

HOST FAMILIES SHELTER RESPONSE GUIDELINES

10/04/10

Shelter Cluster Technical Working Group (TWIG) – Haiti 2010

1. Introduction

The key objective of the Shelter Cluster's Technical working group (TWIG) was to agree a set of appropriate responses for transitional *shelter* interventions in host families or communities. It also acts as a platform for agencies to share and review policies, procedures and good practices that comply with agreed standards. This document builds on and complements the Shelter Cluster's [Host Family Assessment Guidelines](#).

2. Key Issues

Coordination

Host family and host neighbourhood interventions will be a multi-sectoral effort with parallel support to Internally Displaced People (IDPs), hosts and communities through a range of activities such as: livelihood support; NFI distribution; WASH interventions etc. These interventions should be coordinated between clusters through the [Inter-Cluster meetings \(UNOCHA\)](#). The overall hosting strategy, its alignment and associated advocacy with the Government of Haiti's strategy all fall under [Early Recovery Cluster \(UNDP\)](#).

Mitigating the risk of tension

If support is directed only at hosted IDPs, it may cause an imbalance or tension between hosted populations and their hosts. Similarly, support directed only at host families may put IDPs at risk of exploitation in a hosting situation. The TWiG's position is that in a host family *shelter* intervention (not automatically applicable to other cluster interventions):

- the IDP and host family be considered together as a single recipient unit;
- IDPs and host families must agree on how support is divided between families before shelter support is given and these agreements must be endorsed in writing by an appropriate local authority or committee;
- the risk of household level or community level conflict is mitigated through parallel community level support and the possibility of conflict resolution through the appropriate local authority or committee the benefit derived by hosts is conditional on their continuing to act as hosts, balancing the negotiating positions of hosted IDPs and host families and incentivising hosts.

With this in mind, this document makes a further distinction between **existing hosting** arrangements, that have spontaneously emerged, and **new IDP referrals** for families moving out of camps into new hosting situations.

Transitional host family support: transition to what?

This document considers transitional support. Shelter with host families for IDPs or individuals from IDP families may transition to:

- return: a gradual movement back to pre-earthquake home locations where pre-earthquake livelihoods and social and economic networks are based
- integration: remaining in host locations because livelihood opportunities are perceived to be viable

- resettlement: movement on to a brand new location where viable livelihoods and shelter options are perceived to be in place.

It needs to be taken into account that hosting arrangements are **not a durable solution**, although some of these arrangements may become permanent. The support given should also formulate a handover and exit strategy, in which it is clearly defined when and how the hosting arrangement comes to an end.

The perceived and genuine viability of livelihoods, access to basic services and shelter and settlement options inside and outside earthquake affected areas will depend on a coordinated and clear early recovery and reconstruction strategy on the part of the Government of Haiti and clusters.

Vulnerability

Provision of completely built transitional shelters (the so called turn-key provision) or other more comprehensive support measures should be prioritized for vulnerable groups of the affected population who do not have any other support to built transitional shelter or repair their homes. In the context of shelter, **vulnerability is seen as a function of income, tenure security and special needs**. This recognises that agencies may find themselves having to trade-off between supporting the most vulnerable (those without land and housing assets pre- and post-earthquake, those in congested camps, squatting or seeking rental accommodation) and less vulnerable groups (pre- and post-earthquake access to land and housing assets and providers of various forms of accommodation and tenure).

In addition the following **special needs criteria** can be considered in the selection process of the vulnerable beneficiaries: Single headed households; Elderly persons; Women at risk; Persons with disabilities; Persons with chronic health problems (e.g. people living with HIV/AIDS). This list is not extensive and is to be refined by each agency that will engage in the provision of transitional shelter assistance. Assistance for these groups may need special adjustments to their shelter structure and package.









Geographical context

This guideline makes the distinction between three geographical cases based on IDP movements ([more details on Page 5](#)):

- **Urban and Peri-Urban Areas Directly Affected by the Earthquake** (PauP Communes, Carrefour, Leogane)
- **Urban Reception Areas not Directly Affected by the Earthquake** (Cap Haitien, St. Marc, Gonaives, Les Cayes and others)
- **Rural Reception Areas not Directly Affected by the Earthquake** (Cap Haitien, St. Marc, Gonaives, Les Cayes and others)

3. Overall *shelter strategy*

Summary of the response for displaced populations				Summary of the response for non-displaced populations	
Rural self-settlement	Urban self-settlement	Host families	Planned and self-settled sites	Owners	Tenants
					
Phase 1 Shelter within 3 months, before the hurricane season					
Tarpaulins with rope Tents Household support items and cook sets	Phase 1 emergency shelter – tarpaulins, rope when available\ Household support items and cook sets Tents for prioritised groups Public information		Priority given to displaced and vulnerable Unsafe structures demolished Public information		
Phase 2 Full transitional shelter within 12 months					
Phase 2 transitional shelter - roof of corrugated metal sheeting, frame of timber, bamboo or steel Support provided through public information campaigns and technical advice over seismic and hurricane resistance Cash, vouchers and additional materials distribution will also be considered Coordinated rubble clearance			Self-help Phased materials distribution Technical advice	Relocation assistance Rent assistance Extending credit	
<i>Durable housing in less vulnerable locations, built back safer</i>					

Shelter with host families and in host communities are also two of the five options formulated as part of the detailed '[safer shelter strategy](#)' to address the current situation in priority sites and decongest the most at risk in spontaneous camps:

1. returning to safe homes
2. returning to a safe, cleared plot
3. **staying with a host family**
4. **staying in a proximity site with a host community**
5. relocating to planned sites

4. Background to Host Family Response

Host family and community support is an excellent means of assisting displaced populations because it is socially/culturally defined, part of a larger self-recovery process, something that is often established or emergent prior to the arrival of humanitarian actors, and a relatively cost-effective shelter intervention. Until recently, most humanitarian agencies were unaware of the hosting dynamic because it often didn't generate a hard shelter need.

Recent experience suggests that far more disaster-affected households are hosted than meets the eye. It's not uncommon that 30 percent of affected populations are hosted by family and friends, with much higher percentages in places like Goma (75%; see handout) and over 90% in Pakistan last year. Here in Haiti, it appears that at least 33% of those affected are currently

living in a hosting arrangement of some kind. Finally, it's also not uncommon that 15-20% of hosting arrangements become permanent shelter solutions for affected households.

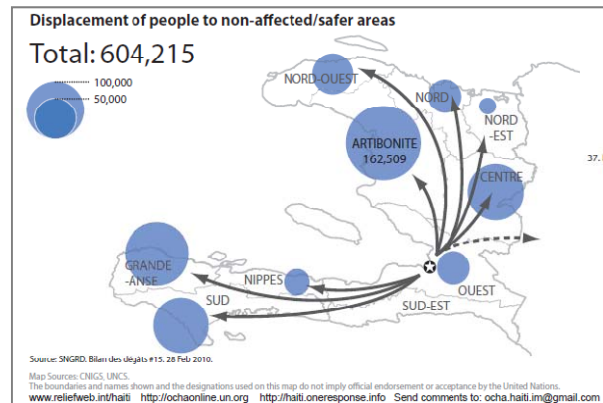
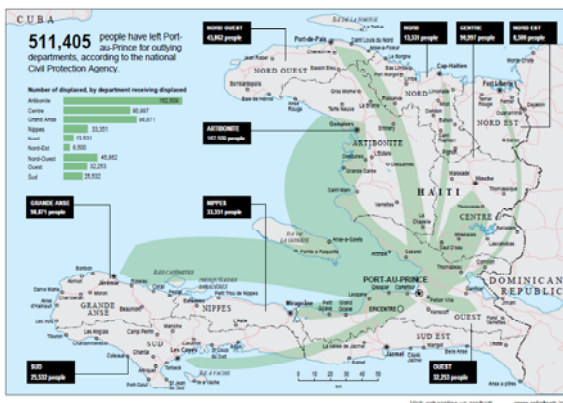
There are two basic forms of hosting support: 1) Economic, typically in the form of some payment transaction, and typically among those in a landlord-renter relationship; and 2) Social, typically among family and friends, typically with no payment transaction. The former is market-oriented, and most often not sustainable over time, while the latter is rooted in social and familial obligation. Both can foster potential for abuse and protection-related issues, but experience indicates lower levels of such problems when hosting is socially-defined.

In addition to household-level relationships, hosting communities are often impacted by an influx of displaced households which consume water, populate schools and clinics, congest streets, etc. Past OFDA hosting programs have included community-level interventions of various kinds to “reduce the social and economic impacts of disasters” associated with large influxes of displaced households.

Having a lot of people on one's home can be a burden on all concerned, of course, as housing space is constrained, privacy is encroached, more food, water, fuel, and other basic inputs are consumed at higher rates, etc. If not supported over time, the burdens become great, often resulting in hosted households being asked to leave. These households are thus displaced a second time, and often end up in camps or other difficult shelter situations, causing greater demands on humanitarian actors than might otherwise be the case.

5. Post-Earthquake Population Movements and Hosting

Data on movement of people since Haiti's January earthquakes¹ suggests that urban and rural areas outside earthquake-affected areas have seen their populations double as people leave for safer areas or places where they can find family support.



Geographical Variation

A. Urban and Peri-Urban Areas Directly Affected by the Earthquake (PauP Communes, Carrefour, Leogane)

Assessments in Leogane and Carrefour are suggesting that about 10% of households are already hosting and that other families in makeshift shelter in their original neighbourhood are anticipating a move to land owned by nearby. In Port-au-Prince, existing hosting and the potential capacity of families and communities to host are unclear but are likely to be

¹ [http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/fullmaps_am.nsf/luFullMap/0FFE401F32F67FE0852576C4006BEDAE/\\$File/map.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/fullmaps_am.nsf/luFullMap/0FFE401F32F67FE0852576C4006BEDAE/$File/map.pdf?OpenElement)
[http://reliefweb.int/rw/fullmaps_am.nsf/luFullMap/567D3FB509B4472C12576E0002F8133/\\$File/map.pdf?OpenElement](http://reliefweb.int/rw/fullmaps_am.nsf/luFullMap/567D3FB509B4472C12576E0002F8133/$File/map.pdf?OpenElement)

significant especially with respect to the potentially dangerous alternatives in spontaneous camps.

B. Urban Reception Areas not Directly Affected by the Earthquake (Cap Haitien, St. Marc, Gonaives, Les Cayes and others)

[Assessments](#) in these areas showed a significant number of host families in St Marc reported losing funds for their small business as one of the largest impacts of supporting IDPs whose population was largely made up of students and youth residing with families. This group cited education and jobs as one of their first priorities. In Cap Haitien, a significant number of the displaced residing in host families did not know their hosts previously. Additionally, unlike in St. Marc where many interviewees anticipate returning to PauP at some point, most IDPs in Cap Haitien do not have any immediate plans to return to PauP. In both cities, both IDPs and Host families are generally uncomfortable with the shared arrangement. At least 40,000 IDPs have reportedly arrived in Les Cayes since the earthquake. IFRC and Haitian Red Cross are currently undertaking the verification of registration lists and undertaking preliminary needs assessment in Torbeck, Chantal and Arniquet. Most of the displaced are staying with families, although the assessment is revealing some exceptions.

C. Rural Reception Areas not Directly Affected by the Earthquake (Cap Haitien, St. Marc, Gonaives, Les Cayes and others)

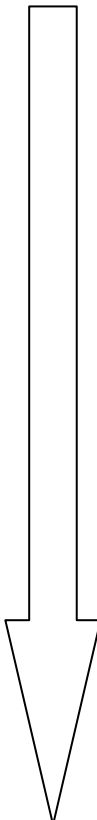
Movements to rural areas have been observed and population pressure may also be contributing to observed food price rises. The profile of hosted IDPs in rural situations may be influenced by the need to leave adult family members in cities for work.

6. Host family and host community *shelter* responses

The following three types of shelter support are distinguished and relate to host families interventions:

- **Community-level shelter response:** mobilisation for an integrated participatory assessment (see [Host Family Assessment Guidelines](#).); support for a local coordination structure and existing organisations that are dealing with hosting and/or shelter provision; garner support and solidarity for hosting and shelter; engage in beneficiary selection; motivate people to participate in shelter construction; resolve conflicts/grievances.
Community level response under other clusters (as per priorities set by community): community-level interventions in economic and social infrastructure selected by community (transport, safe demolition, education/play spaces etc) and environmental and disaster mitigation projects (clearing public space and drainage channels/removing rubble, community mitigation projects, possibly through CFW). See [Early Recovery Cluster](#) documents. In urban areas, settlement level support
- **Technical support:** the guidance, outreach and training required to transfer knowledge on the construction of good quality, hazard resistant repairs, home extensions and transitional shelter, leading into construction related livelihood opportunities and interventions to improve the quality of locally produced construction materials. See [Shelter Cluster Outreach](#) posters and [Early Recovery Cluster](#) documents.
- **Material packages (as voucher or actual physical materials):** see below. This guideline will mainly focus on defining the standards of material packages for host family assistance. However any material assistance will have to come with an appropriate community based approach and the necessary technical guidance.

7. Menu of shelter packages

Range: USD value	Menu 1: Shelter Selection	Menu 2: Other livelihood priorities
 <p>Up to USD 1,500</p>	Kitchen sets	<p>Appropriate voucher bundle based on household priorities identified during participatory assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food vouchers • Fuel vouchers or transport vouchers • School vouchers • Medical or pharmacy vouchers ...
	Household NFIs kit	
	<p>Toolkits</p> <p>Mountain/rural Toolkit (suitable for working with timber, wattle and daub, beam and post, construction types)</p> <p>Urban Toolkit (suitable for salvaging from reinforced concrete, cement block, floor/roof slabs, CGI roofs and timber trusses and repairing/reinforcing self-built or transitional shelters)</p>	
	<p>Latrine repair kits (these will be coordinated under WASH. However any household level intervention should aim to contribute to adequate sanitation levels)</p>	
	<p>Return or relocation package: only applicable for new IDP referrals into host families and may include collective transport for family and shelter, household and/or livelihood assets</p>	
	Housing Repair Kits	
	Extension kit	
	<p>Transitional shelter kit: compliant with <u>Shelter Cluster Technical Guidance</u></p>	
	Core shelter: upgradable and suitable for extension	
	<p>Constructed transitional shelter: compliant with <u>Shelter Cluster Technical Guidance</u></p>	

See Annex 1 for kit definitions.

8. Parameters for host family assistance

Performance standards and indicators for transitional materials assistance in host family shelter response		
Indicators	Standard	Remarks
Key data		
Lifespan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transitional materials assistance should aim for at least 3 years use in line with the shelter strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal, pre-earthquake rental agreements typically 1 year
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 1500USD including transport and labour and potential taxes Host families packages should be seen in the context of other types of assistance (e.g. in planned sites) and recognized as part of a decongestion strategy. Packages should be seen in the context of household incomes, labour rates, housing costs and their geographic variation Packages should be adapted to the composition of the host-family and the proportionality of the burden of hosting (e.g. in case the host family is hosting disabled or elderly persons) Shelter assistance for hosting will be one time and cannot be ongoing intervention, though other cluster interventions may recur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note that this sum represents between 30-50 USD per person per year spread over 3 years (5 hosts, 5 hosted) Direct provision of rent by agencies over extended period of time is not within this framework. Paying arrangements which are observed or arise over time should be monitored alongside protection standards and vulnerability criteria
Type of package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Material and tool packages that support repair and extension of existing structures Free-standing T-shelter (with technical assistance and, for the most vulnerable, construction support) Material assistance can be direct or through voucher systems (locally redeemable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assuming average of 5 persons per family
Appropriate material sourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials should be local where sustainable sourcing is possible Culturally acceptable materials which minimise environmental impacts in production, use and disposal should be prioritised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links should be sought to the Early Recovery Cluster's appropriate technology working group
Tenure aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A stable agreement should be reached between the host and hosted with the local authority or committee arbitrating before support is given This agreement should be at minimum legitimised by the local host family committee and authorities in the context of a variety of complex tenure arrangements An agreement should aim to provide hosted IDPs continuing in existing hosting situations and hosted IDPs referred from camps with transitional security of tenure for 1-3 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take into account different forms of tenure security, including ownership, tenancy and other arrangements Refer to guidance on tenure security (Shelter Cluster website)
Geographical targeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host family assistance should in principle support the choices made by the beneficiaries themselves. However, targeting should also be designed to discourage unsafe shelter, encourage return and avoid multiple further displacements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Push and pull factors which will continue to motivate families or individual family members to move and follow livelihood opportunities need to be monitored and linked in to Early Recovery and national Government strategy
Linking hosts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing linkages and hosting arrangements are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential referrals documented in

and hosted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prioritised • Family hosting is prioritized • Other forms of hosting are possible too (linkages based on friendship etc). Economically motivated hosting is not recommended. • IDPs referred for hosting can be supported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • camp registration data to be coord between relevant clusters and agencies: Protection (UNICEF), CCCM (IOM) and UNOCHA's InterCluster coordination • Identification of possible hosts should be in close collaboration with community committees
Basic Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic services (eg water and sanitation, education and health) should be supported and coordinated with relevant clusters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The burden on services is expected to acute where communities have experienced a large increase in population, outside earthquake affected zones and where pre-earthquake infrastructure has been damaged
Protection concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking host with hosted can create protection concerns. Each referral should be carefully analysed in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GBV risks ○ Cultural and social acceptability ○ Gender and age issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference: Minimum Agency Standards for Incorporating Protection into Humanitarian Response • Gender sensitive programming is required and women and vulnerable groups should be consulted about a range of issues.
Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programming should aim to set up community committees (existing committees should be prioritised in this role) that have the functions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ support hosting arrangements, ○ beneficiary selection ○ mobilise participation in construction, ○ activities which reinforce stability of hosting ○ resolve conflicts/grievances ○ identify infrastructure/community asset priorities (for other clusters) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example the creation of solidarity groups for communal construction of shelters is encouraged • Committees should reflect a range of interest groups, hosts and hosted and reflect a balance of gender and age groups
Privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assistance should allow hosted families to live as much as possible separately from the hosts recognising that hosting puts additional pressure on shared cooking and hygiene facilities, sleeping space and outdoor space 	
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The needs of the hosts and hosted families are prioritized. If shelter is not a priority other interventions (e.g. livelihood support) should be considered and coordinated with the inter-cluster work group for Host families 	
Technical assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any material intervention should come with the necessary technical guidance and appropriate advice on disaster risk reduction • Organisations must ensure that families have the means and skills to build safe shelters. • Other interventions next to material support should be considered in a broad range of interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example training in constructions skills, building of model shelters in communities, labour provision etc. • Combining skills training with material and construction-related livelihood interventions is encouraged
Beneficiary selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations must work carefully to ensure that the most vulnerable families, including the landless are not excluded from hosting arrangements. • Beneficiary selection and selection of host should be done together with the communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The groups at risk in disasters are single headed households, children, older people, disabled people and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Note: Any transitional structure provided at host sites should also comply with the Transitional Shelter parameters as formulated in the technical guidance notes.

9. Needs-based hosting response and linkages to other clusters

Host families assistance is not a single cluster issue. IDPs and hosts have many **inter-related needs**, like food, physical protection, water and sanitation, support to sustainable livelihood strategies etc. Any host family solution should therefore be a integrated intervention, aiming to provide inputs based on the perceived needs of households and communities (see [Host Family Assessment Guidelines](#)). Links with the Early Recovery Cluster and other relevant clusters will be have to be developed in the inter-cluster workgroup on host families programming.

As per the overall shelter cluster strategy, host families solutions are prioritized over planned sites. The focus of shelter actors should be to support those, for whom hosting is an option and those who are able to return to their original house or plot. In addition existing hosting situations should be supported and promoted as much as possible, in order to prevent return or influx into planned or spontaneous sites.

Host families arrangements link into the Safer shelter strategy to decongest the most at risk in spontaneous camps. When assessing sites at risk, not only physical aspects of sites and related hazards should be taken into account. The physical inspection should go hand in hand with a movement intention survey, indicating where people at risk would be able to locate to. Host families response then becomes part of the **contingency response** for those in self-built shelter at risk due to rains, floods and/or other intermediate hazards.

In parallel, coordinated activities to repair and expand buildings that people feel confident to access would need to take place. Activities to think of are: Structural damage assessments (through the Ministry of Public Works MPTC); **Reconstruction program** through repair and retrofitting programme; and transitional shelter assistance for returning population to original houses. Engaging in these activities might have the secondary benefit of opening up additional possibility for referrals for hosting arrangements. In addition, linkages to the wider building industry and building material production industry and retail sector can be explored. Cost-effective building materials suitable to the local requirements and skills need to be promoted.

Livelihood support is an aspect of host families programming that links closely to Early Recovery and other clusters, like for example agriculture and education. With regards to shelter provision there are also opportunities to link into livelihood supporting activities. **Implementation modalities** of host family shelter response need to carefully designed to tap into this opportunity. Engaging in self-help housing programs with extensive training in construction skills, resulting into construction related livelihoods is an option to carefully consider. Working with and supporting small scale, locally based contractors is also encouraged. When designed properly these programs can provide for the transitional shelter needs in a speedy and appropriate manner. Community mobilisation and strengthening are an integral part of this type of intervention.

Other clusters like WASH would need to be engaged in providing adequate infrastructure, especially in areas where due to high influx population, there is increased pressure on public services.

10. Host family shelter support summarised

Rural self-settlement



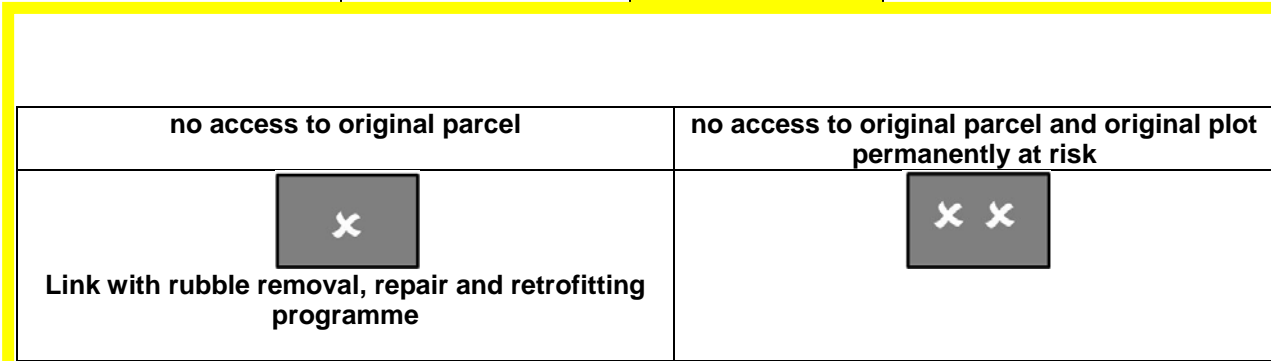
Urban self-settlement



Host families



Planned and self-settled sites



Hosting options

existing hosting

Materials packages complemented with community mobilisation and technical guidance

referred IDPs

Host locations

urban host communities affected-earthquake	urban host communities not earthquake-affected	rural host communities not earthquake-affected	urban host communities affected-earthquake	urban host communities not earthquake-affected	rural host communities not earthquake-affected

Types of assistance

Materials package to hosts and IDPs: retrofitting for host family houses, shelter construction, extension repair, shelter kits,

Technical support: technical guidance, training etc leading into construction related livelihood opportunities

Community mobilisation: integrated participatory assessment; support for a local coordination structure and existing organisations that; garner support and solidarity for hosting and shelter; engage in beneficiary selection; motivate people to participate in shelter construction; resolve conflicts/grievances.

Additional assistance for referrals: Linking host and hosted, transport support for family and assets

Annex 1: Kit Descriptions

See menu of shelter material packages for host families response on page 6.

Range: USD value	Menu 1: Shelter Selection	Menu 2: livelihood vouchers
	<p>Kitchen sets TBC/reference NFI standards 1 cooking pot (7L) 1 cooking pot (5L) 1 frying pan 5 bowls 5 plates 5 cups 5 spoons, knives and forks 1 kitchen knife 1 cooking spoon 1 scouring pad</p> <p>Household NFIs kit 2 mattresses 2 blankets 1 plastic sheet (for subdividing space) 1kg 2" nails with washers</p> <p>Toolkit Urban Toolkit 1no. 4-pound hammer. 1no. pry bar. 1no. 3-inch mason chisel. 1no. 8-inch pliers with cutting tool 10no. dust masks. 4no. pairs of leather gloves. 4no. pairs of safety glasses. 1no. 12-inch hacksaw with six replacement blades. 1no. folding knife with a steel blade. 1no. pointed chisel.</p> <p>Rural/mountain Toolkit 1 handsaw 1 shovel 1 hoe 1 tin snips 1no. folding knife with a steel blade 1 claw hammer 1 role of tie wire 1 role of rope 4 no. pairs of leather gloves.</p> <p>Latrine repair kits: 1no. Shovel 1no. Plastic sheet 4no. 2"x2"x4' wood beam</p>	<p>Appropriate voucher bundle based on household priorities identified during participatory assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food vouchers • Fuel vouchers or transport vouchers • School vouchers • Medical or pharmacy vouchers • Materials or tools vouchers

	<p>Housing Repair Kits: for rural housing / wooden structures U-shaped nails, 2-inch nails, 4-inch nails, rubber washers for nails, 12-mm re-bar metal anchors, 8 mm nylon rope, hurricane strapping, 2'X4' wooden planks, 1no. 60cm metal safe box, 4m X 5m of plastic sheeting and 1no. 50kg sack of cement, or equivalent</p>	
	<p>Extension kit 42no. plank piece 32no. 2" x 2" x 4' wood beam 8no. CGI sheet BG 32 piece 3 no. cement 50kg sack, sand 1.09 m3, rough sand 0.55m3 1kg roofing nails, 5kgx10cm nails, 6kg 8cm and 6cm nails, 0.5kg 4cm nails 1no. door with accessories 80/180cm 2no. window with accessories 60/40 cm 6no. 2" x 4" plank or other suitable cladding material 1no. plastic sheet 5litre wood preservative oil</p>	
	<p>Transitional shelter kit: compliant with Shelter Cluster Technical Guidance (transitional shelter parameters)</p>	
	<p>Constructed transitional shelter: compliant with Shelter Cluster Technical Guidance (transitional shelter parameters)</p>	