



HOMES & COMMUNITIES

Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platforms: Nepal and Pakistan



Main picture: Masons construct a pilot building in Nepal to demonstrate disaster-resilient housing. Inset: A technical coordinator highlights the 10 key messages that should be taken into account when constructing a disaster-resilient house.

Photos by Benny Manser

Nepal

Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform following 2015 earthquakes

A series of earthquakes in Nepal in April and May 2015 claimed the lives of more than 8,790 people and destroyed or damaged 886,000 homes. While Nepal had building codes designed for earthquake resilience, enforcement and implementation were weak in rural municipalities, where technical capacity to support resilient housing reconstruction was limited. To manage the reconstruction process, the Nepalese government formed the National Reconstruction Authority under the Act Relating to Reconstruction of the Earthquake Affected Structures (2015). In coordination with the NRA, the Recovery and Reconstruction working group of the Shelter Cluster recognized the need for a recovery coordination mechanism. This led to the creation of the Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform (HRRP),¹ which facilitated coordination among the NRA, the Ministry of Urban Development and

the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development's central government Programme Implementation Units, other relevant government authorities, and partner organizations.

In December 2021, when the NRA was phased out, the HRRP was handed over to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA), restructured and renamed the National Housing and Settlements Resilience Platform (NHSRP). The platform shifted its focus to helping local government and communities strengthen their ability to recover independently and build resilience to future disasters by 2030, while enhancing the disaster preparedness capacity of authorities and local governments.

Catholic Relief Services and Caritas Nepal, initially focusing on relief efforts after the first earthquake, quickly transitioned to rebuilding safe and dignified homes and communities in Gorkha, one of the hardest-hit areas.²



1. CRS. 2023. *What scaling initiatives look like in practice. A case study from Nepal.*

2. CRS. 2021. *Homes and Communities (SCP2), Nepal.*

“ [The National Housing and Settlements Resilience Platform] has brought all organizations together in one place, which is considered a model concept in order to avoid duplication of work.

Dr. Jagat Basnet
Research and Policy
Analyst, Community Self
Reliance Centre

They coordinated their efforts by providing technical, materials and cash support to construct houses using local designs and materials that aligned with international safety standards, while contributing technical expertise to the government of Nepal.

CRS, Caritas and other local partners directly supported 30,000 families to rebuild their homes.³ What began as a context-specific approach to rebuilding homes and communities evolved into a transformative initiative for housing reconstruction.

In 2017, the HRRP Strategic Advisory Group recognized that an effective response on such a large scale would require close coordination

3. CRS. Spring 2024. *Sowing the seeds. A newsletter for the Boards & Alumni of CRS.*

and long-term planning among all actors, transitioning from emergency to recovery and reconstruction. CRS assumed overall leadership of the HRRP given its demonstrated ability in previous coordination and technical roles.

From 2016 to 2022, the HRRP (later the NHSRP) supported the government of Nepal to rebuild 759,710 homes, trained more than 6,000 engineers, influenced the development of 29 technical policies and guidelines, and developed 42 publications endorsed by the government for use in the housing recovery and reconstruction process, through continued support on information management and district-based governance.

Pakistan

Sindh Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform following 2022 floods

In 2022, severe floods, primarily in Pakistan's Sindh province, damaged 2.1 million homes and affected 12.3 million people. The government

of Pakistan led the emergency response through its National Disaster Management Authority and—following a visit to Nepal facilitated by the World Bank—decided that a housing recovery platform similar to Nepal's would be required.

In 2023, after the reconstruction platform's formation, a strategic advisory group was activated, chaired by the chief executive of the SPHF, and integrating the heads of all contributing organizations, with the SHRRP national coordinator as member secretary. The platform initiated technical working groups that jointly developed minimum reconstruction guidelines, and mason training curriculums and manuals. It also fostered collaboration between 12 housing actors and the SPHF, to ensure minimum guidelines for flood-resilient construction. The platform has engaged more than 180 diverse stakeholders in the post-flood recovery process, including government departments, academia and the private sector. The SPHF has delegated the resource mobilization role to the platform, which has mobilized more than \$10 million in grants through partners. An alliance was also initiated to engage national and international universities and students in applied research into the impact of coordination mechanisms.



In 2022, when their home was submerged in flood waters that engulfed one-third of Pakistan, Sanam and Nadir and their family had to live in a tent. They realized it would take a lifetime to rebuild their home. CRS is helping flood-affected households through a Pakistan government reconstruction initiative. Sanam and Nadir received assistance to rebuild their home using disaster-resilient techniques.

Photo by CRS staff

The Sindh Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform, or SHRRP, was established in 2023 to coordinate and facilitate post-flood recovery efforts. It is led by Catholic Relief Services with dedicated CRS private funding, along with the in-kind contribution of eight organizations: the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Office for Project Services, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, Welthungerhilfe, Muslim Aid, HelpAge International and Islamic Relief Pakistan. The Sindh People's Housing for Flood Affectees, or SPHF, is a government initiative that oversees the rebuilding of 2.1 million resilient homes and creating sustainable communities for a climate-resilient future.

\$10 million

IN GRANTS TO PARTNERS HAS BEEN MOBILIZED BY THE PLATFORM

180

DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN THE POST-FLOOD RECOVERY PROCESS, INCLUDING GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, ACADEMIA AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Operationalization of coordination platforms

\$637 million

IN FUNDING HAS BEEN MOBILIZED BY NEPAL'S HOUSING RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION PLATFORM

257

PARTNERS WERE ENGAGED IN THE JOINT INTERVENTIONS THROUGH THE HRRP

Nepal

Nepal's Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform was organized based on the three main pillars of coordination, technical coordination and information management.⁴ The HRRP embedded coordination, technical and information management staff in the National Reconstruction Authority and in the local governments of the 14 districts of intervention, organizing training activities across the country, facilitating coordination meetings, and monitoring the joint intervention of 257 partners, by mobilizing \$637 million in funding.⁵

The platform coordination operations focused on three main areas:

- Coverage and quality of technical assistance.
- Addressing gaps and duplications through mediation and by supporting organizations to identify the most appropriate working areas.
- Advocacy and communications, tackling the critical challenges to reconstruction and ensuring information flow among multi-level stakeholders.

The National Reconstruction Authority, the HRRP (later the NHSRP) and partners defined a minimum socio-technical and financial assistance package that included technical orientations, demonstration houses, door-to-door technical assistance teams, vocational training for masons, a helpdesk and complaint response mechanism, and support to community reconstruction committees.

Two modalities of financial support were available to households according to the level of housing damage: retrofitting (100,000 Nepalese rupees disbursed in two tranches) or reconstruction (300,000 Nepalese rupees disbursed in three tranches).

4. Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform site <https://www.hrrpnepal.org/about>

5. National Housing and Settlements Resilience Platform (NHSRP). 2023. Overview of the platform.

Pakistan

Pakistan's Sindh Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform operates regionally, and leads the implementation resting on the same three pillars as in Nepal's platform: coordination, technical coordination and information management. Resource mobilization has been added as a fourth pillar. The platform is providing technical support through \$1.35 billion in funding—from the government of Sindh, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank—to reconstruct 2.1 million homes. It is also mobilizing grants for climate-resilient settlement planning and basic services and infrastructure. However, there is a shortfall to meet all the needs. The SPHF, with support from the platform, plans to support 50,000 settlements, reaching 20 million people in Sindh province.

The platform is organized into four working groups:

- Settlement planning.
- Resilient housing.
- Gender equality and social inclusion.
- Water, sanitation and hygiene, together with the Flood Recovery Research Alliance.⁶

The minimum housing package disburses cash in four tranches for each stage of housing construction, for a total of 300,000 Pakistani rupees. As of July 2024, 558,734 households had received the first tranche, 375,298 the second, 277,430 the third, and 136,509 the fourth, i.e. 136,509 houses have now been completed.

The platform also brings a settlements approach to the intervention, integrating hazard planning, improved sanitation, access to basic needs such as water, and enhanced social cohesion and community capacity.

6. [Sindh Housing Recovery & Reconstruction Platform](#) (2024). Comprehensive 4-page brief.

The Flood Recovery Research Alliance is an interdisciplinary collaboration among government agencies, development organizations, research institutions and academia to address the complex challenges of flood recovery.



Durga Sarki (bottom center), a social mobilizer from Caritas Nepal, provides guidance to masons on the procedures and techniques for flood-resilient housing.

Photo by Benny Manser

Advantages of coordination platforms

While there is still a knowledge gap on the benefits of recovery coordination platforms, some preliminary trends have been identified. A platform may:

- **Support the transition from emergency intervention to recovery and reconstruction.** A platform can bridge the gap between emergency response and reconstruction that may not be covered by the cluster system.⁷ Also, other programmatic areas external to the shelter sector, such as disaster risk reduction, may be more easily integrated into the interventions of the platform's partners, depending on the priorities set by the platform's governing bodies.
- **Become a reliable funding channel** or resource mobilization platform to bridge funding gaps and achieve a country's recovery developmental goals in the longer-term, by convening government, humanitarian and academic actors. The SHRRP has mobilized more than \$10 million through partners to support the SPHF and the government of Sindh's recovery objectives. A platform may provide an opportunity to increase the international exposure and governance of the reconstruction process by connecting government authorities with partners who have international evidence-based experience.
- **Facilitate and improve tailored technical assistance and quality control** by all partners, while ensuring efficient and coordinated efforts considering partners' mandates and timelines, avoiding duplication and improving coverage. Commonly agreed standard technical guidelines and interventions have the potential to contribute to housing and reconstruction policies at the national level. In Pakistan, the minimum socio-technical assistance guidelines are followed by 270 partners working in the recovery process.
- **Enable evidence-based learning and practices, communication and advocacy among partners.** A platform acts as a publicly accessible documentation repository and promotes research to inform integrated sectoral impact for long-term sustainability through collaboration among government agencies, development organizations, research institutions and academia. In a Nepal National Housing and Settlements Resilience Platform partner satisfaction survey,⁸ 90% of respondents agreed that NHSRP/ NDRRMA publications such as technical guidelines, research products and program reports were easily accessible. In the same survey, respondents highlighted the platform's significant impact on capacity building, with 85% acknowledging its contribution to increased disaster preparedness and housing reconstruction at the national level, with similarly high percentages at the provincial (88%), district (91%), and municipal (89%) levels. Building in this experience and learning, a platform may contribute to sustainable systems strengthening, connecting the recovery process to exit strategies, and institutionalizing learnings and practices into the government system.
- **Foster replication of good practices,** such as settlement plans in Pakistan, initially developed by CRS and the Sindh People's Housing for Flood Affectees, with a shared contribution of \$1 million. This concept has now been replicated in several settlements by other partners where similar planning was adopted.

8. NHSRP Partner Satisfaction Survey (2023).

7. The cluster system is composed of 11 Inter-Agency Standing Committee-recognized [global clusters](#), including early recovery, that focus on the humanitarian response.

“ [Nepal's] National Housing and Settlements Resilience Platform has played a bridging role in delivering crucial technical assistance since the start of our full operations as an Authority.

Anil Pokhrel, Chief Executive, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority

In Nepal, vulnerable families are at risk when earthquakes, landslides and floods threaten their already fragile homes. Safe homes are the first step that enables displaced and uprooted families to rebuild their lives.

Photo by Benny Manser



Homes & Communities Strategic Change Platform

About Catholic Relief Services

As a part of our Vision 2030 agency strategy, CRS has undertaken a transformational shift from a focus on shelter and settlement—the building of roofs and walls—to homes and communities, the foundation on which life rests. CRS is committed to achieving transformational systems-level change to reach 10 million people affected by crisis and enable them to live in safe and dignified homes and communities through its two-pronged approach:

- Expanding CRS programming reach to support more people in need of housing.
- Bringing about systems-level change by working with key stakeholders—governments, international and local nongovernmental organizations, United Nations agencies and others—to adopt safe and dignified approaches to housing, and scale up our reach.

CRS recognizes that our combined efforts can significantly increase our meaningful and transformative impact. Safe homes are the first step that enables displaced and uprooted families to rebuild their lives. Where possible, early response efforts should be designed to address people's immediate needs while planning for longer-term opportunities with key actors in the local system—government, private, civil society and nongovernment—to promote sustainable, locally led solutions for impact. When homes are destroyed in a crisis, or when families have to flee their communities, we recognize that it is not just the walls that are crumbling or left behind. It is their memories, their sense of security, and their sense of hope for the future. Helping families to rebuild their homes is not only about rebuilding a structure, but about rebuilding that hope for the future.

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