Lecture - 22
Temporary Shelter Construction in Kenya

Welcome to the course disaster recovery and build back better. My name is Ram Sateesh Pasupuleti. I am an assistant professor in Department of Architecture and Planning, IIT Roorkee. Today, we are going to discuss about temporary shelter reconstruction in Kenya.

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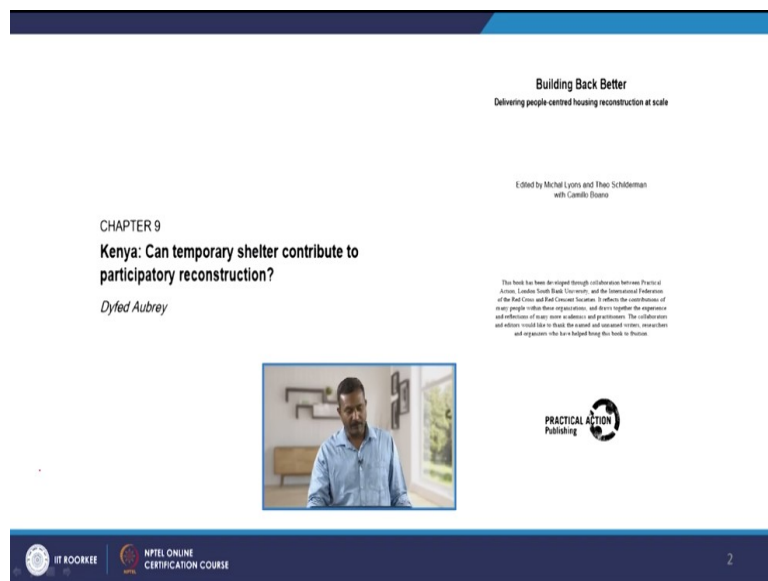
So, this particular lecture has been derived from one of the important contribution from Dyfed Aubrey, which is the chapter 9 in build back better volume, which has been edited by Michal Lyons and Theo Schilderman with Camillo Boano. So, he talks about temporary shelter contribute to participatory reconstruction. So, that is the link between the temporary transition shelter and with the participation and how it can actually make shift into the permanent process.

The background of Kenyan condition, it is not a natural disaster but it is a kind of manmade situations especially the political violence. When you look at the natural disasters phenomenon or the risk phenomenon, even from the document of at risk or the CRED reports, it says almost more than 75% to 80% of the disasters are through the political violence.

So, today we are going to talk about the consequences of the political violence at specially in terms of shelter provision and how it has been organized and how it has been conducted as a pilot project and how it has been scaled up at a nation level and what kind of responses they have you know able to understand.

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So, in 2007 and 2008, after the former President Mwai Kibaki was declared the winner of the presidential elections in December 27, 2007. There has been a huge political clashes and along with various ethnic groups within the country and about 1200 people have been reported dead, almost 5 lakhs people displaced, that is as per the United Nations Office Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs report.

So, ideally there are 3 categories of this; one is the first was burning and looting all the shops, commercial premises and houses. So, all these mobs, they come to the city in the urban clusters and they started destroying, burning down whether it is a public property, whether it is a commercial properties.

So, this is one kind of attack. and the second was an onslaught by opposition supporters on small farmers and landholders in the rift Valley, perceived to be government supporters within the aim of driving them away from the region, so that is also how opposition parties you know make an attempt to drive all these people from the origin and the third one is of the pattern of violence was retaliatory and targeted mainly at the migrant workers.

People have suspected that these has been part of the opposition supporters, so that is where 3 patterns of victims have been analyzed.

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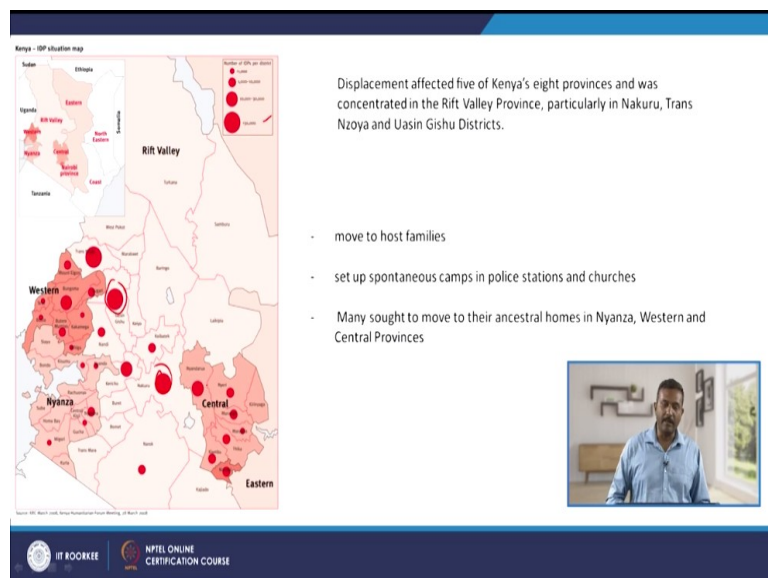
In the Rift Valley which is the majorly affected area, displacement affected 5 of Kenya's 8 provinces, in Kenya, we have 8 provinces and which has been considered the Rift Valley Province particularly in Nakuru, Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu districts. So, after this kind of Rebel groups forcing them and destroying the properties and attacking the people. So, this has caused a huge social destruction.

And in any kind of, situations obviously what kind of responses, the immediate response how people cope up to this kind of shocks and distress. One is move to the host families and some of them, they tend to move to their host families or like people who are migrants from different places, they go back to their places, setup spontaneous camps in police stations and churches.

Because the religious buildings, the schools, the police stations, these are some place where they can protect themselves and they can gather at least certain ethnic group can be protected with the protection of police station or the religious governance. So, this is how they started setting up some camps. Many sought to move to their ancestral homes in Nyanza, Western and Central Provinces.

So, they go back to their parental homes or their ancestral homes, so in that way, they could able to be secured themselves for some time. So, what you can see is about the big circles

here what you are seeing is it's about more than 30,000 people have been internal displaced populations and this is the size of the circle gives the shows of between 10,000 to 30,000 is the medium range and below less than 1000 is the smaller, it is entire IDP's.

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And displacement of these affected 5 of these 8 provinces and out of the whole process, we can see at least in 2009 you have 3 lakhs 13,921 people, have been internally displaced persons integrated in their communities but whereas, the rest of them they have been recorded in 296 camps have been positioned in various camps.

So, what you can see is this camps which are being a temporary shelters whether it is the Pygmy kind of shelters or a kind of conical shelters with the plastic sheet or the tarpaulin sheets where they try to accommodate in a huge groups and some basic services have been provided in those camps in this clusters.

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The Government of Kenya's Ministry of State for Special Programmes (MoSSP) whose mission is to 'to provide leadership in the development of risk reduction measures and disaster management in Kenya' (MoSSP, 2009) oversaw the IDP assistance and resettlement process.
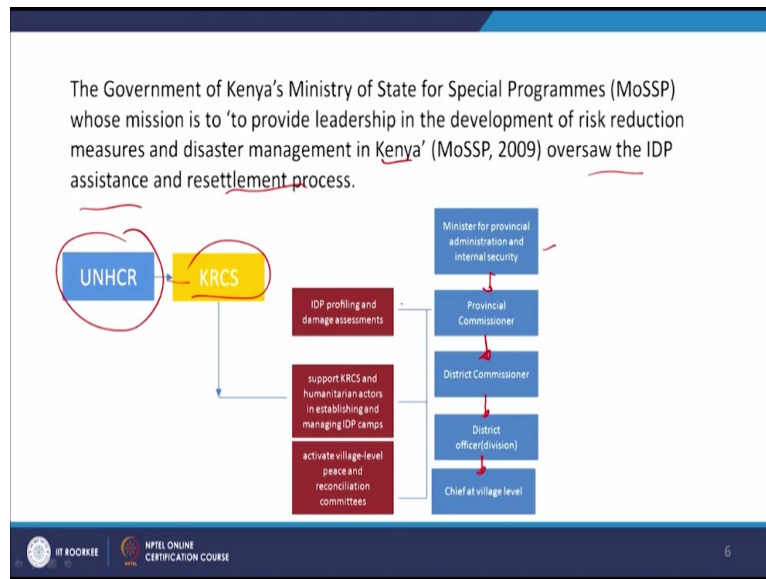
So, how the government have tackled with the situation, the Government of Kenya's ministry of state for special programs, which we call it as MoSSP, the Ministry of State for Special Programs and this particular ministry's mission is to provide the leadership in the development of risk reduction measures and disaster management, within Kenya. And this has looked at the oversea of the IDP, International displaced persons and the resettlement process.

So, UNHCR have also supported that the KRCS which is the Kenyan Government Agency, which has been constituted to provide the resettlement program and they have given some kind of support. So, Kenyan Government have thought that they are self-sufficient to manage this resettlement process but still there has been some support from the UNHCR.

But, in terms of the understanding of the hierarchy of the government setup, one is the minister of our provincial administration and internal security, which has been looking at the internal security aspects and they are further directed with the provincial commissioner because as I said there are 8 provinces, so each province has been headed by a provincial commissioner.

And then, it further is reflected in the district, each province is divided into different districts, so that is where we have and each district is headed by the district commissioner and whereas, each district is again divided into subdivisions and that is where the district officer has been heading the division and again each division is composed of different villages and the chief has been constituted to look at the village level.

But now in this IDP process, the internal displacement of these persons, first of all how to identify whom, who is the most important people to be you know secured enough to put them in the camps or to put them in the transitional centre. So, how we can profile it and how to make the damage assessments, though this has been conducted as a part of the provincial commissioner's responsibilities, in coordination with all the subgroups which is the district level and the chief level.

So, they are able to see a kind of vertical coordination, also the support to KRCS and the humanitarian actors in establishing and managing the IDP camps, activate village level peace, reconciliation committees. So, these are all a kind of bureaucratic system, how each group is living and how they are able to response, how they are able to give support for this kind of IDP setup.

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So, initially, there is a compensation package issued by the government about in a Kenyan of 10,000 which is about 100 Euros per IDP household and an additional 25,000 for each household with a destroyed house. So, that is how they have given about 250 Euros+100 Euros, so that is a kind of compensation package. But then this was not very successful, different and analysis report.

And evaluation reports talk about this particular process lacks accountability and consistency in a location of 10,000 and 25,000 Kenyan currency for these IDPs and this is where, they also started an operation called operation Rudi nyumbani, which is the how to return to home.

Because, we cannot keep providing them all the facilities, for how long one can provide, so that is where the transition camps have been provided initially.

But then how we can reduce the support system and so that how we can make them independent of this process. So, this is where the operation rudi nyumbani return home has been set up and it has been accelerated to close the temporary camps.

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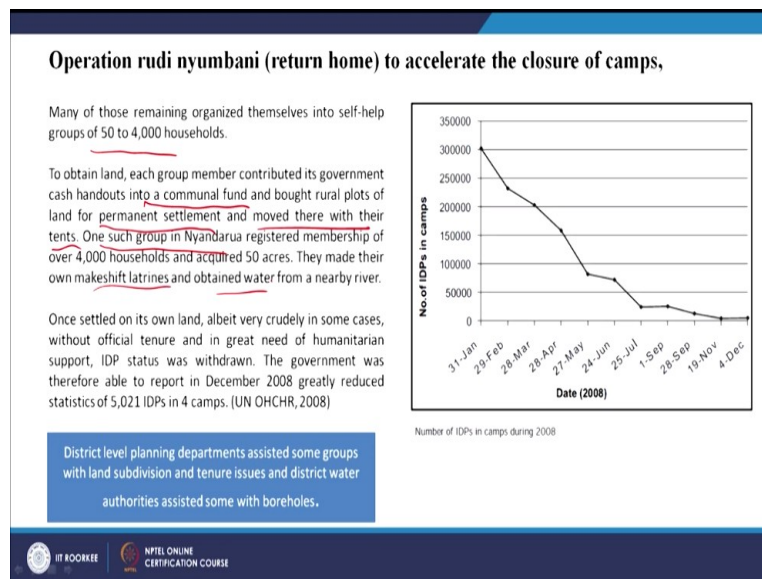
So, this is where many of these remaining you know they organized themselves into a self-help groups 50 to 4,000 households. And in order to obtain the land, each group member contributed its government cash handouts into a communal fund and bought rural plots of land for permanent settlement and moved there with their tents. So, which means whatever the cash inflows they have got, some of them they have tried to form into groups.

And they put some money and they bought some plots in the rural area. So that, you know they can move with their tents. And one such group is Nyandarua registered membership of 4,000 households which has acquired about 50 acres land and they made their own makeshift latrines and obtained water from a nearby river. So, basic services is an important task, how in order to just live there for them it is not just only a shelter, it also has to be with service aspect.

And the tenure has become a big issue in this particular phase, because and also profiling the vulnerable people who are the beneficiaries, is also important as task. So, in that way you know, the government also try to reduce, we are planning to reduce their supports that they

can slowly become independent. Whereas, the district level planning departments, they have actually assisted some of the groups in terms of land subdivision and tenure issues and also district water authorities also assisted some with the boreholes.

So, that you know, some service infrastructure could be set up for them. So, you can see here that you know, the IDP how it has actually progressed and it has come down, later on, the number of internal displaced persons, how they have come down gradually.

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In terms of the housing reconstruction, because this transitional shelter it is not just a norm, it is not narrowed down to your product, it is a verb, it is a process, it is a catalyst to enable families to make a step change from dependency on external assistant, anticipated that the provision of transitional shelter on owners, land would be trigger return, you know that is where this is the process of how you have to make them aware of the situation and so that they can become independent.

So, this is how the definition of transitional shelter which it says the transitional shelter provides a habitable covered living space and the secure, healthy living environment, with privacy and dignity to those within it, during the period between a conflict or a natural disaster and the achievement of durable shelter solution. So, there is also the time factor. So, between the event and this is event of disaster and this is about settling down.

So, this particular phase they need to be served with some dignity, some basic services, some basic safety aspect.

And how do one can identify the target groups, so what they did was, they have broadly classified into 3 target groups, one is those who wish to return to their formal place of residence, those who wish to relocate elsewhere in the country, those who wish to integrate in their current place of displacement, so how they can integrate, the second one is go back to the former place, the third one is go to somewhere else.

And then these groups has been further subdivided based on, land tenure whether they have land or without land or intend to rent or those without who intend to buy land you know, so, this is how the different categories they have identified.