

Shelter and Settlements Sector Update



USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) members inspect shelter programming following the 2021 earthquake in Haiti. Photo courtesy of USAID.

The Settlements Approach

In FY 2021, USAID/BHA continued to support the Settlements Approach, which promotes integrated and multi-sector S&S program planning and the phased implementation of humanitarian activities in defined locations. This process—informed by community-based decision making—can also serve as a disaster risk reduction tool in high-risk urban settlements or help link humanitarian interventions with long-term development goals, among other positive effects. To encourage the use of the Settlements Approach, USAID/BHA supported partnerships with academic, diaspora, private sector, and professional development actors on S&S activities and to engaged with Global Shelter Cluster and Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster actors on a range of related activities at the national and global level, with an emphasis on promoting understanding and adoption of the Settlements Approach.

Tailoring Shelter Solutions to Context-Specific Needs Worldwide

In FY 2021, eleven USAID/BHA UN and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners continued a years-long effort in northern Syria to establish, maintain, and rehabilitate camps and settlements for one of the world's largest internally displaced populations. During the fiscal year, USAID/BHA also supported S&S activities to respond to emergent needs in northern Ethiopia's Afar, Amhara, and Tigray regions through Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Samaritan's Purse, and World Vision, as well

OVERVIEW

USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) remains at the forefront of the humanitarian community's shelter and settlements (S&S) activities, providing S&S to populations displaced by climatic shocks, complex emergencies, livelihood disruptions, natural disasters, and other displacement events. USAID/BHA continues to champion the sector's best practices through relying on experienced and dedicated staff with technical expertise related to S&S programming, operational support, and research. Effective S&S programming not only provides four walls and a roof to displaced households, but also facilitates access to stable S&S solutions informed by the interdependent, localized, and multi-sector needs of displaced populations. In FY 2021, USAID/BHA and partners implemented S&S activities in 32 countries.

USAID/BHA S&S Funding in FY 2021

\$197,626,338

as the IOM Rapid Response Fund. USAID/BHA's FY 2021 S&S response in northern Ethiopia included airlifting 1,500 rolls of plastic sheeting to Ethiopia, contributing to emergency shelter efforts for more than 82,500 conflict-affected people. Meanwhile, in flood-prone areas of Bangladesh, USAID/BHA continued a multi-year effort to provide vulnerable households with disaster-resistant shelter using plinths—raised mounds of earth that elevate homes above flood waters. The plinth-building effort began after severe floods hit Bangladesh in 2019 and continued in FY 2021, during which USAID/BHA partnered with CARE to raise plinths in more than 20 community areas, benefiting nearly 460 households. Overall, USAID/BHA partners implemented S&S activities in 32 countries in FY 2021, reaching vulnerable populations affected by natural hazards, conflict, and other crises with S&S interventions targeted to local, context-specific needs.

Responding to Shelter Needs Resulting from the 2021 Haiti Earthquake

On August 14, 2021, a magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck southwestern Haiti, generating humanitarian needs in Grand'Anse, Nippes, and Sud departments. The earthquake resulted in at least 2,248 deaths, injured an additional 12,800 people, and damaged or destroyed more than 137,000 houses, according to the Government of Haiti. Subsequently, on August 16, Tropical Depression Grace made landfall over southwestern Haiti, resulting in heavy rains and strong winds that further exacerbated humanitarian needs. In response, USAID/BHA deployed a DART and activated a Washington, D.C.-based Response Management Team (RMT) to coordinate U.S. Government relief efforts, which included providing emergency S&S assistance to those whose homes were damaged or destroyed by the disaster. USAID/BHA also supported IOM to maintain pre-positioned relief supplies—sufficient to support nearly 50,000 individuals—in Haiti for distribution in response to sudden-onset disasters, which IOM distributed in the days immediately following the earthquake. USAID/BHA also transported at least 10,000 plastic sheets for shelter and 10,000 shelter repair kits from its warehouse in Miami, Florida, to Port-au-Prince for transfer to and distribution by IOM. USAID/BHA NGO partners ACTED and CRS also provided approximately 85,000 disaster-affected people in Haiti with life-saving shelter and settlements programming.

Mentoring the Next Generation of S&S Leaders Through Outreach

In FY 2021, USAID/BHA worked to mentor the next generation of leaders in the S&S field through the Virtual Student Federal Service Internship (VSFS), a nine-month remote internship which engages university students on issues pertinent to U.S. Government policies and practices. During the period, USAID/BHA supported VSFS interns in a localization research project that assessed local actors' involvement in S&S program development and implementation. USAID/BHA technical specialists and VSFS interns analyzed the importance of adapting consultative processes to account for community norms and examined potential modifications to USAID/BHA's proposal processes to better support local engagement, among other localization measures. Additionally, USAID/BHA technical specialists presented about S&S to students and faculty at Johns Hopkins University, the University of Washington, the University of San Francisco, the University of Oregon, and the University of California, Berkeley.

Additional information on USAID/BHA's activities can be found at: [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)