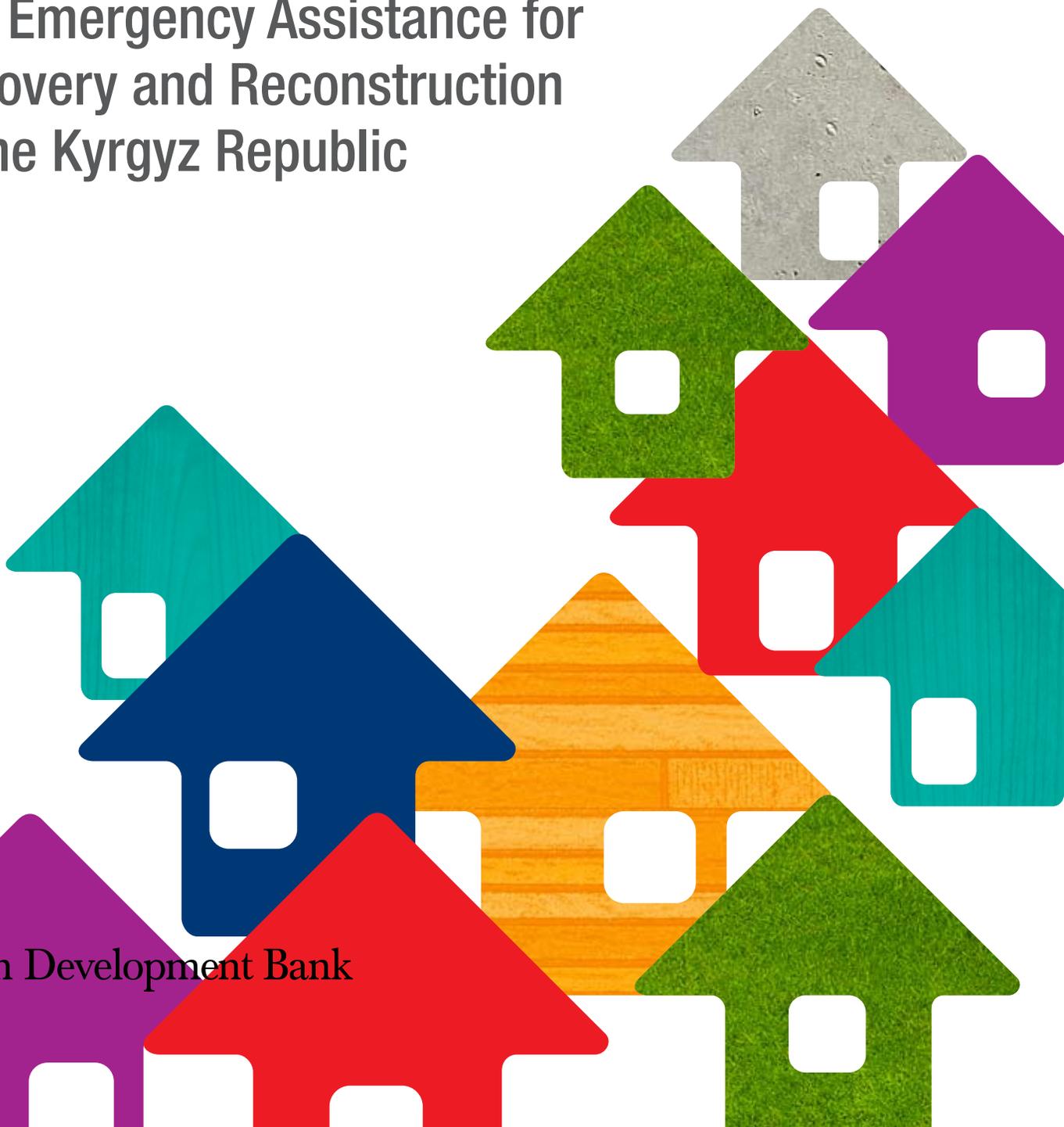


Rebuilding Houses, Healing Communities

The Emergency Assistance for
Recovery and Reconstruction
in the Kyrgyz Republic



When community violence destroys houses, rebuilding them is the first step toward reconciliation. In June 2010, rioting in Osh and Jalal-Abad, Kyrgyz Republic, led to numerous casualties and extensive property damage. Some 1,900 houses were damaged, of which about 1,700 were either severely damaged or completely destroyed, affecting about 13,500 people.

Shelter Cluster¹ partners, led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), launched an emergency shelter program to reconstruct about 1,700 severely damaged houses. Most of the structures were 28 square meters (m²); some were 42 m².

As the shelters provided families with only the minimum standard of housing to see them through the winter, the Kyrgyz Republic government decided to expand the shelters to the size of the houses the families were living in before the conflict, up to 100 m².

¹ <https://www.sheltercluster.org/Asia/Kyrgyzstan/Pages/default.aspx>



Project Beginnings

Emergency assistance. In response to the Kyrgyz Republic government's request for assistance to mitigate the situation after the conflict, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved the Emergency Assistance for Recovery and Reconstruction (EARR) in September 2010. Besides helping maintain essential public services and rebuilding public infrastructure, the EARR included a \$28 million grant to rebuild about 1,700 severely damaged houses and expand the shelters. Based on a detailed assessment by the Shelter Cluster partners when the EARR started, and considering various eligibility factors, the number of houses for reconstruction was estimated at 1,629. The house design was based on the estimate of individual household needs in the UNHCR shelter database and overseen by the State Directorate for Reconstruction and Development (SDRD) of Osh and Jalal-Abad.

Partnering with nongovernment organizations. ADB agreed to engage the Shelter Cluster partners to implement the EARR housing component because they were familiar with the local situation and had construction experience gained through the emergency shelter program. The financing agreement between ADB and the government allowed the outsourcing of the housing component to two implementing partners. The implementing partners procured and supplied construction materials to the households, disbursed funds to them to hire labor, and provided technical assistance. The implementing partners used government-approved standard SDRD designs for building construction. Except for

the initial advance payment, disbursements to the implementing partners were made in tranches when they achieved construction milestones.

Self-build approach. The households rebuilt their houses themselves, strengthening their ownership. They received the construction materials and financial assistance in five tranches, corresponding to the construction stages. The households were able to hire skilled labor for the more technically complicated tasks; for the other tasks, they involved family members and/or hired unskilled laborers. Vulnerable households, including those headed by women, received additional financial assistance. The site engineers of the implementing partners, the SDRD engineers, and SDRD consultants monitored the quality of the work.

Flexible adaptation of standard designs. It would have been impossible to reconstruct or repair about 1,600 houses based on individual designs; therefore, eight standard designs were developed for different floor areas. The designs complied with local building and earthquake resistance codes. Where a standard design could not be used because of site conditions, the design was adjusted. Where possible and requested by households, existing foundations were used, usually requiring adjustments to the designs. Many households requested placing a *padwal* (traditional basement for storage) in the foundation, which required further adjustments and in several cases led to new designs.

Results

Over 14 months, 1,533 houses with an average floor area of 50 m² were reconstructed, and 96 houses with an average floor area of 61 m² were repaired. In the context of project implementation experience in the country, this was a major achievement.

The key factors in the housing program's success were

- the flexibility of the government and ADB in directly engaging the implementing partners using an unconventional cooperation agreement arrangement,
- implementing partners that were familiar with the local situation and experienced in reconstruction, and
- the self-build approach coupled with the flexible adaptation of standard designs.

The direct engagement of the two implementing partners ensured an early start to the housing program. However, some time was lost in developing a cooperation agreement that was acceptable to all parties. ADB may therefore consider developing a framework agreement for engaging nongovernment organizations (NGOs) in emergency projects.

While the self-build approach contributed to the program's success, the implementing partners exerted significant efforts to ensure that the households followed the designs and the construction requirements. Many poor families and households headed by women found the approach challenging despite their additional financial assistance.

Adopting standard designs that meet local building norms, including seismic resistance norms, resulted in reconstructed houses of generally better quality than the preexisting ones. Flexibility in design delayed implementation but it was a price worth paying for stronger household ownership.

Originally, the housing program was to be completed before the 2011–2012 winter. However, this proved too optimistic, and the program was completed in early July 2012, 14 months after the cooperation agreements were signed with the implementing partners. The main factors that extended implementation include

- the delayed start of reconstruction due to the large number of designs that had to be adapted and the limited resources of the local architecture departments;
- difficulties in fitting the standard designs within existing plot sizes and boundaries, as required by local regulations;
- the time taken to resolve noncompliance with zoning and city master plans;
- the need to reassess the seismic safety of existing foundations;
- difficulties in procuring large quantities of quality bricks because of the limited capacity of local suppliers;
- a shortage of skilled labor, which increased labor costs and difficulty for poor households and households headed by women; and
- an early and unusually long winter, which required suspending most of the exterior construction works from the end of November 2011 until early March 2012.

Still, the housing component's success shows that partnering with experienced NGOs and adopting a self-build approach can be effective methods for post-conflict emergency projects.



Highlights

- Under the Emergency Assistance for Recovery and Reconstruction in the Kyrgyz Republic, 1,629 houses were rebuilt over 14 months.
- The factors that contributed to this success included
 - a partnership with international nongovernment organizations that were familiar with the local situation and had reconstruction experience, and
 - the adoption of a self-build approach, which strengthened ownership.





Rebuilding Houses, Healing Communities

The Emergency Assistance for Recovery and Reconstruction in the Kyrgyz Republic

Where houses are damaged or destroyed by community violence, rebuilding them is the first step toward reconciliation. Following rioting in the Kyrgyz Republic in June 2010, some 1,700 houses were damaged. ADB helped reconstruct and repair more than 1,600 houses. The project's success was due to a partnership with international nongovernment organizations that were familiar with the local situation and had reconstruction experience, and the adoption of a self-build approach, which strengthened ownership.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB's vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region's many successes, it remains home to approximately two-thirds of the world's poor: 1.6 billion people who live on less than \$2 a day, with 733 million struggling on less than \$1.25 a day. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.