

HURRICANE MATTHEW 2016/2017

Figure 1: Picture showing how ShelterKits were used by beneficiaries to weatherproof damaged buildings



On October 4, 2016, Hurricane Matthew, a category 4 storm, caused significant displacement across the southwest peninsula of Haiti. This led to the greatest humanitarian crisis in Haiti since the 2010 Earthquake, where 2.1 million people were impacted by disruption to infrastructure, shelter and livelihoods. The Government of Haiti estimated that 370,000 houses were affected by Hurricane Matthew, with 30,000 considered totally destroyed and 60,000 categorized as partially damaged. Three quarters of the affected homes were located in rural areas.

In preparation, ShelterBox closely monitored the storm and readied a response team prior to it making landfall in Haiti. The first team arrived in Port au Prince on October 8, 2016. Over a period of four months, ShelterBox distributed 2,805 ShelterKits and aid item kits to affected households in coastal and hillside communities located across the Tiburon Peninsula.

When the storm made landfall, many families living in the affected households evacuated to temporary collective centers (commonly a school or other municipal buildings). Others fled to a friend or family members home located in a less exposed area. In the days immediately after the storm passed, families were able to construct temporary shelters or crudely repair existing buildings using items salvaged from the storm debris and locally available materials such as palm leaves, timber or rocks.

Having received a ShelterKit from ShelterBox, beneficiaries were able to weatherproof temporary structures or make repairs to damaged homes so they could move out of makeshift shelters. In this way, the materials provided by ShelterBox supported the ongoing recovery of communities. Beneficiary households also considered the water filters and solar lights very important for providing immediate improvements to their life.



Figure 3: A beneficiary using the water filter and water carrier provided by ShelterBox.

Partner Organization	ShelterKit	Aid pack*
Handicap International	998	998
410 Bridge	1398	1398
Haven	191	191
BSEIPH	154	154
Rotary Club of Les Cayes	64	64

*Aid pack = 2 solar lamps; 2 mosquito nets; 1 water filter; 1 water carrier.

Added-value

ShelterBox Response Team Members have a great deal of experience of working in the aftermath of natural disasters. This, coupled with pre-deployment training and continual professional development, equips deployed teams with the requisite skills and knowledge to manage the implementation of emergency shelter accountably and effectively.

In Haiti, ShelterBox partnered with five organizations to facilitate the delivery of emergency shelter to affected communities. Partners were selected based on their strong community links. This enabled ShelterBox to deliver emergency shelter through these community networks, and in a way that was respectful of cultural norms and practices. While working with partners gives ShelterBox teams a crucial connection to communities, partners that do not have emergency disaster response experience may need more training and assistance with the softer skills of emergency responses. ShelterBox can adapt our partner trainings accordingly.

By recognizing the added-value of response teams, ShelterBox can expect to have a more significant long term impact in the communities with whom they work with by building capacity and knowledge in the area of disaster response.

Key Learning Points

ShelterBox should tailor its approach to partnership management according to a partner's skills and expertise in humanitarian programming.

The experience and knowledge held by response team staff and volunteers in emergency shelter provision is something where ShelterBox can offer added value. This goes beyond the technical components of shelter and includes the softer skills associated with implementation. This knowledge can be cascaded to implementing partners, increasing the capacity of communities to respond to future disaster events.

If we are to provide the appropriate levels of support to implementing partners, a manageable number of organizations should be selected for partnership.

By limiting the geographic coverage of an intervention, ShelterBox can ensure that a response is meaningful and effective in the communities selected.

ShelterBox Operations should deploy a specialist logistician from the outset of major responses.

Technical ShelterKit training should only be carried out at the community level when teams are confident that associated distributions will be undertaken in the following days.

Communication equipment should be updated to better support the work of the response team.

Value for Money

The response to Hurricane Matthew fared well from a cost perspective. This is partly because of the partnered approach, where projects were delivered using community representatives, therefore reducing the number of response team members involved in the operation. The response team, who negotiated a reduction in the importation and customs clearance costs, helped make additional savings. Rotarians in Haiti also helped expedite the clearance of ShelterBox aid through customs.

In terms of quality, the response also achieved a good score. However the high overall score for quality masks some of the poorer cases identified by the evaluation team. The variability in quality was due to the slightly different approaches each of the five project partners took to implement, and in particular, the varying levels of understanding each had on emergency shelter provision prior to the disaster.

This response also achieved a high score on timeliness. Beneficiaries reported that the aid came when they needed it despite delays with customs.



Figure 2: A temporary shelter made using a ShelterKit, with an emergency shelter constructed in the immediate aftermath of the storm from salvaged roofing materials visible in the foreground.