particular purpose but are alienating to their inhabitants. The idea that these pre-fab shelters could be folded back into their original kits and be reused as the perfect sustainable solution for displacement is also erroneous; they are damaged quite quickly when they are lived in and cannot

Irit Katz

The container camp and part of the Calais Jungle, April 2016.

be reused later. All of these difficulties are not coincidental but symptomatic of the very way these shelters are designed.

While these shelters are helpful in protecting displaced people from the sun and rain and provide minimal privacy, they often form impersonal spaces which are easily created, managed and later erased but cannot be easily adapted to provide a sense of belonging. This impersonal nature is not necessarily a result of poor design or architectural ignorance but often goes together with the objectives of those who purchase and deploy them but will not live in them.

Freely fabricated

Often created by their own inhabitants and by others who assist them, freely fabricated emergency shelters not only form very different environments but their mode of creation has a different influence on the forced migrants who inhabit them. These shelters are created from any available material or resource which can be found close to the site, using inventive construction methods to hold them together. The free-fab shelters usually look very different from one another as they are produced by different people according to the everyday needs, customs and habits of their residents.

In the Calais 'Jungle', the Darfurian communities created compounds similar to their traditional ones in Darfur, while the shelters created by Afghans in the Jungle's high street became grocery stores, restaurants and barber shops by day, allowing the refugees to earn a living. The Jungle had a very strong 'sense of place' in which the shelters were constructed in different forms and sizes. They created a site-specific and community-specific architectural environment in which many of the forced migrants developed a less impersonal sense of place and identity.

The ability of forced migrants to produce their own spaces challenges, and sometimes changes, the rules that control them and their resources; it empowers them and allows them to begin to re-establish themselves as autonomous subjects in their new circumstances. The new places that they create not only protect them from the elements but also support them in regaining a sense of agency in their new spaces of refuge, enabling them in some cases to develop relations of solidarity with host communities that assist them in constructing these spaces, and to influence their new environments while negotiating change.

Evolving architecture of emergency shelters

It is also the case that pre-fab units may evolve over time into free-fab shelters through processes of informalisation and participatory architecture when they are changed and appropriated by their dwellers. This possibility is dependent on two main factors: first, the pre-fab shelters themselves, including their form and the materials used, and second, the mode of governance in the camp, if it encourages the shelters' appropriation. The way in which shelters are informalised often combines the advantages of the pre-fabricated and the freely fabricated types; this reality could assist architects and designers in rethinking shelters not only as rigid solutions but also to be more flexible and adaptable. Shelters that are produced so as to allow for their rapid deployment could also be designed as structures which could be easily changed, moved, and re-appropriated by their residents over time according to their specific needs and preferences. These emergency shelters could also be units that can become part of urban environments, which are themselves constantly evolving, or become the nucleus of permanent settlements in cases of protracted displacement. As such they may function as the nuclei of more elaborate housing units which develop over time, forming, even temporarily, home-like spaces of identity and belonging.

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1. See article in this issue by Märta Terne, Johan Karlsson and Christian Gustafsson.

Shelter for refugees arriving in Greece, 2015-17

John F Wain

Mass arrivals in Greece since 2015 have far exceeded the supply of acceptable shelter. The attempts to provide solutions continues.

Over one million refugees and migrants undertook the perilous journey into Europe from early 2015. At the start of this emergency the enormous number of arrivals on the Aegean islands of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Leros and Kos overwhelmed local municipality accommodation capacity and their stocks of appropriate shelter solutions. The Greek government requested assistance with establishing 'hotspots' through which all new arrivals were required to pass for registration. In an ideal world, with registration systems adequately functioning, shelter space capacity maximised and regular ferries taking people off the islands, services should have been able to cope. However, the numbers were unmanageable.

The Moria hotspot on Lesbos occupies a challenging site, originally designed in 2013 as a detention centre. The site had accommodation capacity in dormitories for around 700 persons whereas the need at this time was closer to 2,300 and no amount of temporary accommodation solutions was going to bridge the gap. Unfortunately, in the absence of a new site, the shelter conditions were and still are well below standard.

In addition to a limited number of standard family tents – the backbone of global emergency shelter response – over 300 refugee housing units (RHUs) were installed on Lesbos and proved very effective as temporary shelter or for use as service support space at the various landing points, Moria registration centre and an overflow site at Kara Tepe. The RHU is a pre-packaged kit, composed of several basic elements, including a lightweight steel frame, roof and wall panels, door and windows, floor covering, solar energy system (lamp and phone charger) and an innovative anchoring system. Deployment is generally accompanied by on-site training.

RHUs are essentially emergency shelter accommodation, used here primarily for people in transit, so ownership and a sense of home, even temporarily, were sadly absent. This led to the shelters being heavily used and often mis-treated. The understandable frustrations felt by people on the move due to frequent bureaucratic delays and unclear proceedures contributed to the heavy wear and tear. It became necessary to develop detailed care and maintenance check lists, enhance design modifications and create a comprehensive spare parts package to keep the RHU units functioning and in good order.

It became clear that there was a need for large-capacity 'waiting areas' for people waiting significant periods to have their

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arrival formalities addressed. In practically all the bigger sites in Greece, large tents originally designed as mobile warehouses were used to provide covered areas for waiting, temporary registration or transit. These are simply not developed and fitted out for human habitation, however, and are not fit to be used as overnight accommodation. Many innovative solutions were developed to make these spaces more suitable as a day shelter at least.

Types and standards

There were challenges in applying appropriate national and international shelter standards. Humanitarian minimum standards in shelter, settlement and non-food items could not always be met in the only available locations, nor were there suitable Greek national guidelines to refer to for the emergency phase. In addition, the European Union legal framework is generally devoid of clear technical guidelines. As the situation stabilised, there were attempts

through the Shelter Working Group in Athens to achieve consensus on minimum standards; in the initial phases, however, general direction to achieve a consistent level of response and to develop indicators against which to measure performance was needed from relevant technical units.

A typology was developed to assist field-based technical and programme staff in planning and implementing solutions. The different categories were defined as:

- waiting areas, intended for a stay of up to 24 hours and without formal facilities for overnight stay

- transit accommodation, intended for a stay of up to five days, with facilities for overnight sleeping

- mid- and long-term accommodation, intended for periods longer than five days (which may include collective centres, pre-fabricated structures, purpose-built accommodation, RHUs and winterised emergency tents).

Refugee Housing Unit, Kare Tepe, Lesbos, Greece.

Winterisation presented another challenge requiring guidance. It was clear that none of the shelter types deployed would provide sufficient protection from the European winter's cold weather without modifications and the inclusion of a heating source. The use of existing buildings was the preferred solution as solid structures provide a greater level of insulation than temporary shelter options and can be more efficiently heated. Existing structures are also designed for the prevailing local climate including resistance to wind and snow loads. Unfortunately, in Greece during the winter of 2015-16 there were limited existing structures available in the locations where refugees were present and the refugees wanted to keep moving north, often in the direction of more extreme weather conditions.

Solutions to winterise both the family tents and the RHUs were required. A winterisation kit for the family tent was developed which included insulated sleeping mats, an insulation liner and partition, a heat-resistant floor panel (for positioning a stove) and a heat-resistant sleeve (for the stove chimney to pass through the tent wall). The RHUs required a bespoke solution consisting of an elevated insulated floor, roof covering to prevent leaking, and an internal heat source. As the majority of sites did not have appropriate mains electrical connections, the identification of an appropriate and acceptable heat source was the biggest challenge. Safety of occupants as well as tamper-proof solutions led to gas heaters being chosen as the preferred solution; however, wide acceptability of this solution took considerable time to achieve, leading to periods of distress for shelter residents and often to refugees resorting to unsafe and environmentally degrading practices in order to keep warm.

The transition to longer-term solutions

Although the operating environment in Greece has changed significantly since the end of 2015, thousands of people are still accommodated in sites which are only now beginning to offer sufficient protection from the elements and to be equipped with proper access to water, sanitation and cooking facilities. The winterisation strategy for the winter of 2016-17 focused on replacing emergency shelters with durable pre-fabricated solutions coupled with infrastructure upgrades (water, sanitation and electricity) and has had positive results.

Large cities in Greece have been severely affected by the economic crisis, with reduced infrastructural development. The country's public housing agency was forced to close in 2012 and the housing and construction market has been almost paralysed. It is time that shelter initiatives move on to benefit the urban and suburban economies, focusing on sustainability issues by using, for example, the existing housing stock and unused buildings, and supporting the construction sector through rehabilitation and reconversion projects.

As of February 2017, there were an estimated 62,500 refugees in Greece spread across the mainland and the islands and consistently low levels of new arrivals. There still remains considerable work to be done and decisions to be made which will affect finalisation of a revised shelter and settlement strategy which is evolving from transitional to longer-term solutions. It is certain that some sites will remain, to cater for existing and contingency needs, and many sites will require decommissioning.

In addition to refugees accommodated in the 'hosting sites' on the mainland and the islands, there are numerous organisations providing spaces in apartments, hotels, host families and renovated buildings. It is likely that this accommodation scheme will be expanded by the European Commission to ensure all refugees in Greece are given access to standards of shelter appropriate to the European context while they await a decision on their fate. Any such expanded scheme presents significant opportunities for incorporation of solutions which benefit both the refugees and the host communities in which they reside.

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From drawing-board to Jungle

Pedro Sáez and Carmen García

Our research and development department has been working on a shelter solution in accordance with the requirement of improving logistics, installation, flexibility, the use of natural resources and, above all, the improvement of living conditions. In the end we went back to more traditional architectural systems, combining them with advanced technological materials.

Our company learnt two things in particular from our first couple of experiences of dealing with shelter in displacement. Firstly, we became aware of the complications that exist around access to decent accommodation, making it inaccessible for much of the population. Secondly, we realised that the accumulated knowledge regarding sustainable construction – that is, construction that makes use of local materials and is respectful of the environment – has been losing ground to a non-sustainable model. This is what prompted us to accept the challenge of bringing back many of these forgotten aspects and how Suricatta Systems emerged as a multidisciplinary project offering a housing solution that can improve the living conditions of people affected by forced displacement.

The first experience was in 2011 when an earthquake shook the southern Spanish city of Lorca. Urbana IDR (a company specialising in building renovation, repairs and maintenance) sent a team to inspect, reinforce and/or evacuate the homes affected and buildings that are part of the city's architectural heritage. That work led to contacts with the non-governmental organisation (NGO) Bomberos en Acción (Firefighters in Action), which some months later invited us to participate in a shelter construction project

in Haiti. That was the second experience, during which we had the opportunity to verify in situ the conditions in which those affected find themselves, as well as to learn about the difficult working conditions that assistance agencies have to face.

The temporary structures that are generally used do not meet the multiple programmatic, cultural and environmental needs that exist in displacement situations and unfortunately the majority of settlements that are set up as temporary settlements end up becoming permanent. In the best case, the solution for these more permanent settlements is to replace the tents with metal containers which are costly, difficult to transport and install, and require additional equipment and facilities in order to provide a minimum quality of life. We found that there is no comprehensive solution for

'Learning for unity and understanding' at Adult Learning Centre, Dunkirk.

addressing the multiple challenges that designers face. We came across plenty of ideas, impressive projects and images in digital format, but only a few have crossed the barrier to become reality.

So we set ourselves some very demanding goals in terms of improving logistics, installation, flexibility, the use of natural resources and, above all, the improvement of living conditions. Over the past few years we have been working towards a solution in accordance with these requirements – and this has in the end involved going back to more traditional architectural systems and combining them with advanced technological materials.

We focused first on developing accommodation for refugee camps (2013), then accommodation for troops, doctors and personnel on peace missions (2014), leading finally to a modular architectural solution (2015). During this period we received support from both public and private organisations. Collaborators in the actual development include the University of Alicante's Department of Civil Engineering on the design, structural analysis and testing, and AIMPLAS (Technological Plastics Institute) which provided technical assistance in materials, processes and suppliers.

Implementation and adaptation

SURI – Shelter Units for Rapid Installation – is a low-cost modular housing product, conceived with sustainability in mind, allowing communities to be set up quickly and with a view to their being long-lasting. It is designed to ensure good living conditions from the outset, being structurally robust, waterproof, insulated, ventilated and with natural lighting. It can be easily adapted to the environment as a temporary solution or become a permanent home. It is lightweight, easy to transport and quick to assemble, energy-efficient, versatile and removable, allowing re-use over time.

We have now taken this outside the sphere of our main activity into the humanitarian aid sector. Finding that the major organisations are generally not open to small and innovative contributions, especially from outside the sector, we carried out the first implementation of our design in this sector at the now defunct 'Jungle' camp in Calais, where it was used as a shelter for orphaned children by a small local non-governmental organisation, Jersey Builders for Refugees (JBR). The harsh weather conditions required us to adapt the interior with a waterproof, insulating and breathable winterisation kit, improving the thermal behaviour of the unit, thereby reducing heat loss and problems related to humidity and mud, and increasing comfort for the residents.

During the installation of the first units in Calais we monitored them closely as it was the first time they had been used in a humanitarian setting. JBR reported on how they had been employed by the users and later – as the product was well received – JBR contacted us again to develop a language learning centre in the La Linière camp in Dunkirk. On this occasion, two shelters were installed, connected at right angles to create a space that would accommodate two groups of 15 people each. Given that the weather conditions are very similar to those in Calais, we included the winterisation kit, in this case surfacing the interior of the vertical walls with blackboards for teaching.

In order to monitor the installation's performance and its suitability for the users, we have maintained contact with those in charge of running the centre and we have visited the site to check its condition and obtain reports from both the teaching team and the students. We are currently developing different projects with several NGOs as a result of the visibility the product gained following its implementation in the camps in the north of France and the lessons we learned in designing and implementing these solutions.

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The diversity of data needed to drive design

Märta Terne, Johan Karlsson and Christian Gustafsson,

The developers of the Refugee Housing Unit know every aspect and component of their design but can never know what it is like to wake up in one of them every day. Likewise, the end user does not have the tools or resources to make comprehensive changes to its design. The point is about how to work together on it.

The Better Shelter or the Refugee Housing Unit (RHU) is a joint project of Swedish social enterprise Better Shelter, UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency) and the IKEA Foundation. The project, initiated in 2010, was rolled out on a large scale in 2015, and thousands of shelters have been shipped to refugee camps, transit sites and emergency response programmes in Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia to be used as accommodation for displaced persons or as clinics, offices and storage space by NGOs.

The scope of the Refugee Housing Unit project has from the onset been to develop a significantly improved emergency shelter solution for refugee contexts in cases where use of local materials is not an option. While it is evident that there are no 'one size fits all' solutions, an understanding of end users' needs is required to inform design decisions even for a global shelter solution.

User interviews and pilot tests have been an integral part of the design efforts. While the design team is aware that the information gathered cannot be viewed as representative for all users and contexts, it has been used to make generalising assumptions about user needs at a global level. The key challenge in this process is not only to make relevant assumptions but also to balance these assumptions against more tangible and measurable requirements such as costs of production, adaptation of product design to production conditions, and distribution.

During the early phase of developing the RHU, a pilot project was set up in camps in Dollo Ado, Ethiopia, with 39 families moving into the housing units for an intensive six-month testing period, providing vital feedback to the design team. Not all of the refugees were satisfied with certain aspects of the units, like the placement of the doors or the light levels available through the windows on cloudy days. Some manufacturing problems were also identified, and issues that arose with heavier than expected winds or strong sun. Before wider release in 2015 the shelter design was refined in response to this feedback and the units were modified to be more comfortable in high temperatures, for example, and packaged to allow for easier assembly. With several thousand shelters in use around the world, the shelters have been evaluated on a larger scale and an updated version is due to be released in 2017.

While technical testing in different climates is vital in our case, we also depend on subjective information from the individuals

UNHCR/D Corcoran

RHU shelters are being used and tested in the field by Somali refugees living in Hilaweyn refugee camp, Dollo Ado, Ethiopia.

who occupy our shelters. Retrieving their feedback in a continuous, structured manner is difficult. The developer's physical presence in the field at times is therefore essential, for technical testing as well as for further development reflecting the actual needs of the beneficiaries.

Geographical and cultural distance

How do we as a private sector partner based in Europe make sure we do not lose control over the product life cycle and user feedback after the product has left our drawing board and our warehouse, since we do not have a direct mandate with the end users, and function only as a provider of products and services? We collect quantitative data through electronically distributed surveys and through sales and distribution figures, but retrieving structured qualitative feedback from end users on personal, regional or cultural experiences requires research such as interviews, focus groups and observations which we in many cases have no or very limited access to.

Unlike IKEA's customers, the end user in a refugee or IDP camp does not make the choice of what emergency or post-emergency shelter they wish to live in. This is decided by the humanitarian organisations and/or the donors, which biases the product development towards the purchaser and donor as their voices have a channel and proximity. While they know a lot about specific end users' needs, they remain an intermediary. The same goes for our design team; trained in European design schools, we carry a certain heritage that may or may not be relevant in all contexts.

Is it at all possible to aggregate data from individual communities to inform a general truth of the shelter and human needs? To overcome this challenge we designed a shelter that is modular, letting users adapt it to their needs as much as possible. The simplicity of the design allows the shelter to function as a blank canvas for residents to treat as they please, both aesthetically and functionally. The shelter was designed, and is being continuously developed, with the end users' ability to adapt it in mind.

Lessons

Among the things we have learned from the collaboration over the RHU and trialling it with displaced people are the following:

- It is important to establish feedback guidelines and processes for end users' opinions and experiences – and to do this early on in the project. Design partners must figure out what type of intelligence they most require from the end user and operational partners in the field must make sure that they can accommodate the gathering of this information.

- Interview co-workers from all levels and departments in partner organisations to understand requirements on the ground as well as logistical and procurement processes.

- Accept that you will never receive all the feedback you want but utilise the information you get as much as possible.

- Your solution will be used in a wide range of contexts and will not be a perfect fit everywhere.

- Designers alone cannot resolve design problems – we need the support of anthropologists, sociologists and humanitarian experts to research human needs beyond the physical shelter (that is, home, community, safety, dignity).

- There is value in diversity among design partners to represent different realities in order to create a more versatile product and to ensure that the concept can be implemented in as many contexts and to meet as many needs as possible.

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Choice in shelter solutions in Somalia

Martijn Goddeeris and Gregg McDonald

Giving future residents of shelters a choice in the style of building and getting them involved in the construction is empowering and builds capacity.

The complex, inter-linked and multi-dimensional humanitarian challenges in Somalia require equally complex responses in order to be able to bolster the resilience of Somali people. The Somalia Shelter Cluster (SSC) and its partners have historically provided emergency assistance to newly displaced people; however, since the beginning of 2013 the overall security situation has progressively improved, allowing the SSC members to place more emphasis on more durable and sustainable shelter solutions for persons who have been displaced for protracted periods. The SSC identified land tenure, urban planning and livelihood development, private sector engagement, and sustainable solutions as the four key elements to consider.

Land tenure is the most problematic of these, with more than 1.1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Somalia, often living in makeshift shelters and at significant risk of forcible eviction. In the urban centres to which many are attracted, humanitarian and development actors have begun engagement with government counterparts on planning initiatives to avoid environmental degradation and the creation of slums.

SSC partners have recognised the importance of investing in shelter solutions for refugee returns too and have embarked on exercises to avoid tensions between returnees and the existing local urban poor and IDP groups. This involves integrated programming with strong linkages with water and sanitation infrastructure, and with the education, health, protection and livelihood sectors. There are in addition strong opportunities to engage with the private construction sector to support a sustainable approach for the urban poor and displaced populations.

The Dollow experience

In Dollow, where IDPs continue to arrive, extensive and lengthy consultation and engagement with the local authorities, community elders and IDP camp managers have allowed identification of the most vulnerable households – drawn from both the IDP camps and the host community in order to foster social cohesion. The local authorities have ensured that land will be made available to the selected IDP beneficiaries and the land tenure arrangements will safeguard against eviction, although they do not allow sale or transfer of the property.

In one programme run by an SSC member, prototypes of shelters of different types were constructed to similar budgets and the beneficiaries were given the information on the different aspects of each type. They were then allowed to choose a shelter type based on their needs and preferences. The three different prototypes were made of cement blocks, stabilised soil blocks and corrugated iron sheets. Less than 20% of the beneficiaries opted for the cement house;

World Vision/Marion Vera Aitooch

An IDP family with their new shelter in Dollow, Somalia. "I selected the cement-block house because the size is good for my family and it is cool inside."

Somalia Humanitarian Fund shelter project, Somalia.

the rest opted for the larger corrugated iron sheet house, with adequate space and privacy being the main determining factors for their selection. It would be useful to do further research to better understand the choices that the beneficiaries made.

With a view to empowerment, community members were engaged in the building of their own houses, which enabled them to learn important skills (and thereby to increase their livelihood opportunities) and to have a greater sense of ownership.

The Kismaayo experience

Another project undertaken by SSC partners was in the city of Kismaayo, where in 2013 most IDPs lived in former government buildings, or were making settlements on government land. A wave of evictions to free up a number of these public facilities greatly exacerbated an already dire situation. From 2014, the local government counterparts worked closely with the SSC and its member organisations in securing longer-term land tenure solutions. An initial allocation of permanent land was deemed too far away and dangerous by the IDPs but at the end of 2015 the administration was able to find permanent suitable land on the outskirts of the city.

To promote an informed choice, two model types were piloted in the area based on local building culture which takes into account locally available resources, and adapted to social constraints, local climate and natural risks. The potential of local building culture is often not sufficiently considered in construction programmes, even though solutions based on local culture help to put beneficiaries at the centre of the decision-making process. After soil testing and looking at the quality of the stabilised soil blocks, a pilot soil-block house was built in one of the communities surrounding the relocation site. Another model made from plywood was also made at a similar cost in order to provide the beneficiaries with choices.

Community leaders from both the host and IDP communities were invited to visit the project and give their views. The communities overwhelmingly chose the soil-block house over the plywood structure and have subsequently been involved in the construction of their houses. The associated training and capacity building have resulted in several small businesses being set up and other members of the community employing these trained people to build new housing and extensions to existing housing in the area.

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Refugees and the city: UN-Habitat's New Urban Agenda

Raffael Beier and Jasmin Fritzsche

Special protection for refugees and displaced persons should be part of countries' housing policies.

The UN-Habitat New Urban Agenda adopts human rights language, with repeated references to the principle of non-discrimination "regardless of their migration status".[1] Unlike its predecessor Habitat II, the Agenda calls for inclusion of urban refugees within existing city structures; however, it remains a legally non-binding document without any enforcement mechanisms.

In preparation for Habitat III (the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development held in October 2016), one issue paper co-led by UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency), OHCHR (the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) and IOM (the UN Migration Agency) affirms the importance of urban space in refugee protection.[2] With the majority of refugees and IDPs living in urban areas it acknowledges the complexity of the legal recognition of migrants and refugees and the importance of legal status as a pre-condition for protection and assistance. The issue paper concludes that municipalities are disconnected from national migration policies, and argues that including issues related to migration and displacement in urban planning and development will empower municipalities to provide services irrespective of legal status. With this, the paper not only calls for a human rights-based approach in the provision of services but also for stronger planning for population movements at a municipal level.

Article 28 of the New Urban Agenda reads in part: "… although the movement of large populations into towns and cities poses a variety of challenges, it can also bring significant social, economic and cultural contributions to urban life. We … commit ourselves to… supporting local authorities in establishing frameworks that enable the positive contribution of migrants to cities and strengthened urban-rural linkages."

However, the Agenda lacks specific engagement with the particular needs of refugees and IDPs, refugees being listed merely as one group among a larger list of very different kinds of 'vulnerable' populations. References to refugees and IDPs – as well as to the phrase "regardless of their migration status" – are lacking in key articles calling for access to shelter and public services. Moreover, civil society groups have been very critical of the fact that, like its predecessor The Habitat Agenda, the New Urban Agenda is legally non-binding and lacks any reference to independent evaluation and monitoring. The attitude of many governments – despite their participation in Habitat II and Habitat III – towards urban refugees remains sceptical; they prefer camp solutions.

In order to convince more governments to put aside their scepticism towards urban refugees and inclusive urban policies, there needs to be a greater number of cooperative initiatives between UNHCR and UN-Habitat. In the context of the Syria crisis, UN-Habitat in Lebanon has increasingly focused on issues of urban refugees and shelter over the last four years with a number of different partners, in the course of which UNHCR and UN-Habitat conducted a joint study on issues of housing, land and property in Lebanon and the influence of forced displacement.[3] The study criticises the focus at the time on short-term shelter by humanitarian agencies and calls for a more development-oriented approach. An example of closer cooperation between the two agencies can be found in Kenya where, in July 2016, UN-Habitat and UNHCR formally signed a Memorandum of Understanding. One of the key projects of the

new cooperation focuses on the development and implementation of the spatial planning and infrastructure design of a new settlement in Turkana County.[4] Such cooperation brings together the expertise of both agencies, and more of this would be desirable.

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Shelter provision and state sovereignty in Calais

Michael Boyle

Government provision of shelter for Calais' migrant population over the last twenty years has prioritised the assertion of state authority over the alleviation of human suffering. Policies in 2015-16, which involved the destruction of informal shelter and the provision of basic alternative accommodation, continued this trend.

Successive French governments have responded to the large undocumented migrant population in the northern port of Calais by heightening security around the border and by controlling migrants' access to shelter in the immediate vicinity of Calais. There has been a pattern for over twenty years of alternating between providing accommodation and conducting evictions or forced relocations. Reception centres have opened and then shut down and encampments have been allowed to grow and then demolished.

By January 2016, when the French Minister of the Interior ordered the demolition of the informal camp known as 'the Jungle' and the relocation of its residents, the migrant population of the camp comprised an estimated 6,000 people. The Jungle was demolished in two phases over a period of eight months. During the first phase, some of those evicted were relocated to a temporary facility constructed next to the camp from re-purposed shipping containers.[1] Many chose instead to move to the half of the camp which was still standing. In the second phase of demolition, riot police used tear gas, water cannon and rubber bullets to evict everyone, including residents of the container facility.

The provision and destruction of shelter for migrants in Calais has been consistently justified by officials using the language of humanitarianism, citing the poor conditions in which the inhabitants lived. Yet the state's 'humanitarian response' to the conditions in the Jungle in 2016 was to violently evict several thousand people (half of whom saw their homes bulldozed twice), temporarily re-house a minority in shipping containers that did not conform to international humanitarian standards, and ultimately relocate people to asylum accommodation that many chose to leave, preferring to sleep on the streets.

The Jungle camp challenged the sovereignty of the French state. Although the migrant population had received permission to occupy the site in Calais, the autonomous construction of a semi-permanent settlement that by 2016 housed several thousand people defied state authority. Residents of the settlement lived in extreme hardship but they had opportunities to be themselves and perform acts of citizenship which were incompatible with their status as undocumented migrants. It was therefore desirable for the state to demolish the camp and reincorporate its inhabitants

Irit Katz

The 'high street' in the Calais Jungle, April 2016.

into the immigration regime. The decision to dismantle the Jungle and relocate its inhabitants to alternative accommodation in shipping containers and reception centres across France was primarily a political act, not a humanitarian one.

In official camps that provide shelter for displaced people, site arrangements and rules are generally drawn up by the organisation running the camp. In contrast, the French state set the external boundaries of the Jungle settlement – riot police patrolled its perimeter and monitored those entering – but went no further. Inside, residents determined the structure of the camp, building their own houses, initially from plastic sheets, later from longer lasting materials such as wood and corrugated metal. Streets were demarcated and named, and districts were established, generally along national lines. Working with volunteer groups, residents constructed large buildings that provided public facilities such as mosques, churches, children's centres and a youth centre. In the absence of government involvement, humanitarian agencies and voluntary groups performed a range of state-like functions including the provision of medical treatment, childcare,

education, legal advice and the conducting of censuses. The Jungle was the product of Anglo-French border policy but within its boundaries residents enacted their own social order beyond the realm of the French state.

The Jungle offered a space in which residents enacted multiple potential identities irrespective of migration status. There were opportunities for social advancement within the settlement that would not have been possible outside it. The organisation L'Auberge des migrants selected community leaders to assist with the fair distribution of clothes and food. Undocumented entrepreneurs started businesses – grocers sold food purchased in supermarkets in Calais, hawkers traded clothing donated to the camp by the British and French public, and there were a number of restaurants and a nightclub. Residents had opportunities for artistic production, with theatre groups and performing artists travelling from Britain. Volunteers and agency workers lived and worked alongside undocumented migrants to construct shelters and provide services. People made political claims through marches, motorway blockades, occupations, hunger strikes and sewing up their lips. Their actions drew public attention

to the issues facing migrants in Calais, and succeeded in delaying the demolition of the northern half of the settlement by six months.

Reasserting state authority
The shipping container facility constructed alongside the Jungle reasserted the state's authority, restricting the formation of new identities and limiting opportunities for acts of citizenship. Whereas the Jungle was formed incrementally in response to its residents' needs, the container facility was planned and managed by an organisation acting on behalf of the French state according to the principles of cost efficiency and security. Its physical space comprised a grid made up of large containers each housing 12-14 people, whereas camp residents had chosen to live in small, private shelters for individuals or families. The container facility lacked communal spaces for association or performance, public facilities or premises for business. Residents had no opportunity to reconstruct the built environment, which had a permanence that the Jungle lacked. The facility was surrounded by a wire fence patrolled by police dogs, and only residents were able to enter and leave, through turnstiles secured with fingerprint scanners. In contrast, the Jungle settlement had been open to visitors, allowing inhabitants to develop relationships with volunteers, agency workers and activists.

The relocation of Calais' migrants reaffirmed the social and bureaucratic labels from which the informal settlement had sheltered them. Those who moved into the shipping containers became passive recipients of assistance, literally 'contained' in the facility. They were obstructed from creating other identities for themselves by their physical separation from non-residents and by the restrictions on business or community activities. At the same time, the securitised architecture of the facility presented its inhabitants as dangerous.

Shelter provision is political as much as it is humanitarian. In 2016, the dismantling of the Jungle and the forced relocation of its inhabitants were a response to the challenge to state authority posed by the rapidly growing informal settlement. When Eric Besson, French Immigration Minister, ordered the demolition of a migrant settlement in Calais in 2009, he declared that: "On the territory of this nation, the law of the jungle cannot endure." Besson's 'law of the jungle' described chaos and hardship but the Calais Jungle also represented autonomy and the multiplicity of identities. It was these latter characteristics that were incompatible with the French immigration regime.

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1. See image on page 18.

Irit Katz

A camp redefined as part of the city

Cyrille Hanappe

Was what was built at La Linière in Grand-Synthe in northern France a traditional refugee camp or a new kind of urban district?

> The La Linière settlement described here was over-crowded and made of wooden cabins. It was destroyed by a fire in April 2017 but remains a cause of controversy between the supportive mayor of the town and the central political authorities.

The presence of migrants in the La Linière camp in the town of Grande-Synthe on the north coast of France was officially accepted by all public stakeholders in May 2016. This followed the provision of mains services to the site and the construction of 300 wooden cabins by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the town council, against the national government's wishes. After several months of indecision, it was agreed that the camp would be jointly managed by the town hall, central government and a para-governmental organisation, AFEJI.

The site was no more isolated from the town than other local developments, it was close to the largest shopping centre in the town, and the town hall announced its desire to redirect bus routes near it and add new bus stops. The mayor consistently expressed his desire for its inhabitants to have access to and use the town's numerous public services.

It is a pattern for cities, rather than the state, to find that they are the real key players in welcoming refugees. "States grant asylum, but it is the cities that provide shelter," said a joint statement by the mayors of Barcelona, Paris and Lesbos in a blog on 13th September 2015.[1]

British and French organisations installed collective kitchens and dining rooms in the camp, along with a school, an information centre, a language learning centre and a play area. In addition to handing out meals and clothes, they also offered a wide range of services, ranging from tennis lessons to cookery classes and raising awareness about permaculture. As well as the MSF dispensary and a Red Cross station in the camp, the exiles had access to all the public health services provided by the local council.

According to researcher Michel Agier, a 'camp' has three main characteristics: extraterritoriality – the camp is not part of the surrounding area; exception – the camp is not subject to the same laws as the state in which it is located; and exclusion – the camp is a marker of the difference between its inhabitants and inhabitants or visitors from outside.[2] These conditions were only to some degree fulfilled in Grande-Synthe.

La Linière camp in Grande-Synthe near Dunkirk, April 2016.

The site of the camp is not extraterritorial but stands in the heart of the metropolitan area, close to a landscaped park and lake, and it is served by public transport. The exceptional nature of the camp was a reality if only because of the way it came about. But a letter, signed by the mayor and MSF and on display in the camp, noted the rights of its residents: access to shelter, protection, hygiene, food, care, education, culture, and neutral and impartial legal information, for an indefinite period. Finally, the mayor consistently stated that the residents were not excluded from but had access to all municipal public services, even though this does not give them the rights of European citizens.

Officially, no new people were supposed to come to the camp once it had opened; in practice, no-one was turned away, at least until late June 2016. In any case, the number of occupants had dropped steadily from 3,000 when it opened at the end of 2015 to 700 in mid-2016. However, the destruction of the 'Jungle' camp in Calais reversed the trend and the camp's population rose to 1,700, far exceeding its capacity of 700.

The camp's future
Thinking through future scenarios involved a number of principles for the camp. The first was that it was a place that was open to those arriving and also allowed people to leave it easily. It could not be closed but could either expand outwards or become more densely occupied. In either case, this goes hand-in-hand with more flexible, less rigid land laws, where dynamic usage rights replace static spatial rights.

The architecture that goes with this type of openness needs to adapt to the size of the human units (families or temporary groups of people) who live there. This means architecture that can provide a technical service, which ranges from shelter from the vagaries of the weather to kitchens and toilets, and which includes heating and ventilation systems. But apart from the technical capabilities that everyone is entitled to expect, and apart from the general layout and the design of amenities, spaces and public furniture, the individual architecture should express the customs and culture of the people who live in it: this is about creating a place whose architecture is ergonomic, intelligent, useful and social.

Such a place must also be able to become a place of economic production. We may therefore want a right that would allow the emergence of micro-economic initiatives or at least places where things can be produced and people can work. In an article entitled 'The perfect refugee camp', American journalist Mac McClelland reflected on the persistent tension between the two poor choices generally offered to refugees: the camp, or a precarious life in the city as terrible a solution as living in a camp.[3] Even though the city may seem to allow better integration, it subjects exiles to violence and tension. At one point, numerous exiles in France had a third choice: the Calais Jungle; this was a hybrid solution, between camp and precariousness, until it was demolished in October 2016.[4]

Nonetheless, what was being built at La Linière was being done with local actors who were uniformly and consistently engaged. La Linière was more and better than a refugee camp: it could have been a place of welcome and integration, as the mayor, Damien Carême, wrote in a book published a few days before the destruction: "it is a new neighbourhood of my city and I will take care of it in that way. (...) its closure will happen only when the Kurdish situation improves. Or when the migratory route does not pass here anymore. The refugees are in charge of the agenda."[5]

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Appropriating buildings to house refugees: Berlin Tempelhof

Toby Parsloe

As European cities continue to co-opt existing buildings to use as refugee shelters, the inherent spatial characteristics of these structures present significant challenges to the authorities that select the sites and to those who must reside in them.

Tempelhof airport, built by the Nazis in the 1930s, is a protected monument in the centre of the German capital, Berlin. Its history, size and context have established it as a controversial and high-profile space for refugees. And for the residents there is a price to pay for living in such an iconic and politically charged structure. Questions around their inhabitation have become entangled with impassioned public debates concerning public space, urban development and heritage.

It was a bold decision to house refugees in Tempelhof's former aircraft hangars. Since the airport's closure in 2008, the terminal buildings have been used for a variety of events, and the airfield was transformed into Berlin's largest public park. This has since become a cherished space, ingrained in everyday city life. Plans to build on the Tempelhof site were emphatically blocked in a 2014 referendum, which led to protective legislation against future construction. The outcome was considered emblematic of Berlin, where the right to public space triumphed over profit-focused development.

The establishment of what is in essence a camp in Tempelhof in 2015, however, appeared to threaten all this. International private and public events were cancelled, and a former piece of infrastructure was prevented from being reintegrated into the city's wider urban fabric. More alarmingly, the protective legislation was overturned. This aroused public suspicion that the camp was being used as a political tool to open up the site for investors to construct luxury apartments. In a city that is gripped by a housing crisis, the need for affordable housing remains a highly contentious issue. The construction of the camp would inevitably implicate the refugee situation in prominent contemporary conflicts over public space and housing. Placing refugees at the heart of these debates makes gaining acceptance by the host population far more difficult and complicated. Sites that are already highly politicised and contentious clearly are not the best candidates for refugee shelter. But at Tempelhof, the problems run deeper.

Tempelhof was originally designed to act as a cornerstone for Hitler's 'world capital', which sought to crystallise claims of racial supremacy and world domination through architecture. Yet its subsequent history, including the pivotal role it played in the life-saving 1948 Berlin airlift, have imbued it with multifarious associations. The decision to use the airport as a camp merely intensified the complexity of its associations. It now simultaneously acts as an international symbol of totalitarian megalomania and trauma, humanitarian intervention, and cold war propaganda, and is a cinematic icon. While the international media predominantly either juxtapose the current space of refuge with Tempelhof's associations with Nazism, or establish continuities between it and the resilience associated with the Berlin airlift, the critical questions and implications of hospitality are eclipsed.

History, politics and living space

Tempelhof's heritage also imposes physical limitations. The building is a legally protected historic monument, which means that strict regulations dictate the physical forms of the interior camp spaces. No alterations can be made that will permanently affect the building, leaving the entire camp to exist in a permanently ephemeral state. Nothing can be stuck to the walls. In camps in other

places there are ingenious shelters cobbled together from available materials, or street-like thoroughfares lined with makeshift huts wherein unofficial local economies have developed. At Tempelhof, little more can exist beyond the regimentally arranged living cubicles, with their pristine white walls.

Nevertheless, some residents have tried to reshape the spaces to make their temporary home slightly more liveable. They rearrange the beds and benches in their cubicles, and use blankets or sheets to section off small areas for themselves. Others wrap sheets around their bed, offering a fleeting sense of privacy. To bring a modicum of colour to the black-and-white camp alleyways, some drape brightly covered sheets over the black cloth 'doors', creating something reminiscent of a streetscape. Each action attempts to create a sense of domesticity within a vast hangar originally intended for large machines. However, the residents are stuck in the paradox of Tempelhof: the need for the building to remain a historically preserved airport, while simultaneously acting as a habitable space for refugees.

For a short period of time, one practice demonstrated the most striking resident influence over camp spaces. This took the form of graffiti strewn across the cubicle wall panels – colourful markings ranging from children's drawings to religious symbols, national flags and names of hometowns written in different mother tongues. Other scribbles affirmed gratitude to Germany for offering safety and refuge to thousands. The most compelling and aesthetic markings were the elaborate murals exhibiting high levels of artistic skill and intricate detail. The very walls became canvases upon which refugees could express their frustrations, hopes and enduring cultural identities.

Yet, as of April 2016, the practice of graffiti has been banned. Controversial and offensive markings were discovered, as the cultural and political tensions of the residents' countries of origin were also rendered visible on the wall panels. The camp's high-profile status provoked fears over both interior conflicts and an exterior press scandal. These fears were justifiable. A minor scuffle

in November 2015 became internationally sensationalised, and camp authorities were keen to avoid further exaggerated reports. In a heavily scrutinised site as controversial and iconic as Tempelhof, it is understandable that the authorities would wish to avoid any aggravation of an already precarious situation. However, this has ultimately deprived the residents of one of the few ways they could shape their spaces to a significant extent. In place of the graffiti, stencilled prints of famous Berlin landmarks have been put up by the camp organisers. While they offer elements of colour to the sanitised white walls, they do not provide the same self-made cultural familiarity. In this sense, the prominence of Tempelhof has exacerbated very tangible restrictions imposed on the ways that residents inhabit the camp spaces.

Using buildings

There is potential to take advantage of the opportunities that certain sites present, either to better integrate refugees in host cities or to encourage positive interactions between refugees and the host city. In such sites, architecture can become another tool to tackle the conflicts caused by the current refugee situation. Famous historical monuments, however, clearly present significant barriers to conversion into liveable spaces for refugees. Tempelhof may seem a unique case but it should rather be seen as part of an emerging type of camp, established in re-appropriated structures in the centre of European cities. In Paris there is the Humanitarian Centre situated in a former train depot in the 18th arrondissement, while in Athens the Eleonas camp was erected in a former industrial estate. Although these perhaps avoid the heritage issues that are present at Tempelhof, each structure nonetheless presents specific socio-political and physical characteristics that will shape the potential for residents to inhabit the camp, and influence the relationships between the camp residents and the citizens of the host city.

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Collective homemaking in transit

Alexandra Koptyaeva

The daily activities of the residents and volunteers of the City Plaza Refugee Accommodation Centre in Athens and the organisation of the space help to construct a positive notion of 'home'.

Activists and supporters in the Greek capital, Athens, have occupied vacant city buildings in solidarity with the thousands of refugees trapped in the country by border closures. They have transformed buildings into squats to house refugees, in resistance to the government's authoritarian policies and as alternatives to detention centres and camps.

A self-organised housing space, 'City Plaza' in the centre of Athens, is one example. This is a former hotel that had been closed for seven years and was taken over in April 2016 by the Economic and Political Refugee Solidarity initiative, together with volunteers and refugees, and re-organised into an accommodation centre.[1] It offers permanent housing to families that are facing difficulty in finding a place to stay in the city after being relocated from camps on the Greek islands. The residents get three meals a day, there is a clinic, and the children are able to study at local schools. The underlying principles of the running of City Plaza are solidarity and collective participation of residents and volunteers in daily activities. The motto and the philosophy of this space are based on the principle of unity: "We live together. We work together. We struggle together."[2]

I had expected to find residents having little or no respect for each other and living separately because of their diverse backgrounds – there are Afghans, Iraqis, Iranians, Syrians, Kurds, Palestinians and Pakistanis living together on the seven floors of the building. However, what I found were that the notions of 'one big family' and 'second home after the motherland' were shared by nearly everyone. The friendly environment of the squat, with its unwritten rule to respect others despite national or religious differences and conflicts back home, aims to create the concept of a shared space, recreating the feeling of home.

But what is the meaning of 'home' and what are the practices that 'make home' while being on the move?

The organisation of the space

External factors, such as the location of the squat close to the city centre and the nature of the occupied building itself, play important roles in the positive adaptation processes of forced migrants. Greeks and volunteers often express the view that those who are living at City Plaza are 'lucky' and that this is a 'five-star squat'. Compared with camps where people are staying in tents despite the cold weather, the conditions at City Plaza are indeed luxurious. Family members are put together in individual rooms, which have bathrooms, cupboards, tables and balconies. Thus, privacy – one of the main components of the concept of home – is created for the residents; they no longer have to stand in long queues waiting to take a shower, sharing it with unknown people:

"It is better here than in a camp, where you don't have your privacy and relatives are separated in different tents. Also, there were fights in the camp where we stayed, and the police didn't do anything as long as it was inside the camp." (Pakistani male, 20 years old, came to City Plaza in April 2016)

The day and night security makes refugees feel safe. The notion of safety was expressed not only regarding the building itself but also the country in general:

"At least here I am not afraid to walk in a park with my kids and send them to school." (Father of two children, from Quetta, Pakistan)

The attempts to create the feeling of shared belonging can be seen in the formal philosophy of the place, with an official description presenting the squat as one home: "400 refugees, 7 floors, 1 home".

The pronoun 'we' was often used during interviews, for example, "We live together", and pictures of former and current residents are on the walls in the hall and in the bar, which are the two most frequented public spaces. The notion of 'one big family' is created by these visual factors.

Individual rooms also look like small homes within the bigger home: there are family pictures on the walls, blankets or carpets on the floor, and children's toys. Some people, in describing their current rooms, talked of spaces where they can relax after being outside or helping someone from the squat. The ability of family members to live together in one room helps to create the feeling of belonging.

There are also a few people without relatives, who are put together in a couple of rooms in the centre. Typically, there are up to five residents living in one room and, in these cases, the feeling of privacy is limited to one's own bed and a small space around it:

"There are three of us in one room. My bed is my home. I like lying down and watching movies after the shift in the kitchen." (Iranian male, 26 years old, came to City Plaza in April 2016)

The daily performance of familiar acts

Since refugees are officially not allowed to work while they are waiting for the decision on their asylum application, those who, for example, do not go to school or to Greek language lessons have a lot of free time. There are mandatory activities for every family to be involved in. For instance, shifts in the kitchen: residents cook food together for everyone living in the squat. The preparation of a meal, serving the food and then washing up and cleaning the floor takes on average four to five hours. Another obligation is the cleaning of the corridors and stairs, which is done weekly. These activities may be seen as part of the attempt to create the feeling of shared space or, in other words, the understanding of 'being at home', a home that should be kept clean and comfortable. Informal activities organised by residents or volunteers include film screenings, day trips to the historic city centre, football matches and parties inside the squat or in one of the bars. Through these formal and informal activities, the residents and volunteers attempt to maintain positive homemaking practices.

"When families are leaving (because they are relocated), residents organise goodbye-parties for them. Some people cry because they don't want to go; some try to stay in touch even when they have moved out." (Volunteer at City Plaza since July 2016)

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1. http://solidarity2refugees.gr/
2. http://bit.ly/YouCaring-KeepCityPlazaOpen

Perpetually temporary shelter in Trieste

Roberta Altin

An old building that has seen displaced people in it many times over many years is being used by the latest group of arrivals, this time from outside Europe.

Since 2014, when refugees started arriving in Trieste, in north-east Italy on the Balkans route, every day between 30 and 100 people have camped in tents and cardboard boxes with makeshift beds inside the building known as Silos. This is a huge structure that is currently private property, mostly abandoned except for a small area occupied by a car park and a coach station, situated in a central area of the city. The buildings are close to the port, only a few metres from the tracks of high-speed trains; indeed this place has long been linked to the transit of goods and of displaced people.

In the Second World War Silos became a place for refugees and displaced persons. In 1943 Jews were gathered here before being loaded onto the train to Auschwitz. Then at the end of the Second World War, after the Treaty of Paris in 1947, many of the displaced Italian refugees were sheltered in Silos as they waited for the construction of refugee camps and some permanent accommodation.

In recent years there was an agreement between the municipality and a private company to convert Silos into a conference and commercial centre but the economic crisis halted the investment and Silos has again become a shelter for the new refugees and asylum seekers. These are young men, on average in their twenties, who arrive along the Balkans route and apply for political asylum or humanitarian protection in Italy. Although this is often not their first choice, many asylum seekers say that they wish to get to Trieste, where "the Italians treat you well and it is easier to enter Europe".

Taking the pressure off

Trieste is an example of good practice in the management of refugees with its System of Protection for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) that ensures 'integrated reception' activities for asylum seekers and holders of international protection. The SPRAR system has allowed the absorption of 1,000 refugees, housed by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in small facilities such as apartments, abandoned hotels and private homes. This partnership between the police, prefecture, municipality and the major local NGOs has made it possible to avoid assembling too many refugees in large hubs or camps. While asylum seekers and refugees wait for the procedure of recognition to be finalised, they attend professional courses, learn Italian or English and participate in social activities and voluntary work. They cook and live independently, interacting with local people, learning how to live in an Italian setting.

The weak point of this well-organised model of management of asylum seekers is its inability to respond quickly to emergency situations when large numbers of people arrive. So Silos functions as emergency shelter in the case of mass arrivals, as a survival facility for illegal, rejected or irregular migrants and as an informal space of information and socialising. It is a space to take the pressure off, tolerated by the authorities when the incoming flow of refugees suddenly rises sharply.

The advantage Silos offers as a shelter is having a roof and walls, albeit somewhat derelict, offering partial protection from the winter weather. Inside Silos the migrants have built real huts with plywood, enclosed bed spaces using cardboard for walls, kitchens with stoves, toilets without water and even a prayer area. They use water tanks for washing, and sometimes cook; on sunny days they use the large open square to play football and cricket. Within the precarious community of Silos there is a kind of tacit hierarchy of beds, with the best and most protected belonging to the 'senior' occupants – those who have been there longest. In the past two years, Silos has also become an informal

Silos, in Trieste, Italy.

information centre for newly arrived asylum seekers, and a daytime social centre also for refugees hosted in the SPRAR system who still suffer from the loneliness peculiar to and shared by migrants. Silos is at once a central place and one of transit, close to public transport and the port and just a short walk from the soup kitchen, the hospital and the social services of various NGOs. It works as a sort of informal hub – situated in the heart of the city but not overly visible.

Constant interaction with the local community prevents the sense of alarm and perception of invasion that have triggered protests in northern Italy over every new official refugee settlement. Where asylum seekers are confined to an isolated centre in camps or former barracks under militarised supervision, the local residents have expressed much greater fear, as organised settlements are more highly structured and visible. Silos, however, does not disrupt the the city's daily life; police reports indicate no rise in crime rates and the refugees are not too visible, despite the fact that the makeshift camp lies only a few metres

from where commuters arrive into the city. The shelter in Silos occasionally provokes political debate. The police, succumbing to the political mood and media pressure, periodically evict the encamped migrants and destroy the shacks. However, before long the migrants re-appropriate 'their' space, putting back their few belongings.

This perpetually temporary presence seems to be tolerated well by the local residents, maybe partly because of the high walls of the building that protect it and render it invisible. This shelter was not officially established but rather chosen and occupied by the migrants themselves, almost as if they recognised the historical function of Silos. Today, as in the past, it serves as a protective and collective space, and also as a buffer zone between order and disorder, visibility and invisibility, hospitality and rejection.

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The impact of humanitarian shelter and settlements on child protection

Nerea Amorós Elorduy

Insufficient attention has been paid to the design of shelters and settlements in protracted refugee encampments in Eastern Africa. The results invisibly obstruct young children's development.

Being a child living in a protracted refugee situation in an encampment in Eastern Africa means that geopolitics and international standards influence the way you sleep, the meals you eat, and the daily activities at your nursery school. Often long-term encampments lack education and play facilities so children spend most of their time in or around the home, which becomes their main learning space. The home setting has a direct and indirect impact on learning, affecting cognitive, physical, socio-emotional and language development.

The encampment's shelters are not meant to be homes, much less stimulating learning environments, and they perform poorly as such. They are intended and designed to be temporary emergency shelter from the weather and external threats as defined by international humanitarian standards.[1]

As encampment situations globally extend over decades it is vital to question how child development would be affected if these shelters could instead be conceived as homes and learning environments for their inhabitants in the short and the long term? What would be the effects if they were devised for a family to prosper and for children to learn, rest and play?

This article presents research findings on the spatial components of Congolese refugees' homes in long-term encampments in Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya. Gathering knowledge of the home's spatial components that sustain and trigger learning, as perceived by their inhabitants, could generate recommendations to turn existing and future shelters into family homes and stimulating learning environments.

Shelter environment currently hampers children's learning

Elements that affect young children's learning occur at the level of neighbourhood, compound, interior layout, structural elements and materials.

Settlement overcrowding: Land scarcity is common in long-term encampments. In Rwanda, for example, common spaces are scarce, homes are small and toilets are shared and inadequate for young children. The extremely small and overcrowded shelters are placed on congested and steep sites. The majority of the one- or two-room homes house between two and twelve people in 12m^2. These characteristics provide for congested noisy homes and higher rates of physical abuse. Young children's brains react by developing coping mechanisms that affect their attention span.[2]

Compound: Congolese homes usually have no surrounding fence, thereby lessening the ability to control young children and allowing passers-by to interact with activities in the front and back yards. Only homes in Kakuma (Kenya), highlighted as the most unsafe of all the camps studied, consistently had fences. In both south-west Uganda and Rwanda the unfenced small homes prompt children to roam the streets. All respondents listed the fences as a must-have and the streets as one of the main risks to children's development.

Home arrangement: On arrival, refugees are provided with a plot (size varies according to host country), a tarpaulin and poles for the construction of a temporary shelter. In both Rwanda and Kenya the humanitarian agencies help build the first

structure. As the tents evolve over time into mud constructions (typically rectangular in the cases of Congolese), lack of space and resources tend to restrict families to one or two rooms; only the latrine, if they have one, is detached from the main house. One room functions as living-room, eating area, kitchen and bedroom. If there is a second room it functions as bedroom but doubles as storage and is sometimes shared with animals. Sharing of uses in poorly ventilated small rooms contributes to unhealthy, smoky, smelly and damp interiors that make children ill, and often prevent them from attending school or playing.

Materials and structure: The mud homes lack foundations, have precarious roofs and are ill-equipped to manage storm waters; all these factors contribute to structurally weak, damp, dark and dusty environments. As the residents lack proper materials to create secure wall openings, these structures admit little ventilation and light. Leaks and rotting bases are common, with some children expressing fear of their houses falling down on them. Roofs made of iron sheeting and tarpaulins contribute to the interiors being scorching hot by day and chilly at night. These unhealthy interiors are the constant cause of skin and respiratory sicknesses that also reduce attendance and attention at school.

Sleeping spaces: These are often shared between adults and children, and between genders. They seldom have beds, mattresses or bedding. The earth floors, covered only with plastic mats, are breeding grounds for diseases and skin parasites. Shared sleeping areas, congestion and family tensions contribute to child abuse, translated in some cases into child abusers at playgrounds and schools. Sleep deprivation has a direct effect on children's learning and daily life activities, while sexual abuse has long-lasting effects on their overall development.

Toilet facilities: Lack of proper sanitation facilities is endemic to protracted refugee encampments in the research area. In Rwanda the latrines are shared among tens

or hundreds of users. None is adapted to children's needs. In north-west Kenya and south-west Uganda each compound has its own toilet, although some families who are unable to build one are usually required to go to the bush or to their neighbours' toilet. The lack of proper child-friendly toilets leads to accidents and abuses.

Conclusions

Congolese respondents identified two main factors conducive to children's learning in the home environment: protection from external threats and family unity. Parents and caregivers valued having control over an enclosed space that provided protection from the sun and the rain, and in some cases from abuse. Children stated the importance of spending time with siblings and especially their mother. All respondents agreed that being safe and feeling secure at home reinforces children's self-esteem and confidence, affecting direct and indirect learning, and preventing risky behaviours later in life.

Respondents recommended design interventions aimed at improving the family's unity and children's holistic development. They fall into two categories: preventative elements and stimulating elements.

Interventions to prevent family disruption, child abuse, sickness, accidents and disappearance: Where possible, space out homes and allocate a fenced exterior area, potentially shared among groups of shelters. Facilitate the construction of internal partitions to encourage separate sleeping areas, and wall openings to prevent damp interiors. There should be foundations and basic storm water management systems to maintain safer and stronger structures. Finally, families unable to build toilets should be helped to build them, and safe and secure child-friendly ones should be allocated at shared public facilities.

Interventions to stimulate family unity and young children's direct and indirect learning: Allocate exterior shaded areas within the fenced compound for naps,

playing, protection from the sun or cooking on rainy days. Provide mattresses and simple bed structures to enhance proper sleeping.

Despite this kind of evidence, temporary emergency shelters are the rule in established and new settlements throughout the region. This approach is hampering young children's learning and development. Yet it is possible to transform these home environments using easily accessible, cost-efficient and effective design tools. In order to create the knowledge for how to do this, humanitarian shelter and settlement professionals need a greater understanding of child protection needs and of the impact of the built environment, putting greater emphasis on both elements during programme development.

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Reducing GBV risks through better shelter programme design

Amelia Rule, Jessica Izquierdo and Alberto Piccioli

Good shelter programming must include mitigation measures throughout the project cycle in order to reduce GBV risks.

Shelters must be habitable, and provide physical safety and adequate space, as well as protection against the elements. They are also homes where people seek well-being and safety, especially so in displacement. In essence, shelter offers protection. However, it is not enough to build shelters. These – and settlements in which shelters are built – also need to provide protection from violence, including gender-based violence (GBV).[1]

Potential GBV risk mitigation interventions in shelter programmes should be informed by a gender and risk analysis conducted at the start of the programme. In this way shelter practitioners are more likely to identify risks before they unintentionally cause harm. The appropriate inclusion of, for example, gender and female participation in projects has the potential not only to improve women's status in society but also to reduce risks that can lead to GBV. However, when done without a proper assessment of gender dynamics and roles, the involvement of women may inadvertently lead to a decrease in men's control of the recovery process, contributing to domestic, intimate partner and other types of GBV.

Mainstreaming GBV should help to achieve better shelter projects that proactively aim to avoid or reduce harm. It is a strategy and process that can help staff – including shelter staff – to reduce the vulnerabilities of affected populations. A focus on GBV risk mitigation and gender-specific needs and capacities ensures more relevant shelter assistance which meets individuals' needs.

Nepal earthquakes, 2015

Following the Nepal earthquakes in April and May 2015, one shelter and WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) programme integrated a gender-sensitive approach to increase women's and girls' access to essential household items and to reduce protection risks.[3] Female staff members assessed roles and responsibilities of women and girls in order to design distribution points that ensured safe and equitable access. Crowd control measures at distribution times and enclosed sites further increased security.

CARE Philippines/Gabriel Fernandez del Pino

Typhoon Haiyan, 2013

After typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, the international humanitarian community promoted Build Back Safer messaging and vocational trainings on construction.[2] Traditionally, construction roles were held by men, limiting women's participation in the design of shelters that would meet their needs. In one shelter programme, women had a leading voice in deciding the design of shelters in order to ensure the inclusion of elements to guard their privacy and dignity, such as internal partitions for separate sleeping areas, opaque wall materials and spaces for washing and sanitation activities. Through the inclusion of women and girls, this shelter project was better able to take steps to mitigate risks of GBV related to shelter design and construction.

The starting point for any shelter programme is at the settlement level, taking account of issues such as overcrowding and site density, and access to sanitation facilities, markets and emergency relief items. To successfully ensure access to services and opportunities, shelter programmes must integrate GBV and gender considerations prior to and during implementation; this includes in the planning of assessments, targeting and distribution locations, in the prioritisation of individuals at distribution sites, in onwards transportation of materials, in feedback and complaints systems, and in appropriate staffing to ensure safe access for vulnerable groups during such activities as distributions.

Once settlement approaches and location have been decided, the focus of shelter programmes moves toward the home. GBV does not just occur outside the home. For many people, the home is not a place of safety; intimate partner violence and domestic violence by their very nature tend to take place in private, behind closed doors, and between family members. Providing suitable shelter designs and sleeping spaces for the different members of the family, considerate of their cultural practices, can help to mitigate some acts of GBV in the home. Providing adequate covered space

Haiti earthquake, 2010

In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake that hit Haiti in January 2010, a transitional shelter project aimed to provide safer shelters for displaced persons, paying particular attention to the needs of women and girls. Project teams that included female staff assessed special needs through targeted focus group discussions. As a result, an additional door was added to the rear of shelters; not only was it traditional to have two entrances but it also served as a secondary exit from the house if a family member needed to escape an act of violence.[4] Separately, some women also felt safer in homes with outward opening doors, as they felt it would be harder for someone to pry the door open rather than to kick it in.

per person reduces risks associated with sharing spaces with non-family members.

Good shelter programming which considers GBV will not only focus on practical construction aspects but will also make sure that vulnerable families feel safe and secure in their communities and are able, for example, to meet the costs of shelter (such as rent, bills, maintenance and repairs).

Increasingly shelter actors and protection staff, inclusive of GBV specialists, are working together to identify and mitigate risks in shelter programmes. Additionally, all field staff should be trained in when and how to act if they witness or hear about a case of GBV, in order to minimise further negative impacts on survivors and to facilitate access to available support services for GBV survivors. This requires those working on shelter to understand the concepts of confidentiality, consent and child safeguarding, while also adhering to referral protocols in place to support survivors.[5]

Measuring the impact of shelter interventions on GBV mitigation can be challenging. Despite this, providing privacy, dignity and a feeling of safety can greatly influence families' access to services and broader well-being. Therefore GBV integration should not be seen as an additional task to add to shelter practitioners' to-do list; it should be understood rather as integral to programming which includes the key principles of risk analysis, participation, inclusion, consultation and engagement with the affected communities.

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For further reading please visit *http://sheltercluster.org/gbv* and *http://gbvguidelines.org/*

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5. *The GBV Constant Companion*, a useful tool with practical step-by-step advice on how to react when faced with a disclosure of GBV, is available along with other resources at: www.sheltercluster.org/gbv

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Thriving spaces: greening refugee settlements

Carrie Perkins, Andrew Adam-Bradford and Mikey Tomkins

By incorporating urban agriculture initiatives within refugee camp settings, the concept of shelter can be expanded to include providing protection from the climate, addressing nutritional deficiencies and increasing levels of human dignity, place making and self-sufficiency.

Some refugee camps have been described as 'accidental cities',[1] spaces born out of chaos and planned, if at all, as temporary spaces. However, as protracted refugee situations become more widespread, finding ways to incorporate ecological elements into the shelter model from the start has found new importance in the long-term sustainability of camps. One particular aspect of the food-energy-water nexus currently identified as critical to refugee life, dignity and sustainability is urban agriculture.

Urban agriculture initiatives are especially well suited to the diverse needs of a refugee camp, which faces the same limitation on space and lack of resources that are often key challenges addressed in urban settings; the creativity and resourcefulness needed to conceive of low-carbon, hydraulic water-driven vertical farms in Singapore or grey-water garden pools in drought-stricken California provide the basis for the expertise needed to envision food growing in a cramped refugee camp. Additionally, urban agriculture projects often lend themselves to utilising the skills and practical experience of refugees themselves, as many camps contain people with professional agricultural or horticultural training and a significant number of inhabitants with a desire to grow their own food. In this way, urban agriculture has a way of engaging the camp population in solution-driven activity, promoting increased self-sufficiency and, consequently, higher levels of morale and psychological well-being.

Innovative camp greening in practice

Domiz Camp is situated in the north of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, between Mosul and Dohuk. It was opened in 2012 to accommodate approximately 30,000 Syrian refugees and by 2015 was home to over 40,000 refugees. In Domiz Camp the Lemon Tree Trust has initiated an urban agriculture project that we have called 'greening innovation', a term which connects food production, tree planting, energy production, waste recovery and broader environmental practices. The Lemon Tree Trust was invited to develop camp greening and urban agriculture by the camp manager, who was particularly open to ideas around tree planting, gardening, agriculture and landscape improvement. It was encouraging that many refugees had planted home gardens, sometimes hidden away in small courtyards, other times spilling over into public spaces. There was also a nascent plant and seed nursery among the market stalls and shops on the camp's main street. Overall, there was an acceptance that the camp was a city in the making, an evolving urban entity that would be home to thousands of refugees for much of their lives.

If there was a home garden visible from the street, we would ask permission from its owners to visit, and they would then in turn lead us to other residents' or friends' gardens. What emerged was a quiet practice of home gardening for food and ornamental flowers. Refugees described this as coming from a desire to "beautify the house" or to create "beautiful scenery for the camp" – a tool also to establish a sense of ownership of their immediate space.

Rather than imposing a master plan to increase the number of gardens in the camp, we chose to support those who had already shown an interest by planting a garden; we were then able to encourage the expansion of green space and get current gardeners to become mentors for new gardeners. We provided funding to an already established small nursery to expand its range of trees, seeds and seedlings. In

Grey-water garden in Domiz Camp, Iraq, 2015.

exchange, the owner distributed seeds and trees to households, and acted as a focal point for our project. We also recruited two women in the camp as facilitators to distribute seeds and encourage home gardening.

Challenges in implementation

One of the most noteworthy challenges we encountered was simply overcoming the idea that camps are temporary spaces. Planting a tree symbolises both a future vision and permanence. As such, planting trees within the camp could be seen as a rejection of the narrative of temporariness and instead a resignation to its permanence. With this in mind, it was helpful to focus with the camp management (including NGOs) on the immediate beneficial aspects of a broad greening response, such as better air quality, shade, access to fresh food and improved mental health.

While the intention of camp management in Domiz has consistently been to offer protection, safety, shelter and aid, there have been instances where refugee self-sufficiency, competence and expertise have been overlooked in a more top-down approach to problem solving. The most pertinent example of this is in the handling of water. The camp infrastructure moves waste water out of the camp as quickly and efficiently as possible, often at a great expense. However, many refugees have a desire to find ways to divert and reuse at least the grey water[2] and have practical experience in this area.

Furthermore, refugee camp planners consistently underestimate the volume of wastewater a camp produces once it is fully populated and receiving its daily supply of potable water. This results in the overload of wastewater on surrounding eco-systems. However, the continuous availability of wastewater in refugee camps is itself a golden opportunity if a food-energy-water nexus approach is applied. The use of wastewater can maximise the greening infrastructure of refugee camps by using grey-water to irrigate home gardens, market gardens, agroforestry (as windbreaks, shelter belts or orchards), and crops and trees in nurseries.

Grey water can safely be used by households to water trees or home gardens. The amount that an average family produces per day is enough to supply a home garden, if washing and bathing water is diverted for this purpose. Utilising wastewater in this way would not only be an environmentally sound policy but it would also be likely to reduce expenditure in wastewater removal.

Benefits and conclusions

Including the refugee population in infrastructure discussions around urban agriculture would strengthen relationships between camp managers and camp inhabitants, while also tapping into an under-utilised resource of experience, knowledge and skills. The benefits of greening innovation have been profound in their positive contribution to the overall concept of shelter through beautification of space, or the satisfaction of cultivating one's own herbs for a meal. Several jobs have been created for camp inhabitants – opportunities for both men and women to engage with their surroundings and earn income. Most importantly, growing something in the earth has produced an important cultural mechanism for navigating the feelings of loss inherent to the refugee experience. As one respondent told us, "This garden reminds me of my childhood, my land. It also provides me with food, but it connects me to my homeland."

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Repurposing shelter for displaced people in Ukraine

Laura A Dean

Buildings in Ukraine are being repurposed to provide shelter for those fleeing conflict in the country but, as the war continues, the need for more permanent solutions must be acknowledged.

The war in Ukraine has left 1.6 million people displaced inside the country and uprooted another 1.4 million who have fled to neighbouring countries since the conflict began in 2014.[1] This displacement began slowly and then exploded, with the first wave from Crimea starting in March 2014, the second wave from Donbas starting in April 2014, and the numbers have continued to increase since then.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine are scattered over the entire country, although concentrated in the five eastern regions. While the geographic area is large, the ratio of the displaced to the local population in the regions bordering the conflict is only between 51 and 120 IDPs per 1,000 people and in the western regions of Ukraine it is less than five IDPs per 1,000 people.[2] According to one NGO, only 7% of the IDPs live in state-sponsored collective centres, while 33% live with relatives and friends and 60% rent houses at their own expense.[3]

The collective centres are various kinds of buildings – provided by the regional and municipal authorities, private citizens, religious groups and local NGOs – which have been repurposed to serve the needs of the displaced populations. Because of the extremely cold winter weather, provision of suitable shelter necessitated construction materials for roofs and windows, and blankets and tarpaulins to cover windows or uncovered floors. Repurposing of old facilities is not a new concept and has been prevalent since the fall of communism in Ukraine. Declining birth rates and the collapse of the planned economy after 1991 left many structures abandoned in the post-Soviet period; factories have been turned into shopping malls and former hospitals into university buildings. When the conflict broke out in 2014 the strategy of repurposing structures was again utilised by the government as they sought to house the displaced population. IDPs were housed in vacant summer camps, old kindergartens, sanatoria and student dormitories throughout the country.

For example, the main buildings of the former residence of Viktor Yanukovych, Ukraine's deposed president, are now a museum but the former residences of Yanukovych's bodyguards and maids have been turned into housing for IDPs. The Ukrainian Orthodox church has offered parts of their monasteries to be repurposed as housing for IDPs. Some private citizens have also volunteered their property to be repurposed; one businessman in the capital, Kyiv, offered an old warehouse which was turned into apartments to house IDPs. Old storage facilities have been converted into acceptable living spaces; summer camps on the Black Sea have also been repurposed into housing for IDPs, although many of these facilities were not equipped for long-term stays during the winter months.

These collective centres can house anywhere from 20 to 200 people and many are overcrowded. One person compared it to living in a dormitory with common facilities. Although these are permanent structures, they are still temporary solutions to the housing situation; some people stay for a few months and others move from one place to another in search of work, while others have remained for more than two years, demonstrating that a better solution is not available. A shortage of housing and job prospects has kept people in these collective centres. Eventually, however, private citizens and organisations will want their property back and some IDPs have already been threatened with eviction or

charged rent since many of these landlords did not foresee their property being used for such an extended period of time.

The continuing war and daily bombardments have been an impediment as any housing repairs that are undertaken can be quickly undone as the conflict's front line moves. Over 20,500 houses have been repaired in Donbas since October 2014 and there is a database of over 21,000 addresses in the government-controlled areas where repairs, structural retro-fitting, heating and insulation are planned for 2017.

Under Ukrainian law, the government is required to provide housing for IDPs but implementation of the law has been problematic. Although money has been allocated to local administrations for the financial support of temporary accom-modation for IDPs, this money does not cover all of the expenses and the extreme need for shelter. The Ukrainian State Emergency Service and local administrations organise referrals to collective centres but IDPs must first register and obtain certification of their IDP status. Many people do not want to register due to fear of military conscription, lack of paperwork (as is the case with

displaced Roma people), inability to pay taxes, or concern about the arduous and unclear process of registration.

As the conflict currently stands, Ukrainian IDPs face displacement for the foreseeable future. It would clearly be beneficial if the government could place people in permanent living situations but to do that would be to admit publicly that they have lost the territories from which the IDPs have come. To assist the displaced population, however, the government needs to move beyond politics, streamline its approach, and introduce safeguards to protect IDPs from forced evictions out of these repurposed collective centres.

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Reconstructing 'home' in northern Uganda

Alice Anderson-Gough

An understanding of shelter in situations of displacement and return must take into consideration both material and non-material dimensions. As well as undertaking movements in specific geographical landscapes, IDPs and returnees move in social spaces.

At the height of the war between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army, close to 90% of the Acholi population was displaced and living in more than 150 forced encampments known as 'protected villages', many within a 30-kilometre radius of their home. As a result, the same techniques, materials and styles for erecting shelters in the camps were used as in people's homes. However, space constraints in the camps resulted in families having to place their houses extraordinarily close to each other. As Acholi compounds traditionally are dispersed, having to live

in such close proximity was experienced as a violation of their usual living patterns. Related to the lack of space was the fact that, due to the potential fire hazard, in the camps people were not allowed to have fireplaces – one of the central elements and gathering points of Acholi homes. Furthermore, the fact that the shelter was not built on ancestral land precluded it from being a 'real home'.

After peace talks in 2006, people were instructed to 'return home'. On marriage, an Acholi woman normally travels to her husband's ancestral land but many women and their husbands met while in the camp

and, because of the distance between the IDP camps and their husbands' ancestral land and the restrictions placed on their movement outside the camp, there was little opportunity, or reason, for the women to visit their husbands' original villages. One woman described leaving the camp and arriving at her husband's ancestral land not as returning home but as "starting a new home". Grammatically it is not possible for a woman to speak of home without specifying whether she is referring to her natal home, *gang-wa*, or the home she shares with her husband, *gang-a*. The message, 'return home', thus fails to capture the gendered nature of home for the Acholi.

Most people initially erected satellite camps between the camps and their ancestral land. The first step was for the men to clear a path to their former villages and erect temporary grass structures which offered a minimal degree of protection. After some time the men would often bring their wives with them to assist in the creation of temporary shelters. Once the grass and the branches which formed the structure had been cut, a temporary hut could be erected in a matter of hours.

In order to continue to collect food rations, for the first few months people would move between the camp and their area of origin. After the closure of the camps and the satellite camps, many family members settled close together on their original land and either built houses in the same compound or close to each other. This was for reasons of perceived safety and security, as well as practicality. From a practical perspective, the clearing of the bush – which had grown tall during the long absence of human settlement – in order to build houses was difficult and time-consuming. This initial arrangement of shelter in the immediate aftermath of returning to ancestral villages after the war did not take into account the gender, age or marital status of the occupants, nor did it reflect the normative set-up of Acholi homesteads.

The material elements which make up an average traditional Acholi house with a grass roof are a tree trunk, mud bricks, palm poles and palm leaves, bundles of grasses

and innumerable jerry cans of water, plus nails and aluminium sheets for the front door. On leaving the camps, many of the returnees brought with them the door from their house in the camp. The building work is done by hand, with a specific division of labour and the sourcing of raw materials determined by gender and age. Women fetch water, men make bricks, women cut and bundle the grass for the roof, men erect the roof, and women smear houses with a combination of mud and cow dung. Building a house requires time and resources and is reliant on reciprocal social relations. A house does not exist as an independent entity but is inextricably bound up in the physical and social landscape in which it is placed.

Conclusion

An understanding of shelter in situations of displacement and return must therefore take into consideration both the material and non-material dimensions of houses. The complexity of the relationship between people, place and belonging is exaggerated by displacement. How people perceive of and engage in the erection of shelter in their particular corner of the world has to be taken into account in planning for and ensuring the sustainability of solutions. In particular, external actors involved in return and reintegration processes must place greater emphasis on recognising and understanding social networks as key drivers in influencing and facilitating how people find and construct shelter. As shelter is mediated through social networks, broken family ties as a result of protracted displacement often complicate the matter of what and where 'home' is, especially for women. More attention must be paid to the social and gendered nature of shelter alongside its physical components.

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Planning for the integration of refugee and host communities in Turkana County, Kenya

Yuka Terada, David Evans and Dennis Mwaniki

The Kalobeyei New Settlement focuses on the creation of a spatial plan to guide settlement in both the short and the long term to the benefit of both host community and refugees.

Various approaches to refugee integration with local host communities have been suggested in the past, largely within the realms of refugee-friendly policies and the creation of opportunities for refugees to engage in income-generating activities. While recent strategies by institutions such as the World Bank are aimed at collective poverty reduction and support for both refugees and host communities, humanitarian funding is still largely geared towards the displaced.

In Turkana County, in northern Kenya, the existence of Kakuma refugee camp for over 25 years – now home to over 150,000 refugees from 18 countries – has created significant inequalities in both physical infrastructure and economic opportunity to the disadvantage of the host community. In a bid to reduce this development gap and spur regional growth, and with the need to expand the camp in order to host incoming refugees from South Sudan, the county government of Turkana entered into an agreement with UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency. The aim of the agreement was to focus the sharing of investment towards improvements between the refugees and host communities in the county.

Under this agreement, 1,500 hectares of land were allocated in Kalobeyei, 15km to the west of Kakuma camp, for a new refugee settlement. UNHCR and its partners agreed to develop the site as an integrated settlement for 60,000 people – refugees and members of the host community – underpinned by social and physical infrastructure and a diversity of economic opportunities. Given its expertise in spatial planning, UN-Habitat was invited to partner in the settlement development process. The county government of Turkana would be fully involved in planning, construction, monitoring and evaluation of the settlement and would take over its management in the medium to long term, administering it as an urban settlement and providing basic services. The new settlement could then, over time, generate tax revenue to pay for services.

Recently arrived refugees, Kalobeyei New Settlement, Turkana, Kenya.

The spatial plan for the settlement emphasises shared provision of basic services to the two communities and encourages both inward and outward integration, in which interaction spaces (commercial areas, public facilities and social spaces) are provided within and outside the new settlement. These spaces are strategically located at nodes linked through efficient transport networks and are open and accessible to both refugees and host community members.

UN-Habitat has identified several key lessons from this project:

Lesson 1: Allocation of land for refugee settlement development should be based on careful site selection, with particular consideration of indicators such as availability of water, security, a suitable environment, proximity and access to other towns, and access to livelihoods. Unfortunately this was not possible with the Kalobeyei project where land had already been allocated.

Lesson 2: An integrated settlement needs to bridge humanitarian and development modalities. The UN-Habitat intervention in the Kalobeyei New Settlement focuses on bridging the gaps between the two communities and the humanitarian and development approaches. This is facilitated by the creation of a spatial plan to guide resettlement and empower

Jonathan Weaver

local communities to be resilient through development of diverse livelihoods and life skills. This will in turn reduce the communities' vulnerability and support the development of a framework for local governance to monitor and manage growth.

Lesson 3: An integrated settlement requires public participation and stakeholder engagement. While various forms of community participation and stakeholder engagement have been applied in many spatial planning-based development processes globally, there is limited evidence of the same being applied in humanitarian projects; this is largely because the latter respond to crisis, leaving little room to implement the sequential steps of spatial planning.

In Kalobeyei New Settlement, UN-Habitat adopted a participatory approach, which was implemented at two levels – community level and key stakeholder level. Community (public) participation was through household surveys and community planning sessions, in which the planning team received input on different settlement options from the two communities. UN-Habitat then formed two settlement development groups from the host community and the refugee settlements, with each group comprising twelve members from each community representative of age, gender and levels of vulnerability. In addition to being the voice of the communities throughout the planning process, the group members were also charged with disseminating information on the planning process to their constituents and obtaining views which were then integrated into the plan. Community engagement in the planning process has enhanced community ownership of the spatial plan and should greatly contribute to its ease of implementation.

The Kalobeyei project, under the leadership of UNHCR, has – unusually – created a clear framework for stakeholder engagement which incorporates humanitarian and development organisations as well as local governance structures. Partnerships in the Kalobeyei project are implemented through several thematic working groups, each of which comprises experts from all

UN-Habitat planner mapping out wants and needs for Kalobeyei with local host community settlement development group.

stakeholders with an interest in the new settlement's development. For example, the Turkana County government and UNHCR co-lead together with UN-Habitat the thematic group on spatial planning and infrastructure development. This structure of engagement has on the whole been effective in building the confidence of the communities in the authenticity of the process. The involvement of the county government of Turkana, which initiated the idea of integration, has been crucial to enhancing compliance of the resultant spatial plan with existing laws and regulations. Once the spatial plan is approved, the county government will have direct responsibility for monitoring its implementation.

Lesson 4: Achieving integration should empower communities and guarantee equitable growth. The peaceful and productive co-existence of the two communities depends on the ability of the governance structures not only to monitor and facilitate growth in the area but also to collect revenues in order to provide sustainable services to the two communities. With this in mind, UN-Habitat devised a strategy for continued capacity development among the two communities and the county government. More than 500 people were trained in various skills including livelihoods, local needs assessment, spatial planning, use of technology for small-scale infrastructure construction, and business development. Those who have acquired business skills are already contracted to operate commercial enterprises within the new settlement. At the county government level, capacity development is being achieved through direct training on planning principles, continuing support in planning activities, and provision of advisory services to the county government.

While it is still too early to measure the project's impacts, the local response has been positive to date, and it has the potential to be viewed as good practice on how to approach refugee settlements in the future. By creating a platform for the emergence of a sustainable settlement, further investment and economic growth are being encouraged. While a key objective of the approach taken was to bridge humanitarian and development approaches and provide durable solutions and sustainable futures, hopefully the outcome will provide some degree of hope and optimism for both the refugees and hosts.

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Poor Albanians who hosted displaced Kosovars

Beryl Nicholson

The experience of hosting displaced Kosovars is one that at least one Albanian village would prefer not to repeat.

One day in 2001 I dropped in on a former neighbour in Albania in her tiny two-roomed house. Their family photo album included pictures of the Kosovar[1] family they had taken in following their expulsion from Kosova at the end of March 1999. Each family of four had squeezed into one tiny room, and they shared the one sink with a tap in a tiny scullery and the primitive outside toilet. It was hard to imagine how they had lived that way for two months.

Kosovars who came in 1999 who had kin from whom they had been separated during the communist era in Albania stayed with them, but most were given shelter by people they did not know, such as my neighbour. Hospitality, especially when shown to strangers, is the most important tenet of Albania's unwritten customary law and its highest virtue. It is an articulation of what is thought to be decent and proper, by which a family's reputation is measured and, no less importantly, by which they measure themselves.

On arrival and for a day or two afterwards guests will be looked after by their hosts, though the women among them will lend a hand with chores. Then some agreement will be reached about how the guests will contribute to the household. In the past, when passing strangers were taken into a private house because there was no inn in the vicinity, they would pay as if it were an inn. Likewise, strangers might well be expected to pay for their keep, it being deemed fair to contribute to costs if they were able. Kosovars were, on the whole, better off than their Albanian hosts, especially those who received remittances from family members elsewhere. However, the family taken in by my neighbour had, with their expulsion from Kosova, lost their source of income, so she fed them.

Even in normal times my neighbour's family lived from hand to mouth. The husband had a badly paying job and their small piece of land only produced hay for their cow, and beans and other vegetables for their own needs but no more. Moreover, the Kosovars arrived at the end of winter, when stores from last year's harvest were running low.

When people in the village were asked to take in refugees, they were, according to my neighbour, given to understand that they would receive some financial assistance. UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, had undertaken to pay the very modest sum of US$10 per person per week to families who took in refugees as a contribution to their costs. It was a factor the villagers had taken into account in assessing if they could afford to do it. But no money arrived.

For each week that went by, the financial position of my neighbour's family became more and more stretched. Sooner or later they would reach the point where not only could they no longer feed their guests but they could no longer feed their own families either. It would be evident too to the guests, if only because there was less food on their plates. It must have embarrassed them that they were causing hardship. Then one day, after two months, without any warning they informed my neighbour that they were leaving. They had arranged to move to the house of another family. So they left and, she said, they did not even say "Thank you". That had hurt her most. When I asked if she had received any of the money supposed to have been available, she whispered "No" – and that had hurt too.

None of the money that was paid out as part of the UNHCR scheme reached those for whom it was intended anywhere until June, when most of the refugees had already returned to Kosova. There were also villages that missed out altogether. This undoubtedly caused greater hardship than the international aid community appreciated.

What may have seemed unimportant as seen by UNHCR was a major loss for the individuals concerned. More than a decade later an Albanian newspaper reported that a pensioner in a village just outside the town of Kukës where money had been paid out while surrounding villages had got nothing had taken it upon himself to sue the United Nations. It was a hopeless case but the villagers were making a serious point.

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1. The Albanian spelling of Kosova/Kosovar is used here as it was the one used by all the people mentioned and is now the official Albanian spelling for the state of Kosova and its people.

Hosting the displaced – and being hosted

Cynthia Caron

A local family hosting a displaced family in their home is becoming a well-recognised form of shelter for families in displacement. Understanding how displaced persons and their hosts experience hosting can help governments and humanitarian agencies design programme activities to promote its success and sustainability.

Hosting of displaced families by local families might be spontaneous or planned, a first or an intermediate step in a multi-stage process of accommodating the displaced, and often starts before humanitarian actors arrive and lasts long after they leave. The reasons why people host others – without expectation of payment – include cultural norms about hospitality, normative expectations to help those in need, or reciprocation of assistance once received. Sri Lankan families who spontaneously hosted families displaced by the war indicated that their decision to host was based on their lack of certainty about their own future: "If the same situation happens to us? … we should accept them." Hosting has proved indispensable after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2010 Haiti earthquake, in conflicts in The Gambia, Pakistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and most recently for displaced Syrians living in northern Lebanon.

Hosting takes a variety of forms including: allowing the displaced family to build a shelter on the host family's property; allocating space in the house for a family; sharing the same house or room with a family; allowing people to occupy an outbuilding on the host's property; and allowing people to use another home owned by the host. However, despite evidence of the growing role of hosting, there is little systematic writing about how persons in hosting relationships experience them. Interactions in an environment where two families must learn to live together in a hosting relationship are very different from social interactions in camps.

The three prominent factors that shape the hosting experience – length of stay, presence of children, and the need to share – do not exist in isolation. They inform one another, potentially influencing how long the two families can live together and the quality of the hosting relationship.

Length of stay
How long a displaced family will need to stay with its hosts is usually unknown, making it difficult to fix a date for hosting to end. Negotiating a length of stay can be an awkward conversation, as status and generosity are at stake. In Sri Lanka, hosted families normally said that "we promised that once the clashes are over we would go home." In Haiti, duration of hosting was rarely discussed. Approximately half of Lebanese host families interviewed had hosted a refugee family for over one year with no indication of when hosting would end.

Uncertainty regarding the length of stay and potentially overstaying their welcome create anxiety for both families. Agencies such as the Red Cross recommend that length of stay should be agreed upon by the host family, the hosted family and an authority of the host community, and last

Syrian refugee children who are being hosted by a Lebanese family do their homework and play together.

for a duration of one to three years. Other guidelines suggest a four-party agreement between host, hosted, implementing agency and local authority. Yet no independent research has been conducted that shows the extent to which an agreed-upon end date reduces anxiety, and its influence on the quality or experience of hosting.

The 'problem' of children
The presence of children can threaten the stability of the hosting relationship. People being hosted noted the challenge of children, saying, "We can only stay one or two months with relatives, otherwise the children will fight. The host families have more money and our children get upset because they see other children eating or getting things that we can't provide for them. They are too small to understand." Another woman stated, "The children are small and they disturb the older children in our relative's family. We don't feel good when our children disturb others." While manuals suggest that hosting is a preferable option for keeping the family together, case studies from around the world show this is not always what happens. Displaced families in Sri Lanka and eastern DRC claim that they send children to different host families. Separation should

raise concerns, as child-parent separation is a recognised stressor for displaced and refugee children as well as parents.

The need to share
Whether spontaneous or organised through an agency, neither host nor hosted can know how well they will get along on a daily basis. What is apparent is that hosting entails complicated social dynamics of sharing in three particular areas: space, resources and activities.

Sharing space: A Danish Refugee Council assessment in 2012 of Syrian refugees in northern Lebanon found that a significant percentage of hosted families had left their host family and moved into separate rented accommodation either because of the unsustainability of the relationship or because the house was too small. Sri Lankan families who were asked if they would host a family in the future said that they would do so only if the hosted family "would be obligated under our rules and regulations" and "live under our control".

Sharing resources: Even if living in a separate shelter on the host family's property, in the political economy of displacement and

its scarcities sharing resources might be a source of conflict between hosts and hosted. One woman explained, "Our relatives are not making much so when we ask to share milk powder, they grumble that we have too many children."[1] Sri Lankan host families noted, "We are sharing the toilet and the well but there is no electricity… we have to use more kerosene now that there are more children studying. It is difficult."

Sharing activities: Cooking meals, domestic chores and studying together are activities that host and hosted family members do together. Hosted family members also help with household chores such as laundry, childcare and gardening. Assisting in household chores helps hosted family members feel useful and reduces feelings of indebtedness.

Defraying the cost of hosting or being hosted

While hosted families worry about being a burden to their hosts, they also express gratitude. One Sri Lankan woman stated, "At their own expense our relatives have been looking after us for the past two months." Host families also may be poor and might need assistance in order to accommodate a hosted family. There are six common financial assistance packages that can support hosting arrangements:

- cash incentives to host families to shelter displaced families
- in-kind assistance of construction materials to extend the host family's house
- retrospective reimbursement to host families for housing improvements made to shelter a family
- cash transfers to hosted families to, for example, pay rent or utility bills
- cash-for-work or other income-generation schemes for hosted families to help defray the costs of hosting
- assistance to both the host and hosted family as 'solidarity families': The solidarity family model treats the host and hosted families as one family unit and as

one single recipient for aid.[2] It also uses a mutually agreed upon, written contractual agreement describing what support the host and the hosted family will receive for the hosting period and how it will be divided between the two families.

Thinking ahead about supporting hosting

Hosting as both a short- and longer-term shelter option is expanding in practice, and current shelter standards and guidelines provide practical steps for implementing hosting arrangements.[3] They acknowledge that aid distribution might create resentment between hosts and hosted or that host or hosted family members might exploit or abuse one another; yet there is no evidence showing whether or not this happens, under what conditions it is most likely to occur and how to avoid it. While guidelines provide detailed descriptions of selection criteria for hosting assistance, an understanding of the extent to which assistance packages have any effect on the well-being of hosts and those being hosted is neglected.

Hosting is often credited with providing displaced persons with opportunities to socialise and interact with the wider host community but the emotional costs of living in a hosting relationship can be high, especially if combined with being told directly or indirectly that one is a burden. To increase the sustainability of hosting as a shelter option, how host and hosted 'experience' the relationship must be explored further.

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Security of tenure in the urban context

Neil Brighton, Kirstie Farmer and Øyvind Nordlie

Addressing the lack of secure tenure and the risk of forced eviction is one of the defining characteristics of urban shelter response.

Refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in informal settlements or in rented housing are among those most at risk of eviction.[1] Traditional humanitarian shelter responses in urban areas have tended to favour ownership or collective centres, often lacking means and solutions for informal settlers and tenants. The recognition of a variety of forms of tenure continues to be a work-in-progress in the shelter sector, signifying a shift from a focus on freehold ownership as the main guarantee of security of tenure. One of the main challenges emerging when departing from past solutions is assessing what constitutes 'secure enough' for shelter purposes.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)'s experience of implementing shelter programmes for Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan has prompted the use of creative approaches for the provision of housing with improved security of tenure, combined with direct financial aid and host family support.

A broader approach to security of tenure

Security of tenure is the guarantee of legal protection against forced eviction, harassment and other threats. Since the majority of urban displaced live in informal settlements or in rented accommodation, many without formal rental agreements, the risk of eviction is a defining feature of their lives. Security of tenure is usually associated with possession of documents that demonstrate tenure, combined with mechanisms for governance and enforcement, such as state regulation of housing and land. In conflict-affected contexts (both urban and rural), tenure arrangements may be informal. When this is combined with instability and lack of government control, possession of documentation may have limited use against forced eviction. In these situations it is important to take into account the variety of factors beyond

ownership of title or the existence of rental agreements that influence security of tenure.[2]

It is increasingly recognised that security of tenure can be derived from multiple sources and that there is a wide range of factors that interact to determine the level of security. One of the most important is the recognition of rights by the local community. Shelter actors may therefore be able to approach security of tenure through an enhanced focus on the other influencing factors – such as community legitimacy – in order to ensure 'secure enough' shelter programming. Security of tenure can involve community recognition or subjective perceptions, as is shown in Lebanon, where the most significant factor regarding eviction and move-out rates was refugees' relationship with their landlords and the host community.[3]

Urban shelter programmes in Lebanon and Jordan

Syrian refugees in these countries spend a combined total of approximately US$700 million per year on private rental accommodation.[4] But at the same time there are limitations on refugees' right to work and a lack of livelihoods opportunities, which increases the risk of eviction for refugees who are unable to meet rental payments. More than half of Syrian refugee families in Lebanon and one in four families in Jordan are classified as shelter vulnerable, living in either substandard and/or overcrowded conditions.

In response, NRC's programmes provide rent-free accommodation to families most in need by upgrading substandard uninhabitable buildings in the host community, thus fostering community acceptance, and increasing, albeit on a modest scale, the quantity of affordable housing. Phased payments are made to property owners to undertake the work themselves or to hire labourers. NRC also stipulates that the owner must establish bilateral rent-free agreements

Yusra fled her home in Homs in Syria in 2012 and now lives in Amman, Jordan, with her six children. She does not know where her husband is.

with each beneficiary family to allow them to remain in the property for a 12- to 24-month period. NRC monitors the situation on a regular basis and addresses any disputes identified by specific community liaison teams. The rent-free period is meant to ease the financial pressure on families while they establish income-generating activities in the area, so that once the rent-free period expires they can continue to live in the same property, or a similar one elsewhere, paying rent.

Initial programme challenges

The programmes encountered a number of challenges at their inception. First, a small percentage of families vacated the property during the rent-free period for a variety of reasons, including to pursue livelihood opportunities elsewhere, to access different schools, and because of disputes with the property owner which could not be resolved. NRC teams spent a considerable amount of time mediating minor disputes at the household level, whether between owner and tenant, or between tenants, in order to prevent escalation that might ultimately result in an eviction. While NRC endeavoured to relocate new families into these vacant units, it was not always possible owing to social and cultural considerations; for example, families with children were

sometimes unwilling to live in units adjacent to those housing single men.

Both the Lebanon and Jordan programmes faced the question of what happens after the end of the rent-free period. NGOs and donors were eager to understand whether refugees were able to meet rental payments on their own afterwards. This was closely rooted in the refugees' ability to find a sustainable source of income during the rent-free period, and their ability to establish networks and sustainable coping mechanisms.

However, evaluations in both Lebanon and Jordan[5] found that because refugees were limited in their ability to earn money to pay rent, the shelter intervention only prevented the most vulnerable families falling further into debt, rather than allowing them to build resources to pay rent in the future. Families had not been able to establish themselves economically, with refugees having limited access to legal – and hence stable and predictable – income. This highlighted the dilemma of how long to support vulnerable families who could not pay the rent after the end of the rent-free period. Instead of improving the refugee family's economic situation, the rent-free programme could only stabilise the family and decrease the rate of depreciation of a family's financial assets in the short term. Prior to the evaluations, in

Lebanon, NRC tried to offer extended rent-free periods to vulnerable families by moving them to another property, which sometimes disrupted their newly formed social networks and required children to change schools. In Jordan, NRC provided additional upgrades, primarily through renewable energy solutions, to secure continued occupation of the same property with reduced rent.

A final challenge was one of scale – that is, the limited numbers assisted. This raised the potential for Multi-Purpose Cash (MPC) in providing shelter support, in which large number of families can be reached through bank cards. While the outputs of MPC are in general impressive, from a shelter perspective the outcomes are less so. Five years into the crisis, refugees receiving MPC in Lebanon stated that securing adequate accommodation remains the main challenge they face, and over 50% of severely vulnerable MPC recipients were found to live in substandard conditions. While choice granted by cash was important, it does not always equate to accessing a minimum standard of accommodation or security of tenure, given the exploitative rental landscape and multiple competing priorities for a family's resources. Moreover, in some cases provision of cash can confine people to sub-standard accommodation because it is cheaper, leading to longer-term problems. Conversations about how shelter-specific programming and MPC can be used in a complementary manner have not been concluded and there are continued calls from some donors for MPC assistance to replace shelter and WASH programming assistance in Jordan and Lebanon, despite there being no evidence of MPC having a positive impact on refugee's shelter vulnerability in these contexts.

Adaptations to the shelter programmes

In response to the programme evaluation, NRC Lebanon extended the rent-free periods for highly socio-economically vulnerable families in the same properties on the basis of equity for the most vulnerable, while still taking new families into the programme. This was done by adding items to the scope of building activities resulting in upgrades that exceeded the inter-agency minimum standard but which enabled NRC to target a wider range of properties. NRC was able to place families closer to essential services, and to extend their rent-free periods in locations where they had already established networks.

In Jordan, when refugees were granted permission to work in 2016, the programme undertook a pilot supporting home-based businesses. Women heads of households who already had skills and were benefiting from rent-free assistance, were provided with financial literacy training and supported with business start-up cash grants. The intention was for the families to start generating income during the rent-free period and allow them to afford to pay rent once the assistance period was over. The complementarity between the shelter assistance programme and the livelihoods pilot allowed vulnerable families to start generating income while living in dignified, habitable accommodation with secure tenure.

In Lebanon, a 2015 NRC study, six months after the rent-free period had expired, found that 25% were occupied by NRC beneficiaries who had stayed and now paid rent, 29% were occupied by other Syrian refugees who were paying rent; 7% were occupied by NRC beneficiaries who stayed on and did not have to pay rent; and 36% were empty, while the owner sought tenants.[6] A key finding of this survey was that those who had stayed, or moved in, were paying less than the average rate for substandard buildings on the rental market. This represented an opportunity to link unconditional cash recipients with property owners offering minimum-standard accommodation for below-average rent.

Conclusion and way forward

Assistance to host communities helps to build community acceptance and support security of tenure for displaced populations while a lack of host community acceptance can undermine it. Furthermore, refugees' own perceptions of their housing situation have also been seen to play an important role in their ability to secure adequate longer-term shelter solutions. The shelter modalities and adaptations employed

in Lebanon and Jordan have attempted to take these factors into account. Both evaluations found that NRC's shelter approach had increased local community acceptance, owing to the host community benefiting from the housing upgrades.

Given limited resources, robust assistance can be provided for the most vulnerable – but at the cost of coverage. However, displaced populations are not homogeneous and, as demonstrated in Lebanon and Jordan, equity-based responses for the most vulnerable can also tangibly support the host community and broader displaced community in the short- and medium-term. Combining this assistance with other sectoral interventions and unconditional cash assistance can increase the impact at the household level for the most vulnerable families.

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The pavements and slums of Dhaka

Nellie LeBeau and Hugh Tuckfield

Almost half a million people every year seek refuge in Dhaka, compelled by a nexus of climate change, poverty and environmental degradation. Many end up on living on the pavements.

The slums of Bangladesh's capital city, Dhaka, have traditionally provided shelter for the country's environmentally displaced poor. Recent increases in storms and flooding have diminished the liveability of the country's coastal and rural regions; unable to fish, farm or safely dwell on their land, millions of people have migrated from their homes and are now internally displaced in Bangladesh's cities. When slum housing for them is inaccessible, the next shelter option for internally displaced environmental migrants is the unsheltered pavement.

The 'pavement dwellers' of Dhaka have transformed public spaces for private use, creating their own tenuous shelter under blue tarpaulins on the sides of streets, in front of shops on footpaths, and under bridges in upper-income neighbourhoods. Men who were once farmers and fishermen are now Dhaka's rickshaw drivers and vegetable sellers, sleeping at night on the lawns of Bangladesh's government buildings. Women work in factories, or as sex workers, or as domestic day servants for middle-class households, and come home to sleep in Dhaka's parks and bus stations. Families unite into communities, and build portable outdoor kitchens and washing areas between buildings and in alleyways, paying officials for the right to sleep on the streets. Home for these climate migrants is a squat beneath abandoned shopping malls and within construction sites of luxury apartments scattered across the city. Living on the streets, they are at increased risk of assault, rape,

theft and disease, and their children are vulnerable to trafficking and labour abuses. Some NGOs have established walk-in centres for the pavement dwellers' health-care and hygiene needs, and have constructed one short-term shelter for pregnant women. While a patchwork provision for the migrants' basic needs is certainly beneficial to health and well-being for those able to access services, true shelter remains out of reach.

Globally, in the face of environmental disasters, the international aid community erects temporary tents and constructs permanent structures to protect the displaced from harm, reducing the vulnerability of survivors while preserving their dignity. This is the importance of safe shelter, however basic that shelter might be. Bangladesh has received generous international funding for climate change adaptation plans and projects, with more than US$10 billion invested in building irrigation pumps, distributing solar panels and constructing cyclone shelters in rural coastal regions to mitigate the impact of climate change. These are important programmes but, as migration is also part of adaptation, providing decent shelter for climate-related

displaced people should also be an integral part of any climate adaptation strategy.

While the climate-related displaced of Dhaka are increasingly often evicted from slums and prevented from sleeping in public spaces, shelter solutions are urgently needed. A current and reliable census of slum and pavement dwellers would be an excellent starting point for assessing the need for shelter construction and for health and education provision. An account of available and liveable units affordable to climate-displaced migrants would assist communities in ensuring that dwellings lost to urban development will be replaced. Building safe shelter for those dwelling on the pavement would assist Bangladesh in its compliance with international human rights law and with its own constitution, according to which all its citizens should have access to shelter.

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Mass shelters: inappropriate in displacement

Alena Koscalova and Yann Lelevrier

Mass shelters appear to be an inappropriate shelter solution even in the acute onset of a crisis, creating problems of dignity and security and having significant health consequences.

Between May 2015 and December 2016, more than 200,000 Burundi refugees fled into Tanzania. Nyarugusu camp already existed, home to more than 60,000 Congolese refugees for almost 20 years, and it was therefore to here that the first Burundian refugees were directed on arrival. The first wave of refugees arriving in the camp were accommodated in schools, the second wave in mass shelters that were already home to a few hundred Congolese asylum seekers. Although the stay in such transit centres should not exceed five days and in theory all inhabitants were supposed to be quickly relocated to a more appropriate shelter in Nyarugusu or another camp, some refugees were living there for more than 12 months.

The mass shelters are either 240m² large hall-type tents (designed mainly for storage purposes) or 300m² shelters made of wooden posts covered with plastic sheeting. Each shelter accommodates between 100 and 400 people, providing on average a living space of less than 2m² per person, which is far below the minimum standard of 3.5m² per person in a warm climate. The people live outside the shelter during the day and sleep inside at night.

During the course of an evaluation commissioned by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in 2016 to learn from the emergency phase of its intervention in the camp, refugees complained that this type of shelter provided no privacy and therefore had a negative impact on their mental health. Reportedly, it became particularly intolerable for people who lived there for several months. Staff from MSF and other agencies described the mass shelters as unacceptable in terms of dignity, security and hygiene conditions. Given the limited living space, overcrowding and insufficient water and sanitation facilities, this population was also found to be extremely vulnerable to the spread of various infectious diseases such as measles, diarrhoeal diseases and skin diseases.

During the rainy season, it was clear that people living in mass shelters were particularly vulnerable to malaria. The MSF clinics located near the mass shelters were treating considerably higher numbers of malaria patients than other clinics in the camp. Leaks in the tents, overcrowding and stagnant puddles around the shelters were also contributing to a high malaria transmission rate; however, it was almost impossible to use mosquito nets in the mass shelters due to limited space and problems in fixing the nets to the construction, leaving the inhabitants unprotected against the disease vectors.

The situation eventually improved in December 2016 when most of the inhabitants were moved out of the communal tents to family shelters. Administrative and political problems had prevented MSF from installing temporary family tents or family shelters before UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency) could provide more suitable accommodation for the inhabitants of the mass shelters.

Learning from the experience in Nyarugusu, before the refugees arrived in the newly opened Nduta camp MSF installed 2,000 tents each designed to accommodate a family of five, with internal partitions. The family tents allowed the refugees more privacy, better protection against the weather and insects, and considerably higher hygiene standards compared with the mass shelters. However, this shelter option was quite costly due to expensive transport and the tents have a short life span. Some refugees also complained about the lack of flexibility of the family tents to accommodate single refugees or incomplete families, who were often obliged to share the tent with complete strangers.

A few weeks after the opening of the camp, family shelters made of plastic sheeting and locally available materials were installed by other NGOs in the rest of the camp, with each shelter adapted to the actual size of the family, providing greater versatility than the tents. Due to the use of local material, the cost of family shelters was considerably lower than the cost of the tents. Furthermore, the materials can be re-used by the beneficiaries for the construction of more permanent shelters.

Conclusion

Coordinated action eventually led to most of the inhabitants of the mass shelters, including those without a proper refugee status, being relocated to the more suitable accommodation facilities. Both family tents and family shelters made of plastic sheeting and local material present alternative solutions to mass shelters in Tanzania. On the one hand, family tents were an acceptable solution in Nduta camp, where the speed of deployment was the main objective. On the other hand, less expensive, more flexible

and re-usable family shelters appeared to be the more suitable shelter option in the chronic situation of Nyarugusu camp.

Cost, speed of deployment, expected lifespan but also the acceptability and flexibility to adapt to families or groups of various compositions should be considered when deciding on the particular types of shelters to be used in different contexts. What is essential is to avoid the use of mass shelters – initially serving as transit centres with an acceptable short stay not exceeding a few days – being transformed into mid-term accommodation facilities.

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This article is based on the findings of an evaluation commissioned by MSF on which the authors both worked. The views expressed here are the personal opinions of the authors and are not intended to reflect those of MSF.

More design, less innovation

Mitchell Sipus

Those working in international agencies to develop shelter solutions for displaced populations can learn much from human-centred design practices of professional architects and planners.

Over recent decades, the word innovation has proliferated across multiple industries and is widely drawn upon to tackle many kinds of problems. In the case of shelter and settlement planning for displaced populations, the pursuit of innovation by the humanitarian community has tended to be unhelpfully siloed. Innovation units have popped up in numerous UN agencies and NGOs, yet, for all the innovation, most long-standing problems remain.

Agency innovation units may be effective for trying new methods but the innovation model is not always a viable path to better shelter solutions. Opportunities and insights

may be created but better shelter and planning solutions that emerge through techno-centric innovation teams may be more vulnerable to failure when attempts are made to scale them up across the industry, across budgets and across regions. Innovation alone is not the answer – unless paired with good design.

Good design is not a profound or magical process. It requires the design professional to get very close to the user community to conduct ethnographic research and then rapidly build low-cost and low-quality prototypes for testing with the immediate stakeholders. A good designer will repeat this process many times until

a solution emerges to meet stakeholders' needs. A design professional understands that solving a complex problem requires more than research and planning; the proposed solutions must be iteratively prototyped, piloted, tested and modified.

Good design is not found in a boardroom strategy session, nor in a cluster meeting, but only happens when the designer is embedded in the field, making observations, and quickly testing solutions. While design methods can be replicated across any geography, a well-designed product is very specific to the needs of a specific group and an immediate location. A good designer will never transplant a solution from one group of stakeholders to another – even if their problems appear identical at the outset. Yet too often design is understood as an outcome rather than a process. Design is often outsourced via high-profile partnerships or through global design competitions which continue to veer toward imported solutions. Though these designers are capable, it is unlikely that they can get as close to the problem as UN or NGO staff on site.

It is common practice today for shelters and settlements to be planned using satellite images and relying on structured social surveys contracted to a local NGO. Rapid site visits and surveys are not a substitute for proper design ethnography – that is, using detailed observation to try to understand how people live their lives in relation to buildings, infrastructures and objects. Design ethnography generates insights to drive better shelter design in complex conditions. Architects and planners, who are trained in empirical social research processes and human-centred design, can offer an example to agencies that struggle to achieve shelter solutions that are effective on technical grounds and that also take into account the interaction between people and technology.

It is of course a reality that host country policies towards displaced people may make it difficult to implement a robust design process or ideal solutions. Where the demand for camp systems is imposed in preference to urban integration, architects and planners are often constrained in their attempts to do their work to the highest professional standards. Exceptions have emerged, such as the construction of Za'atari camp in Jordan, but these exceptions are not commonplace and Za'atari continues to maintain many of the characteristics of a refugee camp. These challenges are inevitable as design professionals are not educated in migration law or national policy, and thus struggle to communicate and deploy their work in a context where people expect an immediate technical solution – not an iterative social process.

To work within these organisational and cultural constraints while creating more contextually responsive shelter solutions takes time, and strategies for success are still emerging. For example, the use of a 'lean start-up' methodology[1] has helped many organisations embrace a common design principle in order to scale up and modify projects through iteration. Until large organisations embrace the principles of design as already understood by most shelter professionals – a process of on-site, iterative user research and rapid prototyping – camps will continue to reflect big innovations rather than incremental design. If humanitarian and development organisations learn to leverage design as a process, not a product, the results will reverberate globally.

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1. An organisational method to identify – within weeks, not months – what technical solutions work and which do not, by using short cycles of product experimentation rather than long-term, multi-phase strategies.

The humanitarian-architect divide

Tom Scott-Smith

Humanitarians and architects can fail to find a common language, characterising each other in schematic terms. It is time to bridge the divide and encourage greater collaboration between these professions. By learning from each other's way of thinking they may also become more relevant to displaced people seeking shelter.

Media coverage of forced migration tends to repeat the old, tired imagery of tents and camps, ignoring how often displaced people end up living in a much wider range of shelters. Many forced migrants live in ordinary rented apartment blocks or stay with friends and relatives. Others find a roof by looking to their personal networks, or seek shelter in a church or mosque. Some move into informal settlements such as the Calais 'Jungle', constructing their own shelter from wood and tarpaulin. Others stay in the natural environment living in caves, sleeping under trees or hiding in hedgerows. In large cities many migrants find refuge in the urban environment: living under bridges and underpasses in Paris, or in tents in a central train station such as Keleti in Budapest. Others may be housed in government facilities, such as detention centres, underground bunkers in Switzerland, or airports such as Tempelhof in Berlin. Some refugees squat in abandoned buildings, such as in the neighbourhood of Exarcheia in Athens.

The lesson of this diversity is clear: forced migrants are likely to find accommodation without the assistance of professional aid workers or architectural expertise. Indeed, the importance of improvisation and personal initiative has been a striking feature of the recent 'crisis' in Europe. Both humanitarians and architects have been more irrelevant to the problem of shelter and displacement than they would care to admit. On the one hand, large aid agencies have been slow to respond and have ended up being overtaken by amateur humanitarians and solidarity groups. On the other hand, forced migrants have rarely lived in spaces designed by architects, despite the attention placed on 'innovative' prefabricated shelter in design media and on the architectural conference circuit. These two professions, which at least ostensibly have the most to contribute to addressing the problem of shelter, have a tendency to misunderstand and disagree with each other, only exacerbating their irrelevance. This enduring tension stands as a real obstacle both to collaborative working and fresh thinking on this important contemporary topic. The first step is to understand the stereotypes in this 'humanitarian-architect' divide.

The pragmatic humanitarian's view

Humanitarians are minded to see architects as utopian dreamers, completely out of touch with the realities of the field and the needs of beneficiaries. They read enthusiastic media reports of the latest emergency shelter designs, sighing in despair at the expression of certainty that a universal solution can be found. Humanitarians may also have been bombarded by well-meaning but ultimately unworkable suggestions in their workplace email inboxes, or may have heard about the 2016 Venice Architecture Biennale exhibition with its combination of impenetrable jargon and over-ambitious aims. As a result many aid professionals have concluded that architects completely misunderstand the nature of the problem and lack the necessary pragmatism to tackle it. Employing an architect may be all very well, they think, but only if you have lots of money and want to build something pretty; most architectural thinking, however, is ultimately irrelevant in emergencies, when the need to provide simple shelter with limited resources and limited time is the most significant concern.

Some humanitarians, especially in the shelter sector, do have an architectural training or some familiarity with the profession. They may understand that a

thoughtful and well-informed architectural intervention is possible, and that there are some productive conversations taking place. Yet they still tend to argue that there is not the time. After iterating designs, having endless meetings with stakeholders, sourcing materials and responding to bids, they fear that architects will still be pondering as the ground moves beneath their feet.

The professional architect's view

For their part, professional architects often wonder why aid agencies never reach out to them. They too read the media and lament the restrictive, unimaginative, mean-looking designs that so often characterise refugee camps. As professionals trained for years to think about how to build shelter in complex situations, they wonder why their specialist expertise is not being sought, and after observing the grid-like layouts of camps and the relentlessly uniform housing, they see how little design there is in the world of aid. This may lead them to the conclusion that the sector may claim to be humanitarian but rarely appears humane. They also notice that humanitarians are preoccupied with spreadsheets, metrics and minimum standards, and that humanitarians seem more concerned with ticking boxes and counting costs than thinking creatively about how people live.

Some architects, if they are more familiar with the world of aid, will understand the severe financial and temporal constraints aid agencies are under. They may recognise that doing more is impossible. Yet they may still regret that housing has become an issue of engineering, and they may conclude that humanitarians are too preoccupied with efficiency to find the necessary holistic solutions. Architects understand that any attempt to find shelter should take into account everything from the formation of community to the utilisation of the latest materials, from considerations about the environment to attention to forms of construction, from making a building aesthetically beautiful to making it practical for daily life. Humanitarians rarely think this expansively.

Bridging the divide

Given the persistence of this divide, which is based more on misunderstanding than genuine animosity, we need to promote some mediation between these cultural worlds. Humanitarianism is a mode of thinking that is based on a careful calculation of cost, time and lives saved. Architecture, however, is a mode of thinking that is centred on a balance of aesthetics and utility, solidity and suitability. Both sides can assist with the shelter needs of displaced people in a variety of circumstances, but in different ways. The task now is bring the two together.

One of the aims of the Refugee Studies Centre's Architectures of Displacement research project is to widen public understanding of refugee shelter and to inform the design of successful policies on shelter and displacement.[1] We are studying interventions by both architects and humanitarians in detail, exploring their advantages and limitations. We are starting to facilitate dialogue, getting the main players together to talk about their constraints. We believe that by learning from each other's way of thinking, both architects and humanitarians can become more relevant to displaced people seeking shelter. Get in touch and join the debate.

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1. Launched in late 2016
www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/research/architectures-of-displacement

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Cash transfer programming: lessons from northern Iraq

Yvonne Deblon and Patrick Gutekunst

Cash transfers can be a powerful tool in situations of conflict and forced migration. However, the need to adopt a context- and conflict-sensitive approach is of great importance.

In situations of conflict, disaster and protracted crisis, displaced persons not only face physical threats but are also confronted with the challenge of economic survival. High levels of general unemployment or legal barriers to labour market entry often restrict access to jobs and income, and the consequences of unemployment in displacement can be far-reaching, with poor nutrition, lack of access to basic services, psychological distress and social conflict just some of the possible results.

In this context, Cash Transfer Programming (CTP) has become an increasingly important tool in humanitarian response and poverty reduction. CTP encompasses cash transfers (to households or individuals) that are either unconditional or conditional upon criteria such as acquiring education, attending training, using health services or carrying out work.

Cash programming in northern Iraq

There are currently about 240,000 refugees and 900,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Iraq's northernmost region, and the resulting increase in population (25% since 2012) has put further pressure on an already strained labour market. In this context, CTP was chosen as a measure to temporarily stabilise vulnerable households and enable them to meet their basic needs. As basic requirements, CTP presupposes the availability of essential goods and functioning local markets that are able to meet an increase in demand. Furthermore, recipients must be able to safely receive payments.

GIZ's cash programming in northern Iraq consists of two main components: cash-for-work and multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA). Firstly, through cash-for-work, around 26,000 people received payments that are conditional upon their participation in temporary employment, such as support of public service delivery, water supply, repair of roads, and social activities in schools or community centres. Secondly, in order to take into account vulnerable labour-constrained persons (notably persons with disabilities, single heads of household or senior citizens), 5,500 beneficiaries received unconditional transfers through multi-purpose cash assistance. At a household level, together the two components reached approximately 160,000 persons.[1]

The benefits of cash transfers are multiple. On an individual level, the provision of readily available income through cash transfers is proven to temporarily stabilise households and increase their resilience to external shocks. Examples of additional benefits of CTP are increased dietary diversity, improved access to health services, and the reduction of negative coping mechanisms such as the continuous sale of assets or running into debt. Unconditional MPCA has proven to yield especially positive results, as the transfers can also reach the most vulnerable and at-risk households.[2] Furthermore, CTP enables beneficiaries to make their own decisions, using their income according to individual needs. However, two factors affecting the stabilising impact of CTP must be taken into consideration: the duration of payment or employment, and the amount of the transfer or the wage set.[3]

On a societal level, cash transfers and a resulting increase in purchasing power can provide a stimulus for the local economy and can revitalise markets. The rehabilitation and creation of basic social or economic infrastructure and the support of communal services – all done through cash-for-work – generated material benefits

in northern Iraq and also strengthened peace and social cohesion between displaced persons and host communities. The latter aspect is particularly important in situations of protracted displacement, where scarce resources and services often need to be used by very diverse groups with considerable ethno-religious and linguistic differences.

Notwithstanding these positive aspects, there are possible downsides and unintended consequences of cash programming in conflict situations. Targeting is one example of this; in areas with high numbers of potential beneficiaries, social frictions may develop between those included and those not included in the programme. In addition, enabling participants to freely dispose of their income means that donors to some extent give up control over the final use of funds, although post-distribution monitoring has shown that the vast majority of beneficiaries use their income responsibly.

Lessons identified
The main lessons identified with regard to cash programming in northern Iraq relate to four different aspects:

1. Combining cash programming with complementary measures
Outside conflict situations, CTP is often implemented as one component of more complex programmes. CTP on its own can, even under challenging circumstances, rapidly bring temporary relief to households and individuals, where volatile security conditions and short timeframes for implementation may initially complicate complementary measures. At a later stage of a protracted crisis, however, cash transfers should be linked to additional support measures – such as acquiring qualifications and accessing training, or enabling access to financial services such as small business grants or savings products – in order to achieve lasting effects that go beyond initial stabilisation. Such measures may be challenging but are particularly relevant in northern Iraq, since a succession of crises has seriously limited the absorptive capacities of the local labour market,

An internally displaced Arab Iraqi family in the north of the country walks through the Kurdish neighbourhood where they now live.

especially in low-wage sectors. In this context, unconditional MPCA can also support livelihood creation. GIZ's follow-up project in the region will therefore specifically focus on linking cash transfers with promotion of employment and livelihood activities in order to achieve more sustainable results.

2. Use of context- and conflict-sensitive selection criteria for targeting
In northern Iraq, GIZ included unconditional MPCA in its project so as to take account of persons who are unable to participate in cash-for-work. However, vulnerability assessments at the household level showed that only a very small number of households are completely labour-constrained (the original criterion for inclusion in MPCA). Rather, the issue is under-employment, which does not allow them to cover all their basic needs. Consequently, the project brought households with limited access to labour into the eligible beneficiary group if they met the socio-economic selection criteria.

Another challenge during the implementation of MPCA was the fact that a 'poverty pocket' approach[4] was needed as the project budget was not sufficient to reach out to all potentially eligible households in northern Iraq. The poverty pocket approach

meant that households outside the poverty pockets which met the selection criteria and households which were only slightly better off could not be integrated into the project. This situation was further challenged due to the fact that host communities were increasingly affected by unemployment and underemployment due to the mounting economic crisis and were no longer receiving welfare assistance from the government, as budget cuts have rendered social security systems largely dysfunctional. This fact on top considerably increased the number of potentially eligible host community households for MPCA support during the implementation period.

The follow-up project has been modified in order to avoid any tensions in the community. MPCA will be integrated into a livelihood component that aims to strengthen the long-term resilience of IDPs, refugees and host communities. In this context, MPCA will guarantee that the selected households can meet their basic needs, while complementary measures (such as training or the creation of microenterprises) are established.

3. Equal consideration of displaced persons and host communities

From the outset temporary employment and MPCA were made available not only to refugees or IDPs but also to local inhabitants who met the same criteria of vulnerability. The integration of host communities is especially important in conflict regions, where general income levels tend to be low and the (perceived) exclusion of certain groups might contribute to increasing competition over resources or even recourse to violence. Displaced persons are in direct competition with the local population over a decreasing number of jobs in the low-wage sector. It was therefore crucial that

GIZ did not promote tensions by opening up conditional or unconditional cash transfers only for refugees and IDPs.

4. Payment mechanisms

Payments can be made in cash or by vouchers, bank transfers or mobile payments. Again, a context- and conflict-sensitive approach is necessary to ensure the safe access of beneficiaries to payments and to avoid exposing project staff to risks. If there is no functioning banking system or digital infrastructure, and given that establishing new structures usually requires long time frames and additional resources, it is often necessary and even sometimes preferable to use existing payment mechanisms.

Northern Iraq has a poorly developed financial sector. There is a preference for cash transactions, and the use of digital services – such as payment via mobile devices – is also not common at the moment. An alternative that has proven to be very effective is *hawala*, a traditional network of money transfer agents.[5] While the inner workings of such local systems need to be carefully analysed in order to rule out harmful effects, they may provide the best and only means to transfer cash in conflict zones when time frames are short.

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1. The average household size in northern Iraq is five persons.

2. It is worth pointing out that MPCA is not limited to use only with those who are labour constrained. In this particular project it was designed to complement a cash-for-work intervention but it is equally applicable for use with households who do have labour capacity, and it has been used for this purpose by other agencies in northern Iraq and globally.

3. In northern Iraq, beneficiaries of cash-for-work receive US$21-50 per day for 40 days, depending on their level of skills and assumed responsibilities. Beneficiaries of MPCA receive three consecutive payments of $360 per month.

4. A 'poverty pocket' approach is where the poorest districts within a region are selected for project implementation – and in turn only the poorest households are selected as beneficiaries.

5. The *hawala* system is widespread in the Middle East and in Asia. It is a network of money transfer agents and is by nature non-contractual and is based on an established bond of trust between different agents in the *hawala* network.

Facilitating 'reasonable hope' with refugees and asylum seekers

Greg Turner

The loss of hope over time has led to despair and a mental health crisis for refugees and asylum seekers on Manus Island and Nauru. The use of the principle of 'reasonable hope', however, can support their mental health and well-being.

The reasons why people seek asylum are diverse but the common factor is the overriding need to flee and a hope that life will be better. For many asylum seekers, Australia seemed to offer everything they hoped for. But in August 2012, nervous of public perceptions of being 'swamped' by asylum seekers, the Australian government passed legislation decreeing that all Irregular Maritime Arrivals (asylum seekers arriving by boat) would be sent to either Manus Island in Papua New Guinea or to Nauru for the processing of their asylum claims. Furthermore, in September that year the government announced that refugees who had arrived by boat on or after 13th August 2012 would no longer be eligible to sponsor their family members for resettlement, and in October 2016 the government announced that individuals who had been sent to Manus Island or Nauru since July 2013 would never be allowed to settle in Australia under any circumstances.

It thus became a question of date of arrival or means of transport – or occasionally other, at times inexplicable, reasons – as to whether a person would be held in detention in Australia or be sent to Nauru or Manus. The inability to make sense of the process or to anticipate future events, their powerlessness, and the obvious unfairness of the process are not just mental health risk factors but a recipe for cognitive decline and mental health breakdown.[1]

In limbo on Nauru

Nauru is a tiny island in the Pacific Ocean – small enough to drive around in half an hour. In the last decade or so its greatest source of revenue has been the immigration detention centres built and maintained by the Australian government. Asylum seekers sent to Nauru are detained while their claims are processed; most are recognised as refugees and are then 'settled' into various camps located around the island. Outside the detention centre, life can be even more difficult than inside, with reports of assaults, rapes, bullying of children, poor schooling, poor health care and a myriad of psychosocial stressors and mental health risk factors. It is not what was hoped for.

The tidal flow of hope and despair gradually erodes mental health, and as months turn into years, and the years roll by, the hope of getting to Australia or some other country becomes their sole focus. Over a two-year period to December 2016 I worked as a consultant psychologist providing support and training to the refugee settlement workforce on Nauru, which included refugees themselves.[2] During this time I became aware of the mental health risk factors associated with this overwhelming focus on what I call the 'One Big Hope' – that is, of leaving Nauru – and how the idea of 'reasonable hope' articulated by Kaethe Weingarten[3] might help maintain healthy mental processes and preserve mental health.

Support workers and mental health professionals often struggle to find viable strategies to maintain the mental health of the refugees on Nauru. Some of the professionals worry about encouraging hope in the face of what often may appear as hopeless, concerned that they may be supporting false hope. Others encourage the One Big Hope, perhaps in the hope that the image of desperate refugees will help 'prove' that settlement on Nauru is not working and that they must therefore be resettled in Australia or another country. As well intentioned as

this may be, the result is a constant preoccupation with the future and with what may be an unattainable hope of resettlement. This type of obsession has led to severe mental health problems and suicidal behaviour resulting in some cases in serious injury and death. This is particularly the case following perceived opportunities, such as elections or visits from UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.

US Energy Dept Atmospheric Radiation Measurement Program

Nauru

From a neurological perspective, the result of the constant focus on a distant hope is the reinforcement of neural pathways associated with that hope and the decay of neural pathways not associated with it. Thus afflicted, people find it difficult to maintain meaningful activities and healthy mental processes for daily life.

From despair to 'reasonable' hope

One of the major tasks of the refugee settlement support worker is, or should be, to assist their client to maintain healthy mental processes despite uncertainty, disappointment and apparent hopelessness. While resources may be scant, workers can use evidence-based interventions and practices, applied with professionalism, persistence and imagination. A primary purpose of this is to stimulate pathways in the brain, not so as to encourage denial or the extinction of the One Big Hope but to encourage the development and reinforcement of other neural pathways – other thought processes – through identifying other hopes which have a relatively high chance of being realised.

"Reasonable hope's objective is the process of making sense of what exists now in the belief that this prepares us to meet what lies ahead. With reasonable hope, the present is filled with working not waiting […] it provides a way of thinking about hope for therapist and client alike that makes it more accessible even in the grimmest circumstances…" Kaethe Weingarten

According to Weingarten there are five main characteristics of reasonable hope:

- Firstly, it is 'relational' in that it flourishes in relationships and is not merely an individual attribute. I found this resonated with the refugees of Nauru as they live in close contact with others in the same situation, supported by empathetic workers.

- Secondly, it consists of a practice that is a daily process rather than an end point – about doing rather than wishing. This is fundamentally important for refugees with the One Big Hope which is generally about an end point such as getting off Nauru, or getting a visa. This characteristic of reasonable hope shifts the reinforcement of neural pathways associated with the One Big Hope to reinforcing those associated with daily living.

- Thirdly, it maintains that the future is uncertain but open. Although uncertainty is a significant mental health risk factor for asylum seekers and refugees, these characteristics mean that there are still possibilities. Nobody can predict what is around the corner. I utilised this many times with refugees on Nauru to challenge their despair and pessimism.

- Fourthly, it seeks goals and pathways to identified goals. By identifying realistic goals, and pathways to achieve these goals, refugees can obtain – often through

a process of trial and error – a sense of control and predictability over daily life. As more and more new neural pathways and networks are activated, cognition improves as do general mental health and well-being.

- Fifthly, it accommodates doubt, contradictions and despair – very appropriate in the environment in which refugees exist.

Training in facilitating reasonable hope provides those who support refugees and asylum seekers with practical mechanisms to support their clients to focus on the present and to reinforce positive cognitive processes. It is in no way my intention to deprive refugees and asylum seekers of the hope of getting off Manus Island or Nauru. The One Big Hope will always be in their minds. However, rather than have that sole, distant hope dominate their lives, the concept of reasonable hope can provide other points of focus in the present and the immediate future, helping individuals to identify achievable albeit humble hopes that bring satisfaction and further motivation. When refugees and asylum seekers do finally reach a place of safety, their mental processes will be intact and they will be in a stronger position to face the challenges of settlement and to lead productive lives.

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1. The Nauru files, *The Guardian*
www.theguardian.com/news/series/nauru-files

2. The settlement organisation employed refugees in administrative and operational support roles – which had benefits in terms of participation but resulted in role conflict and relationship challenges.

3. Weingarten K (2010) 'Reasonable hope: Construct, clinical applications and supports', *Family Process*, 49 (1): 5-25
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Vulnerability of refugees with communication disabilities to SGBV: evidence from Rwanda

Julie Marshall, Helen Barrett and Angelo Ebengo

Refugees with communication disabilities are particularly vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence, in part because of their limited ability to report abuse.

In recent years, there has been a concerted effort by humanitarian actors to include people with disabilities in service provision and programming. However, those identified as having disabilities are more often than not people with 'visible' physical difficulties. People with less visible challenges, such as communication disabilities, often go unidentified and are unable to access the humanitarian and protection services they need.

A person with communication disabilities may have difficulties in understanding and/or in expressing themselves, using spoken or signed language. Studies suggest that up to 49% of people with disabilities who seek services in East Africa have some form of communication difficulty[1] but the challenges they face are often not identified due to the 'hidden' nature of the disability: communication disability is both invisible and often complicated by other disabilities. Services to assist people with communication disabilities in many low- and middle-income countries are either non-existent or in short supply. In addition, widespread misunderstanding of the causes and nature of communication disabilities often results in people's exclusion from, or poor access to, support within the community and through formal and informal services.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is a significant risk for refugees in Rwanda, particularly for women and children. The

risk is considered to be significantly higher for refugees with disabilities, because of factors such as being separated from family members, isolation, poor living conditions that may impact them disproportionately, and shortfalls in community protection mechanisms. Other contributing factors include people with disabilities being stigmatised, their accounts of abuse being discredited and, in some cases, their lack of mobility hindering escape.

People with communication disabilities may be specifically targeted as they are far less able to report abuse, to describe the perpetrator effectively or to follow through with legal proceedings. In addition to the lack of support services available following abuse, evidence suggests that preventative measures, such as sexual and reproductive health education for refugees, is often not accessible to people with communication disabilities.

There is some emerging evidence that humanitarian organisations are beginning to recognise communication disabilities as a barrier to accessing services for SGBV (including prevention, support and legal redress), and as a major protection risk,[2] but there is little evidence of good practice in supporting people with communication disabilities to report SGBV and to access ongoing support. Front-line humanitarian staff in Rwanda are aware of the difficulties that people with communication disabilities face across the SGBV response systems but feel ill-equipped to respond to their needs.

Identifying the challenges

In response to concerns identified by UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency) Rwanda, and following an in-depth literature review,[3] a project involving Manchester Metropolitan University, Communicability Global and UNHCR was set up to find out more about the scale and nature of the challenges facing refugees with communication disabilities and their carers in relation to access to SGBV medical, legal and psychosocial support services.[4] We first carried out focus group discussions in Rwanda with frontline humanitarian staff and community members (including community mobilisers,

who are responsible for assisting refugees to access appropriate support services) from a refugee settlement and from an urban refugee setting. We also carried out a small number of individual and small-group interviews with carers of people with communication disabilities, to find out what challenges they and the person with the communication disability face. (At this stage, we did not talk to carers of people with communication disability about SGBV specifically, due to the sensitive and distressing nature of the topic.) Information about the experience of SGBV survivors who have a communication disability was obtained indirectly, from humanitarian staff and community mobilisers.

We then held a workshop for key stakeholders (UN agencies, national organisations, local Disabled People's Organisations and a clinical psychologist with expertise in SGBV) to explore the difficulties faced by refugees with communication disabilities in accessing appropriate services, gaining support for improvement of services, and to establish a consortium of expert organisations to take this work forward.

Findings from this preliminary investigation indicate that understanding about communication disability is very limited across the board, at community level and among service providers and strategic actors. For people with a communication disability, barriers to accessing services occur at every stage of SGBV response: prevention, disclosure, support and redress. There were anecdotal reports of perpetrators targeting people with communication disabilities and bribing them with food, or threatening them with exposure, and evidence of people with communication disabilities being targeted in their own homes when they were alone. Endemic stigmatisation and discrediting of people with communication disabilities by community members and service providers make reporting abuse almost impossible.

Critically, service providers do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding about the range and impact of communication disabilities, or skills to support people with communication disabilities. There is also a

widespread misunderstanding that using sign language is the best solution, even though most people with communication disabilities in humanitarian contexts do not use a formal sign language. It was apparent that when a SGBV survivor has a communication disability, medical practitioners did not have the skills to take a medical report and police are unable to take statements effectively. Furthermore, judicial systems may not be able to prosecute if a victim cannot bear witness to the crime. In addition, counselling and psychosocial support services are often based on talking therapies, and providers lack the skills and resources necessary to provide services using alternative methods.

Improving services

During the workshop, participants identified what they thought they and their organisations could do over the next five years or more to improve services for refugee survivors of SGBV who have a communication disability. Their commitments included training and capacity building for all service providers about understanding and identifying communication disabilities, awareness raising and sensitisation among communities, developing materials to help people with communication disabilities to disclose SGBV (for example, by using picture symbols or objects for people to show what they experienced, rather than having to use only spoken words) and to access medical and legal services, and better inclusion in education – both formal education and in sexual and reproductive health (SRH) education. SRH has been identified as crucial in the prevention of SGBV and both the literature review and reports from stakeholders highlighted the lack of inclusive SRH education services in refugee communities.

Priorities identified for the project include a) working with key stakeholders to engage with refugee survivors of SGBV with communication disabilities and their families, in order to better understand their needs and the challenges they face – and to involve them in future developments in this area; and b) working with partners to design, implement and evaluate changes in processes and services to increase the inclusion of people with communication disabilities in SRH education, and to improve their ability to access appropriate responses to SGBV.

In order for this work to be done, humanitarian actors clearly need to be able to identify people with communication disabilities. This will require training of agency staff, community leaders, disability committees and community mobilisers (and volunteers), and the establishment of systems to record and document people and needs.[5] It will also be essential to consider the ethical implications and support systems needed to engage with such a vulnerable group of people on such a sensitive and distressing topic.

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The power of education in refugees' lives: Sri Lankan refugees in India

Antony Jeevarathnam Mayuran

In their determination to take control of an uncertain future, Sri Lankan refugees living in the camps of Tamil Nadu, India, have prioritised education. The story of how they did this, and the crucial role of the host government in supporting them, may inspire other refugee communities who wait in uncertainty for a durable solution.

Violence that erupted in Sri Lanka in 1983 and on various subsequent occasions triggered a decades-long exodus of Sri Lankan Tamils to seek asylum in India and other countries in Asia, Europe, America and Australia. In total, some 303,000 people moved to India between 1983 and 2010, and were mainly accommodated in government-run refugee camps spread across Tamil Nadu in southern India. While the majority of the refugees have since moved back to Sri Lanka, there are still 19,451 families – about 63,350 refugees – living in 107 refugee camps. A further 37,868 live in Tamil Nadu outside the camps.[1]

Those living in the camps can access a range of support measures, including cash allowances and access to all the social security schemes available to local citizens. However, for the refugees, education is paramount. They see education as fundamental to efforts to rehabilitate and empower the refugee community, and believe that an educated community will be better prepared to rebuild a peaceful and prosperous society upon return to Sri Lanka.

Prioritising education

Under the leadership of OfERR (Organization for Eelam Refugees Rehabilitation, an organisation of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees), the refugees lobbied the central and state governments of India and obtained special concessions to allow refugee students – most of whom had lost their school certificates during displacement – to continue their education.

"We, Sri Lankan Tamils, having lost everything, requested the governments to provide space for our children to come and study in the classrooms along with the Indian children. To our surprise, the Tamil Nadu government offered space in their heart agreeing to admit all the children in schools without academic certificates. Nowhere in the world had this happened." (S C Chandrahasan, founder of OfERR)

A variety of programmes were organised by OfERR to promote education among the Sri Lanka Tamils: nursery education, primary and secondary schooling, evening classes, higher education, computer training, and school and college student forums. Sri

A student-led forum for school children in a Sri Lankan refugee camp in Tamil Nadu, India.

Lankan Tamils prize education highly and if any child from a refugee family is seen not to be attending school, the neighbours will intervene and take responsibility to ensure the child's education.

OfERR helps the students of vulnerable families to access higher education by providing scholarships, with a major part of each scholarship funded by an external donor.[2] More than 3,526 students in this refugee community have graduated or achieved diplomas, including in medicine, engineering, IT, banking, business and social work. The Tamil Nadu government's support in allowing access to higher education has been crucial.

More than three decades have passed and now basic education is ensured for every child in the camps, while special non-formal education and psychosocial support are provided for children with disabilities. OfERR's programmes aimed not only to help the refugees be gainfully occupied but also to help them overcome the psychological trauma resulting from prolonged residence in camps and years of uncertainty regarding prospects for return to Sri Lanka.[3]

Through district and regional forums involving over a thousand students, the refugee student community helps the next generation of students by providing mentoring, coaching, training and monetary support. They also monitor academic dropouts, organise community programmes such as neighbourhood clean-ups, and build awareness within the refugee community about social and global issues. But their ultimate goal is to utilise their higher education back in their homeland.

"Graduates, being the highly educated group in our community, have the responsibility of constantly updating refugees with the current situation of Sri Lanka and preparing the community for making voluntary, considered and informed decisions about their future." (Ajith Kumar, Paramathi camp, Namakkal district)

Long-term benefits

Education has made a significant contribution to the social and economic lives of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees living in Tamil Nadu. There is neither poverty nor hunger; women are empowered and gender equality is maintained; almost 100% of children have access to basic education; there are no epidemics, and infant and maternal mortality is very rare in the camps; and refugees are conscious of the consequences of global warming and climate change and actively engage in promoting environmental sustainability. The support of the Tamil Nadu and Indian governments has been significant in helping to achieve this.

Sri Lankan Tamil refugees have not deviated from their objective of developing their human resources and building their capacities. Despite insecurity about the future, education has been used as a bulwark against the harsh challenges encountered in their lives, and their empowerment through education has brought a sense of sustainability and self-reliance, and has helped equip them for their return to Sri Lanka.

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My name is Antony Jeevarathnam Mayuran. I am Sri Lankan, and have recently returned to my motherland Sri Lanka after 25 years of life in exile as a refugee. I lived my life as a stateless refugee in a small house in a refugee camp in India.

I completed my Masters in Social Work and then an MPhil in Social Work at Loyola College, Chennai, India, and am now a Community Social Worker serving the returning IDPs and refugees in Sri Lanka. I work with OfERR (Ceylon) to provide education, empowerment, documentation, capacity building and livelihood support to the resettled Tamil population in Sri Lanka.

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Children of rape of refugee women, and statelessness, in Egypt

Mohamed Farahat

The facilitation of birth registration procedures for children born from rape – particularly of refugee women – is necessary in order to prevent statelessness.

In Egyptian civil law the birth certificate is the only legal document that proves the existence of a human being, and the validation of other identity documents relies on the birth certificate. The birth certificate is the document that identifies the nationality of the person and his or her parentage.

Registration of children born from rape is one of the hardest matters facing refugee women who are victims of rape either inside the country of asylum or en route to that country. Both in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and in Egyptian law, birth registration is deemed a right of all children, including children born outside marriage; nonetheless, in practice there are many obstacles hindering the implementation of this right. In Egypt the Civil Registry Office has responsibility for recording children born to both citizens and non-citizens. In the case of children born outside marriage, the mother has the right to have her child's birth registered and to be granted a birth certificate with the mother's name.

Under the Egyptian Personal Status Law, doctors and midwives must issue a certificate with the name of the mother, date of birth and sex of the child. Despite this and the legal entitlement to a birth certificate, in practice the focus turns to the nature of the relationship that produced the child rather than the child's rights. One of the main obstacles confronting rape victims is the lack of knowledge among officials with regard to the procedures for issuing this sort of certificate, partly due to the fact that issuance of birth certificates for children born outside marriage is not common in Egyptian society, and social attitudes regarding this matter make the officials unwilling to provide this service. In the case of a child who is the product of rape and is born in Egypt, the registration procedure depends on whether the mother was raped and the father was unknown, whether the father denied his fatherhood or disappeared from the life of the mother, and whether the rape occurred inside or outside Egypt.

The first obstacle that confronts a victim of rape is the type of identity documents she carries. If the victim is an immigrant, her passport will confirm her identity. But if the victim carries an asylum seeker or refugee identity card she is likely to be refused registration for her child as registration staff in Egypt have limited knowledge about the validity of such identity documents. Further, there may be no evidence of rape such as a police record.

These are some of the difficulties faced by women refugees or migrant women in documenting the birth of children resulting from rape. The consequence of depriving a child of a birth certificate is that the child becomes a stateless person. In cases where the mother decides to leave Egypt (to move on or to return to her country of origin), without a birth certificate the mother cannot obtain a travel document for her child and is forced to leave the stateless child behind.

Facilitating birth registration procedures for children resulting from rape is vital to prevent all of these consequences. In order to reduce the risk of statelessness, the Egyptian authorities should implement the legal requirement to register each birth from rape or outside marriage even if the alleged father denies paternity, including identifying the mother as the mother of the child and its sex.

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Proving torture: demanding the impossible

Lucy Gregg and Jo Pettitt

New research demonstrates that errors by Home Office asylum caseworkers in their handling of expert medical evidence of torture can make it almost impossible for survivors of torture seeking asylum in the UK to prove that they were tortured. The consequences can be devastating for the individuals concerned, and can also place additional burdens on public services and funds.

A recent study suggests that 27% of adult forced migrants living in high-income countries like the UK are survivors of torture.[1] Many have complex physical, psychological, social and legal needs arising from their torture and from their often prolonged and dangerous journey to safety, and yet survivors consistently tell us that securing legal status quickly through the asylum system is the most significant problem they face.

Medico-legal reports are a well-recognised and accepted form of evidence commissioned by legal representatives on behalf of asylum claimants to assist decision-makers in establishing key factual elements of an asylum claim. They are a vital form of evidence for survivors of torture who may have little else available to prove the fact of their torture and, for reasons stemming from psychological trauma, may find it particularly difficult to give a coherent and comprehensive account of what has happened to them.

Freedom from Torture undertook a detailed analysis of how 50 expert medico-legal reports have been treated by asylum caseworkers in the UK Home Office.[2] The results indicate that in such cases many Home Office decisions are poor and have to be corrected by judges. In 76% of cases in our research for which the final outcome is known, the person was granted asylum following a successful legal appeal. The average success rate for asylum appeals is 30%. In many of the cases we reviewed, the Immigration Judge specifically refers to the strength and high quality of the medical evidence at the appeal stage. Such a high rate of overturn on appeal, albeit for a relatively small cohort of cases, suggests serious and systemic failings in asylum decision-making on torture claims in the UK.

Standard of proof

In all of the cases in our research we found that asylum caseworkers failed to apply the correct legal standard of proof for asylum claims in the UK. In order to grant asylum, caseworkers are required to satisfy themselves that a claimant's account is 'reasonably likely' to be true. Our research shows that, in practice, asylum caseworkers demand a different standard of proof from the medical evidence of torture, one which comes closer to the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt'. For example, asylum caseworkers reject medical evidence because the expert clinician cannot categorically attribute the injuries to torture. This is grossly inconsistent with the 'reasonably likely' standard of proof demanded. In other cases, caseworkers wrongly assume that physical injuries assessed as anything less than 'diagnostic' of torture (that is, having no other possible causes) have little or no significance as evidence of torture.

Questioning or replacing expert medical opinion

We found that in 74% of the cases asylum caseworkers gave preference to their own opinion on clinical matters or made clinical judgments beyond their qualifications. In 30% of cases, they wrongly questioned the clinical expert's qualifications and expertise in the documentation of torture. This is contrary to the Home Office policy guidance which directs them not to "dispute the clinical findings in the report or purport to make clinical judgements of their own about medical evidence or medical matters generally".[3] The Home Office explicitly recognises in its policy that medical doctors and other clinicians at Freedom from

Torture are "objective and unbiased" as well as trained, experienced and qualified to prepare medico-legal reports relating to torture, including in relation to the assessment of mental health conditions.

Credibility assessments

In 84% of cases in our research, asylum caseworkers dismissed the medical evidence because they had already reached a negative finding on the credibility of the case. Home Office policy makes it clear that expert medical evidence should be considered carefully as part of the process of looking at the evidence, and that a decision on credibility must not be reached before the medical evidence is fully considered. Our research demonstrates poor practice by asylum caseworkers in this respect, including failure altogether to consider the clinical findings, failure to consider parts of the evidence of torture (especially psychological evidence), and findings on credibility reached before the clinical evidence is even considered.

Poor understanding of international standards

In 54% of cases in the research the asylum caseworker demonstrated poor understanding of how to interpret medical evidence of torture that has been prepared in accordance with the internationally recognised standards contained in the Istanbul Protocol[4] and submitted as evidence in asylum claims. For example, caseworkers wrongly criticised the doctor's use of specific terms found in the Istanbul Protocol or incorrectly challenged the doctor's compliance with the methodology for assessing the degree of consistency between physical injuries (lesions) and the attributed cause of torture given by the individual.

Next steps

For survivors of torture who need protection, the impact of being disbelieved and having their medical evidence mishandled can often be psychologically devastating, obstructing their chances of rehabilitation and social integration. This puts a significant and unnecessary additional burden on already overstretched public services and funds.

Mistreatment by asylum caseworkers of medical evidence of torture leads to long and costly legal appeals and a need for claimants to be financially supported in the asylum system for months or even years.

In its recommendations, Freedom from Torture has called on the Home Secretary to take immediate measures to improve decision making in asylum cases involving medical evidence of torture. The Home Office already has a strong policy in place but effective implementation is lacking. We are now working with the Home Office to begin to address the issues we have raised, with a focus on introducing more extensive and effective training as well as ongoing monitoring of practice.

We have also recommended that there be an independent public audit of the application in practice of the standard of proof more broadly in asylum claims in the UK. This audit should take evidence from survivors of torture, those with experience of providing expert evidence in asylum claims, and legal and other civil society organisations in the refugee field.

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Giving birth in transit through Greece

Raquel Esther Jorge Ricart

Pregnant refugee women en route through Europe are having to give birth in extremely difficult conditions. They face appalling choices, and their babies risk being stateless.

Many of the women travelling through Greece to escape conflict and reach safety are already pregnant when they leave home or they become pregnant during the journey. Their journey may take months and they are likely to have limited access to the quality of nutrition they need during pregnancy. Added to that is the physical impact on their health of the journey itself, and the psychological stress of becoming displaced, losing their home and belongings and probably family members.

When the time comes to give birth, they face a dilemma. Makeshift refugee camps or temporary housing may provide certain sanitary facilities but there is unlikely to be any specialist gynaecological care available; local health workers and NGO volunteers may be providing some assistance but do not have specialist equipment or knowledge. The alternative, especially when the birth proves to be difficult, is for the woman to give birth in a local hospital.

According to women's testimonies,[1] this is often a poor alternative. In Greece, access conditions to the refugee camps are bad, and this obstructs the arrival of ambulances

(which are in short supply anyway). Many women have found that it took two to three hours for an ambulance to arrive, and the crowded state of the temporary camps makes it difficult for the ambulance or medics to access the tent where the woman is in labour. Ignorance in many cases (especially among younger women and those who are unaccompanied) and the paucity of translators add to their anxiety and sense of helplessness.

Those who go to hospital are very seldom asked if they want to give birth naturally or by caesarean section. Most have their babies delivered by caesarean section without their prior informed consent, without information about the risks and without consulting them about their medical history. In many cases women are given a basic medical examination to check for infections or injuries, and are then discharged, often only a few hours after delivery, which is against most medical advice. Given that in hospitals they are given little option other than to have a caesarean (with all the additional complications that brings with it), many women choose to give birth in their tents – in dirty conditions but at least being helped by professionals who respect their wishes.

Some of the women suffer pain and infections after childbirth, often due to the nature of the delivery, and the lack of post-partum care exacerbates their problems. Most of them seek help in local clinics but queues are usually long; others prefer to buy over-the-counter medications or may not wish to attend a clinic if they

UNHCR/Mark Henley

cannot be guaranteed to be seen by female medical staff. Furthermore, some of them had become pregnant after being raped and may opt out of attending the clinic because of the shame they feel.

There has been an increase in acute post-traumatic stress disorders among post-partum women since many of them have experienced severe pain in delivery, and have suffered from the lack of sympathetic care. If the circumstances around the birth have been traumatic, this may have an effect on their relationships with their children – both the newborns and children with whom they came to the refugee camp.

Alongside this, the difficulty of accessing care and the lack of resources to care for their newborns lead to these women feeling isolated, and this in turn may damage relationships within the family, specifically with their husbands. And to compound it all, many of these newborns do not have their births registered and so are, in effect, stateless, deprived of access to a legal status, to certain rights and to protection.

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1. Drawn partly from conversations with refugee women at the Refugee Reception Centre in Valencia, Spain, who have travelled through Europe.

Refugee Studies Centre: news and resources

Annual Harrell-Bond Lecture 2017

The 2017 Harrell-Bond Lecture will be given on 22nd November, in Oxford, by **Jemilah Mahmood**, Under Secretary General, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. To be notified when booking opens, please sign up for RSC seminar alerts at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/forms/general/connect

The Myth of Self-Reliance: Economic Lives Inside a Liberian Refugee Camp

Naohiko Omata, Senior Research Officer, Refugee Studies Centre
ISBN 978-1-78533-564-8. June 2017.
Volume 36 in the Berghahn Forced Migration series.
For many refugees, economic survival in a refugee camp is extraordinarily difficult. Drawing on both qualitative and quantitative research, this volume challenges the reputation of Ghana's Buduburam refugee camp as a 'self-reliant' model and sheds light on considerable economic inequality between refugee households. By following the same refugee households over several years, *The Myth of Self-Reliance* also provides valuable insights into refugees' experiences of repatriation to Liberia after protracted exile and their responses to the ending of refugee status for remaining refugees in Ghana.

RSC Conference March 2017 – podcasts available

Beyond Crisis: Rethinking Refugee Studies
The Refugee Studies Centre hosted this major international conference in March 2017, thirty-five years after the RSC was founded. The purpose of the conference was to reflect on the role that Refugee Studies can play in the world. In the context of profound changes in the nature of forced displacement, the conference assessed what kinds of knowledge, evidence and concepts are needed to understand and respond to contemporary challenges. The conference programme and podcasts of most sessions are available at: www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/events/beyond-crisis-rethinking-refugee-studies

Annual Elizabeth Colson Lecture 2017

Nostalgia and Legitimacy: Understanding the Externalization of European Migration Policy
Professor Thomas Spijkerboer, Professor of Migration Law, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
Podcast now available of the lecture given on 17th May 2017 by Professor Thomas Spijkerboer in which he discussed how the European Union has responded to the 2015 'crisis' not by addressing the fundamental shortcomings of its Common European Asylum System but by taking major steps in the externalization of migration control. Significant elements of this are the EU-Turkey deal; intensified cooperation with Libya; the military operation Sophia in the Central Mediterranean; and the Migration Partnership Framework.
http://bit.ly/Colson2017-Spijkerboer

For details of RSC research, publications and events, please visit www.rsc.ox.ac.uk.

To receive the RSC's monthly e-newsletter, visit www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/forms/general/connect

Using public schools as shelter for IDPs in Yemen

Mohammed Al-Sabahi and Ghaidaa Motahar

The two years of conflict in Yemen have created 3.3 million internally displaced person (IDPs), 20% of whom live in spontaneous settlements or collective centres, including public buildings. Schools top the list of the public buildings that are frequently occupied by IDPs in Yemen. The bulk of the initial displacement happened at a time when education was put on hold due to the war, permitting the idea of IDPs staying in schools as a 'temporary' solution which has unfortunately turned out to be more permanent than anyone thought it would be. The initially small number of IDP families living in these school buildings has functioned as a 'seed' for more IDPs to come and live there.

What has happened is that schools housing IDPs could not open their doors to students when school did re-start. This has led the host community to blame the IDPs for their children not going to school or having to walk further to attend school elsewhere. IDPs in public high schools have stated that the host community and local authorities, including school management, are very hostile to them. In one incident, a school principal used armed men to force 15 out of 21 IDP families out of her high school for female students, and is threatening to kick out the remaining families soon. She and the host community would not tolerate the presence of IDPs – including mature and young men – in the same place as teenage girls.

In another high school for boys in the same city, the local authority has threatened to shut down a shelter project provided by one of the international non-governmental

organisations if the IDPs are not moved out of the school. The school principal has said that he cannot continue running a school full of teenage boys with IDP young women in the school. On the other side, IDPs themselves have expressed their discomfort being in the school. Male heads of families have said that they cannot go to search for work, although the market is right next to them, since they do not feel they can safely leave their families in a school full of young men.

Given the protracted displacement, most IDPs now living in schools have managed to organise themselves and develop a system with shelter managers and IDP representatives. This also means that these IDPs are in a good place to articulate their needs clearly and precisely. IDPs in schools, especially those who have been living together for quite some time and have some such system, should be consulted in matters that concern them; for example, with regard to the boy's school mentioned above, involving the IDP representative in discussions about moving the IDPs to another building helped to minimise the inevitable tensions and concerns.

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