

Project title:	Transitional shelters for earthquake affected communities in Haiti
Lead organizations:	American Red Cross, European Commission - Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection (ECHO), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and UKaid (UK Department for International Development)
UNOPS services:	Project management

Building shelters in Haiti

The January 2010 earthquake left behind a scene of devastation and desolation in Haiti. As many as 220,000 people were killed with thousands more injured. Almost 1.5 million people were forced to leave homes which had either been completely destroyed or damaged.



Haitians from earthquake-affected and poor neighbourhoods are hired in order to provide alternative income generation.

UNOPS aims to fulfill the immediate shelter needs of these communities by building transitional wooden shelters, in a programme funded by the European Commission, the American Red Cross and the governments of Sweden and the United Kingdom.

These transitional shelters are designed to provide a more durable and sustainable solution to the current emergency shelter and tent camps, as the removal of debris and the reconstruction of the damaged housing infrastructure is likely to last years.

Shelter design

Based on ground realities and Haitian weather conditions, UNOPS developed a customized 18 metre squared design, consisting of a timber structure, plywood wall cladding and

zinc aluminium roofing. The shelters are designed and built in accordance with international standards and the latest disaster risk reduction techniques, and have been tested to withstand wind speeds of over 170 kilometres per hour (Category 1 hurricane).

Completed shelters can house families of five people and last at least three years.

The process of designing the shelters was a joint effort between the UNOPS shelter team in Haiti, and the UNOPS Physical Infrastructure Design Unit. The teams are also testing the structural strength of shelters designed by some of the other organizations working in the shelter cluster.



Female carpenters have been trained by UNOPS to join the production teams.

Shelter production and construction

UNOPS has established a shelter production base in Port-au-Prince. Here Haitians from earthquake-affected and poor neighbourhoods are involved in producing and assembling the shelter kits, generating incomes as a secondary outcome of the project. UNOPS is also identifying and training female carpenters to join the production teams. In addition, fifteen teams are being established to construct the transitional

shelters at their final destinations. In total, an estimated 200 Haitians will be employed to work on the transitional shelter programme.

Project Manager Claude-Andre Nadon said beneficiaries had been delighted with their new homes: "One elderly lady thanked us repeatedly, saying that her family of six had been living with friends since the earthquake, and were so happy they finally had a place of their own to sleep."

Results

As of 15 October 2010, some 350 transitional shelters have been constructed, out of a current expected delivery of 2,835 shelters. These will provide durable shelter for 14,000 people, and constitute a key step towards rebuilding their lives.



A shelter production base established by UNOPS in Port-au-Prince.

Structural assessment project

UNOPS is concurrently working with the Haitian Ministry of Public Works on the national Building Damage Assessment project, financed jointly by the World Bank and the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery. Some 400 engineers have been trained to check the safety of damaged buildings, assessing over 300,000 buildings as of 15 October 2010.

Supported by ECHO, the engineers are working with 75 'community mobilisers' to disseminate life-saving information, raise awareness and collect data at household, neighborhood and camp level on the danger of living in damaged buildings.

Once assessed, the buildings are marked either red (unsafe), yellow (safe after repairs), or green (safe). UNOPS uses this information to identify families whose houses have been destroyed in order to provide them with a transitional shelter on their existing plot.



Buildings are marked after assessment with red paint (unsafe), yellow (safe after repairs), or green (safe).

UNOPS advantages

UNOPS operates as a fully self-financed provider of implementation services. This prompts efficiency and financial discipline. As a not-for-profit organization it is motivated only to meet the expectations of partners

During periods of conflict or crisis UNOPS maintains a physical presence on the ground and promotes the ownership and engagement of governments and local communities.

While partners may need a public profile for fundraising or advocacy, UNOPS does not and takes a low-key position as a service provider.

UNOPS extensive experience and proven track record in its focus areas allows partners to enjoy the benefits of specialization, shared knowledge and economies of scale.

UNOPS transparent, accountable management services meet the highest international standards. Partners are assured consistent performance to agreed standards of quality, timeliness and cost, and safeguards against implementation risk.