

Urban Humanitarian Crises



Strengthening the humanitarian system to
respond more effectively

Background

“The concentration of populations in urban areas will change the nature of many humanitarian disasters. More people will be living on marginal land, in overcrowded and poorly planned housing, lacking access to adequate water and sanitation, healthcare and education.”

The Humanitarian Emergency Response Review' 2011

Background

Recent Urban Crises

Haiti Earthquake



Earthquake damaged communities, Port au Prince.

Syria Region Crisis



Artillery damaged street, Syria.

Philippines Typhoon



Storm damaged electricity system, Tacloban.

Problem Statement

“...urban areas present unique challenges in terms of complexity and scale, and many existing ways of working were originally developed to address rural crises, and may not work as well in cities.”

ALNAP ‘Responding to Urban Disasters’, 2012

“While much work has been done on urban risk and vulnerability, the humanitarian sector has been slower to understand what this means operationally for agencies’.

BRC ‘Learning from the City’, 2013



Scope

Focus on:

- Responding to humanitarian crises in urban areas
- Preparedness measures
- Resilience as part of response

Learn From:

- Urban Refugees
- Sustainable Urbanisation
- Urban Violence



What is different about responding to urban crises?

“An urban disaster is unique in that it occurs in a dense and highly complex (physical and nonphysical) environment that has adapted, formally and informally, to absorb large populations and a range of economic activities”

Responding to urban disasters, ALNAP, 2012

What is different about responding to urban crises?

- Working with Complex Communities
- Working with Governments
- The Built Environment
- Markets



Wealthy and vulnerable communities, adjacent in Sao Paulo.

Elderly typhoon evacuee, Philippines.

Stakeholder Consultation

Scoping Study - *February to March*

- Thematic Workshops
- Literature Review

Gap Analysis – *April*

- Scoping Study Recommendations
- Knowledge Consolidation

Potential Areas of Action

- Policy and advocacy for system reform
- Building Operational Capability
- Research and Evidence

Contacts

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Questions:

What works well and why?

What needs to change?

Groups:

Strong government, formal environment

Weak government, informal environment