Better Shelter in Northwest Syria
Our promise

We are a social enterprise committed to increasing the safety and dignity of forcibly displaced persons, by making it easier and more cost effective for humanitarian organizations to provide durable and reliable shelters to people of concern.
Better Shelter is a social enterprise based in Stockholm, Sweden. We supply temporary infrastructure from Gdansk, Poland, and Mersin, Turkey.

We provide temporary shelter solutions, training and technical support to partner organisations worldwide.

Founded in partnership with the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, and the IKEA Foundation.

We have delivered >60,000 shelters to 66 countries.

Middle East, Africa, Europe, South East Asia and South America.

> 6,700 shelters delivered to North-West Syria.
Everyday life shapes a big part of our identity and creates a sense of meaning. The habits steer the direction of the days without unpredictable or dramatic events – you drink coffee in the morning while listening to the radio; laugh at cartoons on the telly; argue with your spouse about the cleaning; have dinner with the friends; help your children brush their teeth. When your everyday life is taken away from you, it leaves you vulnerable and uncertain of the future.

We know that living as a refugee is far from how life used to be. And it’s far from what you wish it to be. And we hope for everyone to get the opportunity to create the everyday life that they desire. Until then, we create spaces where you can feel safe and dignified – and get the possibility to create habits that give a sense of meaning even if they are temporary.

A space to live, not just to survive
A space to live, not just to survive
Current situation in Northwest Syria

- 10 years of conflict.
- Around 2.7 million IDPs need humanitarian assistance.
- Limited shelter options and civilian infrastructure destroyed.
- Constant need to repair many of the available shelter solutions due to harsh winter weather conditions and floods.

- Acute lack of privacy, security and safety.
- Need to advance from emergency deployment of tents and relief materials toward improved infrastructure that can function as emergency relief and recovery response.

“I believe it is time to stop using tents.”

Yakzan Shishakly, CEO of Maram Foundation for Relief & Development
Why Better Shelter?
An approved and recommended solution in North West Syria

**Approved solution in NWS**

- + 6,700 families sheltered by UNHCR and Syrian NGOs Watan Foundation, Maram Foundation, ATAA Humanitarian Relief Association and Bonyan Organization.

- **COVID-19** quarantine centre by Syrian NGO Maram Foundation.

**Wide-ranging support**

- Delivery to Syria within two days.
- Regional Representation in Syria and Turkey.
- Support with design and planning, capacity building and quality assurance.

**Why the Better Shelter?**

- **Scale**
  Quick deployment and implementation – one partner built 140 units per day.

- **Durability & adaptability**
  Protection against wind and rain. Adaptable to different heating and cooling options.

- **Locally upgradable**
  Easily upgradable with locally available materials.

- **Safer and more dignified**
  Forcibly displaced persons have a safer and more dignified place to stay.
The Better Shelter

We provide dignified, safe, all-in-a-box shelters that can be deployed quickly without the need to rely on local materials or supply chains. The Better Shelter is modular and can be upgraded, repaired, reused or recycled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key features</th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Applications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17.5 m²</td>
<td>Wind</td>
<td>Shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lockable door</td>
<td>Rain</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 windows &amp; 4 ventilations</td>
<td>Snow</td>
<td>Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-hard and opaque plastic panels.</td>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Communal Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 months lifespan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160 kg</td>
<td>Up to 28 m/s or 101 km/h gust speed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solar powered, portable lamp.</td>
<td>Passes artificial rain test – no leakage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembly by a team of 4 in 5–6 hours without additional tools.</td>
<td>10.5 kg/m²*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fire and flammability protection: Fire retardant materials allows for minimum 2-minute escape time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Eurocode 1 - EN 1991 – calculations, 20 kg/m² Internal test.
How do we operate?
Support before, during and after implementation

Design and planning
- Project resource and time planning
- Design and 3D visualization
- Fire safety and risk mitigation
- Ground preparation and anchoring
- Climatic adaptation
- Wind resistance and risk mitigation
- Maintenance

Capacity building
- Training
- Installation support
- Technical troubleshooting
- Local material upgrade

Assurance
- Quality control
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Project communications
Modularity that suits different needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modularity – design alterations that suit different needs</th>
<th>Support with design &amp; 3d visualization to suit project needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 unit</td>
<td>2 BETTER SHELTER UNITS JOINED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 units</td>
<td>1 BETTER SHELTER UNIT + 1 STRUCTURE UNIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 units</td>
<td>Shelter + shower and toilet area + cooking space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 units</td>
<td>Shelter + veranda + toilet and shower area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Health infrastructure with space for five beds.
Selected projects in Northwest Syria
Camps for internally displaced persons, Idlib governorate

Better Shelter has assisted UNHCR with:

- Refresher-training for implementation speed, project resource planning and preventive solutions.
- Consultation on ground preparation and feedback on platform design.
- Guidance on climatic adaptation.
- Direct assistance to and consultations with UNHCR’s implementing partners Maram Foundation and Watan Foundation.

Project info

- **Context**: Conflict
- **Partner**: UNHCR
- **Location**: Harem & Ma’arrat al Numan Districts, Idlib Governorate
- **Number of units**: 6,000
- **Application**: Shelter
Quarantine centre for COVID-19 patients, Idlib governorate

The Syrian healthcare sector does not have the capacity to fight COVID-19. Besides, the healthcare infrastructure in North-West Syria is almost completely destroyed.

The Polish Center for International Aid (PCPM) donated 52 Better Shelters to the Maram Foundation to create a quarantine centre with a capacity for 260 patients.

Better Shelter assisted Maram with wind resistance and risk mitigation support along with technical troubleshooting.

Project info

Context
Conflict and Pandemic outbreak

Partner
PCPM / Maram Foundation

Location
Harem District, Idlib Governorate

Number of units
52

Application
COVID-19 quarantine centre
**Improved living space in rural areas, Aleppo governorate**

Bonyan Organization installed 48 Better Shelter units as an extension to the overcrowded shelters in rural communities in the Afrin District.

Better Shelter supported Bonyan with logistics arrangement, technical consultations and solutions to administrative challenges.

The Better Shelter technical team provided Bonyan with wind resistance and risk mitigation advice and technical troubleshooting support.

**Project info**

- **Context**
  - Conflict

- **Partner**
  - Bonyan Organization

- **Location**
  - Afrin District, Aleppo Governorate

- **Number of units**
  - 48

- **Application**
  - Shelter
The impact of a well-planned shelter implementation

**Secured HLP-rights**
Large enough to facilitate community in an area with several informal settlements.

**Secured land**
Establish gravelling services and raised foundations for shelters to protect from land slides and flooding.

**Improved health**
Overall health can be improved and WASH-services can be planned more effectively by building functioning water and drainage systems.

**Safety and dignity**
A shelter that provide safety and dignity can give a sense of home.

**Stabilized region**
By providing additional services and improve infrastructure and camp management, and by building a community of several informal settlements.

**Integration with local community**
Our partners are building camps near existing communities which provide the opportunity for integration and increased sense of stability.
Additional services provided by partners

**Site planning**
Topographic terrain analysis and site planning with all services considered.

**Excavation**
HLP rights are often in difficult terrain and the land often needs to be excavated and secured.

**Site levelling**
Levelling, gravelling and infrastructure is provided in each camp.

**Better Shelter foundation**
A raised foundation is recommended to prevent flooding, it insulates and create more stability.

**Water and drainage**
Camp is built with full water and drainage system to cater the WASH facilities.

**WASH**
Family individual facility, connected to water and drainage system.

**Safety and Security**
Camp Management, Fire safety, WASH monitoring, security systems and other services improve the overall safety and security in the camp and the region.

**Complementary services**
Education, Health and other Communal infrastructure is also be built by Better Shelters.
Appendices
### Camp for internally displaced persons, Idlib governorate

![Image of a camp for internally displaced persons]

**Project info**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Watan Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Harem District, Idlib Governorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of units</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Shelter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The Watan Foundation and Better Shelter teams worked together on onsite planning, layout design, ground preparations and fire safety and risk mitigation.

- Climatic adaptation support by Better Shelter: A chimney plate to serve as a safe exhaust for stove pipes was specifically developed for this project as Watan Foundation plans to install stoves "sobas" inside the units.
Camp for internally displaced persons, Aleppo governorate

**Goal**
Shelter 182 families from the Syria’s harsh seasonal climate by providing a safe and dignified shelter solution.

- ATAA Humanitarian Relief Association and Better Shelter found a solution to best meet the needs of the community in Jarabulus.

- The continued communications between the teams regarding ground preparations and the installation support offered by Better Shelter ensured the best possible outcome.

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<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>ATAA Humanitarian Relief Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Jarabulus District, Aleppo Governorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of units</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Shelter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Images from Northwest Syria
A successful implementation of Better Shelters requires additional services provided by partners

**Implementation cost break down**

With obtained HLP-rights, the terrain needs to be prepared for the camp and partners must plan for additional services.

The direct cost of a Better Shelter will account for around 65% of the total implementation budget, of a larger camp in North West Syria.*

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**Issues to be addressed**

- Housing Land and Property rights
- Inaccessible and difficult terrain
- Topographic terrain analysis and site planning
- Excavation and gravelling work
- Raised foundations
- Water and drainage services
- WASH facilities
- Safety and Security

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**Additional services**

To improve the situation in communities in NW Syria, partners must plan for additional services beyond the Better Shelter. When all issues are addressed, Better Shelter works well as a shelter solution.

"Dignity and safety are urgent and strict priorities when providing shelters to the displaced families, and it is combined all here in this model."

Tarek Muhabbak — Shelter and Emergency Coordinator — WATAN Foundation

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* Estimated from recent implementation with partners in NW Syria.
Thank you!

BetterShelter.org
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