systems, weather forecasting, and improving water management and flood control through flood defences and protection or restoration of wetlands, mangroves and other natural ecosystems. Disaster risk reduction measures will only protect against displacement if they are locally implemented, and if local communities have the capacity to effectively implement such measures. For example, in early 2012 Refugees International travelled to Colombia and interviewed people who were still displaced 15 months after heavy rains and flooding had forced them to flee. Colombia had a disaster risk management plan in place before the flooding started in 2010 and was considered a leader in disaster risk management in the Latin American region. But its plan failed to effectively protect the three million Colombians who were either displaced or otherwise affected by the disaster. The scale of displacement exposed serious flaws in the system – most notably the lack of local implementation and capacity.5

Conclusions
Despite extensive research and expertise in effective shelter interventions, the biggest challenge has been the failure of governments, donors and NGOs to proactively undertake preventive shelter interventions. Most often, disaster-resistant shelter is built with humanitarian funding after a disaster and only a small fraction of donor money goes to stand-alone, proactive measures. This is not an effective use of limited resources and it does not prevent displacement in the long term. For example, shelter construction after a disaster is often focused on building the largest number of shelters within the shortest time frame, often at the expense of community consultation, education, mapping, zoning and erosion control, all of which are essential to preventing displacement in the long term.

Given all the above, it is important that governments, donors and NGOs:

- implement both hard and soft shelter interventions
- focus on shelter interventions which involve community consultation and encourage capacity building and mobilisation of communities
- complement shelter interventions with investments in disaster risk reduction measures, such as local implementation of early warning systems
- focus in hazard-prone areas on proactive shelter interventions rather than on short-term humanitarian responses to shelter needs.

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1. http://tinyurl.com/CRS-Shelterposter

Voluntariness to remain
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In the context of prevention of further displacement or re-displacement (specifically, preventing returnee refugees becoming refugees again), two elements are particularly important: post-repatriation activities in the return destination countries to ensure the durability of the voluntary repatriation, and the living conditions in these return countries. In practice this often becomes a question of whether the returnees have the freedom of choice to remain or are ‘forced’ to do so in the absence of any viable alternative.

The voluntariness to remain will be determined by push factors such as security and socio-economic situation in the country of origin to which they have returned, and pull factors such as the availability of other durable solutions and respect of refugee rights in other countries in which they might consider seeking refuge.

In Afghanistan, recent data1 shows that only around 20% of returnees have regular employment, only 23% of them have adequate shelter and less than 20% of them have full access to clean drinking water. Half of the returnee population have only partial access to basic health services and only half of the returnee children have full access to school. These push factors – added to the general poor security in Afghanistan – undermine the sustainability of their return. Better access to these facilities and services would be conducive to preventing their re-displacement. And both of the most likely potential countries of asylum, Iran and Pakistan, are far less welcoming than they were in the past.

Those returning to Burundi face a lack of internal security and reduced access (in comparison with the undisplaced population) to socio-economic opportunities but their most obvious country of asylum, Tanzania, is not a welcoming prospect. The government there had insisted on repatriation for the refugees as the preferred durable solution in the 1990s, and by 1997 Tanzania considered Burundian refugees as a security threat and has taken a tough approach towards refugees, restricting their movements and limiting their access to economic activity, making it clear to Burundians that they are not welcome.

For both Afghans and Burundians there were no pull factors from potential host countries, yet plenty of push factors within their country of origin. If they could have had freedom of choice, they would probably not have remained in their countries of origin. As it is, they are ‘forced’ involuntarily to remain within the borders of their own land.

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1. From surveys covering one third of the assisted returnee population