

16 lessons to inform responses to earthquakes

You can also read an [interview](#) with Helene Juillard to find out more about the lessons and how they can be applied to the current response.

Lessons which apply across the project cycle

Lesson 1: Engage broadly and rapidly with local and national actors – even the most affected communities and authorities have some level of capacity after an earthquake

Lesson 2: Acknowledge and do not undermine the work of private sector entities to ensure business continuity following an earthquake

Lesson 3: Do not let infrastructure and access challenges get in the way of communication, especially with isolated communities

Lesson 4: Ensure that cross-cutting issues such as gender, security and the environment are incorporated at all stages of the response

Lessons relating to assessment and analysis

Lesson 5: Conduct thorough assessments which recognise and identify the distinct ways earthquakes affect different populations

Lesson 6: Follow established good practice for needs assessments, recognising the specific challenges of doing so in urban areas

Lesson 7: Conduct assessments in ways that avoid exacerbating tensions between host communities and internally displaced persons

Lessons relating to strategic planning

Lesson 8: Locate spaces to store debris and, if appropriate, use short-term conditional assistance to clear it

Lesson 9: Anticipate issues related to lack of documentation and complex land tenure

Lesson relating to resource mobilisation

Lesson 10: Mobilise sufficient and appropriate surge capacities

Lessons relating to implementation

Lesson 11: Account for quickly evolving health needs in post-earthquake contexts. Be aware that epidemics can happen

Lesson 12: Prioritise the repair of existing structures, support ownerdriven reconstruction, preserve architectural heritage and use relocation and resettlement only as a last resort

Lesson 13: Be cautious with setting up transitional shelters, which may hinder longer-term reconstruction

Lesson 14: Address long-term as well as immediate education needs

Lessons relating to Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL)

Lesson 15: Recognise the value of MEAL and push through obstacles

Lesson relating to coordination

Lesson 16: Put time and effort into coordination to avoid negative impacts on the response