

A.4 Côte d'Ivoire – 2010–2011 – Post-election Crisis

Overview:

Keywords: Returns, Household items, Construction materials, Core housing construction, Housing repair and retrofitting, Vouchers, Advocacy / legal, Training.

Summary

The November 2010 election in Côte d'Ivoire triggered violence that led to the displacement of up to a million people. The western part of the country was particularly affected. Families were displaced both within Côte d'Ivoire and over the border in to neighbouring Liberia.

Support for returnees by international organisations focused on rebuilding communities as well as houses. About 30 per cent of the 24,000 households whose houses had been damaged or destroyed were targeted by the coordinated interagency response. About one third of those assisted were in spontaneous sites.

Organisations supported only the most vulnerable households, assuming that most households had the capacity to rebuild on their own.



Background

Côte d'Ivoire is a lower-middle-income country experiencing significant demographic changes. The proportion of people living in cities in Côte d'Ivoire has risen from 15 per cent in 1960 to 50 per cent in 2010.

Despite long term efforts by the government to encourage housing construction through the private sector, there remains a shortfall of around 400,000 houses.

Côte d'Ivoire's development has been hindered by conflict in 2002, 2008 and 2010–2011.

The conflict

The violence associated with the 2010–2011 post-election crisis was particularly destructive in the west of Côte d'Ivoire, where approximately 24,000 houses were damaged or destroyed.

At the height of the crisis in early 2011, up to a million people were thought to be displaced, including over 700,000 within or from Abidjan. More than 200,000 people fled to neighbouring countries.

Relations between some communities had been strained due to issues of immigration, ethnicity and access to agricultural land. The violence further damaged relations between the different communities.

Lack of physical security in the west due to ongoing hostilities meant that thousands of families

were afraid to return to their villages of origin. Many of those wanting to return cited damaged houses as one of the main impediments to return.

The fragile security situation continued well into 2012.

Emergency phase in 2011

Although the Coordination mechanism for the response was established in January 2011, a Co-ordinator was not in place until March 2011.

Between January and September 2011, organisations assisted 8,150 households with emergency shelter support. About 35 per cent of this assistance went to support the displaced people in various spontaneous settlements in the west, such as the Catholic Mission in Duékoué camp, which housed around 27,000 IDPs at its peak.

The rest of the shelter support, in the form of support for repairs and reconstruction, was largely targeted at returning IDPs and repatriated refugees.

Early Recovery Strategy

Given the problems at the core of the crisis, it wasn't simply the houses that needed to be repaired and rebuilt, but also the communities themselves. The goal was to support vulnerable households through a community-based approach that would promote positive relations within the community and to reinforce existing coping mechanisms. The following two case studies (sections A.5 and A.6) all adopted this principle in slightly different ways, depending on the context.



Non-food items were provided to returnees and those directly affected by the crisis.

Photo: Neil Brighton



24,000 houses were damaged in Western Côte d'Ivoire. It was estimated that nearly 65 per cent of the population would be able to rebuild their houses without external assistance.

Photo: Neil Brighton

After the emergency, the focus was on supporting vulnerable households to rebuild their mud-brick or wattle and daub buildings.

Self-recovery

Before deciding on a target for the number of households to support, an assessment was made of how many people would be able to conduct their repairs without external assistance.

In Western Côte d'Ivoire, the vast majority of households lived in houses that are built with materials found locally and were either constructed from mud-bricks or wattle and daub. The roofs were thatched or covered in corrugated iron. Though the house walls were prone to erosion from rain and wind, and were relatively weak, they were built by the households themselves and contributed to a high self-recovery rate.

By mid-2012, the affected communities themselves had rebuilt approximately 50 per cent (11,500 houses) of the destroyed mud-brick and wattle and daub houses. This type of construction made up approximately 90 per cent of the damaged or destroyed buildings.

Only vulnerable households were targeted, as a significant proportion of the population was both able and willing to rebuild themselves.

Although the government had the primary responsibility to assist those affected by the crisis, it lacked resources to support the entire population and was not able to respond quickly enough.

Of the 24,000 damaged or destroyed houses in the west, international organisations targeted 8,775 vulnerable households in 2012. Of these, 7,200 had earth-brick or wattle and daub houses.

Some organisations worked on confined masonry buildings, but this was a small proportion of the response. Return kits were also distributed to displaced households returning home.



Destroyed home - the majority of houses were made from wattle and daub or mud blocks.

Photo: Neil Brighton

Government response

The government made both food and non-food item distributions in the emergency phase. In the summer of 2012 the government announced that a permanent housing project would target 1,000 households in the Department of Duékoué. Though this capacity was welcomed, the decision was taken unilaterally with little consultation with the humanitarian community who had been working in the target area since mid-2011.

The coordination team

The shelter coordination team consisted of one coordinator and three protection monitors from a local organisation. It was in place from January 2011 to December 2012. The protection monitors assessed the damaged and destroyed houses, and assessed the capacity of communities to reconstruct without external assistance.

This team proved invaluable for collecting critical baseline data, which informed the shelter strategy in different organisations' project planning.

Closing of the coordination system

By mid-2012, the security situation in Côte d'Ivoire was beginning to stabilize and life was returning to normal. The decision was taken in August 2012 to close the coordination system by the end of the year. The table below summarises the collective goals for the response and the extent to which those goals were met.

Goal for 2012	Result achieved
Support 90 per cent of vulnerable households (6,489 households) with damaged or destroyed earth houses (mud-brick or wattle and daub) to rebuild by 31 st December 2012.	4,461 households
Support 25 per cent of vulnerable households (1,425 households) with lightly damaged confined masonry houses to rebuild by 31 st December 2012	434 households
Support 10 per cent of households (1,150 households) that are building back their own house with some material or technical assistance by 31 st December 2012.	200 households
Support 90 per cent of affected households (37,455 households) that lost essential household items with distributions of NFI Return Kits by 31 st December 2012	37,455 households



Self recovery: A man rebuilds his wattle and daub house without external assistance. Photo: Neil Brighton

A.5 Côte d'Ivoire – 2010–2011 – Post-Electoral Crisis

Case study: **Keywords:** Returns, Urban neighbourhoods, Construction materials, Core housing construction, Housing repair and retrofitting, Vouchers, Advocacy / legal, Training.

Country:

Côte d'Ivoire

Project location:

Duékoué, Western Côte d'Ivoire

Conflict:

Post-electoral crisis

Conflict date:

2010 to 2011

Number of houses damaged:

24,000 in Western Côte d'Ivoire

Number of people displaced:

1 million people nationwide
150,000 displaced in the West

Project target population:

1,465 households
7,325 people

Project outputs:

1st project: 335 households
2nd project: 1,130 households

Occupancy rate on handover:

Between 75 per cent
and 100 per cent

Shelter size:

28m², 2 rooms.

Materials cost per shelter:

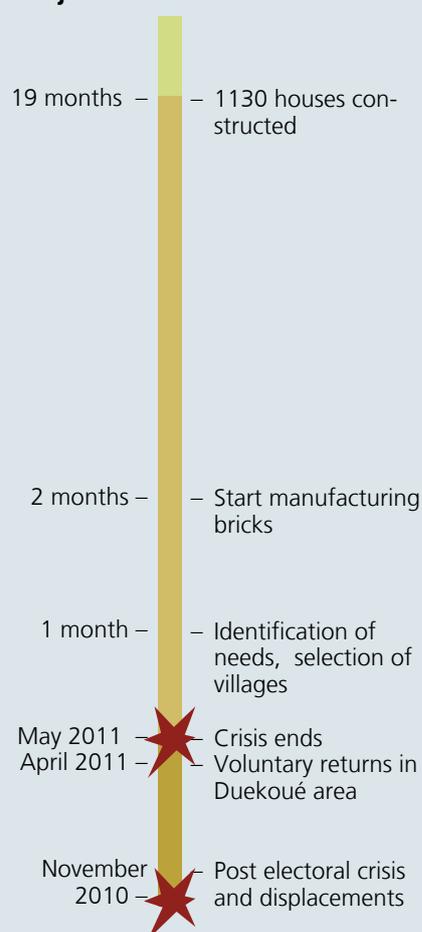
US\$ 580 Materials
US\$ 80 Labour

Project cost per shelter:

(Total project / number shelters):
US\$1070



Project timeline



Project description

The lead organisation worked with three partners to provide houses for vulnerable returnees, whose house was damaged by the post-electoral crisis. The project had the goal to sustainably improve the living conditions of returned households by providing one shelter per household. At the end of the project over 1,130 houses were built or rehabilitated by one of the three partners.

Strengths and weaknesses

- ✓ Every beneficiary helped to make mud-bricks for the whole community. This led to strong involvement of the population throughout the project.
- ✓ By supporting local technicians, the project injected cash within the communities.
- ✓ Training sessions entitled “building back better” gave people the opportunity to share experiences and construction methods and to discuss different related issues such as sanitation and hygiene.
- ✓ Having access to shelter was a starting point for a new life and a durable return.
- ✗ The project found it challenging to ensure that the beneficiaries were the owners of the land and houses because many people had lost their papers during the crisis.

- ✗ Difficulties arose in validating beneficiary lists as some chefferies saw opportunity to recover influence over some beneficiaries and NGOs. Traditional decision-making systems, through “chefferie” were undermined by the post electoral conflict.
- ✗ In a context of rivalry between communities and a weakened social cohesion, the shelter project targeted mainly people from one ethnic group.
 - There was an unforeseen challenge of holes left from brick production. These were dangerous for small children during the rainy season and encouraged poor sanitation making mosquito breeding areas. Work was required to reduce this risk.
 - The organisation provided sand to beneficiaries. This was so that they could spend time on agricultural work rather than collecting sand.

Background

See A.4 Côte d'Ivoire – 2010–2011 for background.

After the conflict

As a result of improved security in Côte d'Ivoire in the West of the country, part of the population displaced during the post-electoral conflict had started to gradually return to their places of origin. However, there was significant damage to society, the economy and infrastructure.

In the communities of return, there were significant humanitarian needs and serious risks of secondary displacement.

According to assessments, food and shelter were indicated by returnees as overwhelming priorities, followed by education, health-care and water.

Intercommunity tensions, land disputes and lack of access to basic services represented major protection threats to returnees. Without resolving housing issues it would be difficult to address social needs.

Selection of beneficiaries

The organisation assessed many issues, including the numbers of destroyed houses, ongoing displacements, and returns, mainly in two locations. Households were selected based on criteria defined by the organisation with the communities. Two non-negotiable criteria were that:

- the household was affected by the post-electoral crisis
- their house was either damaged or destroyed.

Other criteria, such as the household social and economic situation before/during/after the crisis, were agreed to better assess the household's vulnerability with respect to shelter security.

Based on these criteria, a pre-selection list was written down by each village committee, if it existed, or the Village Chief.

People on this list were surveyed with around fifty questions to verify levels of vulnerability. The survey



Households participated throughout the construction, manufacturing bricks, preparing mortar and conducting other tasks.
Photo: Antoine Vollet

led to the final selection list of beneficiary households.

Land deeds verification

Before the beginning of the construction work, the land deeds that households provided were authenticated. If documents were not available, the identification of land ownership was made in coordination with the local community. In every case the signature of the village chief was required.

In the countryside and the villages, the traditional informal system is predominant. There was no choice but follow the statements of the chief of lands and the village chief. In some questionable cases, the organisation also interviewed the neighbours. The land service of the municipality was sometimes also able to help.

There were some cases where there were lacking title deeds, and conflict over the land. This was often due to conflicts between siblings.

Eventually only 6 households were excluded on account of land not being identified.

Implementation

All construction materials were provided. Doors and windows were constructed by local carpenters. Metal sheets were given for the roof.

One mason and one carpenter were paid to work on several houses. In some remote villages

householders recruited builders, who were then paid with vouchers.

The organisation provided tools and equipment that had to be given back at the end of the construction

Every step of construction or rehabilitation was checked by a technical supervisor and the team leader. A form with key points was completed to check whether or not the house was ready to be occupied.

Each beneficiary participated in the following activities:

- manufacture of mud bricks
- preparation of the mortar
- involvement throughout the construction so that they could later upgrade their houses.

Training

Regular trainings and meetings were organised by the organisation in order to keep a high level of motivation and involvement throughout the project. Specific attention was paid to the following aspects:

- In most communities, the population was not accustomed to working together and every step of the project required a meeting with all households.
- Rehabilitations often require technical skills and as a result are led by local masons and carpenters. To ensure participation, beneficiaries were asked to collectively produce mud-bricks.
- Some beneficiaries finished their houses earlier than the others.



Roofing with corrugated irons. (Toa-Zéou)
Photo: Daniel N'dri Yao



Drying mud bricks. (Niambly)
Photo: Damien Laporte

They were required to continue participating in the fabrication of mud-bricks.

The following trainings were conducted:

- Mobilisation and the role of the committee: The committee was established to assist the organisation in the daily work and to take project ownership. Trainings about mobilisation were repeated every time they were needed.
- How to improve the shelter: Before the households choose the shelter design, a training gave advice on improving the resistance of a house against rain and humidity (simple principles of the reaction of mud-bricks to humidity, and how protect the base from water).
- Explaining what is expected from the committee members and role allocation (e.g. president, secretary, storekeeper).
- There were occasional awareness raising activities regarding cleaning the village.

The trainings were conducted by the mobilisation team members. Technical trainings were given by the technical supervisors.

Handover

When the project was over in a village, the village committee initiated a key-giving ceremony.

Coordination

Few organisations were working in the same area, and coordination helped to avoid gaps and duplications in areas targeted by the different actors.

Coordination also allowed organisations to exchange information on technical issues and challenges faced as well as to share analysis about socio-economic trends.

Technical solutions

Two designs were proposed for the construction, and households chose the design that they wanted:

- Classic: walls made of dried mud-bricks joined by mortar with a corrugated iron roof supported by a wooden roof structure.
- Improved: This was a more rain resistant shelter. The walls were made of dried mud mixed with cement bricks, with cement mortar on the base and the first four rows, and with mud mortar for the rest of the building. The roof and its structure were the same as the traditional design.

Rehabilitations

Where buildings were rehabilitated, repairs were based on an assessment of needs and observed damage. Most of the time, they consisted in replacing or repairing the roof.

Every building was assessed by the technical supervisors who completed a bill of quantities. This was then checked by the technical team leader and the programme manager. A random control took place in every village, led by the Program Manager and Technical Team Leader.

Sometimes, the level of support required was too high for the available budget. In these cases the beneficiary household was asked to provide materials to fill the gap.

Staffing

The entire project was managed by a staff of 22 people: A project manager assistant, a field logistician, a mobilisation team leader, 7 mobilisation agents, a technical team leader and 11 technical supervisors. The team used 4 cars (pick-ups and one 4x4)

Logistics

In each village, with the support of the population, a storage area was identified for all construction material for every household. This area was managed by a local storekeeper chosen by beneficiary households and supervised and trained by the organisation.

All supplies were purchased from the nearest town of Duékoué.

Materials list

Materials	Quantity
Wall and base construction:	
Sand	3m ³
Cement "A 32.5 N"	12 sacks
Mud-brick	1,200pcs.
Red wood 15cm x 3cm x 400cm	1pc.
Doors and windows:	
Plank 25cm x 4cm x 400cm	7pcs.
Rafter 8cm x 6cm	4pcs.
Nail n°6	2kg
Nail n°8	1kg
Nail n°10	1kg
Crochet medium	2pcs.
Pairs of split hinge 140 steel	4pcs.
Paris of split hinge 110 ordinary	4pcs.
Door handle	2pcs.
Lock	2pcs.
Wood screw	1 packet
Carpentry:	
Rafter 8cm x 6cm	18pcs.
Rafter 6cm x 4cm	12pcs.
Nail n°8	1 packet
Wire	15m
Roof:	
Corrugated iron (2m x 0.8m)	33
Nail n°6	2 packets
Nail n°8	1 packet
Rubber band for washers	5pcs.

A.6 Côte d'Ivoire – 2010–2011 – Post-Electoral Crisis

Case study: **Keywords:** Returns, Urban neighbourhoods, Construction materials, Core housing construction, Advocacy / legal, Training.

Country:

Côte d'Ivoire

Project location:

Duékoué, Western Côte d'Ivoire

Conflict:

Post-electoral crisis

Conflict date:

2010–2011

Number of houses damaged:

Approximately 24,000 houses in the west of the country

Number of people displaced:

1 million people nationwide
150,000 displaced in the West

Project target population:

8,046 people

Project outputs:

1341 shelters

Occupancy rate on handover:

99% of the first 421 shelters occupied in July 2012

Shelter size:

36m² (3 rooms) for the house + 2m² for the latrine.

Materials cost per shelter:

US\$ 585 (Material), US\$ 70 (Labour)
US\$ 200 (Beneficiary contribution)

Project cost per shelter:

US\$ 886



Project timeline



Project description

This shelter intervention built 1,341 shelters, supporting participation at the household and community levels through self-help groups and shelter committees. The shelter design used abundant local resources and promoted a design well known by the beneficiary households and local builders. The goal of the project was to contribute to the return process through shelter rehabilitation for the most vulnerable households.

Strengths and weaknesses

- ✓ More than half of the work was completed by the beneficiaries through self-help groups.
- ✓ Maximises the use of local resources which provide all the masonry material (bricks and mortar) while at the same time limiting local environmental impact.
- ✓ By adapting the design, and ensuring strong community involvement and good quality of work, capacity to build and to maintain shelters was improved.
- ✓ By using mud blocks and mortar, the organisation built larger shelters with the same cost as shelter projects led by other organisations.
- ✓ Given that one of the major concerns of the IDPs and refugees was the loss of their homes, shelter reconstruction supported durable return after the crisis.
- ✗ It was sometimes difficult to verify whether the house was destroyed during the 2010–2011 post

electoral crisis, or as a result of a previous crisis.

- ✗ The project staff found it challenging to resolve land tenure disputes. There was no formal system of land tenure security, and some disputes arose when shelters for migrant households were rehabilitated. Work continued into 2013 to solve the disputes.
- ✗ The second phase of the project began a few months before the start of the rainy season in March and ended two months after the rainy season in December. This greatly affected the production of mud bricks as well as masonry works.
- ✗ Despite an initial awareness campaign at the start of the project, it was necessary to regularly re-explain the beneficiary selection criteria, especially with newly arrived returnees that could not be selected given the time and resource limitations of the project.



By using mud and other local resources, the project was able to reduce costs and build more shelters.

Photo: Yao Albert Konan

Background

See [A.4 Côte d'Ivoire – 2010–2011](#) for background.

Selection of beneficiaries

The first project was implemented in Duekoué and Bloléquin, departments where the reported destruction was most severe. About 2,200 houses were destroyed in the 11 selected districts.

The communities provided their own list of households, which was confirmed by a door to door survey.

The vulnerability criteria were based on: gender of head household, age, presence of disabled people in the family, household size, household economic resources, food security scoring, ownership or access to land, and willingness to participate in the reconstruction of the shelter.

The provisional lists were publicly posted for two weeks to allow for feedback from the community.

Land

Formal land documentation generally does not exist in Western Côte d'Ivoire. Sites were visited with the traditional authorities to certify that the head of family was the landowner.

There were some conflicts between different communities, often between Autochthon communities and migrant communities.

Only 40 households out of 2,200 had land tenure issues that required some external intervention...

For 40 families with land issues, solutions were found by working with the local administration. This was done with the assistance of a legal assistance programme that the organisation was running. It took about four months to agree on durable land for these families.

Implementation

2,500 mud bricks were produced per household (2,000 for the shelters and 500 for the latrine) through the work of the self-help group formed of 8 households. Each self help group was provided with tools and brick moulds at the start of the project. A community mobiliser and the shelter committee supported the beneficiaries throughout the process.

The organisation started construction once the beneficiaries had produced the required number of mud bricks and dug the latrine pit. The first step in the construction was the trenching and laying of the foundation.

The wall was built in three steps, with two days to dry at each step: 1) five rows of bricks, 2) five rows of bricks, and 3) build the gable. The work was done by a mason while the household prepared the mortar and supplied the necessary water.

Constructing the roof took two days: one day for the carpentry and another day to fix the corrugated roofing sheets. Simultaneously, the mason built the latrine walls.

Once all houses in the village were completed a closure ceremony was held.

Self help groups

Self-help groups were created with the aim of encouraging collective work, especially to ensure bricks were available for weak, old or disabled people. In practice, it was almost impossible to mix people from different communities to work together, and it was difficult to stimulate a team-work with 8 to 10 families to produce enough bricks. The majority of households decided to work alone or with family members.

At the end of a training session, each self-help group received a construction kit to share (spade, hoe, shovel, 1m³ water tank and jerrycan).

Shelter committees

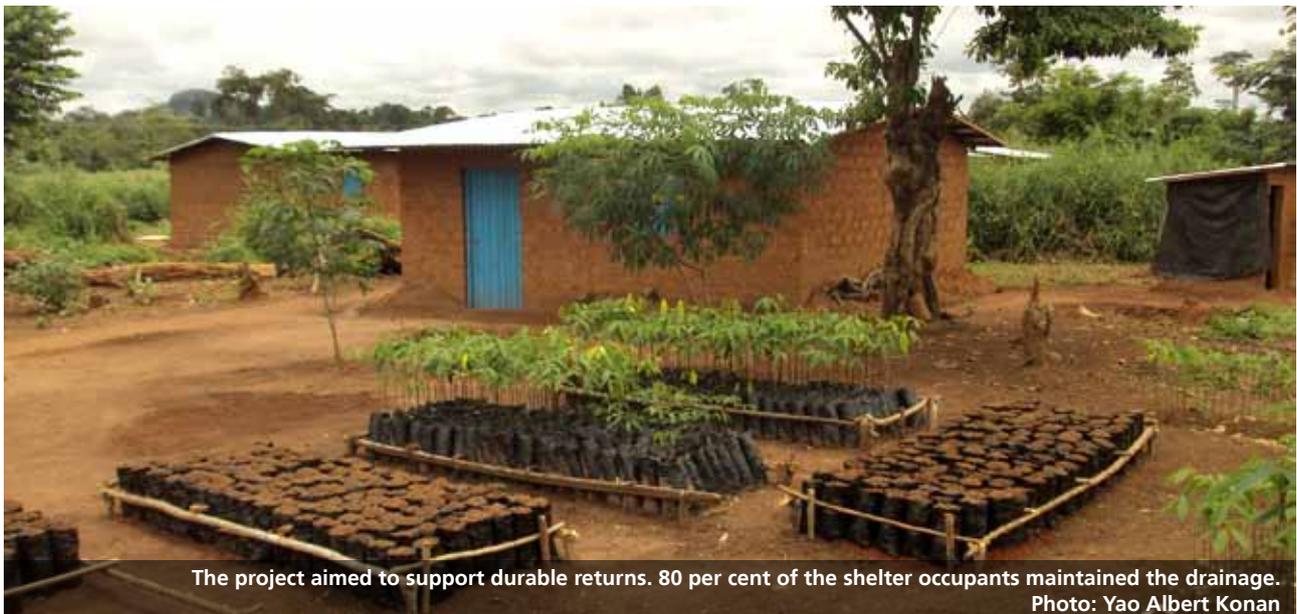
Shelter committees were established to empower and mobilise people in the project. They regularly checked on the number of bricks made, and created a ranking which determined the order in which they would build houses.

Training

Basic messages were shared about maintenance of the drainage, plastering the sill as well as door making and installation of latrines.

Each household received a brick mould. Trainings about mud bricks production and self-help group work were held at the start of the project. These trainings took about half a day per group and were led by a site manager.

Each household received two 1½ hour trainings on shelter and hygiene promotion. In total there were six trainers (five technicians and one social mobiliser).



The project aimed to support durable returns. 80 per cent of the shelter occupants maintained the drainage.
Photo: Yao Albert Konan

Coordination

The main humanitarian actors acting in the shelter response met twice a month until July 2012 thereafter meeting once a month. Meetings were held in both Abidjan and in the West.

Coordination helped to define the areas of intervention between the different organisations as well as to communicate figures from the start of the returnee movement. In addition, coordination was essential in order to share information on design, costs and to adopt a common response on the ground.

Technical solutions

Mud bricks were selected as the easiest way to ensure a good quality of implementation, as it is a very common construction material in western Côte d'Ivoire. Cement was not used in the mortar as it would be above local standards and would increase the cost per shelter thus decreasing the number of beneficiaries.

The organisation referred to the shelters as "improved design" relative to other houses on account of the corrugated iron roofing sheets, latrines and quality of the platform. It was based on a common design of shelter in Western Côte d'Ivoire but was larger than many houses in the area.

Staffing and structure

The organisational structure was:

- one social mobiliser responsible for group mobilisation, hygiene promotion and assessments
- five site managers (one for two to three locations) responsible for following works, masons, carpenters, trainings and materials supply. Site managers and mobilisers spent 80 per cent of their time on the ground
- six community mobilisers (one for two locations). Locally hired community mobilisers received a monthly allowance and monitored construction
- 11 committees in which positions were chosen to represent the three communities in the region
- one project coordinator to supervise the operations.

Logistics

Tenders were issued for reinforced concrete slabs for the latrines, corrugated iron sheets, timbers and other materials. Suppliers delivered directly to each community, except for roofing sheets, which were centrally warehoused.

The mud bricks were produced locally in the communities. Each household stored them close to the future construction site.

Field warehouses were set up to store timbers, frames and equipment.

Shelter committees distributed materials supervised by the organisation. Materials were distributed on completion of each phase of construction. Special attention was paid to the corrugated iron, as households were tempted to sell it.

60 to 80 different masons and 10 to 20 different carpenters were directly contracted, mainly from the villages where the shelters were to be built.

Maintenance

Around half of the shelters were upgraded by their occupants with concrete screed and plastering. However people mainly plastered inside the room in preference to plastering the façade, failing to maximise shelter durability.

At the end of 2012, about 80 per cent of the drainage around the shelters was still maintained. More than three-quarters of the latrines were in use, although some were used as showers. Hygiene promotion activities continued into 2013.

Some masons contracted by the organisation built the house design for other private contractors, but they did not use metal roofing sheets due to the cost.

Materials list

Materials	Quantity
CGI sheets	45 pieces
Timbers	33 pieces
Mud bricks	2,500 pieces