

### *Construction of multipurpose shelters after Myanmar cyclone*

To implement a recovery project following Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar, a consortium comprising four agencies was formed in July 2009. The consortium members were ActionAid International, HelpAge International, The Leprosy Mission International and Ever Green Group. This group aimed to rebuild sustainable livelihoods and cyclone-resilient shelters for livelihood assets in 51 under-assisted villages in Bogale District. A specific focus was the inclusion of vulnerable subgroups such as landless labourers, small-scale fisherfolk, and other disadvantaged groups such as older people, people with disabilities, and female-headed households.

A rapid assessment indicated the absence of community structures where people without permanent shelters could keep their livelihood assets, such as seeds, grains, fertilizer, tools, and livestock. The recovery project therefore included the construction of multipurpose units (MPUs) to address the lack of proper storage facilities. The MPUs were designed to reduce the impact of future cyclones and thus increase the protection of livelihood assets in the future.

Once the MPUs were completed, the rules and regulations for the use and sustainability of the buildings were jointly formulated by the consortium in consultation with communities. The shelter MPUs provide serves many purposes, offering a storage facility for livelihood assets, including livestock, and also functioning as a meeting place and generating a sense of ownership among community members. Construction skills for cyclone-resistant shelters were also increased. The consortium's experience highlighted the importance of marrying existing knowledge and modern construction techniques.

**Source:** Alam, K. (2010) Joint review of the project 'Reducing the vulnerability of under-assisted Cyclone Nargis affected populations', implemented by the Consortium of ActionAid International (AAI), HelpAge, Ever Green Group (EGG), and The Leprosy Mission International (TLMI) and funded by the Department for International Development (DFID).