The United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat, is the agency of the United Nations dedicated to promoting socially and environmentally sustainable development of human settlements in and urbanizing world, with the goal of providing shelter and inclusive human settlements. The agency provides technical assistance to countries and cities in the areas of urban governance, urban safety, housing, poverty reduction strategies, water management, post-disaster rehabilitation and disaster mitigation in human settlements. During the provision of support, UN-Habitat's approach, the People's Process instills capacities of hundreds of communities for achieving safer settlements, while delivering cross cutting impacts of local governance, sustainable livelihoods, empowerment and capacity building. The Project for Emergency Support to Poor and Vulnerable Communities in Ethnic Areas' supported by the Government of Japan has focused on empowering communities to jointly work to build/renovate quality services (WASH and community infrastructure), and housing (affected by the 2015 floods), to give people basis for healthy and productive life. The project benefited 120,949 people in 241 target villages across Hakha, Tedim, Falam and Thantalang townships in Chin State.

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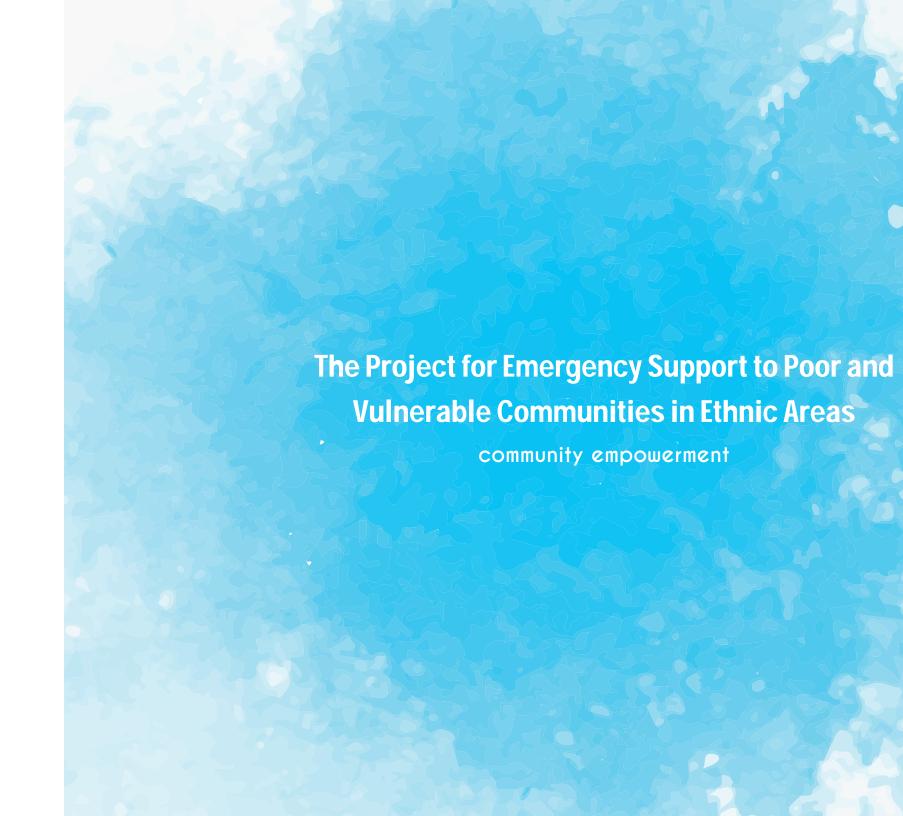
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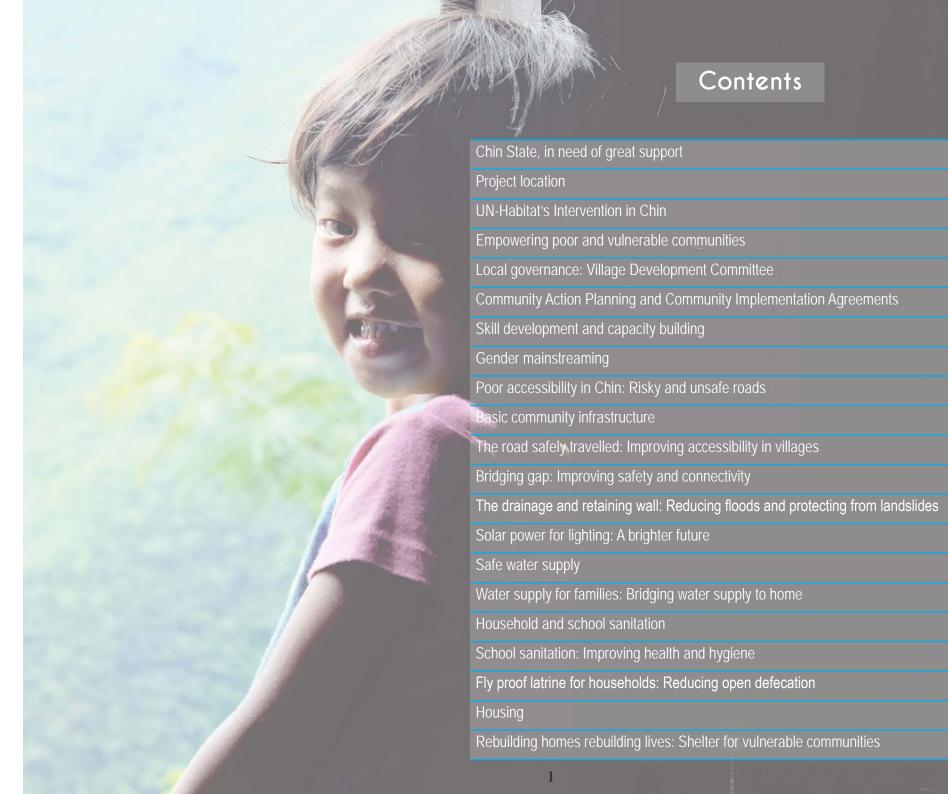
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Contents

Chin State, in need of great support

Non-Bamar ethnic groups largely populate the In response to this the Government formed a part of northwestern Myanmar that is also known as "Chin Hills', due to its mountainous geography of 500 to 800 feet in elevation. The Chin locals are of Sino-Tibetan origin and inhabit a mountain chain which roughly covers western Myanmar through to Mizoram in north-east India and small parts of Bangladesh. Called the mountain people by tradition they are composed of a number of ethnic groups of which about 80% are Christians. Combined with the difficulty in accessing the area; the living conditions of Chin State continue to degrade due to lack or inadequate support to its population. A survey conducted in 2009-10 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has found that Chin State remains the poorest state among 14 regions and states in Myanmar with seventy-three per cent of the people living below the poverty line.

is losing its labor force as many young people homes resulting in the displacement of 1,147 migrate to foreign countries for employment; people. no workforce means no production thus no production means no income.

A torrential downpour in July 2015 with the onset of cyclone Komen had triggered severe floods and landslides across 12 states and regions in Myanmar leaving 1.6 million people displaced.

upland areas of Myanmar; each state and region Recovery Coordination Committee (RRC) on being diverse in terms of its people, languages 10th August 2015 and developed a recovery and culture. Chin State is located in the southern strategy plan that covered both early and longterm recovery activities to ensure rapid recovery and strengthen the resilience of disaster affected communities.

The floods affected 20,449 people in Chin State, which is 4.3 per cent of the total population. The damage spanned across 9 townships in the state, causing widespread damage to households and basic infrastructure in the region. The Myanmar Post-Disaster Needs Assessment of Floods and Landslides report determined Chin State had the second highest (behind Rakhine State) number of affected households in the region, with 3,987 homes either collapsed or destroyed during the floods and of these households 2,934 requiring relocation. As a result of the floods Chin State has seen a further 4,042 people displaced to IDP camps along with 5 reported deaths from the disaster. The State capital Hakha was the worst Like in many places of the country, the state affected region with heavy rainfall destroying 247



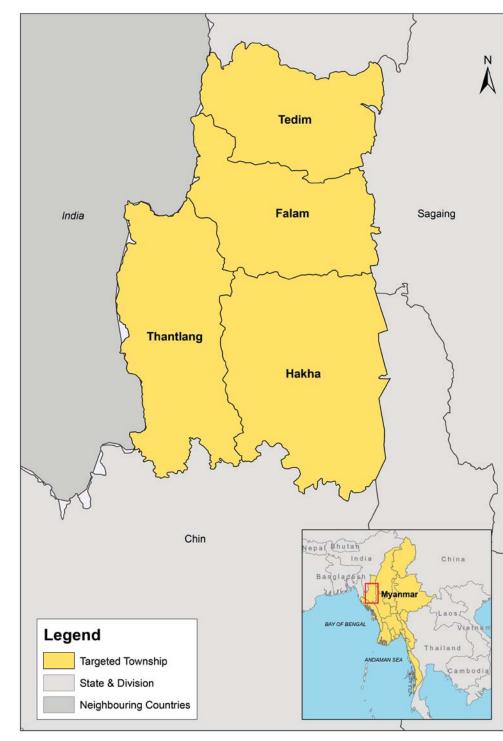












Project location

The **Project for emergency support to poor and vulnerable communities** was implemented from August 2016 to December 2017 in 241 villages across Hakha, Falam, Tedim and Thantalang townships of Chin Sate.

UN-Habitat's Intervention in Chin

In response to the floods that affected Chin State in 2015, the Government of Japan funded UN-Habitat to implement the **Project for emergency support to poor** and vulnerable communities in 241 villages across four townships. The project started field operations from 1 August 2016 in Tedim, Falam, Thantlang and Hakha townships that focused on empowering communities to ensure they jointly work to build/renovate basic services, community infrastructure, and housing in order to provide communities basis for a healthy and productive life. The project was conflict of interest, and at the same time select those people that could have framed within the overall objective of helping Myanmar's ethnic poor minorities and vulnerable communities to address the emergency needs to restore their normal life and to sustainably improve their quality of life.

Empowering poor and vulnerable communities

UN-Habitat strongly believes that unleashing the potential of the people is the only way in which the affected community can work together for their recovery and development in a short period of time. Throughout the project UN-Habitat assisted in mobilizing and empowering the target communities to help them act on their own recovery. This community-driven process enabled people to reflect and gain insights on their own capacities to organize and initiate actions for their own rehabilitation and development.

The UN-Habitat's People's Process requires trust in people and recognition of the way people organize themselves. Communities are expected to lead in assigning priorities, in decision making and in taking action. They are encouraged to execute recovery and development programs which they build on their own skills and creativity. Groups of families and whole communities that share common interests and goals, work out action plans. In order to implement these plans UN-Habitat signs contracts, provides funding and sets up joint accountability formats, in such a way that the community groups are in full control of their own expenditures with the technical assistance of UN-Habitat.

This photo book showcases the Government of Japan funded-project implementation where the human spirit of target population has got united to work for the improvement of their communities

Local governance: Village Development Committee

The project activities were implemented by the support of elected Village Development Committees (VDCs), to represent their respective communities. Members were sourced from the community, and during the selection of members for VDCs usually 7- 10 persons (chair person, secretary, treasurer and members) - the community was encouraged to nominate and vote for people that did not already hold posts with local authorities or NGO's to minimize the possibility of influence (village elders and local opinion leaders) over the community. The latter ensures that decisions taken by the VDCs are upheld by the community, allowing for sustainable development building on existing power structures and hierarchies within the community. All VDCs members received trainings from UN-Habitat to build/strengthen their capacity and knowledge.

Community Action Planning and Community Implementation Agreements

The project was implemented through a community contracting system which is the formal instrument of agreement between UN-Habitat and the beneficiary households/ Village Development Committees (VDCs) through Community Implementation Agreement (CIA). The implementation of community contracts promoted by UN-Habitat follows a step-by-step methodology within the framework of the Community Action Planning (CAP) approach, where UN-Habitat supports the preparation of development plans and the activities identified during CAP are recorded in CIAs.

Skill development and capacity building

Capacity building and trainings were an integral component of the entire project cycle. The objective was to support communities to strengthen their social capital through formation of VDCs, provide platform for better coordination and communication for gaining access to basic services, and to develop their skills to improve employability of workforce including women in the labor market, and continue to enhance community capacity to own and maintain the infrastructure built.

Training sessions were not limited to classroom lectures but were more informal and practical that consisted of information and skills involving the project activities on ground. Implementation of project activities provided local communities with hands-on experience and enriched their knowledge and understanding of community-driven development initiatives.

The overall outcome of training was very encouraging. The local communities were found to be more organized, aware and exposed, more community contribution and participation was noticed and the networking among VDC and others were also improved a commendable level.

Gender mainstreaming

Participation of women in all activities was recorded high and this project was very successful at community level initiatives. VDCs were seen as the core of the village community and the project also created a major role for women in participating and decision-making process. Women participated actively in forming of VDCs, participating in CAP and preparing CIAs for their villages, with strong commitment and ownership. It was recorded that average female presence was 40% at VDC training and 46% in skills training all townships.

























Basic community infrastructure



The purpose of community infrastructure is to improve the basic infrastructures and productive assets used by, and services delivered to, the targeted communities. Target communities benefited from improved community infrastructures to meet their basic needs and gain better access to public services and markets. These infrastructures were prioritized, built and are being maintained by the communities, who had formed Operations and Management (O&M) committee and community savings systems to ensure financial resources for long term maintenance, thus sustainability. The project activities covered construction or restoration of bridges/suspension bridges, renovations of roads and footpaths, construction/renovation of culverts/course ways, restoration of drainage systems to clear culverts and sites of stagnant water. These actions improved the connectivity to township centers, rural-urban supply chain, health and educational facilities, and they are helping reduce social exclusion.

In addition, the project supported with renewable electrification to most vulnerable households through solar lighting. Solar power for lighting has largely contributed with lighting opportunity for school children, furthermore quality of life of youth and adult beneficiaries.







Improving accessibility to school throughout the year

Van Sui Mawi, a 7th grade student at Chawncum primary school, had a very poor village road that posed difficulties in walking to school throughout the seasons but that was inescapable for her and as for many other students in her village. Van said "Before it was sometimes very hard to get to school because the road was a muddy road and sometimes we looked dirty when we arrive to school. It was not comfortable with dust in dry season and mud during monsoon."

UN-Habitat aimed to help improve the conditions in the village, which included improving the access to education centers for the local children. After the community worked together and built a new concrete road Van expressed she and her friends felt happy and confident to walk to school anytime of the year. With a smiling face she said "Now all students are very happy going to school on the new road, they feel motivated to study at school".

Van added, "On behalf of Chawncum primary and middle school students I would like to express my gratitude to UN-Habitat and the people from Japan."

Van Sui Mawi, Chawnchum Village, Hakha Township

















Improved access helping improve living conditions

Gin Khua Zam, a household leader of seven family members, lives in Valvum Village, Tedim Township. He grows vegetables and sells at the Kale market to support his family. The vegetables he grows he carries them by himself from a narrow road which is the only access for that village to the surrounding areas. However, the road was unsafe to travel due to muddy and slippery conditions during monsoon. Therefore, people were isolated from one village to another due to poor accessibility.

Gin said, "It was terrible and stressful condition. My children were unable to attend school frequently, especially in raining season. When people fell sick, we had to carry the patients by stretcher for long distance to reach hospital as the ambulance could not come to our village".

"Now we have a newly constructed road, a better one, wider and safer. My children will no longer be absented from school. Even a small van can pass through in our village and I can transport my vegetables to the market without having to carry it, which has effectively increased my income."

He finally said, "Improving access has improved everyone's lives in our village."

Gin Khua Zam, Valvum Village, Tedim Township

















































































































Empowering women, empowering community

Daw Far Hrim Mawi, a 37-year-old widower, lives with her elderly parents and takes care of her 95-year-old grandmother. Daw Far Hrim Mawi opened a small shop at her house to sell goods, however, like many other rural villages in Chin State the surrounding mountainous geography makes transportation of goods a serious challenge, particularly during monsoon

This project has empowered and given confidence to many women like Daw Far Hrim Mawi in her village to be a part of the VDC unlike before. From taking care of her family and her shop Daw Far Hrim Mawi also supports her village by holding the position of accountant within the VDC. Daw Far Hrim Mawi adds, "Before women were never a part of the important decisions of the village but after the empowerment like me many women have got the confidence to voice our opinions. I believe empowering women will be a direct effect on the betterment of the community."

Lastly she concluded by saying "I would like to express my sincere gratitude to UN-Habitat and the People from Japan for encouraging and illuminating confidence in the people of our village in working together for basic servies like better access to road, lighting at night and household sanitation. This has in turn given the women a push towards participation which is a very good approach for community development."

Daw Far Hrim Mawi, Laizo Village, Falam Township

















































Safe Water Supply









Most Chin communities located on low land fetch water from wells for their daily drinking and domestic consumption. The project technically supported communities to locate new wells based on fresh drinking water source as well easy access and sustainability. Target villages were supported with new gravity water supply system, renovation of existing system, water storage tank, household water storage tank, tube well, and water source protection. Total 120,949 people have benefited from access to safer drinking water, which has contributed to reduce incidence of water borne diseases.

In addition, UN-Habitat supported training activities such as basic water quality test and operation and maintenance (O&M) training for sustainability. As a result, the community themselves can manage operation and maintenance systems and also develop bigger systems for future needs.



































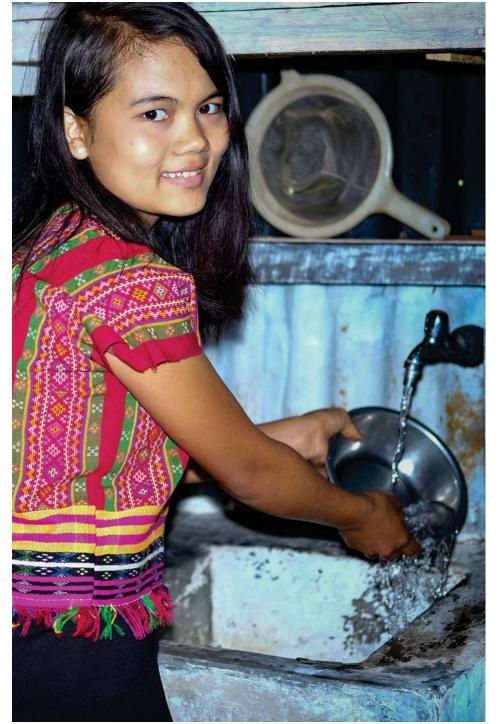














Water flows from household connection taps

Ma Vung Sum Cing a 19 year old living 24 miles away from Tedim town in the small village of Tungzang in the North West part of Chin State. Her village has about 2,000 inhabitants working on agriculture.

Ma Vung Sum Cing said "To fetch water for our daily needs we had to walk 7 miles every day to another village as the only source of water available was a spring source there." However, this was one of the many problems as besides walking a long distance that took away from her time to study, the amount of water they could bring was not sufficient to drink and use for personal hygiene.

She pointed at a water tap, which is installed in front of her house and said, "Due to this water connection, nowadays we all are happy because there is a stable and direct water supply." This in turn has also helped the people in increasing their time at work, improves hygiene and health, and therefore this helps in having a good productive life. She also adds that, "With the help of UN-Habitat we have improved our skills and confidence in building water systems which will be of great help in the future."

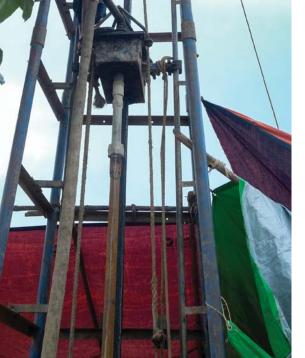
Ma Vung Sum Cing, Tungzang Village, Tedim Township

















































A storage we need to save water

Daw Len Kim, living in Hmunli Village of Falam Township is a housewife and also a mother of 4 children. Hmunli village is home to 135 people and is located between Falam and Kalay road, 3 miles away from the junction of the main road.

One of the challenges the villagers faced was the inadequacy of water in dry season due to lack of proper water storage. Although they had locally made traditional wood water storage but that was easily susceptible to breakage or damage. Furthermore, the wood container was very expensive and extremely rare to find big diameter wood in the forest. Therefore, they could not save adequate amount of water, mentioned Daw Len Kim.

Daw Len even mentioned that due to not enough water for all there had been conflicts between community members and nobody was happy. The importance of having a proper storage for water was the need of the hour and this was taken into account during the Community Action Plan (CAP). With the partnership of the community and UN-Habitat concrete water storage tanks were constructed which were big and durable. "Besides, we also received training to construct and maintain these storage tanks" added Daw Len pointing to the newly constructed water storage tanks.

Concluding Daw Len said "I am happy to have the guidance of UN-Habitat and the people from Japan to help us build these tanks which have reduced our problems of water storage and made peace in our community.

Daw Len Kim, Hmunli Village, Falam Township



Household and school sanitation

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Basic sanitation is one of the key infrastructure for an improved nutrition and healthy and productive life. The project in Chin State supported improving hygiene condition in the community through provision of household and school sanitation component. The sanitation component was supported for the most vulnerable and poor households in order to reduce number of open defecation cases in the village. In supports to the component, UN-Habitat conducted training activities such as fly proof latrine and hygiene awareness with the communities. In the end, it was seen that there was a considerable change in the hygiene practices and behavioral change in the community towards reducing the transmission routes of germs that bring in health problems.

The community identified beneficiaries from the most vulnerable group themselves and the activity integrated with hygiene awareness activities.

The project was further extended towards the construction of school latrines with hand washing facilities. This activity helped in improving the health of school children which also saw an effect on that of their families – by reducing the incidence of water and sanitation-related diseases.

The end of this project saw a total of 1,956 households (9,838 people) being supported by provision of Fly Proof Latrines (FPL) and on a school level 2,637 primary and middle school students being in access to school latrine and practice hand washing in a cleaner environment.























































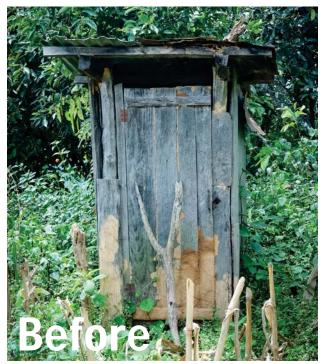














A special latrine for my disabled husband

Daw Zen Khua Niang, 70-year old woman lives with her 72 year old disabled husband and supports her family by weaving since 2008.

Daw Zen Khua Niang faced many challenges in using a latrine which was not suitable for a disabled person. Expressing the concern for her husband she explained her situation with the old latrine near her house adding "The old latrine was too old to use and was not appropriate to use for a disabled person like my husband. It was difficult for him to go to toilet alone without others support. But we could not solve this problem as we were not equipped with skills and did not have any idea to build a latrine suitable for disabled persons, and also we could not afford to build a new latrine due to our economic condition.

"After the initiation by UN-Habitat about hygiene awareness training and Fly Proof Latrine (FPL) I took interest and attended the trainings, where I learnt about latrines for disabled person. With their help in design I myself helped to construct the latrine. And now, since August 2017 we have a disabled person latrine and my husband feels comfortable in using the toilet by himself. This has made it easier for all of us."

Daw Zen Khua Niang (beneficiary), Dampi Village, Tedim Township



Eradicate open defecation

U-Thang Hnak a 48 year old man living in the village of Sumsi, Hakha Township, believes that the poor conditions of sanitation and hygiene in his village are due to the lack of hygiene and health education within the community. He adds, "The community in the village was never aware of the risk of open defecation and causes of fecal borne diseases that could put children and elderly people at threat to illness."

U Thang Hnak recalls his previous experience adding "People from the village suffered with diarrhea a lot especially in the dry season. And this was because we never washed our hands neither before nor after meals and the rate of open defecation was very high."

He adds that he is glad there was a team like UN-Habitat that organized trainings that made them aware about the importance of hygiene. "Diarrhea case is significantly decreased after the project because people are recognizing the disadvantages of open defecation and benefits of hygiene practices. Furthermore, people themselves can build fly proof latrines effectively with locally available materials." said U Thang. He happily concludes, "No person in the village will no longer defecate at open space, our behavior towards sanitation has changed and I hope this leads us to a healthier life."

U-Thang Hnak (beneficiary), Sumsi Village, Hakha Township











Housing



The project supported households who lost their homes due to the floods in 2015. UN-Habitat supported the community to build-back their homes, with DRR measures incorporated. Based on UN-Habitat's experience in previous post-disaster housing, the housing design was molded according to the mountainous geography of Chin.

During the design stage the focus was maintained on the local culture and weather conditions of Chin that were carefully implemented in the construction of the houses. UN-Habitat ensured support on provision of technical standards, followed of agreed guiding principles, and coherent implementation modalities that promote the principle of "Build Back Safer" and "Build Back Better", incorporating strong DRR measures to make shelters more disaster resilience, and complement government interventions. The project focused on building/upgrading houses of the 25 most vulnerable households that were affected by the floods in the Hakha Township.

















"Hurray, we have a new house"

U Tan Nei, a victim of landslides in 2015 lives in Lungcawi village, Hakha Township. Although he lost his house, he and his family were saved during the disaster. He recalls the disaster and with a heavy heart expressed that "It was very difficult and cramped to live in the small rented room with my family and I could not afford to re-build a new house but I did not have any other way out."

U Tan Nei said when he heard that UN-Habitat and the community had agreed on doing carpenter training and shelter construction for the most vulnerable communities and he being one of the selected beneficiaries he could feel a great burden being lifted off".

He pointed to his newly constructed house and said "I am ready to move to our new house with my family and start a new life. Thank you UN-Habitat and the Government of Japan."

U Tan Nei (beneficiary), Lungcawi Village, Hakha Township













