

NRC Core Competencies and HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY (HLP)

HLP rights mean having a home safe from eviction and access to land that offers shelter and possibilities to secure livelihoods.



Why is HLP at the heart of forced displacement?

Displaced persons are forced to leave their houses, land, and other belongings behind **AND** must find new homes and sources of livelihoods.

They often end up building shelters or growing vegetables on land without permission, which causes disputes with host communities and puts them at risk of forced evictions.

Upon their return, they often find that someone is occupying their homes or land, but they have no access to justice institutions to claim it back (i.e. local courts may not function or may be hostile to them).

Displaced women face more difficulties enjoying their HLP rights. Typical discriminatory practices include giving control over housing and land to the husband or denying women's right to inherit.



Why can ignoring HLP issues do harm?

If humanitarian build temporary shelters without checking who has rights to the land, someone with legitimate rights (or not) may ask for money or for the shelters to be destroyed.

Food security and WASH programmes need to understand HLP regulations when using land for livelihoods or water and sanitation infrastructure to avoid being stopped by authorities for lack of compliance.

If humanitarian do not understand what practices and laws prevent women from enjoying HLP rights, they may aggravate gender-based discrimination.

Ignoring HLP issues leads to funding being wasted since the infrastructure we build may be destroyed or fall into the wrong hands.

HLP Activities in NRC's Core Competencies

1



Addressing HLP rights ensures that educational programmes can thrive.

- Secures rehabilitation and reconstruction of educational facilities
- Enhances entrepreneurship training and basic educational programming
- Is pivotal for the economic inclusion of youth

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Enhancing security of tenure in site management allows communities to enjoy a safe, secure, and appropriate environment.

- Prevents violence and deliberate deprivation
- Reinforces community engagement
- Increases women's inclusion

2



Empowering displaced people to safely claim and enjoy their HLP rights.

- Focuses on displaced women
- Provides technical support to other CCs
- Enhances NRC's expertise
- Supports dispute resolution
- Is crucial for protection, durable solutions, and transitional justice

5



Enhancing security of tenure through due diligence safeguards the right of people to live in their house.

- Strengthens the right to adequate housing.
- Improves protection from forced eviction
- Clarifies ownership for infrastructure interventions and schools

3



Having secure land tenure and property rights boosts income and agriculture productivity.

- Allows creating sustainable agriculture income
- Enables people to use property for business
- Supports self-reliance outcomes

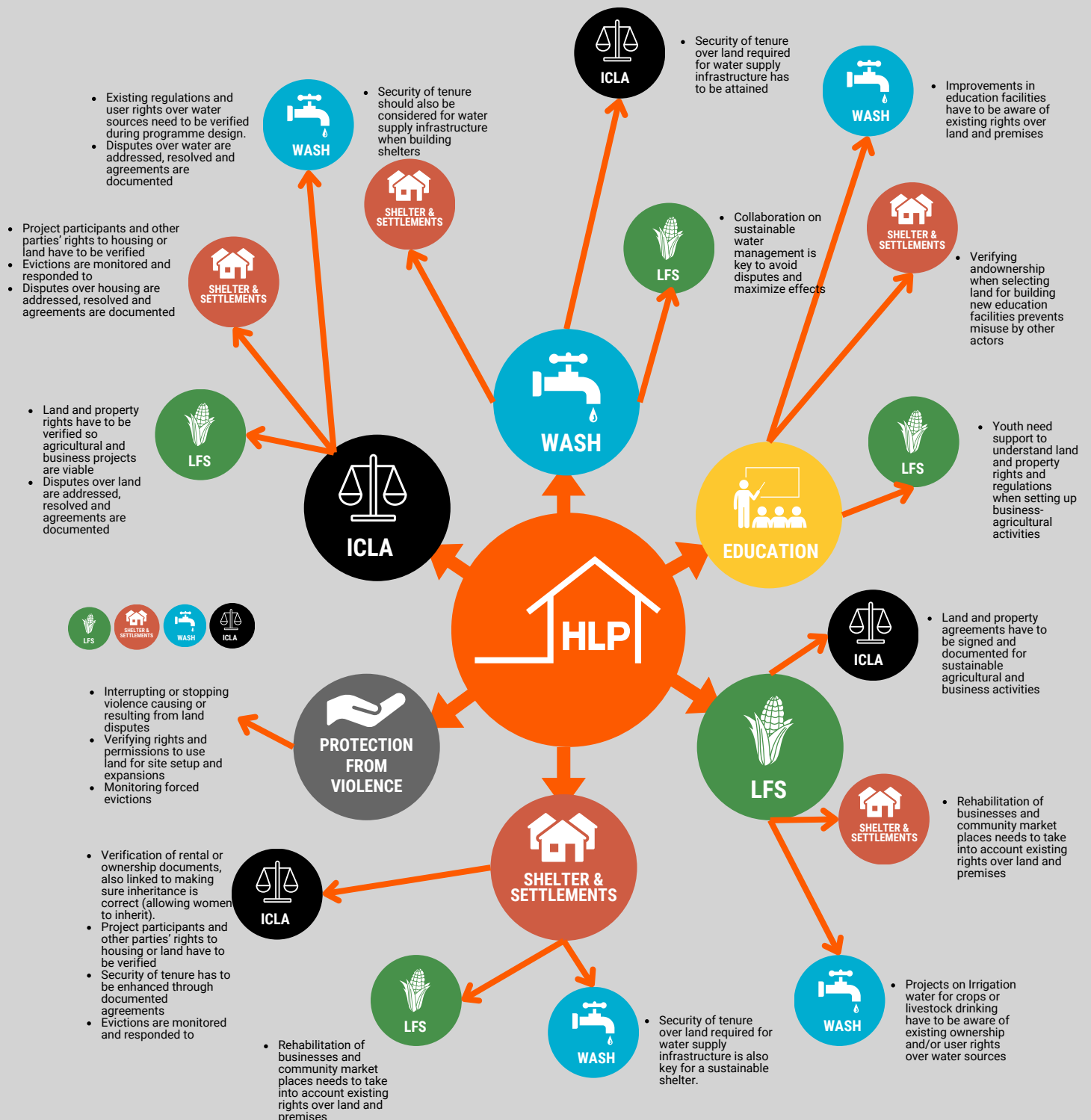
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Understanding land and water rights ensures safe and sustainable water interventions.

- Secures land tenure
- Needed for environmental mitigation and protection
- Supports community cohesion and engagement
- Supports water security
- Supports self-reliance outcomes

HOW DO THE CORE COMPETENCIES INTERCONNECT WITH EACH OTHER IN HLP ACTIVITIES?



Due diligence

HLP due diligence is required for all projects implemented by NRC which require access to buildings, land, property, or natural resources, as a concrete way to ensure that NRC's interventions "Do No Harm."

It is a process to understand, to an acceptable degree of certainty, who has ownership, tenancy or other rights to a building, parcel of land, property, or a specific resource.

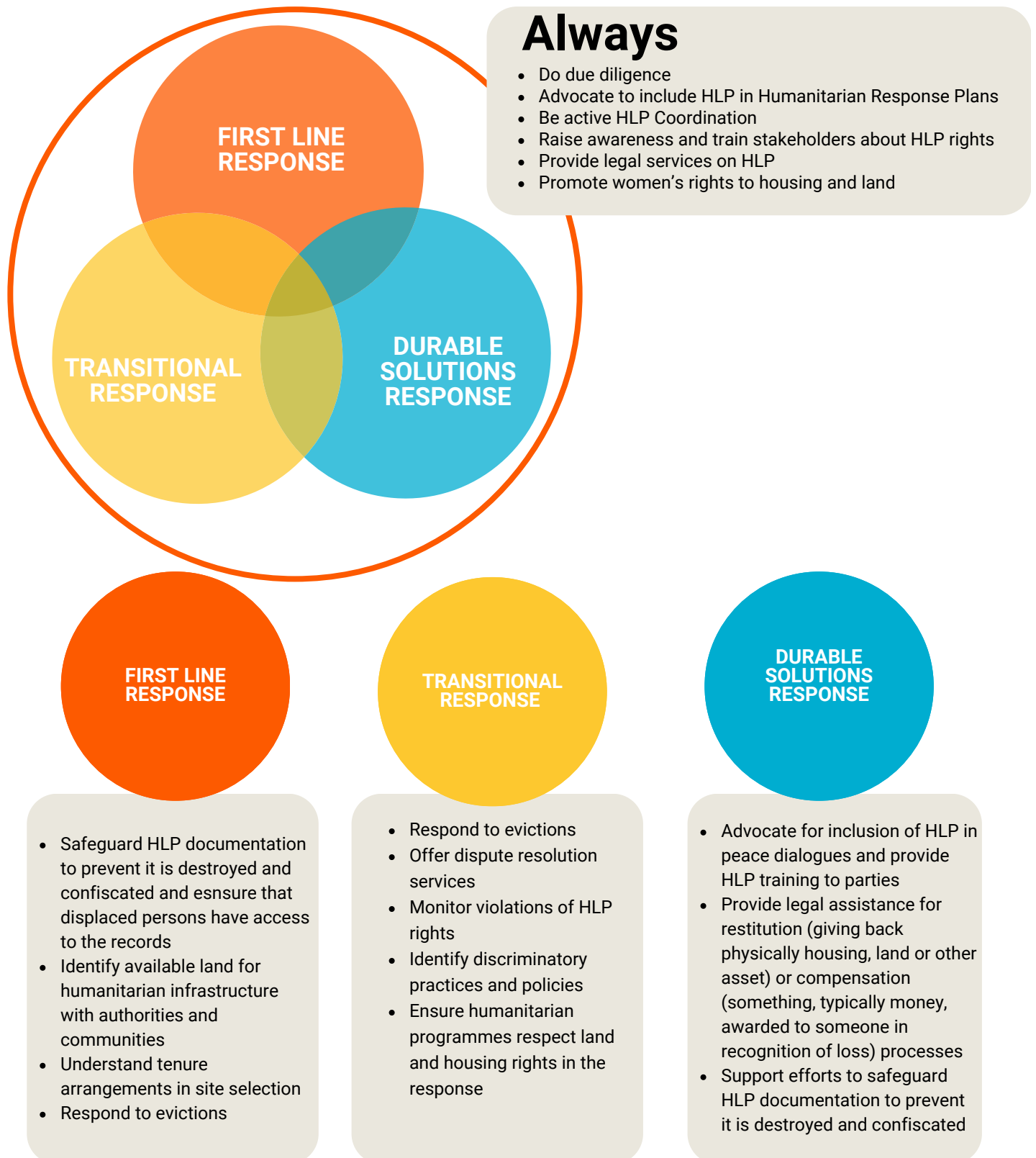
Security of Tenure

Tenure refers to the relationships between people or groups regarding a property, like a house, or other resources such as water or forests. Tenure systems outline who can use these resources, where, and when. The rights and duties of parties are laid out in tenure agreements.

Security of tenure means that a person's rights to their home, land, or property will be acknowledged and respected. They will be protected against forced evictions, harassment, and other dangers.

HLP THROUGHOUT DISPLACEMENT

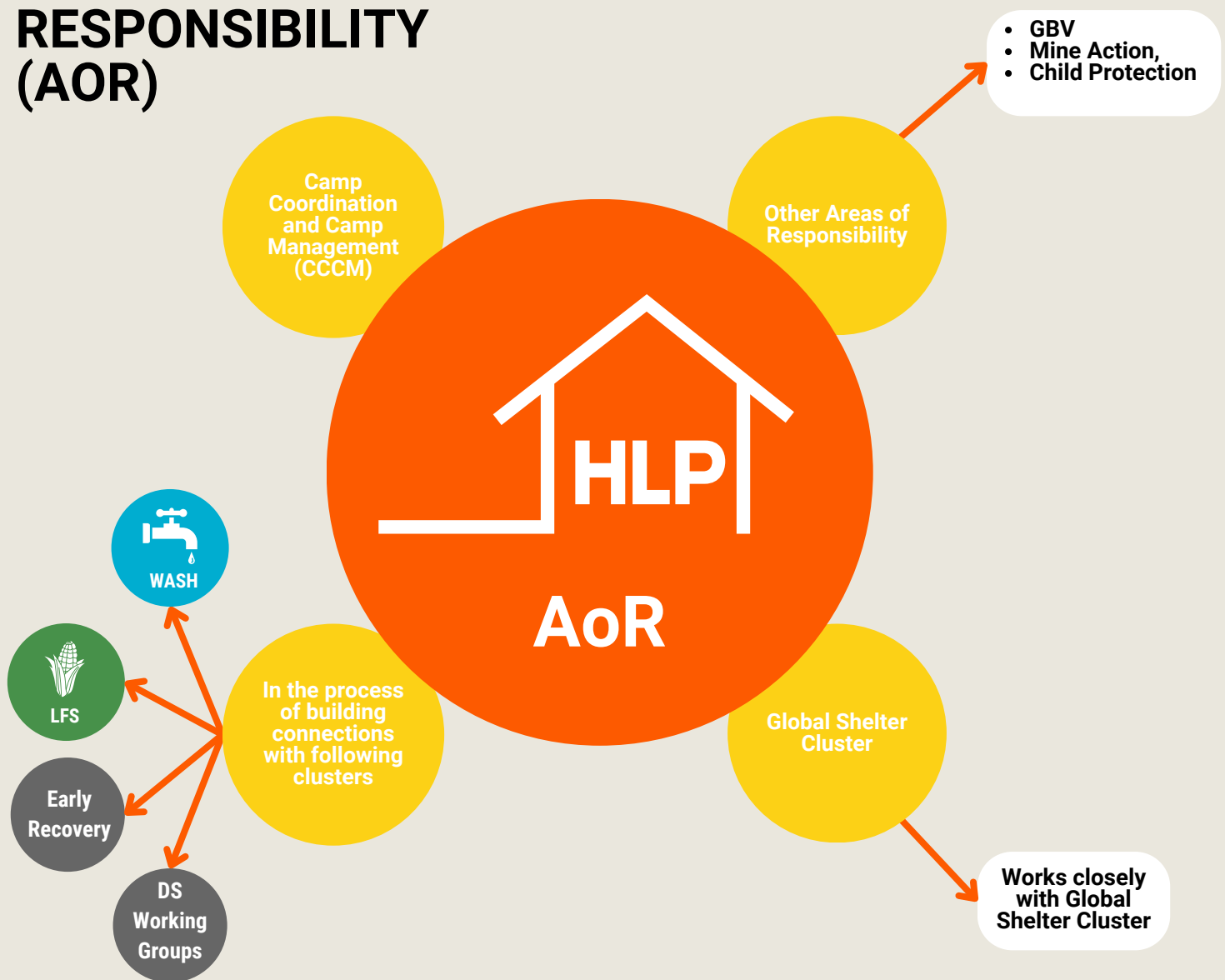
Displaced persons are forced to leave their homes and land without knowing where they will be living, and whether they will ever be able to go back and recover their property and possessions. In emergency responses land and housing has to be made available in arrival locations. Having security of tenure is key in early recovery and in the path to self-reliance and durable solutions because it guarantees access to shelter, health care, food, water and other means of survival. The protection dimensions of HLP are also staggering. Displaced persons are particularly vulnerable to forced evictions because they often do not have legal protection associated with having formal permissions and agreements to use housing or land.



GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ON HLP

The HLP Area of Responsibility (AoR) is part of the Global Protection Cluster and ensures technical and strategic support on HLP in humanitarian responses, working with HLP partners, other clusters, AoRs, government, civil society and communities. HLP is at the heart of effective response and solutions to displacement, so coordination is crucial. In co-leading the global HLP AoR, NRC draws on its vast HLP expertise to influence and advocate for the inclusion of HLP across clusters and sectors. Currently we work closely with the protection cluster and AoRs, shelter and CCCM clusters, and are building connections for collaboration with LFS, WASH and into durable solutions.

HLP AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (AOR)



**THE HLP AOR IS CO-LED BY NRC AND UN-HABITAT
HLP COORDINATION IN 22 COUNTRIES, 19 LED/CO-LED BY NRC**

Working with people to claim and exercise HLP rights

EXAMPLES FROM COUNTRY OFFICES

These are examples of activities delivered by one or more core competencies in NRC's country offices working together to address HLP issues in first line, transitional and durable solution responses.



In Afghanistan, informal settlements, land disputes and forced evictions are very common. NRC implements due diligence activities to ensure HLP rights are respected in our shelter response. S&S identifies sites and does household assessments, while ICLA checks who has rights to the land through verifying the authenticity of documents proving land rights, like deeds or lease agreements, or through dialogues with customary authorities and community leaders. The latter are crucial since many lack land rights documents.



In Colombia, ICLA supports to displaced communities on their path to durable solutions. This includes working with them to make use of existing legal and administrative actions (e.g. submitting a formal petition to receive housing assistance) to claim adequate housing and land restitution. Recognising that durable solutions are multidimensional, ICLA activities are always coordinated with LFS, WASH, Education, and S&S interventions.



In the refugee camps in Bangladesh, the host community often takes rent from refugees for housing and from humanitarian agencies for building infrastructure. Since land tenure in the camps is complex, land disputes are likely. ICLA works with Education, S&S and WASH to identify sites for building shelters and other infrastructure by checking the property documents' authenticity and negotiating with landowners to ensure there are no obstacles endangering implementation.



In South Sudan, HLP is integrated in the multi-sector Rapid Response Mechanism in hard-to-reach locations. The response includes ICLA, Protection from Violence, Shelter/NFI, WASH and LFS. ICLA assesses the severity of HLP protection needs like lost/destroyed HLP documents, access to land including farming land, resolution of HLP disputes and protection from evictions. The assessment informs due diligence and land tenure security activities across CCs as well as ICLA's services.



In Cameroon, the violence perpetrated by non-state armed groups leads hundreds of thousands into forced displacement. The security situation makes access to land very difficult, resulting in disputes between IDPs, returnees and host communities. ICLA, LFS and WASH collaborate to secure land for WASH infrastructure and agricultural activities for home consumption and commercial purposes. The three teams conduct joint visits to identify suitable land plots, carry out due diligence checks and draft lease agreements between landowners and tenants. In addition, ICLA provided material support and trained local and regional authorities, traditional leaders, and humanitarian actors on Collaborative Dispute Resolution to enable them to address HLP-related disputes.



Lack of adequate housing and/or concerns over the situation of the property and housing left behind greatly influence Syrian refugees' decision to return. Refugees can't protect their property while in displacement and/or upon their return to Syria due to extensive property destruction, massive numbers of displaced persons and an ever-changing property rights framework. NRC implements a cross-border HLP project across Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon that provides legal assistance to obtain replacements to property documents, safeguard property rights, legal options for destroyed or severely damaged property and issues of inheritance. Specific training is provided to women so they can understand their HLP rights and the possibilities to claim them.



In Ukraine, ICLA teams are providing legal aid directly and through partners on compensation for damaged and destroyed housing, property registration, IDP housing allowances, inheritance, housing subsidies, restoring ownership documentation, utility services and available social housing programmes. ICLA and Shelter & Settlements teams collaborate on conducting due diligence to verify the ownership of the properties selected for repairs. ICLA chairs the HLP Technical Working Group, to promote HLP mainstreaming in the humanitarian response.

What happens when humanitarian action ignores HLP issues?

NRC Somalia documented that "over 4.6 million USD in infrastructure and investments has been lost as a result of forced evictions in 2022, which is mainly attributed to insecure land tenure. Destroyed investments include WASH infrastructure, community centres, schools, and other projects such as solar streetlights."

4,6million USD lost