**Tool 0.1 – What is Rental Assistance**

**Why consider rental assistance programming?**

* People forced to leave their homes in a crisis would often prefer to rent a room, or apartment, rather than live in a collective centre.
* Rented accommodation provides safety and protection whilst households take time to rest, recover and decide what to do next: move on, return, or settle.
* Some families (such as larger families or families with people with disabilities) may struggle to find host family arrangements or other accommodation.

**What does rental assistance programming involve?**

* The objective of rental assistance is to ensure people’s protection and dignity, whilst **enabling access to adequate shelter** for an agreed period of time, to make it possible for people to live in a dignified space **without fearing eviction or abuse**.
* Often involves the provision of rental payments, but **rental assistance goes beyond the provision of cash and voucher assistance.**
* Where possible the rental assistance programme **should link with the existing social protection system.**
* An **exit strategy must be planned from the outset**, ensuring people can maintain their living conditions once support ends.
* The type of programme adopted is influenced by the intended objectives, the context, people’s migratory status, and the vulnerabilities, needs and capacities of the targeted households. As such there may be different components to be considered in a rental assistance programme including:
* ***Information*** (e.g. support to understand normal rental practices for the context)
* ***Minimum Housing Standards*** (e.g. space, privacy, WASH requirements etc.)
* ***Minimum Security of Tenure*** (e.g. a tenancy agreement)
* ***Exit Strategy*** (e.g. how will people pay the rent at the end of the support)
* ***Technical Advice*** (e.g. Assisting with accessing support from government)
* ***Rental Payments*** (Conditional CVA or where not possible landlord service agreements and payments to property owners directly)
* ***Advocacy*** (e.g. to government to ensure access to the rental market)
* ***Complimentary programming*** (e.g. Livelihood support)

**Key Steps in Rental Assistance**

* There are a range of steps to implement Rental Assistance including:
  + Rental market assessment;
  + Security of tenure assessment;
  + Agreeing the housing minimum standards;
  + Deciding the targeting criteria;
  + Risk assessment (including PGI risks);
  + Monitoring and follow-up with property owners and tenants;
  + Exit strategy monitoring.
* The steps often require a multi-disciplinary approach with Shelter, Protection, Migration, CEA, HLP, CVA, and Livelihood colleagues working to ensure a holistic programme.

Diagram

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*For more information:* [*https://cash-hub.org/resources/cash-and-shelter/cash-and-rental-assistance/*](https://cash-hub.org/resources/cash-and-shelter/cash-and-rental-assistance/)