# **Introduction**

Key decisions about the programme design will be made using the information gathered from Step 1- Context Analysis. This will relate to:

* The **objectives** of the rental assistance programme
* **Duration of assistance**
* The **rental assistance approach** (e.g. Multiple components of rental assistance with rental payment paid to tenant vs. RCRC rents entire hotel/hostel and provides accommodation directly to target population with individual rooms.)
* The **rental assistance components** to be included (e.g. information on rental, minimum housing standards support, security of tenure support, rental payments, etc.)
* **Outline budget**
* **Population to be assisted**
* **Exit strategy** & exit considerations

As can be seen from the above list, this SoP will require significant decision making, and ideally this should be made collectively. The programme manager (often the shelter and settlements practitioner) is expected to lead on the programme design with significant consultation with other colleagues such as: Head of Programmes / operations manager, community engagement and accountability (CEA), livelihoods, cash and voucher assistance (CVA), branch managers, finance etc.

Representatives of the target population and other stakeholders (e.g. local authorities, national government) should be consulted and ideally involved in planning. See SoP 2.1.5 CEA Strategy for further information.

Tools and examples from the toolkit, that may be useful to assist here include:

* 2.1.3\_Example\_SlovakiaShelterProgramOverview\_RentalAssistance.docx & 2.1.3\_Example\_ShelterProgrammeOverview\_Slovakia\_RentalAssistance.ppt
* Summary document highlighting programme design for both rental assistance and hosted arrangement assistance. Giving information on: targeting, programme location, rental payment support amounts, activity implementation plan, budget, eligibility criteria. extension criteria, housing standards checklist, monitoring)
* 2.1.3\_Example\_ShelterWorkingBudgetExpForecast\_RentalAssistance.xlsx
* Shelter budget, expenditure and forecast spreadsheet used as part of Ukraine 2022 response in Slovakia
* 2.1.3\_Tool\_IFRC\_Budget Template\_RentalAssistance.xlsx
* IFRC Budget Template used as part of the appeal process
* 2.1.3\_Example\_Draft\_Log\_Frame\_Poland\_RentalAssistance\_2023.xlsx
* This is a draft logical framework developed for the rental assistance programme in Poland in 2023.

# **Setting Objectives**

Support should be sought from Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) colleagues on what is required for RC systems and support with the process of setting objectives and indicators.

It is useful to clearly define objectives as they help to clarify the purpose of the programme, which helps in clarity of programme design, monitoring and adjustment of the programme, and evaluation.

The following process can be considered in relation to setting objectives, and ideally involve a range of colleagues and other stakeholders (e.g. community representatives). The activities could take 30 minutes or several hours.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Process ref.** | **Activity** |
| 1 | Problem Tree - Using the Step 1 context analysis information gathered, prepare a problem tree.  You may use post-it notes to highlight the problems and arrows to show their interconnectedness. It can be helpful to consider the following headings when thinking about problems: information, housing standards, tenure security, rental practices, rental market environment, financial resources, discrimination.  For example, you may find that the lack of financial resources to rent may be because the target population consists of single mothers who have fled war while the fathers were stopped from leaving the country or had to fight, and they cannot find employment because they cannot find child-care. |
| 2 | Solution Tree – Given the problems highlighted suggest potential solutions or actions against each problem. |
| 3 | Set objectives - rephrase the solutions and actions into objectives. |

An example of a Problem Tree’s and Solution Tree’s in relation to Rental Assistance can be found in [IFRC (2020) Step-by-step guide for rental assistance to people affected by crisis](https://cash-hub.org/resource/step-by-step-guide-for-rental-assistance-to-people-affected-by-crisis/) , step 2, sub-step 1.1

Typical objectives could include:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Goal | Affected households have their longer-term shelter and settlement needs met during and immediately after the assisted period through access to safe and adequate rental accommodation. |
| Outcome 1 | Displaced households have access to rental accommodation during the project period that is affordable, has secure tenure, meets minimum housing standards and is connected to essential services, markets and livelihood opportunities. |
| Output 1.1 | Displaced households are supported with rental payments for a period of 6 months. |
| Output 1.2 | Displaced households have had their tenancy agreements checked and advice offered to tenants and property owners on their roles and responsibilities. |
| Output 1.3 | Displaced households have had the rental accommodation they are renting verified to meet minimum housing standards prior to rental. |
| Output 1.4 | Displaced households have had their rental accommodations verified to be within appropriate distance from essential services like schools, healthcare facilities, and public transportation |
| Outcome 2 | Displaced households have enough income to allow them to continue renting adequate accommodation after the rental support has ceased. |
| Output 2.1 | Displaced households have attended employment support workshops |
| Output 2.2 | Displaced households have had qualification certificates officially translated |
| Output 2.3 | Displaced households have been supported with employment related fit-to-work medical certificates |

Notes:

Output 1.4 addresses the “connected to essential services” part of Outcome 1, the indicator for this would need to be a composite one since for different essential services it will be acceptable to be difference distances away from them. For example, it may be fine for a major hospital to be up to 10km away, but the nearest primary school should not be this far away. This indicator may also use travel time and reflect this according to public transport options where they exist.

For Outcome 2 and Outputs 2.1 to 2.3 there could be the indicator target values expressed as % of # but recognising that not all those supported with rental assistance attain the outcome or take part in the activities to achieve the output, therefore it is important ensure that the targets are realistic and achievable.

Please see Table 17 presented in [IFRC (2020) Step-by-step guide for rental assistance to people affected by crisis](https://cash-hub.org/resource/step-by-step-guide-for-rental-assistance-to-people-affected-by-crisis/) , step 2, sub-step 1.3 for further examples. Please also see the example in the toolkit: 2.1.6\_Example\_Draft\_Log\_Frame\_Poland\_RentalAssistance\_2023.xlsx

The [IFRC (2010) Project/Programme Planning Guidance Manual](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwi1gLrP1Ob_AhVa_rsIHdcPBn8QFnoECAUQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fpreparecenter.org%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fppp-guidance-manual-english.pdf&usg=AOvVaw057k2-uVwErRyn-eWS6Sb-&opi=89978449) suggests that the objective should be “a measurable target of specifically what is desired to be achieved in order to progress towards the goal.”. When considering outcomes, the practitioner should write down, in simple language, the change the community wants to achieve. The outputs may relate more closely to activities and be formulated stating how we will go about doing this and who specifically will benefit from the actions.

There could be a range of other outcomes listed, potentially related to integration, accessing educational services for children of the tenant household, or childcare access for example. There could also be a range of outputs listed for every activity. This would then allow the programme to be adequately tracked. See separate SoP 3.2 Monitoring and Indicators.

# **Duration of Assistance**

From considering objectives and setting indicators it is likely that the duration of the programme will have been considered. The duration may be governed by a range of factors including:

* If protracted crisis (e.g. displacement during war, or pandemic livelihood disruption), the duration that you envisage the displacement may last for (assuming return is possible for example). This is very difficult to reliably estimate, and it is advised to be pessimistic about the end of hostilities and the time needed for demining and safe return.
* The length of time that it may take some households to re-establish or access new livelihoods (so that they can continue to pay rent after the supported rental payment period has ended).
* The length of time it may take some households to find other accommodation solutions.
* The IFRC appeal timeframe or donor funding / financial resources available.
* Standard rental practices may dictate duration – for example, if rental practices dictate that standard tenancies are 12 months with 6 months break clause which can be triggered on either side with 2 months notice, it may not be appropriate to run a programme for less than 6 months since you would leave the tenants liable for rent after the supported period had ended. You may also not be able to find property owners willing to engage with tenants supported by the programme.

# **Selecting the Rental Assistance Approach**

A range of example approaches has been presented in the Part 1: 02\_SoPs\_Approaches\_Components\_RentalAssistance. It is likely from Step 1 on context analysis that it is clear which approaches are feasible.

If there are a number of approaches that are feasible it is recommended that the remaining feasible approaches are reviewed using a “pros” and “cons” table, to help you select an approach and document why you have selected an approach. Alternatively, a matrix similar to that used in SoP 1.2 Response Option Analysis can be used.

# **Selecting the Rental Assistance Response Components**

The components that are included in the rental assistance programme will relate to:

* Your objectives, and in particular the solution tree/ problem tree, if this was undertaken. The rental assistance response components may closely relate to solutions identified.
* Context, vulnerabilities, needs, capacities, and preferences explored from Step 1 context analysis
* The NS capacity and operational direction/ appetite. The potential of partners should also be considered here.
* Consultation with affected people related to programme design, this is often undertaken using community representatives to consult with when undertaking programme design, or alternatively relevant host community civil society organisations.

In general, no payment support should be given unless there is an exit strategy, security of tenure support, and housing standards support.

# **Outline budget**

To support further discussion and gain approval for the programme, an outline budget should be developed. This can be high-level and include significant contingency through the over-estimation of budget lines. It is recommended that the practitioner designing the programme consults with finance colleagues on the appropriate budget template, but be prepared to create a new budget framework, since IFRC budget templates are broader and include other sectors and programmes. See tools and examples in this toolkit.

Likely budget lines may include:

* Rental Payments
* Procurement of services (where contracting of properties will take place)
* Sub-contracting/Partnerships for delivery of some services
* Print media / online media
* Transport
* Communications
* Staffing
* Volunteer Per Diems
* PSSR – Programme Support and Services Recovery

If rental payments will be included as a component of the response, then SoP 2.1.6 – Planning the Rental Payments should be referred to.

There will be some costs that will be more proportional to the number of people that will be assisted and some that will not be. Ideally allow cells on the spreadsheet you create for your programme to allow you to vary this during discussions. In some cases, a pilot programme may be considered or batches of households may be budgeted for assistance as funding becomes available or confidence in delivery is gained.

# **Number to be assisted**

The number of people to be assisted will need to be considered in relation to the following:

* Scale of the crisis and the number of those in need of rental assistance
* Likely target groups that will be assisted under the programme and the number in need of rental assistance within these groups. Considering eligibility criteria is part of SoP\_2.1.4\_Targeting\_and\_Selection\_RentalAssistance\_2023.
* Financial resources available and likely cost of the intervention
* Capacity of the National Society and potential partners
* What other humanitarian actors and government are planning related to rental assistance or accommodation assistance more generally. I.e. we should consider the gap that the NS may need to fill.

A more rigorous method to determine the number of people to be assisted could be considered through undertaking a cost effectiveness analysis. This would consider:

* estimating the cost of different rental assistance response components
* the effect of those different components
* the effect of different durations of assistance
* whether the RC should undertake a more comprehensive rental assistance programme (involving multiple components) for fewer people vs. a less comprehensive programme for far more.

Although it can be hard to find the time to undertake a cost effectiveness analysis, it can be a useful exercise. Choose numbers to be assisted which are achievable. If confidence in delivery is built these could potentially be expanded if further funding becomes available.

# **Exit strategy & exit considerations**

The aim of the exit strategy is that the target population should be able to exit the supported rental assistance programme and be able to maintain their access to adequate housing (including all elements of adequacy: 1. Security of Tenure, 2. Availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure, 3. Affordability 4. Habitability, 5. Accessibility, 6. Location, 7 Cultural appropriateness). This will impact targeting as well as the programme objectives and rental assistance response components included in the programme design.

As with many aspects of programme design, community engagement and accountability (CEA) is key to ensure the programme is responsive to needs and appropriate. [Tool 20 from the CEA Toolkit](https://communityengagementhub.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/12/Tool-20.-Exit-strategy-guidance.docx) specifically focuses on exit strategy.

It is recommended that the following is undertaken:

1. Outline all the main potential exit routes for the population (both adequate and less adequate), such as:
   1. Return home (to undamaged homes).
   2. Return to repaired/reconstructed homes.
   3. Onward travel (inside or outside country)
   4. Re-/establishment of livelihoods to enable income to pay rent (either in rental accommodation found during programme or elsewhere)
   5. Access to alternative accommodation (e.g. return to collective centre, absorbed into older people’s supported accommodation run by state or civil society etc.) *– it is useful to list out all the main alternative accommodation options in-country that people could potentially exit the programme to.*
   6. Absorbed into the government social protection system for rental payment assistance.
   7. Etc.
2. Comment on the level of uncertainty related to some of these exit routes (e.g. return where there is an ongoing conflict). At this stage it may be appropriate to estimate how many households are expected take each exit route.
3. Map out barriers and enablers related to the exit routes.
4. As appropriate to context, consider how the programme should be setup to ensure once the supported rental period ends. The household could potentially continue the arrangement avoiding multiple displacement as appropriate, which may be detrimental to social network development and children’s education. Focus on those items that are likely to be within the RC and households' control, such as supporting employability or broader livelihoods objectives.
5. Consider an exit strategy monitoring process. Identify who in the programme team will be responsible for supporting and monitoring exit strategies. Refer to SoP\_3.4\_Integration and Exit Support.
6. Write up summary of exit strategy in 2-3 pages.