

PROGRAMME POLICY



HUMANITY
NEUTRALITY
INDEPENDENCE
IMPARTIALITY



NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

NRC WORKS TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF DISPLACED AND VULNERABLE PERSONS DURING CRISIS.

Through our programmes we provide assistance to meet immediate humanitarian needs, prevent further displacement and contribute to durable solutions. Through our stand-by rosters we provide expertise as a strategic partner to the UN, as well as to national and international actors. Through our advocacy we strive for rights to be upheld and for lasting solutions to be achieved.

We take action during situations of armed conflict, and engage in other contexts where our competencies will add value. We are a rights based organisation and are committed to the principles of humanity, neutrality, independence, and impartiality.

THE NRC PROGRAMME POLICY

This Programme Policy has been developed to guide the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in its development and implementation of programme activities – saving lives, alleviating suffering, upholding the needs and rights of displaced persons and assisting them to seek and reach durable solutions. It aims to ensure coordination and promote coherence in the content of NRC's response.

This policy is developed within the framework of the overall NRC policy and should be read in conjunction.

PRINCIPLES

NRC is committed to:

- Humanitarian principles of **humanity, neutrality, independence, and impartiality.**
- Ensuring the **participation** of displaced populations in the selection, design and organisation of assistance; to **accountability** in the delivery of aid and services; to **transparency** of action and provision of information; and to considering the perspectives of displaced populations to guide programme decisions.
- A **rights-based approach**, recognizing individuals as rights-holders (with legal entitlements to protection and assistance) and seeking to encourage those with responsibility to respect and protect the rights of displaced persons set out in domestic and international law.

1. A FRAMEWORK FOR QUALITY ACTION

SUPPORTING SELF-RELIANCE AND DURABLE SOLUTIONS

Displaced persons are often at immediate and heightened risk; face insecurity and serious challenges to their ability to meet their basic needs. Displacement also incurs considerable sustained stigma, risk and challenges to the establishment of a dignified life.

NRC intervenes to save lives, to alleviate the burdens incurred by displacement and from our earliest engagement, to support freedom of choice and self-reliance of displaced persons and to promote durable solutions to **displacement**.



- NRC upholds the following principles in all cases:
- **displacement shall last no longer than required by the circumstances**
 - **settlement options for durable solutions to displacement must be informed, voluntary and sustainable**

Durable solutions for Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees are essentially the same: an end to displacement has been achieved through return, local integration or settlement in a third location. However, the frameworks for determining that a solution has been achieved differ, as different protection and legal regimes apply. *Durable solutions for both groups have been defined as follows:*

REFUGEES*	INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS**
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Voluntary Repatriation (return)• Local Integration (in host country/ naturalisation)• Resettlement (to a third country)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainable reintegration at the place of origin (return)• Sustainable local integration in areas of refuge (local integration)• Sustainable integration in another part of the country (settlement elsewhere in country)
<p>* Framework for durable solutions for refugees and persons of concern. Core Group on Durable Solutions UNHCR Geneva, May 2003.</p> <p>** IASC Framework on durable solutions for internally displaced persons, The Brookings Institution – University of Bern Project on Internal Displacement, April 2010</p>	

NRC recognises that reaching a settlement option (as defined in the table above) does not mean that all needs and vulnerabilities related to displacement have been redressed. NRC understands that durable solutions will only be attained once displaced persons no longer have specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement, and when they are able to enjoy their rights without discrimination on account of their displacement.

NRC seeks to access the most vulnerable people and communities in times of crisis - and work with them to develop a relevant response.
Photo: NRC/Astrid Sehl



NRC CRITERIA

NRC will apply the following eight criteria to determine to what extent a durable solution has been achieved:

- safety and security;
- adequate standard of living (including access to vital services);
- access to livelihoods;
- restoration of housing, land and property;
- access to documentation;
- family reunification;
- participation in public affairs; and
- access to effective remedies and justice

When Displacement Ends: A Framework for Durable Solutions. The Brookings Institution – University of Bern Project on Internal Displacement, April 2010

CORE COMPETENCES

In our effort to save lives, alleviate suffering and promote durable solutions, NRC has developed five areas of competence:



EDUCATION



FOOD SECURITY



INFORMATION, COUNSELLING, AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE



SHELTER



WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE

These Core Competences are relevant for all phases of displacement, with a strong focus on the emergency phase and to support progress towards finding durable solutions as soon as it is practically feasible. These Core Competences are all vital for the welfare of displaced persons but may not be sufficient. The activities are selected in accordance with prioritised needs. However, NRC activities should never be discrete stand alone actions. NRC programmes shall be developed in accordance with actions by other partners and in close collaboration with other NRC programmes to ensure a strategic response to the local problems faced by displaced persons

For more information and details about the specific Core Competences we refer to NRC Core Competence Handbooks and other NRC guidelines and policies.

APPROACH

All NRC programmes and activities will endeavour to:

- Target the most vulnerable with the right to assistance and protection (impartiality);
- Consider the impact of displacement on host communities and relations between displaced and host populations – and adopt a “DO NO HARM” approach;
- Promote quality of programming that is culturally appropriate as well as adhering to SPHERE and other relevant international standards;
- Work with authorities to uphold their commitment to respect and protect the rights of citizens and refugees;
- Work closely with the international community to ensure commitment to the development of humanitarian access and financing to ensure an effective humanitarian response; and
- Engage with coordination efforts at all levels which support predictable, accountable and effective humanitarian response.
- Integrate Security risk management into programme planning and implementation from the outset. The objective is to ensure and sustain operational access as well as the security of NRC staff and beneficiaries, as far as possible.

CROSSCUTTING ISSUES

NRC operates in complex, violent and often marginal environments generating different needs and risks for different groups or individuals. In order to ensure high quality relevant programming NRC will always assess the importance of the following key crosscutting issues and incorporate a programmatic response where required:

PROTECTION

NRC frequently operates in a context where displaced populations are exposed to violence, oppression and exploitation. NRC tries to identify acute threats faced by displaced populations as defined under International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (IHRL and IHL). NRC will respond by encouraging duty bearers to uphold their responsibilities to recognise and uphold the rights of displaced persons, without discrimination. NRC will use its reputation, influence, presence, programmes and voice to maximise protection for displaced populations.

NRC conducts its programme activities in accordance with SPHERE standards on protection as outlined in the four basic Protection Principles for humanitarian action:

- Avoid exposing people to further harm as a result of your actions
- Ensure people’s access to impartial assistance in proportion to need and without discrimination
- Protect people from physical and psychological harm arising from violence and coercion
- Assist people to claim their rights, access available remedies, and recover from the effects of abuse

AGE, GENDER, DIVERSITY

NRC seeks to ensure that the different needs and risks faced by different groups of displaced persons are recognised. NRC believes all displaced persons should enjoy their rights and be able to participate fully in decisions that affect their lives, the lives of their family members and their communities, without discrimination of any kind.

NRC will integrate a gender perspective into all programmes. This entails recognising and addressing the specific roles, needs, risks, vulnerabilities, capacities and opportunities that women, men, girls and boys face in displacement situations. While all conflict-affected populations are at risk, displaced women and girls are often exposed to greater risk and may have additional protection and assistance needs. NRC aims to identify these needs and address them through its programmes and advocacy activities.

NRC also recognises that other types of differences (older persons, youth, minority groups etc.) should be identified where they incur specific risks, challenges and opportunities; and identify responses that can address inequalities and special needs.

Protection is defined as all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law, namely human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law. As such protection can be seen as an objective, a legal responsibility and an activity.

ENVIRONMENT

Mass displacement may have significant immediate and long lasting impact on local environments, creating stress and hardship for both displaced populations and host populations. Humanitarian programming may also incur significant environmental costs. NRC aims to systematically integrate environmental considerations into its programmes and policies through:

- Conducting short- and long-term environmental impact assessments;
- Design and implementation of programmes that reduce negative environmental impact created both by displaced populations and corresponding humanitarian assistance;
- Assisting people to assess environmental risks, to adapt traditional coping mechanisms to face emerging threats, and to develop sustainable environmental management practices; and
- Documenting and sharing best practices and lessons learned with the broader humanitarian community.

2. NRC PROGRAMMES

NRC's collective response will always prioritize the humanitarian imperative to save lives. NRC aims to be a reliable and innovative actor at the global level, with a strong focus on quality solutions. NRC commits to participative needs assessments, monitoring and evaluation – as well as post implementation follow up, in order to assess the context, determine needs and register changing needs over time and across different groups within affected populations.

TARGET GROUP

NRC responds to the needs of people who have been forced to flee across borders and within countries.

Where the impact of displacement on host communities is critical, NRC will respond to the needs and fulfilment of rights of all displaced and displacement affected community members.

The NRC will target assistance within communities to those who are most vulnerable and at highest risk.

NRC's collective response will always prioritize the humanitarian imperative to save lives.

START-UP AND EXIT CRITERIA

NRC will initiate programmes at the country level according to specific start-up criteria. NRC will, from the start, continuously define and adjust exit criteria (programme and country) as a means to define the limits of NRC programme responsibility. NRC will continuously plan for responsible and effective programme change, programme closure and ultimately country withdrawal.

START-UP CRITERIA (ALL OF THE FOLLOWING)	EXIT CRITERIA (ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Refugees and/or displaced persons exhibit a need for international protection and assistance that has not been met ✓ NRC will have genuine access to the refugees and/or IDPs, and will be in a position to professionally implement justifiable programme activities ✓ The safety of humanitarian workers has been adequately secured ✓ There is a need for the type of assistance offered by NRC ✓ The assistance offered by NRC will not merely assuage immediate needs, but will also help to introduce constructive lasting solutions for refugees and/or IDPs ✓ A sufficient amount and quality of financial, human and other necessary resources are, or will be, available in the field and at headquarters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The target group is no longer in need of protection or the type of assistance offered by NRC, or the group's needs are being fulfilled by other actors ✓ NRC no longer has access to the refugees and/or IDPs, or is no longer in a position to implement professionally justifiable programme activities ✓ The safety of humanitarian workers cannot be adequately ensured ✓ The relevant situation has reached an impasse, and the activities of NRC will not in any substantial way contribute to constructive, lasting solutions ✓ It is not possible to obtain sufficient financial, human or other resources to carry out the efforts <p>In addition to the general criteria for exit, specific criteria should be established for each programme (adapting over time and with changing context).</p>

NRC is focused on the needs of women and children in times of crisis
Photo: NRC/Christian Jepsen





EDUCATION

Education is a right. Situations of mass displacement frequently result in severe curtailment of the right to education for children and youth, threatening individual lives and the possibilities for resolution of the crisis.

Rapid provision of access to education is a priority emergency response in order to

- save lives,
- protect children and youth,
- prepare populations to cope with displacement and the situation they find themselves in, and
- enhance self-reliance and opportunities to reach durable solutions to displacement.



NRC believes it is imperative that children affected by crisis can sustain their education.

PRINCIPLES

NRC education activities are conducted in accordance with the principles that:

- Children and youth should be protected from abduction or recruitment into armed forces, crime, sexual exploitation, and exploitative labour. Learning environments should be secure, to protect the well-being of learners.
- NRC prioritises the most vulnerable among displaced populations, such as vulnerable children and youth, minority or indigenous groups, children associated with fighting forces, young mothers, children with disabilities, and persons with needs not being met by the formal education system. NRC works to ensure that access to emergency educational opportunities is equitable and offered in such a way as to include those with special needs.
- Local communities should be involved in the development of education programmes, enhancing local ownership and supporting the enrolment and retention of learners
- Boys and girls have equal opportunities to access quality education, and neither sex should be discriminated against. Male and female teachers should have equal access to training and support and teaching faculties should be balanced.
- Youth are an important segment of the displaced population with critical significance for the future of their communities and societies and should be engaged as a positive resource.

DEFINITIONS

Children are defined as persons aged 0 to 18 years.

Education in emergencies is defined as quality learning opportunities for all ages in situations of crisis (including early childhood development, primary, secondary, non-formal, technical, vocational, higher and adult education). Education in emergencies provides physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection that can sustain lives and enable a positive future.

Quality education is defined as education that is relevant, inclusive, protective, and participatory. Curricula and materials should address the needs of the learners, and they should feel welcome and safe at school and on their way to and from school. Teachers should be qualified, trained, motivated, use participatory methods, and have a manageable number of learners in the classroom.

Basic education is defined as the entire range of formal and non-formal educational activities to meet basic learning needs. According to the Inter-Agency Standard Classification for Education (ISCED), basic education comprises primary education (first stage of basic education) and lower secondary education (second stage). In some countries, basic education also includes pre-primary education and adult literacy programmes.

Formal education: Learning opportunities provided in a system of schools, colleges, universities and other educational institutions. Formal education systems are normally developed by national authorities, and administer national curricula in accordance with national public regulations (in emergency situations where administrative control is contested, it may be supported by other stakeholders).

Non-formal education: Educational activities that are not part of formal education system. Non-formal education can take place both within and outside educational institutions.

Youth refers to a specific group that is often culturally defined as between childhood and adulthood with different responsibilities, obligations and rewards than either children or adults. International definitions define youth as people aged 15 to 24 years.

SCOPE

NRC's education programmes target children and youth who face particular education needs related to their displacement.

In order to benefit displaced children and youth, NRC may assist other groups such as parents and guardians, teachers or children and youth in host communities. Education authorities may be supported as a means to fulfil the education rights of the target group.

Education authorities may also be supported, but only as a means to fulfil the education rights of the target group.

NRC's education programmes respond to education needs in all phases of crisis and emergency. Whereas some activities might be the same regardless of phase, focus may also change from phase to phase:

ACUTE EMERGENCIES:

NRC will actively promote education as one of the core components within humanitarian response, highlighting education as a means of protection and enabling recovery. NRC will respond rapidly to displacement related emergency education needs through:

- The establishment of basic teaching and learning activities
- The creation of safe spaces for children and youth, including provision of recreational and psychosocial activities

CHRONIC OR PROTRACTED CRISIS:

NRC will address gaps in education provision for displaced children and youth. Focus will be on access, quality and protection and reintegration into formal education and/or achieving basic levels of education.

Activities include:

- Alternative education programmes
- Basic skills training
- Support to formal education
- Capacity building initiatives of teachers and authorities as part of the achievement of durable solutions

NRC also seeks to support youth through protection from recruitment, life skills and vocational training/employment opportunities and inclusion in consultation and decision making processes.

EARLY RECOVERY/DURABLE SOLUTIONS:

To promote access to quality education during the transitional phase, NRC will contribute to strengthen and support education stakeholders and/or authorities' capacities to meet education needs

and sustain basic schooling. Activities include:

- Facilitation of re-entry into schools
- Alternative education programmes
- Capacity building of stakeholders

NRC also seeks to support a positive role for youth in reconstruction through life skills and vocational training/employment opportunities and inclusion in community governance processes.

We promote equal education opportunities for boys and girls. Photo: NRC



*NRC supports both formal and non-formal education - supporting children to complete basic education and to receive certification.
Photo: NRC / Odette Asha*

APPROACH

NRC adheres to the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, and Recovery in all education programme development, implementation and evaluation.

NRC supports the development of equitable and sustainable “formal” education services for displaced persons. Where such inclusion is not possible in the immediate term, NRC will respond to the needs of vulnerable persons by adopting non-formal approaches with the ultimate aim of re-establishing a link between learners and formal education systems.

NRC involvement in education activities should be based on thorough assessments and holistic analyses of the factors keeping children and youth out of school.

The categories “children” and “youth” overlap and so many of the issues and activities overlap. Nevertheless, approaches designed to assist children and youth differ in important ways and can be broadly described:

FOR CHILDREN

NRC will provide (based on needs in each specific context):

- catch-up classes to help children (re-)enter ordinary schools
- alternative paths (e.g. accelerated programmes) to complete primary school
- material and non-material support to allow children to access and complete formal or non-formal schooling
- recreational activities and psycho-social support

For youth NRC will provide (based on the needs in each specific context):

- basic literacy and numeracy
- life skills training
- basic practical/vocational skills training (to promote access to livelihoods)
- recreational activities and psycho-social support
- basic micro-enterprise skills training
- business start up investment

- material and non-material support needed to be able to access and complete formal or non-formal schooling (this may include support to youth accessing secondary school, although NRC will not run ordinary secondary schools).
- inclusion in community representation, consultation and decision making processes to ensure the needs of Youth are heard and responded to.

WHEN ASSISTING OTHER GROUPS

(such as parents and guardians, teachers or children and youth in host communities) NRC will provide (based on the needs in each specific context):

- Teacher training
- Training/capacity building/sensitisation of communities, parents/guardians
- Pre-school children as a part of care taking of children of parents involved in NRC youth programmes.

CAPACITY BUILDING OF AUTHORITIES

and school administrations will only be conducted as a means to an end to assist displaced persons

Objectives for NRC’s education activities will vary, but follow a basic approach of:

- Provide safe learning environments and psycho-social support
- Curriculum should be chosen on the basis of addressing the needs of the learners
- Provide recognised certificates for completed programmes enabling learners to document their achievements, continue schooling or enhance their job opportunities
- Promote school feeding and/or cash/ vouchers as a tool for improved enrolment, retention, and performance
- Work in partnerships with different stakeholders to enhance implementation and foster sustainability





FOOD SECURITY

Food is an immediate and basic need for all people – although different people may have varying food needs and preferences. A failure to access sufficient and healthy food creates a risk to life, suffering and the stigma of hunger and dependency. NRC contributes to saving lives, protecting livelihoods and seeking durable solutions by upholding the Right to Food and supporting displaced persons to attain food security.



Food assistance can be vital i emergencies
- but it is not a long term solution.

PRINCIPLES

NRC's Food Security activities are conducted in accordance with the principles that:

- Highly vulnerable individuals or households should be prioritised
- Activities should promote nutritional well being and health in families and households
- Activities should promote access to essential services with a particular reference to basic education (e.g. school feeding, vouchers)
- Activities should promote environmental conservation by supporting the development of livelihoods that conserve natural assets (especially soils, water and forestry)
- Activities must assess and respond to the different roles women and men fulfil in the household economy and in caring for the broader family in all phases – and ensure women are included in programme benefits
- Activities will ensure equitable access to registration, credit, land and other productive assets, and control and use of assets and resources.



Markets are key to people's survival.

DEFINITION OF FOOD SECURITY

NRC subscribes to the FAO definition of food security: “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

Food security involves local, regional, and global factors relating to food production, distribution and marketing, preparation, processing, and storage. Food security typically consists of four main dimensions:

- Availability
- Accessibility
- Utilisation
- Sustainability and vulnerability

SCOPE

NRC will respond to food security needs in different phases of crisis and emergency. The phases and their corresponding activities are:

ACUTE EMERGENCIES:

In an acute emergency NRC will respond rapidly to facilitate access to daily food levels sufficient to provide a healthy and well balanced diet. The initial focus shall be on:

- General food distributions (GFD)
- General distribution of non-food items (NFI)
- Distribution of supplementary foodstuffs where there are specific dietary risks
- Distribution of cash and/or vouchers
- Livelihood support to households to reduce distress sale or consumption of key productive assets such as land, animals, tools, and seeds
- Support to host families to reduce burdens of hosting

CHRONIC OR PROTRACTED CRISIS:

- Targeted support to extremely vulnerable individuals or households for continued direct food and welfare support
- Assisting beneficiaries in resuming economic activities to enhance food security and reduce dependence.
- Measures to mitigate negative environmental impacts of mass displacement .
- Support to public works to generate employment opportunities and renovate public infrastructure (see box)

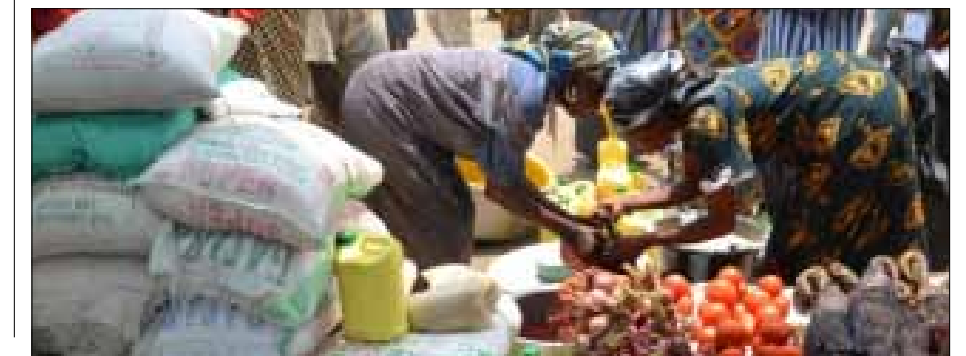
EARLY RECOVERY/DURABLE SOLUTIONS:

- Provision of cash grants to support welfare needs during return movement
- Negotiation of access to means of production such as land or employment upon resettlement or return
- Provision of critical inputs to support re-settlement and re-establish the basis of production
- Provision of temporary assistance for extremely vulnerable individuals or families in the period before production can be realised.

APPROACH

Whilst prioritising emergency response to immediate needs, NRC's approach to Food Security will be grounded in an appreciation of long-term needs and the search for durable solutions from the initiation of programming. NRC's approach is:

- To base income-generating and livelihood interventions on a thorough analysis of household economies and local markets.
- To promote the most appropriate response with explicit inclusion of the possibilities of use of cash transfer programmes (particularly in urban environments and well developed economies).
- To ensure that beneficiaries are well informed about entitlements and processes of targeting and dispersal to ensure understanding, acceptance and local support for programmes.
- To design programmes to ensure interaction and cooperation between displaced and host communities to create shared interests and mutual benefit.
- To focus on the household as the unit of economic activity.
- To factor in seasonality to all food security planning, including activity schedules, scope, scale, and targeting of beneficiaries.



NRC seeks to promote access to locally produced, fresh, nutritious food. All photo: NRC

PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMS

Food For Work (FFW) and Cash For Work (CFW) aim to provide food or a salary to those in need of income in return for their labour (as a means to contribute to public infrastructure with positive community level implications). However the poor and vulnerable are often labour poor as well. Public works schemes can sometimes provide short term employment opportunities (for example during seasonally low labour periods), whilst allowing development of private or public infrastructure - improving shelter, services and production/marketing opportunities. However, public works programmes can be problematic when employing poor people at below subsistence wage levels (creating exploitation and dependency), have no exit strategy to assist those enrolled and provide insufficient technical inputs to ensure effective public works outcomes.

NRC will ensure that public works programmes pay a fair wage, are limited in duration, use labour when it is not in short supply and will only include public works which can be appropriately addressed with unskilled labour and where there is a collective learning experience. All public works programmes will have an explicit exit strategy determining when they will stop and how those enrolled in the programme will be responsibly helped off NRC employment.



INFORMATION, COUNSELLING, AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE (ICLA)

NRC assists displaced persons to claim and fulfill their rights, reach durable solutions and to prevent further displacement through application of information and legal methods.

NRC's ICLA activities aim to enable beneficiaries in forced displacement contexts to access relevant mechanisms to claim and exercise their rights as necessary to:

- Prevent primary or secondary displacement
- Claim and exercise the rights to which they are entitled during displacement
- Reach durable solutions to displacement
- Prevent development induced displacement when this process is fuelled by conflict

PRINCIPLES

NRC's ICLA activities seek to ensure people's access to impartial assistance, according to their rights and without discrimination. Activities are conducted according to the following principles:

- NRC respects confidentiality and safeguards personal and other sensitive information.
- International and country specific professional and ethical standards regulating the exercise of the legal profession and use of collaborative dispute resolution procedures should be respected.
- Women face particular barriers in accessing and controlling housing, land and property, legal identity and other rights. NRC will provide specific assistance aiming to remove such barriers.
- All ICLA services directly provided by NRC are free of charge.

SCOPE

NRC's ICLA activities primarily focus on five thematic areas:

- Housing, land and property (HLP) rights
- Legal identity including obtaining civil documentation necessary to access rights and services
- Citizenship and statelessness issues related to displacement
- Procedures for refugee status determination
- Procedures for registration of internally displaced people (IDPs) when access to rights and services is dependent on such registration

Exceptionally, ICLA programmes may engage in other thematic areas as long as the problem at stake is linked to displacement, and its solution is required to solve a problem faced by beneficiaries within the five core ICLA thematic areas. When such situations arise, NRC shall ensure that required follow-up activities are undertaken by other actors.

ICLA activities may be implemented in any phase of a crisis, from acute emergencies to protracted displacement, as long as they are relevant to NRC's beneficiaries. The phases and the corresponding activities are:

- **ACUTE EMERGENCIES:** NRC will assist displaced persons to obtain civil documentation, register to receive humanitarian assistance and access land for shelter, food security or livelihood purposes, at their place of (temporary) settlement. Activities may include management of disputes and other grievances with host communities or negotiating access to land with authorities on behalf of the displaced persons.
- **CHRONIC OR PROTRACTED CRISIS:** NRC will address structural obstacles to full enjoyment of rights by displaced persons within the five thematic areas. NRC will include a focus on prevention of secondary displacement and the active search for durable solutions.
- **EARLY RECOVERY/DURABLE SOLUTIONS:** NRC will address structural obstacles to full enjoyment of rights by displaced persons within the five thematic areas. NRC will prioritise enhancing the capacity of duty bearers including authorities and development actors in executing transitions to durable solutions.

Individuals or groups shall be provided with accurate, reliable, timely, and updated information about their rights, entitlements, and remedies, and how to claim and exercise them.

This family has proof of ownership of their house, allowing them to access reconstruction assistance. Photo: NRC



APPROACH

NRC's ICLA activities shall support beneficiaries in claiming and exercising their rights through the provision of information, counselling, legal assistance, collaborative dispute resolution, capacity building, and advocacy activities.

NRC's approach is:

- To observe legal, cultural and social norms existing in the specific country. This includes the use of judicial or administrative remedies, customary or religious mechanisms, collaborative dispute resolution methodologies, and transitional justice mechanisms.
- To identify protection concerns and legal obstacles to durable solutions, and to advocate for their resolution with duty bearers and other stakeholders at local, national, and international level.
- To enter into partnerships where necessary and appropriate with other organisations for service delivery or advocacy purposes.

APPROACH SPECIFIC TO INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

- Individuals or groups shall be provided with accurate, reliable, timely, and updated information about their rights, entitlements, and remedies, and how to claim and exercise them.

APPROACH SPECIFIC TO COUNSELLING ACTIVITIES

- Individuals or groups shall be provided with explanation and advice on relevant rules and procedures embedded in the formal, customary, or religious mechanisms of the specific country. Counselling entails a degree of analysis of the problems faced by the beneficiary and provides advice on what is the best possible course of action to solve a particular problem.

It enables beneficiaries to claim and exercise their rights by themselves

APPROACHES SPECIFIC TO LEGAL REPRESENTATION AND COLLABORATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION ACTIVITIES

- NRC will provide legal representation and collaborative dispute resolution services to individuals or groups who cannot effectively claim and exercise their rights independently. The provision of legal representation shall be subject to NRC's capacity to bring cases to closure or hand them over to other relevant organisations.
- Beneficiaries should be supported to access and exhaust all relevant avenues depending on the strength of their case and a cost / benefit analysis.
- Activities may be initiated to support public interest and other prominent cases. NRC will seek to ensure that such cases have direct positive effects for a greater number of individuals or create legal precedents that can generate structural positive changes. In every context where such an approach is to be employed, the potential risks and opportunities must be assessed and approved by senior management at Country Office and Head Office.

- When domestic remedies have been exhausted or are ineffective, NRC may use international litigation and non-litigation mechanisms. In every context where international litigation approaches are to be employed, the potential risks and opportunities must be assessed and approved by senior management and endorsed by the Secretary General.



Shelter is essential for the physical protection and privacy of people affected by displacement, allowing them to lead lives in a safe, supportive and culturally appropriate setting.

NRC seeks to protect rights and save lives by providing timely shelter interventions to meet both immediate and temporary needs, promoting durable solutions and enabling families to access social services and livelihood options.

PRINCIPLES

NRC Shelter activities are undertaken according to the principles that:

- Design criteria defining appropriate construction standards, methods and cross cutting issues are negotiated with all parties involved (beneficiaries, host population, authorities, donors and humanitarian community).
- Shelter solutions shall be of appropriate standard in line with SPHERE and other relevant international humanitarian standards.
- Activities should benefit local economies and strengthen local competences and capacities as well as self-reliance and self-help (to this end assisted self build options are preferred).
- Assistance standards are appropriate to the local context, cultural and social norms and consider differential needs (age, gender and disability) in design and functionality.
- All built structures are safe and secure, designed to resist local natural and operational hazards.
- Construction and use of materials should be environmentally appropriate and environmental restoration considered where possible.
- Special focus on transparency and anti-corruption practices related to procurement and contracting.
- Equitable participation and proprietary rights for both women and men are ensured.

SCOPE

NRC's shelter activities aim to facilitate both the physical and social needs of targeted beneficiaries in all phases of a crisis and across a range of settlement options beyond the household, including:

- Individual and collective housing
- Schools
- Social and technical community infrastructure
- Settlement and camp planning

NRC's shelter programmes do not focus solely on the delivery of shelter as a physical product but should also include a range of wider social and settlement related considerations which

enhance and complement the impact of individual shelter solutions such as:

- Physical safety and security
- Best possible security of tenure
- Access to livelihoods and employment opportunities
- Access to basic social services
- Access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services
- Social and cultural norms and standards
- Environmental considerations and adaptation to natural hazards (DRR)
- Settlement management and governance

In all stages of crisis and level of emergency NRC will seek to address the needs of affected households, host families, grouped settlements and communities.

ACUTE EMERGENCIES:

NRC will focus on living solutions offering physical protection from climatic hazards, as well as providing protection of assets, privacy and dignity. Specific activities may include:

- Provision of emergency shelters and tents
- Planning and preparing of camps or other settlements
- Provision of essential social and technical infrastructure including spaces for emergency education, drainage and sanitation facilities
- Provision of non-food items (NFIs) and/or cash/vouchers

EARLY RECOVERY/DURABLE SOLUTIONS:

NRC will focus on voluntary and sustainable solutions contributing to the overall recovery of communities. This will be done by ensuring that building and settlement (re)construction is used as an economic multiplier, that social interaction between various groups increases and that necessary infrastructure for livelihood activities is in place. Specific activities may include:

- Provision of durable housing and settlement solutions
- Linking of settlement options to viable livelihoods opportunities
- Supporting dependable tenancy arrangements
- Advocating for access to social and public services

APPROACH

Based on contextual analysis NRC will define appropriate strategies and activities to address identified needs. This analysis will consider all relevant contextual factors such as scale, climate, culture, available materials and skills, logistics, funding, legislation and policies.

NRC'S APPROACH TO SHELTER PROVISION IS:

- To mobilise, train and organise communities and individuals during shelter provision
- To support the coping strategies and solutions of beneficiaries
- To support local institutions
- To use local labour, goods, materials, and services wherever possible

APPROACH SPECIFIC TO HOUSING

- Cost-efficient shelter with the best possible durability.

APPROACH SPECIFIC TO SCHOOLS

- Support the establishment of structures and routines for continuous operation and maintenance of school buildings and attached sanitation facilities - either by authorities or local committees.

APPROACH SPECIFIC TO SOCIAL AND TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Various stakeholders (local, national and international) are involved in the process of needs identification and design.
- All social/technical infra-structure complies with the needs of various other sectors and programmes.
- Roles and responsibilities for the operation, budgeting and maintenance of infrastructure and services are explicit and realistic. Those deemed as responsible for recurrent financing and management (authorities, local communities, private sector) are supported to take on their role.

APPROACH SPECIFIC TO SETTLEMENT AND CAMP PLANNING

- Negotiate appropriate physical standards, inclusion of infrastructure and inter-relation to the surrounding environment with the planning and managing authorities.
- To advocate for agencies, institutions and authorities to take on the construction and operation of infrastructure and services in the planned sites.



NRC promotes local self-built solutions to shelter needs - ensuring ownership, local design and stimulating local markets. Photo: NRC



WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)

Access to safe and sufficient water is a basic human need and a human right. Access to sanitation facilities, waste management and promotion of appropriate hygiene practices are essential to reduce exposure to public health threats.

NRC seeks to save lives and uphold rights (to a sufficient quantity of clean water for personal and domestic uses) by providing emergency WASH solutions to meet both immediate and temporary needs and the facilitation of durable solutions.

NRC also seeks to promote access to key institutions and services through provision of WASH facilities. In particular, NRC works to promote enrolment and attendance in education services through provision of safe water and sanitation to schools and other education facilities.

PRINCIPLES

NRC's WASH activities are conducted according to the principles that:

- Response should include health promotion activities considering and reflecting the wider cultural, social and economic aspects of hygiene practices, and understanding the particular role women play in influencing the health of the household.
- Facilities and/or infrastructure should be sex-segregated where appropriate, physically accessible within or in the immediate vicinity of the household, an educational institution or another communal institution, and ensure a location that provides the best possible security to individuals.
- The principles of Universal Design Solutions should be applied, thus caring for persons with disabilities.
- Construction and use of materials should be environmentally sensitive and water usage and disposal should be undertaken in a manner that is sustainable.
- Activities should benefit the local economy in the given situation and strengthen local competence, capacity, and self-reliance.
- Activities should strengthen social and economic links and support conflict resolution.
- Activities should mobilise communities, strengthen local management structures, and support good governance.

SCOPE

NRC's WASH activities focus on the provision of access to a sufficient quantity of safe water, as well as the provision of contextually appropriate sanitation and hygiene services.

Hygiene promotion should be addressed in all WASH programmes. The complexity of the situation and staff capacity will determine whether health promotion should be addressed by WASH staff or by other NRC programme staff.

NRC will respond to WASH needs in different phases of crisis and emergency. The phases and their corresponding activities are:

- **ACUTE EMERGENCIES:** NRC will focus on ensuring access to safe and sufficient water supply, according to international emergency standards; the provision of basic household waste disposal (latrines) and critical hygiene solutions to prevent outbreaks of communicable diseases.
- **CHRONIC AND PROTRACTED CRISIS:** NRC will provide WASH facilities and hygiene support to promote public health and enhance livelihood options. Special emphasis will be placed on inter-communal relations with regard to exploitation of water sources.
- **EARLY RECOVERY/DURABLE SOLUTIONS:** NRC will contribute to sustainable solutions that promote voluntary and sustainable durable solutions and can integrate into communal or public infrastructure and services.

For each phase, a wide range of technical and social solutions can be applied depending on the context. This analysis considers factors like scale, climate, local materials and skills, land and water source ownership patterns, logistics, funding, political constraints and coordination policies.

The different activities may include:

- Material or cash/voucher distribution
- Construction activities
- Capacity development
- Awareness raising
- Advocacy for access to secure water and sanitation solutions

APPROACH

NRC's WASH activities shall be inclusive and participatory. NRC's approach is:

- To coordinate and implement activities within national guidelines/regulations where possible.
- To include integrated water resource management and water efficiency plans in programme design.
- To use locally appropriate standards and guidelines to establish water quality standards (National, WHO, SPHERE).
- To mobilise and organise communities in development of water sources, sanitation and in promoting hygiene.
- To monitor hygiene practices to ensure messages are understood and applied.
- To use local labour, goods, materials, and services as far as possible.
- To support local production of WASH construction components (supporting small local enterprises to ensure sustainable supplies).
- To include management and financing plans (structures, fees, models) for recurrent maintenance and sustainable and equitable access of WASH services.

Access to safe and sufficient water is a basic human need and a human right.

Water is vital for life - and fun. Safe access to water is vital in supporting women and children in times of conflict. Photo: NRC



ABBREVIATIONS:

FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
GFD:	General food distribution
HAP:	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
HLP:	Housing, land, and property
IASC:	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
INEE:	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
INGO:	International non-governmental organisation
ISCED:	Inter-Agency Standard Classification for Education
NFI:	Non-food items
NGO:	Non-governmental organisation
SPHERE:	Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response

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we refer to NRC Core Competence Handbooks and other
NRC guidelines and policies.



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