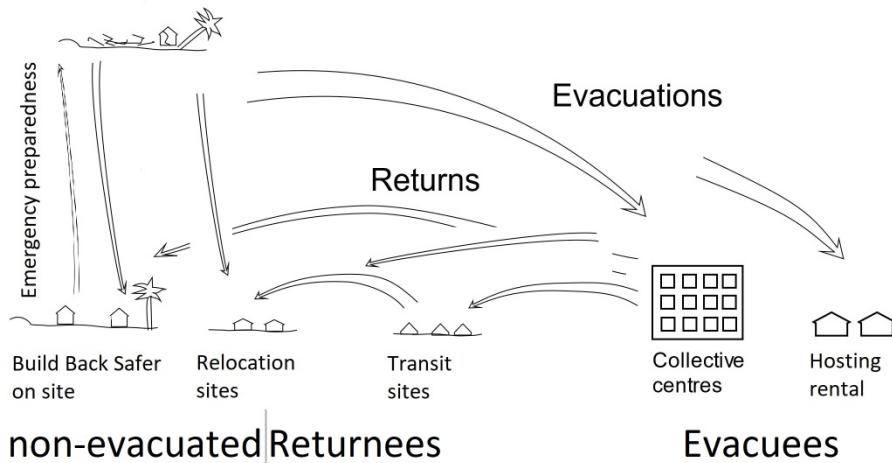


**DRAFT 02/19/2019**  
**Hurricane Dorian Response**  
**(ESF 3, 6) Shelter Sector Strategy DRAFT for DISCUSSION**  
**Timeframe: September 2, 2019 – March 2, 2020**



## 1. Background

Between 1 and 2 September 2019, Hurricane Dorian Struck Abaco (population 17,224; 8,902 males, 8,322 females) and Grand Bahama (population 51,368; 24,996 males, 26,372 females) and surrounding Cays in the north-western section of the Bahamas. Satellite imagery shows damage to an estimated 13,000 houses.

Following the Hurricane an estimated 5,000 people have been evacuated to Nassau, New Providence. Of these more women and children moved on account of damaged services, infrastructure, closure of markets and lack of education, leaving some men to look after and repair properties and find work.

As of 16 September 2019, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) reported an estimated 1,976 persons in 14 official shelters, primarily in New Providence. Approximately 900 people are being housed in private homes and hotels, organized by private sector and volunteer initiatives. An unknown number of displaced persons made their own arrangements. Several spontaneous, non-approved shelters are being used and assisted in hard-hit areas.

Four informal settlements on Abaco, (The Mudd, Pigeon Pea, Sand Bank and Farm Road) with an estimated 700 houses were declared no-build zones. In addition to the specific challenges for those with no land, many households, particularly those of lower incomes have no insurance and lack the means to repair their house. For those with property, many lack the financial and labour resources to rebuild, and lack shops selling construction materials. This is also compounded by damaged infrastructure and a lack of building inspectors, and rumours that building regulations may change.

The Cluster system is not activated, but there is a strong [Coordination Structure](#) in place. The Shelter Sector is within the Emergency Support Function ESF 6, Mass care and Shelter service, together with CCCM. Debris removal, early recovery and other related areas are included in the ESF 3. Therefore, it is important to promote inter-sector coordination with ESF 3 and other related sectors: Protection, WaSH, Early Recovery, Livelihoods

Two hubs have been established for the Shelter Sector coordination in Abaco and Grand Bahama. Although officially there is no Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) nor Technical Working Groups (TWG), ad-hoc groups have been working with objectives similar to SAG or TWGs.

## 2. Shelter Sector Objectives

### Long-Term Objective (1-5 years):

To support Bahamas in its efforts towards long term recovery, ensuring that implemented actions adhere to the country's objectives in sustainability, inclusiveness and resilience.

### Medium -Term Objective (3-9 months):

To prevent protracted displacement, allowing safe and voluntary return, supporting durable shelter solutions. To support early self-recovery of affected communities by promoting their initiatives participatory neighbourhood/settlements approaches, integrating WASH, health, livelihood and protection.

### Short-Term Objective (3 months):

To maximize the emergency shelter delivery. Both, hardware (clothes, kitchen sets, construction materials, tools, etc.), and software (safe shelter awareness, technical guidance, training, capacity building activities, etc.) as well as hardware and software together, e.g. delivering orientations and flyers on the use of shelter kits in the moment of the distribution of these kits. To finalize the assessments and identification of the most affected areas and vulnerable populations by 12 October, all with the participation of the affected communities. This is to safeguard the health, security, privacy and dignity of women, men, boys and girls, and identify those with specific needs and vulnerabilities who were affected by Hurricane Dorian.

### Review:

As this strategy is a living document, objectives and activities will change as the situation evolves. Once in place, the Strategy Advisory Group (SAG) will review the strategy weekly and in order to respond to the situation as it develops.

### Focus area:

Worst-hit areas of Hurricane Dorian, primarily Abaco and Grand Bahama. Temporarily New Providence while massive return is not happening soon.

### Target population:

Most vulnerable families and populations\* affected by the hurricane:

- who remain in or live nearby their damaged homes and need shelter support;
- who live with host families and need shelter support; this may also include the host families;
- who need help to rebuild their partially or totally damaged houses;
- who live in evacuation centres and need shelter support;
- who live in evacuation centres and can return to their homes, but require shelter support.

\*especially people with disabilities, elderly, children, female headed households and other disadvantaged groups

### Immediate activities

- Distribute emergency shelter NFIs and provide shelter support, as soon as possible, to all affected population, prioritising those with specific needs or vulnerabilities.
- The Technical Working Groups (TWiG) in Nassau, Abaco and Grand Bahama to determine and recommend the types of shelter support\* and minimum standards\*\* for the different categories of target population, including those mentioned above:
  - other forms of shelter assistance (debris clean-up, cash for work, technical support, cash for rent etc.)
- Support / carry out targeted assessments of affected populations and markets (including labour and contractors) in worst-hit areas, and New Providence.
  - Provide detailed and specific assessment info to the ESF 6;
  - Inform the ESF 6 of gaps and unmet needs, constraints and challenges;
  - Make urgent recommendations if critical areas are identified during assessments.
- Coordinate project planning and implementation of shelter interventions
  - Inform the ESF 6 of project activities, areas and timeline to avoid duplication;
  - Involve local authorities and community-based organizations in project planning;
  - Share information on available funding sources.

\*see annex 1 with the options identified until now for discussion.

\*\*important discussion to have with the key Government actors is about their (potential) flexibility for temporary or transitional shelters setting up / building code. The very new Ministry seems to indicate that some flexibility could happen.

### Constraints/Challenges

- Return of affected persons to Abaco;
- Difficulties for the assistance community in gaining access to worst-hit areas;
- Difficulty in finding resources (funding, local materials, others?);
- Obtaining replacement work permits for those affected as employer no longer present.
- Relocation plan of the Government, not defining yet dedicated land for resettlement of non-land tendered people in Abaco. This is critical for return of livelihood, family stability, and labour for the island.

### Aim

The main aim is to lead efforts towards long term recovery. The Shelter Sector aims to complement Government of the Bahamas and civil society efforts in providing all disaster-affected persons with safe, adequate, appropriate, and habitable shelter, that will reduce vulnerability to future calamities, promote human dignity and not contribute to environmental damage within the *next three months*, to agreed national and international standards.

### Guiding Principles

International organizations and NGOs will support the work of NEMA through the appointed Counterparts as defined in the [Coordination Structure](#) and the Ministry of State for Disaster Preparedness, Management and Reconstruction, who has the overall lead in the crisis response. Activities must be conducted in coordination with WaSH, Protection, livelihoods, etc.

Shelter programs seek to ensure equity across all vulnerable groups. This means that disproportionate inputs and technical assistance may be required for extremely vulnerable groups

such as widows, child and female-headed households, the elderly, and the physically and mentally disadvantaged. Such assistance should be based on independent assessment of level of damage, vulnerability, community resilience, hazard risk, and number of households affected along with pre-agreed criteria to identify those who need to be prioritised.

Particular attention will be paid to gender specific needs and disability inclusion.

Support to owner-driven recovery processes is crucial, as well to work at neighbourhood and settlements level with integrated programming. It is also crucial to pay particular attention to households who need to be relocated and their land tenure rights and needs. Activities should be conducted with the aim of avoiding secondary displacements and supporting safe and voluntary return.

Shelter strategic frameworks are linked to more durable solutions and thence to longer-term permanent housing programs under early recovery frameworks coordinated by the Early Recovery Sector, inside the ESF 3 on behalf of the humanitarian community.

Every effort should be made when delivering shelter assistance to avoid partial coverage of needs in any community, and instead total needs should be met which would include access to supporting services and proximity to livelihood options.

Assisting organizations will need to coordinate with the Bahamians authorities to set pay scales and agree contractor rates to avoid undue cost escalations and to also avoid exploitation of workers. Additionally costs of different assistance methodologies will have to be agreed and coordinated between assisting agencies.

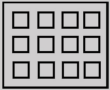




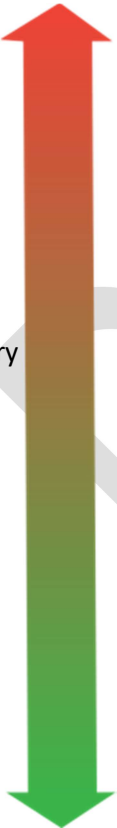
Disaster risk reduction and mitigation measures are integrated into emergency response plans from the outset.

Local authorities and Government coordination bodies will be involved and kept informed of all the Shelter Sector activities.

Home is more than a dwelling; it is often the place of work. Investment in shelter is therefore an investment in restoration of livelihood. It is also an investment in health, and the social safety of women. Humanitarian inputs, however well-intentioned, must do nothing to undermine the social, cultural, economic, or environmental fabric of a community.

## Annex 1: options /types of shelter support

Following the hurricane people are settled, or will settle in the following types of location. Each type requires differing types of response

Summary of Shelter response options						
Settlement type	 <i>collective centres</i>	 <i>Rental and host families</i>	 <i>Build Back Safer on site</i>	 <i>Transit sites</i>	 <i>Relocation sites</i>	
Description	Buildings housing people from multiple households	Informal or formal rental, paid for by themselves or private sector	Repairs, upgrades... on land with tenure ensured*	Temporary <i>collective centers</i> or camps to facilitate return **	Longer term land and T-shelter to enable recovery.	
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; margin-right: 10px;">Emergency</div>  <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; margin-left: 10px;">Early recovery</div> </div>	3.1 Emergency NFI ( <i>clothes, kitchen sets, mattresses, blankets, solar lamps, etc</i> ), and emergency shelter kits assistance (materials and tools with technical advice).		3.2 Return NFI kits, similar to 3.1 the hardware must be delivered together with the software / appropriate technical advice.			
	3.3 Repair and upgrades, once again, the hardware must be delivered together with the software / appropriate technical advice.		3.4 Tents, once again, the hardware must be delivered together with the software / appropriate technical advice.		3.5 Temporary shelter, once again, the hardware must be delivered together with the software / appropriate technical advice.	
	3.6 Cash for rent / hosting		3.7 Debris collection			
			3.8 Transitional shelters, once again, the hardware must be delivered together with the software / appropriate technical advice.			
			3.9 Cash / vouchers or materials for repair, upgrade and & reconstruction with technical support			
			3.10 Training			
Reconstruction			3.11 Reconstruction support			

Overall, the response will be based on needs, independent of ethnicity and gender. It will be based on humanitarian and protection principles.

\*For people who retain land titles or any other kind of land tenure, early recovery support will focus on repairs through different modalities combining material, cash, temporary or transitional shelter assistance, including technical support aligned with government guidance on shelter inspectors. The focus will remain on those who will not receive insurance or lack resources to recover.

\*\* Whilst in general camps or collective centres are to be avoided. For people who have been evacuated and who do not have land to build on, the ideal start point will be that people have plots on which to build. Suitably planned transit sites to provide shelter whilst people are returning may facilitate recovery. However, careful planning of plot allocations and establishment of longer term plans will be essential to avoid creating slums of the future.

### **3.1 Emergency NFI and shelter kits assistance**

NFI and shelter kits will be delivered together with technical advice to people repairing or rebuilding their homes. Household non-food-items will be provided to all based on need. Note that standards in the Bahamas indicate that more fixings and different tools will be required from international normal kits.

### **3.2 Return NFI kits / House, Land and Property Rights (HLP)**

Return NFI kits will be provided based on need to people returning to their islands from evacuation centres and complemented with technical advice. Families are legally supported to obtain or recover land house and property rights.

### **3.3 Repair and upgrades of damaged homes, collective centres, and host families homes**

Assistance will be provided to upgrade and repair damage homes, collective centres and host families homes to ensure acceptable living standards.

Tools and fixings kits, together with technical advice, will be provided to people who they would help to repair their homes. Note that standards in the Bahamas indicate that more fixings and different tools will be required from international normal kits.

### **3.4 Tents / ~~prefabs~~**

Tents can be quickly set up on site while beneficiaries repair or rebuild their houses, or temporary shelters are set up in a short period, following the “build back safer” approach. Tents should not last more than six months or so, and never last until the next hurricane season. Such structures must be accompanied by careful site planning and avoid future risks including gender-based violence (GBV) and formation of new overcrowded informal settlements. Where established, there must be a plan to upgrade in advance to the 2020 hurricane season, and site planning should focus on household plots as per sphere shelter and settlement planning indicators ([spherehandbook.org](http://spherehandbook.org)).

### **3.5 Temporary shelter**

Temporary shelters are designed to be built rapidly in few days, and be more effective and last longer than the tents and plastic sheeting traditionally offered by relief organizations. However, due to their temporality, they are neither designed to be as safe as a permanent construction nor durable. As well, they shouldn't follow the actual building code, but need to agree their standards with the Government.

### **3.6 Cash for rent / hosting**

Cash for rent or to support hosting can be provided to assist specifically targeted vulnerable people who have been evacuated. Host family mobilization, evacuees transportation and accommodation “booking” assistance: evacuees are supported with finding suitable accommodation according to their needs. Host families are approached and supported, evacuees are supported for transport to return, and “booked” into the agreed accommodation.

### **3.7 Debris collection**

Debris management is essential for all recovery and falls under ESF3. Debris should be triaged and collected from roads and drainage channels and collection schedules established. This is essential for shelter recovery.

### **3.8 Transitional shelters**

Transitional shelters are designed to be more effective and last longer than the tents and plastic sheeting traditionally offered by relief organizations. They are designed to be safe and durable. Based on a strong core structure, designs incorporate a longer-term development component as there is the potential to expand the structures later or to reuse the materials in building permanent houses. Unlike money spent on temporary housing, resources used to construct transitional shelters can be considered an investment in long-term, permanent housing. Core transitional units should be code compliant and located in areas safe from potential tidal surge or other local flood risks.

### **3.9 Cash / vouchers or materials for repair, upgrade and & reconstruction with technical support**

Cash for labours or materials, or materials itself, can be provided directly or through voucher systems to enable recovery. Coordination is required to establish maximum per household transfer value to ensure equity in response. Overall labour shortages are expected.

### **3.10 Training**

Training of home owners and those working in the building trades on code compliance and building out risks is an essential long term strategy to be coordinated with relevant line ministries. This should also be linked with government staffing and planning on building inspection.

### **3.11 Reconstruction support**

For vulnerable families, especially those with disabilities and without insurance, workers will need to be contracted to assist with reconstruction. This may be linked to cash assistance value and work permit documentation needs to be provided to safeguard them and their families. Overall labour shortages are expected. Legal support for recovery or application for house and land titles is also required to be addressed to facilitate options for those seeking to rebuild.