27th ALNAP Meeting, Chennai, India  
17-19 January 2012

**‘MEETING THE URBAN CHALLENGE’**



**Rapporteurs’ meeting record**

**DAY 1, 17 JANUARY 2012**

**Welcome**

**Mihir Bhatt, Director, All India Disaster Mitigation Institute**

**(Meeting Chair)**

Mihir Bhatt opened the 27th ALNAP Meeting and underlined how important it is to realise the impact of international conferences such as this and also our meetings on a one-to-one basis.

Chennai is the perfect place to host this year’s conference. It is a port, a coastal city and a metropolitan city. Chennai is also a symbol of India's engagement with the Far East. The city faced the 2004 tsunami when slum dwellers were badly affected and it was one of the most complicated urban recoveries.

In 2001 an Indian Government official attended an ALNAP conference for the first time and the importance of engaging with the government was realised during this meeting. There is a lot of humanitarian action taking place in India. India is also now a donor of financial aid for its neighbours. India has a long history of urban resilience and recovery. Since the tsunami there has been the chance to look back and take stock of what could have been done better. The campaign for safer cities has been launched in the country. Cyclone Thane recently reminded us of the relevance and timeliness of this conference

**Welcome and meeting opening**

**Dr Muzaffar Ahmad, Honourable Member, National Disaster Management Authority, India**

Globalisation is at the forefront of change in the world. Climate change and an urban population explosion has led to increased vulnerability. Half of the world’s population is living in urban areas. It is therefore critical for governments to address interventions in urban risks. Some cities have weaker capacities. Here in India we have experienced a wide range of urban disasters; Mumbai floods, Gujurat earthquake and the Kashmir earthquake.

There is now a National Disaster Management Authority which aims to achieve a timely and effective response to disasters. They are currently working on policy and advocacy in terms of disaster management plans and many cities in India are in the process of developing thorough plans. In Chennai a disaster emergency management exercise has been carried out. This is being replicated in other cities in the hope they too will be able to prepare themselves. There has also been multi-partner and facilitated in-house training to target local infrastructure and institutions in case of emergencies. The aim is to make the cities in India safer against hazards. Over the next 3 years India hopes to make our cities safer. But I want to go beyond cities and now take up the citizen’s right to safety, and suggest calling it the Citizens’ Right to Safer Cities. This idea puts citizens in the centre, his or her identity and dignity, and ways to make them more active in our ultimate struggle to make the world a safer place from humanitarian crises.

[**Keynote Address 1**](http://www.alnap.org/resource/6276.aspx)

**Robert Piper, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Nepal**

Kathmandu is one of the world’s most vulnerable cities. A major fault line runs through the city and the tectonic plates are moving 33mm a year (roughly the same speed that finger nails grow at!) During the earthquake in September last year 7,000 buildings were destroyed on the Nepalese side alone. With the pressure mounting along the fault lines it is inevitable that the pressure will be released and Nepal will have a larger earthquake soon, which will also affect North India.

In 1934, there was a major earthquake in Nepal. 8,000 people died and there was widespread damage. Sixty per cent of the buildings collapsed. However, at this time there were only 150,000 residents in Kathmandu. Today the city is a sprawling metropolis with 2.5 million people. There is a small international airport with one runway and it is estimated that there are 13,000 people per km2. There has been a large number of migrants from rural areas into the city which has meant slum dwellings have increased. Kathmandu is now the most rapidly urbanising area in Asia. With new buildings come new risks as construction limits and codes are overlooked.

Fifty per cent of schools in Kathmandu would collapse tomorrow if there was a repeat of the 1934 earthquake. Local services are ill-equipped and the fire service has just 15 fire engines. There is also no search and rescue capacity. The city is connected by bridges, therefore there would be huge challenges in terms of access. The city does not benefit from access to the sea, and Nepal's neighbours would also be badly affected which would affect their ability to help. Electricity and communications would be disabled. There would be approximately 100,000 fatalities and 60 per cent of buildings would fail. Furthermore, 1 million people would need shelter and 1 million people would need food and water on an emergency basis.

Awareness of the risk in Kathmandu is low, so there is a need to plan for the scenario. Mayors could hold the key, as there is an absence of local officials in Nepal. Local government could therefore become an important institutional partner. There is a need to adjust national thinking to work locally.

There also needs to be a weak building code enforcement in order to make places of work and schools safer. A new fundraising strategy is also needed. Help is needed to ensure people stay out of the city and have access to services.

We need to build redundancy into government and the UN and anticipate potential losses in terms of key people. There needs to be a back-up in terms of infrastructure and buildings.

India is a key area for relief supplies. The US military are also working on a strategy for response.

Everyday the planning issue is compounded as new schools are opened which are not built to code. The causes of the risk need to be addressed at the same time.

Nepal has an unstable political system, and therefore there are institutional challenges. There is also difficulty in financing preparedness.

The humanitarian community cannot handle the challenge alone. There is now a five to eight year planning horizon. Urbanisation is a neglected field. The NRRC (Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium) has set up five flagship programmes.

[**Keynote Address 2**](http://www.alnap.org/resource/6277.aspx)

**Dan Lewis, Chief, Disaster and Post Conflict, UN-HABITAT**

The world is changing: economically, demographically, and technologically (i.e. communications) and more people are moving to cities. There are also new opportunities in urban communities.

In 2000-2010 the cost of disasters was $760 billion. In 2011 the devastation cost $350 billion. In 2010 the global humanitarian budget was $15 billion.

How can we spend this better? The global economic crisis has led to a faster less expensive delivery of aid.

There is a need for change and a need for capacity to enable areas to scale up and help. There is still a lack of preparedness and prevention in urban areas. The response is split into humanitarian and development areas of aid and is donor driven. The growing importance of local government as a key actor has emerged, but sustainable remedies are not yet well implemented. The rate of urbanisation is a hazard in itself. There needs to be a focus on specialisation – engineers and architects should be working on these specific areas and working to their skill sets. Working with academic institutions and students may also prove key in the future.

Conclusion: there has been an emergence of new tools. Lessons have been learnt from Haiti and the Philippines and there needs to be a focus on pre-disaster risk.

**Plenary Discussion/Questions**

**Q1:** Two missing areas in the presentations: first aid, and war in cities. Most aid is given by the population themselves but they need training. Wars in cities present specific security and services issues.

**Q2:** A missing dimension in the issue of disasters is that they are not just natural, there are also ethical dimensions. In the Qu'ran Muslims believe destruction and corruption will result in disasters as God wants them to suffer. Creating injustice in areas is killing people – this is a main cause of disasters. You have to consider spiritual and ethical dimensions.

**Q3:** Agree about the importance of the role of national and local NGOs and civil society organisations. Local government is key, but urban local governments are some of the most disengaged and disempowered in the world. Therefore it is important to look at ways of empowering them. How does the panel think we could address this complex issue? It is also equally important to mobilise social/civil society groups. Shopkeepers and other stakeholders at local level have risk reduction processes in place. The sector needs to recognise their effort and incorporate them. Also, the large and well-informed middle class is really growing in cities. They are online, powerful and can bring governments down. It is therefore important not to underestimate their power.

**Q4:** It is frustrating to get cluster systems to work in disaster situations. We have spent two years in Kenya alerting individual communities and key players, Kenya has a stakeholder urban vulnerability forum which has key players around the table. However the real challenge has been the business as usual attitude of humanitarian actors. During drought, fire and explosions in Kenya it was difficult to get cluster systems to respond to urban disasters. We need to address rapid onset disasters and chronically vulnerable situations. Large scale incidents get all the attention.

**Q5:** What is the role of the military and local groups in disaster settings and contexts with no democratic governance? What is the role of the international community in this context? What is the role of international militaries and civil protection actors? Haiti brought the issue we are talking about to the surface.

**Q6:** We sometimes forget the capacity that already exists in cities which can be utilised.

**Response to questions and comments** – Panellist 1

India is looking at preparedness and mitigation. It is important to make buildings safe. We need to have capacity building. Architects and engineers are needed for their specialist skills. The Real Estates bill has been passed in India, which ensures the safe construction of buildings. Indigenous people need to be educated in safe construction. Rapid visual screening is being carried out in the country in a bid to make structures safe. There is also a school safety project which is seeing teachers and students educated.

In urban areas that are heavily congested here in India, the first step is to implement a dedicated national disaster force. Rescue searchers have been trained in first aid. NGOs play an important role in disasters. It's important to recognise that traditional houses have withstood earthquakes. How do we get people to adapt traditional technologies? In terms of the fire service, a focus should be put on how to make them more advanced – emergency services in urban areas are key. Public services in urban areas are also important – including vaccination programmes.

Geological changes play their part. In Ladak there are flash floods and rains every year – deforestation is having an effect.

**Response to questions and comments** – Panellist 2

Local government is weak in most of the countries we have been highlighting. But where it’s stronger it makes a difference, for example in Christchurch. It's important to get mayors in place in Nepal and reward good mayors for doing the right thing. It requires several electoral cycles before you make headway though, so it is a longterm issue. It requires patience and a cultural shift in the political system. It is taken seriously in Japan; response to disaster is a fundamental election issue. People in power have a duty of care. If we get governance systems right it will make a huge difference. In most cases a country’s neighbour is the first responder.

In Nepal the consortium has brought about a community preparedness programme – this has brought together 100 community organisations which have established common minimum standards. This will take a couple of years but will be worth the effort. There is funding for 500 systems. The IFRC is leading a flagship programme in community preparedness. There could be a benefit in establishing an engineers’ association of self regulation. Governments are often too slow in getting their act together. If engineers are certified by their peers for competence in seismic zones, they can regulate the industry, charge a premium for their services and the buyer gets a safe building.

The US military has mobilised scenario planning in Nepal and there is a hope that the Indian military will be around the table one day. The UN is working in the background encouraging people to talk and the country's UN ambassador is extremely active. Nepal has two armies. The Maoist army will be de-mobilised and integrated into the national army and trained in disaster response. The national army will become a key actor in disaster response.

**Response to questions and comments** – Panellist 3

With regards to weak local governments, crises always reveal weaknesses. However, this is not a reason to look elsewhere for a solution. It is instead the primary reason to engage with the local government and use the period of recovery to build capacity. One of the principles is to look where weaknesses are and address them.

With regards to Kenya, weaknesses and capacity constraints are evident. It's important to bring cluster systems together and analyse what could have been done better. Nobody will self-determine their role unless the organisation has a framework that fits. Several organisations including Oxfam, World Vision, CARE and Red Cross have urban engagement programmes. It's important to develop the framework in which programmes are enabled or compelled to work in this area, to move into a new paradigm of operations.

**Table discussion: 'Ideas emerging, issues arising'**

The group divided into eleven subgroups, each of which conducted table discussions on the challenges of humanitarian action in the urban context.

The key challenges identified by each group are given below.

**GROUP 1:**

**Three Challenges:**

* Coordination
* Roles Specifications (Development in Humanitarian Actions)
* Exploiting Comparative advantages of NGOs vs. UN vs. Government

**GROUP 2:**

1) Definition:

**How and when do we define an emergency?**

1.1 After a major catastrophe?

1.2 As urban risk evolves?

2) Governance and Coordination:

2.1 Building capacity and understanding of Disaster Risk Reduction (Making it an urgent issue)

2.2 Coordination of NGOS (Umbrella Organisation?)

2.3 Who to coordinate with? (Many actors in an urban context)

3) Social and Economic aspects of urbanization

3.1 Migration

3.2 Coping Mechanisms

3.3 Social Structure and Kinship

3.4 Remittances

3.5 Collective Action

**GROUP 3:**

**Three Priorities**

1. Integration of Disaster Risk Reduction into municipality and urban planning processes rather than addressing Disaster Risk Reduction after the event (taking a holistic approach to the city)

2. Better coordination with city authorities’ investment today for effectiveness tomorrow (it is also important to coordinate with local communities)

3. Balancing a respect for the local context, both its strengths and its flows with the international response system and standards and donor driven priorities.

4. Finding a framework to engage and work with multiple and new stakeholders while maintaining some core principles and standards

5. Focusing on the services and their early recovery b/c without these recovery is severly hampered.

**GROUP 4:**

* Coordination with city authorities
* Investment today for effective tomorrow (also important with local communities)
* Better understanding of the sociology of cities and relationships and tension within them
* Need anticipatory understanding of pressures on cities and their impact i.e. climate change conflict etc.
* Harnessing technology effectively

**GROUP 5:**

* Complexity of delivery and response systems in urban contexts, particularly in informal settlements
* Challenges of duty of core if core was not given before the emergency- whose responsibility is it?
* Providing assistance to crisis affected migration to urban contexts vs. needs of vulnerable decentralized populations in the city

**GROUP 6:**

* Humanitarian sector/systems to look through an urban “LENS”
* Role of local structures (Municipalities and private sectors)
* Preparedness
* Assessment and evaluation tools (particularly to look at municipality capacity and finding different stakeholders)
* Reconfigure relationship with private sector to be positive contributors to risk reducing and response
* Need for urban specialists as part of multi disciplined team

**GROUP 7:**

1. Effective Coordination Mechanisms

1.1 Build mutual understanding among humanitarian community and government

1.2 Synchronisation of local knowledge

1.3 Information sharing

2. Shift Response to Preparedness

2.1 Integration of response into preparedness

2.2 Mindshift

3. Allocation of local resources

3.1 Aid effectiveness

3.2 Government ownerships

3.3 Political commitments/priorities

**GROUP 8:**

* Understanding the institutional framework where we are working in, in municipality
* Assessment
* “Cluster” approach in municipalities
* “Pull-Push” factor in urban/rural
* Clear planning of roles and responsibilities of all involved
* Incentivising investment in disaster risk management
* Restoration of essential services and managing expectations

**GROUP 9:**

* Government as key stakeholder
* Governance
* Accountability
* Working together
* Preparedness and substitution
* Engagement of People’s Institution
* Develop thinking/improve understanding of “urban challenges”
* Role of humanitarian sector
* Promoting coordination with development
* Technical coordination/collaboration
* Security
* Leadership, structures, specialized knowledge
* Under cooperation
* System preparedness (with governance and accountability)
* Top- down approach (currently challenge)
* Strengthen the role of humanitarian actors
* Fragmentation of specialized/ technical knowledge across sectors/actors

**GROUP 10:**

* Lack of system approach and coherent agenda, bringing together humanitarian, government and development actors
* Consolidate understanding of what “Urban Challenge” is by bringing together a range of actors

**GROUP 11:**

**Challenges**

* Local groups (not recognized)
* Coordination (how to coordinate efforts?)
* Ownership and accountability (whose disaster is it?)
* Coordination between urban and rural
* Sustainability (role of media)
* Donor timeframe
* Knowledge management
* Participation of communities (chosing the moment, getting balance right)
* Land rights
* Rapid implementation design capacity to deliver

Overall, the key challenges from the entire group were summarised as:

1. Definition of ‘disaster’ in urban context
2. Relative roles of Development / Disaster actors
3. Relative roles, and some different priorities, of Government / IHS
4. Coordination approaches and frameworks that make best use of *all* resources of multiple actors: Government (all levels); international humanitarians communities; private sector;
5. Lack of Clarity, capacity; investment and urgency around preparedness and DRR
6. Lack / fragmentation of understanding, skills and tools related to urban environments
7. Complexity of assessment targeting, delivery, in urban environments

**Lessons learned from working in urban environments: Session One**

**Evaluating humanitarian aid in urban situations- a few methodological challenges**

**Francois Grunewald, Executive and Scientific Director, Groupe URD**

URD are trying to develop new information on urban affairs. They have been working on evaluations of disasters and continue to carry out this work. Some examples of where they have worked are in Kabul, Bam, Indian Ocean tsunami-affected areas and in Port-au-Prince. I think many will agree that Haiti has been a wake-up call for all of us.

Emerging actors have carried out actions without research and have therefore continued to use the old rural methods, for example tent camps. These methods may not be applicable in some urban cases.

The humanitarian evaluation sector does not have many urban specialists on board and this is a sector that we can learn a lot from. The aid sector currently engages with existing rather than emerging principles. The humanitarian sector is ruled by old habits and this blueprint is not necessarily suitable for urban environments. The cluster system is a killer in the city and needs to be reshaped and adjusted for an urban setting.

The social and economic fabric of cities is very different to that in rural areas. There is real lack of specialists in this sector. UNICEF guidelines of communities in the urban setting do not take into account all the complexities of the city. This needs to be reshaped.

The constraints and opportunities of cities are very specific. In terms of constraints, you are dealing with massive numbers of people, logistics are often very complicated, and streets are often full of debris. Having said that there are still a lot of opportunities within cities and by essence they are the ebb of social wealth. Cities contain more educated people and skilled professionals and they must be utilised more.

**Evaluation questions and processes**

1. Phased process

Evaluating humanitarian aid in cities has to be a phased process

* What was the effectiveness of the preparedness strategy? E.g. urban search and rescue elements. How does this look at the initial coordination with the national disaster management agency?
* How well does the primary immediate response lead onto secondary coordination?
* The critical first month, in this time you need people who know about cities, mass case scenarios, mass medical areas etc. Most of these people do not fall into the normal tool box of an emergency.

It is also a time where new technologies can be used to reach the urban population; the improved use of satellites and wider and more efficient use of SMS for example alongside the more traditional way of acting that still exists.

The coordination during the stabilisation phase (when external actors enter) has to take an urban format: working with the municipality; public and private organisations and the existing charity and Church groups.

1. Urban management

There are many issues of management which exist in urban environments, such as land titling, land rights, land tenure and analysis of tenure. All of these need to be greater understood by the sector.

The sector needs to develop more specific tools to work more with the civil society groups and local actors. When doing so, it is important to go into discussions with caution knowing that these actors may have their own agenda and may have been involved in illicit action e.g. gangs. They may not be the most friendly to discuss with but they are there and they need to be contacted.

It is also important to talk with those from the civic society who have established organisations already, such as theatre groups. It is necessary to speak with the local people in an urban setting (this can be done in focus groups), during the project implementation and through the evaluation.

1. Targeting

Who you target is a critical element as there are massive numbers of people and you will not be able to reach everyone. Community targeting (as used in rural) is not always best because different community structures are in place in rural settings. There are other ways of trying to identify a target for example: geographically or self-targeting.

1. Quality of services

An awareness of context is vital to ensure quality. For example, how do you set up latrines when there is concrete hard standing? It is useful to have technical experience in an urban context to ensure quality. Since the 1980s, a lot has been done by the global WASH agency, which must be adapted to urban areas.

The emergence of post-crisis support is important, looking at how private and public services are supported.

An evaluation team should always have someone with an urban context in place when going in to do an evaluation.

What would be the indicators of a smart urban response?

* To identify how humanitarian actors have been communicating with national and municipal actors.
* The relevance of response is vital, looking at how social, cultural and economic systems in urban areas have been taken into account and analysed. One example is shown through cash and voucher systems; though this still has problems with targeting issues becoming complex.
* Each time an evaluation happens it is important to assess what the level of preparedness was before and whether this has impacted on the response. For example: do they have evacuation plans, flood defences, urban search and rescue teams; first aid etc.? These areas all have to be analysed.
* It is also vital to take into account different types of urban disaster that could potentially occur, for example; war, floods and earthquakes and how these all differ in the response needed.

**Summary:**

Inadequate urban response is in place at the moment. Have we got guidance and evaluations for urban disaster in place already? Are there difficulties in targeting and difficulties in using criteria such as SPHERE minimum standards or other technical standards? Guidance must be given to help evaluation teams with their methods and analysis of urban response.

**Questions and Answers Session:**

**Q1:** What does an urban specialist look like?

**Response*:***They have different training and experience. They will combine their skills in urban contexts such as geographical understanding. They could be urban planners, urban geographers or sociologists. In most countries you have urban specialists (urban planners). These people will know how urban spaces are spatially organised and framed. An understanding of this was essential for the water response in Port-au-Prince.

**Comment:** Urban specialists could be business men and women working in the city. For example in Haiti, CELTEL helped to rebuild the market.

**Q3:** Who is best placed to provide you with support rather than a specialist? Dan maintained that specialists are not the way forward. Changes have been made and seen since Haiti, and evaluations are driving change. Part of the evaluation process has to look at the assets that are left? For example a process in place in Haiti was binned and re-started, it could have continued, they need to be explored. It is a starting point not to be overlooked.

What are the issues of security? It is apparent that the local actors and national teams will have access to what we do not have as foreigners.

**Q4:** Evaluators need to be asking questions about the need for an urban section in their master evaluation rather than just have specialists. If evaluation teams are small, is there space for an urban specialist?

**Q5:** In a urban setting you need people with multi-disciplines. An urban planner may not have the environmental knowledge, while others may be focused on land use, or sociology. (The example was given of a Masters degree in City Planning at MIT: if someone majored in one discipline i.e. environmental planning, design would not be their focus.) How do you handle the complexity of having only one person who is a true urban specialist?

**Response:** If the person is one of a team then value may need to be added. Relying solely on an urban specialist may not be the best way forward, but rather as part of team. Technical standards become more critical in urban setting as there is more pressure from the high densities of people. Expectations can be higher in an urban context, therefore restoration of public services during recovery is critical. We need to especially look at the essential services during the emergency phase.

An urban specialist is by definition a specialist of the urban situation; knowing all areas of cities, not only planning or engineering, but also social and economic structures, etc. To have an urban specialist as part of a team has a huge impact. You do not send an urban specialist in alone, they go with the team. In certain cases they are the team leader as they are bringing in dynamic qualities.

**Q7:** What is the best advice on how to act during urban war situations?

**Response:**

1. Look at the access, for the evaluator and aid providers and how to adjust this with active war.
2. Services---it may not be possible to replicate what was there before but rather it is important to look at how we respond to the need and how is best to help.
3. Technical response and assistance is not always present or appropriate. Standards are not always designed for urban contexts and tend to be more biased towards camps and rural settings.

**Q8:** Impact of evaluation?

**Response:** In Haiti, the evaluation has had an impact. And the effectiveness of evaluations is improving.

**Preparedness for urban disasters – the case of Kathmandu**

**Jenty Kirsch-Wood, Head, Disaster Risk Management Unit, UNDP Nepal**

**Mr Lakshmi Dhakal, Ministry of Home Affairs, Nepal**

([Presentation slides](http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/day1-jkirsch-wood.pdf))

**Kathmandu Context**

* Seismic hazards – Nepal is on a long fault line, not a question of if but when. Kathmandu is among the highest at risk cities for an earthquake.
* Population has doubled since 1998. This presents a challenge for the government due to competition for resources.
* An LDC.
* Challenges for government in terms of investment priorities.
* Transitional society.
* Also many other high risk cities nearby.
* Unique response challenges as most buildings won’t survive.
* We are now mapping the risk areas and using it in risk sensitive urban planning.
* Narrow roads, lots of infrastructure damage is predicted in the event of a major earthquake.

**Policy Framework**

* + We have a good policy structure and the engagement of many stakeholders. Despite the good progress on paper, it remains a challenge to apply it in practice, to turn it into on the ground work. We are planning for an emergency response, but are still unable to meet the scale of the potential disaster and it is a challenge to address the increased daily risks.
  + Natural Calamity (Relief )Act, 1982
  + Prime Minister Natural Calamity Rescue Fund
  + Local Self Governance Act, 1999
  + Three Year Interim Plan
  + National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management, 2009
  + Sectoral Policies: Health, Environment, Building, etc
  + Draft of New Disaster Management Act
  + Disaster Preparedness Plans in District Level
  + Cluster Approach (Center to bottom)
  + Draft of NEOC Operating Procedure

**Coordination between national and international actors during mega disasters**

* In terms of actual planning, have done work on how to manage some actors.
* All in theory, doesn’t deal with new risk created daily and the sheer scale.

**Roles and responsibilities of MOHA**

* + Aiming to increase the number of stakeholders. Diagram demonstrates various types of stakeholders beyond the obvious ones like donors, UN organisations, district authority, community. Also including private sector, media, financial institutions, universities. We are strategically increasing the number of stakeholders so that response and responsibility in the recovery process involves everyone. This will make it clear to all stakeholders to keep disaster management a priority at all stages.
  + Innovations by government
  + Traditional structures exist like CNDRC, Natural Calamity Act ( future law)
  + Also innovations like the Risk Reduction Consortium – it’s not traditional to bring in so many actors together under a three to five year target-based initiative to reduce long-term risk. This strategy is important for the international community to keep in mind, it has affected short-term plans and long-term risk reduction.
  + Nepal Disaster Risk Consortium Steering Committee - a new initiative by MOHA.
  + Central Natural Disaster Rescue Committee (CNDRC), chaired by the Home Minister, is accountable for preparing and ensuring implementation of national policies. Designated as the lead agency responsible for implementation of the Natural Calamity (Relief) Act, 1982
  + Co-chairs the Nepal Disaster Risk Reduction Consortium Steering Committee
  + Manages the Emergency Operation Centre Network
  + Leads coordination of DRM Strategy Implementation
  + Nodal agency linking GON to cluster system
  + Has a dedicated Disaster Management Section

**Recent milestones**

* + Pragmatics - we are protecting spaces for recovery and response and trying to upgrade it e.g. for protected water supplies. More than 30 organisations implementing projects.
  + Established National Emergency Operation Center and 16 district EOCs
  + Disaster Preparedness Planning workshops at all levels every year, including lessons learned
  + District Disaster Preparedness Plan in 65 districts, updated annually. Other districts are in the process of completing plans
  + One window and UN cluster approach at all level
  + DRM focal points in PM Office, National Planning Commission, different ministries and security sectors
  + Established a National Platform for DRR and NRRC Steering Committee
  + Commitment to 83 open spaces for evacuation during emergencies
  + Lots of simulations
  + Working on emergency response framework

**Coordination Challenges and Opportunities**

* + How do you mainstream DRR across government? It involves a sectoral approach, and going ministry by ministry and making the case to each one. Making the case to retrofit schools, for example, is difficult when the indicator the government is evaluated on is the education of each child. Competing timelines and priorities within the government present challenges. The cooperation of the Ministry of Finance is essential as donor resources are not enough. We need their commitment to help fully mainstream DRR.
  + Non-traditional actors: e.g. private sector – we have begun working with Nepal Telecom and others to find out how to involve them in using mobile phone networks in an emergency and how to use mobile phone technology to give money to affected people in a disaster. We are also aiming to change the perception of the private sector as creator of risk, by improving its reputation as an agent to mitigate risk.
  + Working with a range of Ministries (about 13 involved in NRRC) especially NPC and MoF
  + Working with non-government actors, (media, private sector, development agencies)

**Response challenges**

* + In a projected disaster, 60 per cent of housing would not withstand damage.
  + No hospitals are expected to withstand a large earthquake at the moment. Health will be a key issue.
  + We are working on the assumption that there will be no electricity.
  + Emergency services are already weak. Limited ability to respond in major disasters, or even just to mobilise. Access will be difficult.
  + Water is already a huge problem as it is very expensive. We assume there will not be adequate water in an emergency.
  + Dead body management – government has done some planning but it is best to reduce new risk to reduce the areas of the city which may be affected, to increase potential functioning areas.
  + Debris management.
  + The best thing is to try to reduce risk on a daily basis e.g. by enforcing building codes.
  + Main issue: access. We assume no-one could actively help us for two weeks. We could have one plane landing every twenty minutes but even that would be a drop in the ocean. It is a sobering lesson for us and makes us to return to the question of what capacity do we have on the ground? Even if aid got through to Kathmandu there would be a huge bottleneck.

**Innovation in an urban context**

* + Aim: strengthening partnerships in municipalities and getting specific about who exactly would do what in an emergency and how many fire engines are available etc. When you engage municipalities and they understand the critical nature, it becomes personal.
  + Identifying and connecting with key actors – supporting the municipalities in reaching out to rotary clubs and schools etc. to create community network *before* an emergency occurs. Need to reach out to municipalities, organisations, civil society and establish community links and capacity pre-disaster.
  + Adapting NRRC community based DRM (cf John Twigg) for minimum preparedness actions e.g. risk analysis, identifying the most vulnerable people in advance.
  + NGOs can have a big impact by adapting existing humanitarian tools. Humanitarian actors can help us understand the need for open spaces, and the need for access to help people in a crisis. We need to feed this information into planning i.e. widening roads, and to use these principles in the municipal structures and work with the Department of Urban Planning to develop risk sensitive urban planning . Build emergency response planning in from the beginning. For example, protect those 83 sites in Kathmandu as part of the government's green spaces plan – make it part of how the government does business. Nepal is making big decisions about future infrastructure. Government needs to lead, be engaged – not just informed.
  + “Humanitarian action won’t work in urban settings unless local partnerships are addressed”
  + Partnership and response planning with municipalities
  + Adapting NRRC community based DRM to urban settings
  + Integrating open spaces into risk-sensitive land-use planning
  + Adjust humanitarian tool

**What we are learning:**

* + The government needs to lead this process and we need their active engagement - more than just informing them that you are doing a project. Different parts of the government need to speak to each other. Local governance structures must be addressed.
  + Partnerships with development actors essential: We must work in partnership with other development actors. We need to align with World Bank planning cycles.
  + From a humanitarian and development perspective, there is a role for joint HC/RC function eg. someone like Robert Piper who can broker the discussion.
  + Ambition and longer term planning focus works: From a humanitarian perspective, we are still locked in short time-frames: six months or one year, however most organisations do know that they are there for the long-term, so it is not really a big deal for them to commit to long-term planning. At the Consortium, three to five year time frames were discussed and in this way the World Bank were able to get on board as they work on a similar time-frame. So actually, ambitious targets are good and allow building of trust around common indicators rather than projects. Allows different organisations’ planning cycles to come together. Builds around common indicators rather than trust.

**Concluding thoughts**

* + Humanitarian agencies will not just hand over to development: it is not a continuum. There is a long term development process in Nepal with some spikes and moments of need in emergencies, but this is normal. We are not working in a continuum. Win-win options for hum-devt planning exist
  + 80-90% of risks in Nepal can be predicted in advance in terms of rough numbers and types of needs they’ll have.
  + Reaching out to development actors won’t phase the government out.
  + Disasters may be rapid onset, but are not a surprise- we can do a lot
  + Humanitarian preparedness planning in a vacuum will not be effective
  + It is possible to align long-term and rapid funding flows, but not overnight
  + There are no excuses for not acting now

**Discussion and Questions:**

**Q1:** In a big earthquake we presume the runway would be out of action. Are there any plans for reestablishing the ski lift system to bring things over land? What about the military? Civil protection agencies play a huge response in an emergency.

**Response:** We have an emergency response framework which we are compiling from many plans, this is not one single policy. For example, with the road network, we assume that nothing will be coming in for two weeks so we are working with military about whether they can work on re-establishing bridges etc which is their skill set. Looking at what people are best at. Civil protection - they have a response framework committee and they have invited lots of people in.

**Q2:** You mentioned rejuvenation plans for certain parts of city. Will it work and reduce risk?

**Response:** We are working hard on risk resilience planning e.g. school retro fitting, and water supplies – eg. identifying which wells will survive in an emergency. It was brought home to many planners on 18th Sept 2011 when their own homes were shaken.

**Q3:** Is there any regional cooperation? It's the same situation in India. Are we working together? What about floods? And Bangladesh?

**Response:** Regional cooperation – we have a team from new centre who have visited new centres in India and visited SAARC. They are hoping to invite regional stakeholders in. We are also careful about not relying too much on regional support because our neighbours will also be affected and we cannot expect too much.Nepal has 75 districts – each one has a chief officer. These respond immediately whenever a disaster comes.

**Q4:** What about food and nutrition? Should be included in your list of challenges and opportunities. Very often in an urban context food is left off when it is a very important and forgotten issue. It is more than just emergency food aid. The self-production of food around big cities needs to be addressed. Have you engaged the Ministry of Agriculture in DRR?

**Response:** Food was an oversight in this presentation, it is an important area.

**Q5:** What role do you envisage for the media and corporate sector?

**Response:** The media will be a major stakeholder. There are companies who can take part in debris removal. MOHA is doing inventories of existing excavation companies who can respond in an emergency. We have to acknowledge that the private sector will be there alongside the government in a response. We need to turn preparedness into good business. The media will be major players in awareness-raising and communications especially information during disaster. We have done outreach about planning.

**Q6:** What are your plans regarding hospitals? Who will be your first responders?

**Response:** First response – we are expecting no substantive outside help for the first two weeks, so the police, APF, Red Cross and others are all discussing who will do what in terms of first response. Important to have roles designed early so no areas neglected. Experience from cities like Chennai will be very important for us to learn from.

**Q7:** You mentioned that municipalities will be key actor. Many of them struggle with capacity. What’s your plan for capacity building?

**Response:** Just a few months ago five new municipalities were formed that were previously VDCs and are therefore now implementing building codes for the first time. We are tailoring our approach to address different assistance and training issues for different municipalities.

**Q6:** We are working on an ongoing project trying to establish data exchange so that early warning is possible. Also working on regional planning information system in six countries. Have 38 hydro-meteorological stations and hope to add 100 more stations to this network. Recently learned that 17-18 new urban centres are to be created to ease Kathmandu. This is an opportunity to contribute to risk-sensitive land use planning.

**Q7:** Nepalese government has been proactive since the disaster in 2008 and are working with the international community. With the National Disaster Response Framework we are trying to institutionalise all our practices. It is a work in process. Compliments to Jenty on the presentation.

**Q8:** We have supported preparedness efforts in Nepal. Money pours in after a disaster. What’s the commitment to pre-positioning of stocks and the purchase of supplies? What are the trends and positions of committees at this time?

**Response:** With regard to the funding question posed by the Red Cross, the consortium has been quite good at getting development actors to allocate a bit of money to risk management to help bridge the preparedness gap. DFID has been a great support under both their humanitarian and development budgets. DFID is supporting an emergency operations network over three years and we are also trying to synchronise that with ECHO’s 15 month commitment to hospitals. Stockpiling is still tricky. In a food insecure country, how do you store that much food? We are working on it by looking into rotating stock.

**Q9:** Do you test this and put it in practice? We have seen plans in India that don’t work when tested. What about work with citizens? How do you involve them in the decision-making and planning process?

**Response:** We did one simulation last year and are planning more for this year. We will be testing the national centre, and also local community-based plans. It is critical that we have openness and willingness from the government to look at this issue. I commend the team from MOHA for doing this and their leadership.

**The humanitarian implications of urban violence**

**Kevin Savage, World Vision International**

([Presentation slides](http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/day1-ksavage.pdf))

Trends and urbanisation concerns:

Half of the world lives in cities. By 2050 it's predicted that three quarters will live in cities. Many people in urban areas live in slum dwellings. However, intra- and inter-state conflict is decreasing however there is acute violence by armed groups and, to a large number of people, urban violence brings extreme vulnerability and exposure. Moreover, this area is not well recognised by the humanitarian community. The journal of Humanitarian Assistance report covering this issue will be out soon.

1.5 billion people are considered to be living in chronic fragility and instability in urban centres and cities. There is a correlation between urbanisation and increased violence. There are multiple causes and violence is multi-factoral and can be localised. There is not a causal relationship, mega cities don't necessarily mean more violence.

Homicide rates: the cities with the highest homicide rates such as Santo Domingo and Panama are where growth is expected to happen in the near future.

There has been a movement from fragile states to fragile cities which has been seen in strategic military planning: cities are now a focal point.

The UK riots show that violence can be contagious. The advantages of working in cities are the informal systems of governance. Urban planners are looking at changing infrastructure to make streets safer and improve cohesion. We need to look at applying new experimental approaches in chronically violent cities and adapting human resilience to tackling violence, particularly in Latin America.

There is a divide between development and humanitarianism. We need to review legal and institutional mechanisms. At the moment we don't collect data on this issue. With regard to practice on the ground, we need to engage with armed groups. In some places the state is retreating. In terms of risk reduction we need to recognise the hazard of violence/conflict as a factor. It’s important to strengthen community structure and improve social cohesion at neighbourhood level. We need to engage with the national framework of violence prevention and local institutions. DRR resilience work has been carried out in Gaza.

**Question and answer Session**

**Q1:** Looking at gender as an issue – how do you ensure you identify the most vulnerable group to reduce exploitation and abuse. In an urban emergency – how do you identify the barriers? Gender has to be a key issue.

**Q2:** How do you identify an appropriate space for humanitarian action? In Columbia there is an absence of authorities – what lessons are you able to draw and what works? Also, humanitarian budgets are finite and we're often asked to do a lot – does this issue fall into the same arena – is the humanitarian area being asked to do development work? What has been the reaction of national authorities?

**Q3:** It seems that one of the challenges is context analysis and how different groups live together. Also, is there a flow back effect to rural areas that are forced to produce more for urban areas.

**Response to Q1-Q3:** Extreme violence is a humanitarian crisis by definition - the Brazil crisis was a humanitarian issue. South America doesn't meet the conventions of armed conflict. Organisations need to recognise this in mandates. There is a debate about DRR – the issue of violence needs to be taken onboard. This issue will undermine and prevent risk reduction. Disaster responses may be in places that have extreme violence – but violence may not be the cause. But the violence could increase and cause vulnerability. Agree that gender is a huge focus.

**Q4:** What are your recommendations for humanitarian actors working in areas of conflict. Is there a need for more resources? In terms of awareness of violence in urban settings – there is lots we can learn from others and lessons from other places. There is a wealth of experience we can apply to this area.

**Q5:** What about the application of humanitarian law? Wary of this area, humanitarian actors might not have the skill set to deal with this issue. Is there a way of tracing emerging conflicts and the areas we should be responding to?

**Q6:** There's a danger if we use DRR response as a solution to this issue. Heavy responsibility that you're not making people more unsafe.

**Q7:** Have there been examples of facilitating violence?  Humanitarian actors will be taking the risk of working in conflict. Important to look at civil society and the role they play – especially if they have an active role in perpetuating the violence.

**Q8:** How do you define urban violence? It's quite ambiguous. What are the solutions?

**Response to Q 4- 8:** Important to look at the triggers and early warning. Organisations are looking at how this area fits in with their mandates. Need to start looking at this in risk reduction and resilience.

**Lessons learned from working in urban environments: Session Two**

**Meeting the urban challenge: adapting humanitarian response to a changing world - Citizens Disaster Response Centre experience**

**Carlos Padolina, Deputy Executive Director, Citizens Disaster Response Centre (CDRC)**

([Presentation slides](http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/day1-cpadolina.pdf))

**Presentation:**

In December and January this year, the Philippines was in the eye of the global media because of the typhoons which occurred in December, followed closely by landslides in January as a result of mining.

The experience of the Philippines in 2009 opened up the issue of DRR in urban areas. There is now a new law which has been established to build on the response and preparedness of typhoons. This law is now being put to the test, especially following the recent typhoon in December 2011. The local government must give priority to preparedness, prevention and mitigation activities.

**Question and Answer session:**

**Q1:** What systems are in place for early warning?

**Response:**

* There are currently systems in place for flooding (although these tend to only be in or near river basins.
* The Met office provides information on dangerous incoming weather systems, however these are rarely filtered down to the community level.
* Most local governments are still yet to take this issue seriously.
* There are still traditional early warning systems in place, for example whistles, bells and community representatives acting as messengers.
* The ‘ready, steady, go’ system is used:

1. Being ready (1st bell)
2. Getting started (2nd bell – getting things ready in your homes, going to an assembly point)
3. Go (3rd bell – go to the evacuation centre)

**Q2:** Do you define yourself as a humanitarian organisation and do you see that as important or not?

**Response:**

* CDRC is predominantly a community based NGO (do not really have a ‘humanitarian label’).
* CDRC is more about capacity building at community level, is focusing more on disaster prevention and and preparedness, along with influencing and shifting of the mindset of the government and community.

**Q3:** How do you see the role of universities in DRR?

**Response:**

* University courses are now touching upon interrelated issues of typhoons such as climate change, the impacts of mining, etc.
* The government has been encouraged to handle the situation better, bring in new laws and approve the cluster system.

**Q4:** What do you see as specific to the urban response?

**Response:**

* Coordination.
* The involvement of many different actors, for example politicians, television networks, NGOs, INGOs, UN bodies, government, church groups, other local civil society groups.
* Local governments in the Philippines need to better prepare themselves on how they will respond to urban disasters.
* The poor are still the ones who are most affected.

**Q5:** Can you tell me more about the use of text messaging in early warning systems?

**Response:**

* Alert systems are based on warnings from national level, which are hopefully filtered down to the community level.
* Many methods of communication are used in early warning systems, not only text messages, but also emails, along with various local and traditional methods.
* There is a system/database which contains the mobile phone numbers of mayors, community leaders, other prominent community members, etc, who with the click of one button can be informed of approaching risks and hazards.

**Disaster Preparedness in urban West Africa: Integrating WaSH, food security and livelihoods**

**Morwenna Sullivan, Policy Advisor, Action Against Hunger**

([Presentation slides](http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/day1-msullivan.pdf))

* Discussing programmes in Guinea and Sierra Leone
* Research is in production stage, can ask for info once available

**Conakry – Guinea**

* Working in Guinea since 1995, in Conakry since 1997. Previous cholera project with ECHO in 2009.
* Undertook cholera and hygiene promotion and awareness activities, looked at what future activities should be ECHO financed
* ACF and Ministry of Health led the response, UNICEF worked outside of the capital.
* At each stage each actor had a defined set of responsibilities.
* A contingency plan was carried out in 2009/2010 and since then there has been no cholera outbreak (so not 100% sure it will work in actual situation). A simulation exercise was carried out last October and difficulties and bottlenecks were identified and fed into the plan.
* GIS and GPS training was carried out to allow health professionals to map a picture of the outbreak.

Strengthening WASH infrastructure:

* Dual aim of clearing waste and reducing vulnerability
* Cash for work was used – it was market-orientated. It was also given in line with seasonal peaks of hunger or at times of large household outgoings, for example when school fees were due or Ramadan. This was given in two cycles, March and May-June.

**Sierra Leone**

* Partnership between several organisations including Goal, Concern, Oxfam and Ministry of Health.
* Two programmes: rehabilitate wells (long-term), install public taps (continues through 2012)
* Currently building capacity of water committees and hygiene promotion.
* In August last year ACF identified a need for a clear drainage system. The peak hunger season coincided, so ACF used cash-for-work.

**Lessons learned:**

* Important to work with what already exists and to understand demographic/ethnic mix, social networks and power networks. Coordinated approach, at least in theory.
* It's imperative that partners, INGOs, local NGOs and government have a clear set of responsibilities and involve other actors. Both programmes involve civil society
* Integration of WaSH and food is also key.
* The urban context is appropriate for cash for work programmes. In Sierra Leone it was important to meet community associations to identify the most vulnerable. Community targeting mechanisms need to be used and seasonality needs to be taken into account (no point doing cash for work when it’s time to plant or harvest). It's also important to understand the livelihood systems in place.
* Involved in developing assessment methods of food and technology with FAO

**FAO speaker:**

* As part of an interagency group meeting human challenges in urban areas, have been working with UN-HABITAT on a special task force on urban issues with numerous actors trying to work on food in the urban context and trying to come up with recommendations. Specific areas: targeting, needs assessment, monitoring, preparedness, partnerships. This is linked to work other agencies are doing on community partnerships.

**Morwenna continues:**

Rural–urban linkages research has implications for disaster preparedness and response:

* Analysed urban and rural linkages in Guinea and Zimbabwe. Looking at nutrition but there are lessons for disaster preparedness and response. Links play a greater role than previously envisaged.
* ACF found it as essential to recognise the integrated role that these linkages play in livelihoods. Households of migrants and rural families need to be analysed as a whole. In Zimbabwe a tomato trader migrated with her children but returned to the rural area to help with agricultural production and then again during harvesting season. She was able to transport harvest to where she had migrated and use as stock. If livelihoods are stable they become a self-generated safety net. However, linkages can redistribute poverty if livelihoods aren't stable.
* Rural areas may offer solutions to urban disasters, e.g. slow onset disasters such as food security. NGOs and government can strengthen self-generated safety nets by helping with infrastructure and facilitating movements of goods and cash between urban and rural areas.
* Migrants have been categorised as the most vulnerable as they are yet to attain the skill set for an urban economy, therefore they're at the bottom of the pile.

**Further research questions:**

* + What types of linkages are most important?
  + How might linkages be affected following disasters?
  + What opportunities exist to leverage linkages to decrease negative coping strategies?
  + What are the bottlenecks to increasing efficiency and value of linkages?

Once planners answer these questions they can support migrants and help re-build assets following disasters.

**Question and answer Session:**

**Q1:** Confused with term self-generated safety net, isn’t this usually described as livelihood diversification?

**Response:** That's correct – depends on how you would define safety net.

**Q2:** Would like to know more about the integrated programme between WaSH and security and livelihoods, the cluster system, how did it work?

**Response:** Focus of cash for work was sanitation project, so this was achieving WaSH aims and at same time, providing cash to help household security/livelihoods.

**Q3:** Can you give examples of links and imaginative ways of working in this area?

**Response:** In Guinea, food was going from urban to rural areas as well as vice versa, this was surprising. Remittances were also going back to rural areas.

In Zimbabwe, it was common for market traders to drop children in rural areas whilst they bought stock in South Africa. More examples are in the report.

**Q4:** Will you be answering the questions proposed in the report or do you know the answers?

**Response:** No, we don't have the answers. These were questions thrown up by the research we will now work to find out the implications of these questions. Do have some ideas of what links are most important at certain times of year but not others.

**Q5:** How will you go about phasing out of the hygiene and sanitation programme?

**Response:** We aren’t sure. The aim of the programme in Guinea is to build the capacity of state and non-state actors who can take the programme forward instead of ACF. There will be a time when ACF won’t be involved, it will be government Ministry of Health.

**Q6:** ACF is involved in policy, development, etc. How challenging is it and what are the opportunities at the country level to feed back information?

**Response:** We feed findings into the country office, and what they conclude can be fed into future programmes.

**Ensuring accountability in urban contexts: New challenges and opportunities**

**Emily Rogers, Accountability Coordinator, CRS Haiti**

([Presentation slides](http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/day1-erogers.pdf))

It is important to define what we mean by ‘community’ and ‘community representatives’. A sense of community often comes from participation, but in a city context there are more boundaries potentially resulting in less of a sense of community. In cities it may be better to look at common purposes, networks, livelihoods and where people gather, rather than their geographical area.

It is not possible to work with everyone in a city so it works better to gather representatives while taking into consideration not everyone can represent themselves. In Haiti, we encountered self-formed groups without clear mandates who represented their own self-interest rather than others. It is vital to communicate to committees and representatives what and who they are representing. The fluidity of people movements makes this more difficult as people have footprints in multiple areas. NGO activities such as the provision of services can also trigger movements of people.

There will be a large concentration of varied actors. We need to understand the tensions between people e.g. those with different types of housing, landowners and slum dwellers and recognise that there is suspicion of newcomers.

Working with government is essential but takes time. It is important to work with them at their pace. In Haiti we needed to work with different levels of government but they were not necessarily working with each other. From a community perspective there are blurred definitions of actors. How do they access the humanitarian response system? We tend to be closed in our use of specialised language and response. It is important to communicate our role and where that stops.

There is a need for local level coordination; enabling opportunities for different partnerships as well as joint implementations, building to the strength of other organisations. How do we recognise the role the businesses were playing before and how they are able to work post disaster? How can we recognise their systems and work with them and not undermine them? For example, in Haiti, before the earthquake people were used to paying for water from private companies.

Transport to urban areas is much more accessible than in rural settings, resulting in many volunteer groups. This affects collective accountability. How can we be frank about communications on the ground to try and work with organisations to understand how they are better able to help, particularly with volunteer groups who continue to arrive in Haiti? It is difficult for governments to distinguish between amateur and well-experienced groups.

In an urban context populations can access information from many different sources. NGOs used to be the gatekeepers of information. Now people can ask many questions of agencies and in turn see what agencies are saying. People can access news and sensational stories easily, so agencies have to be more proactive about communicating their information, saying what they are doing and how they are handling challenges. Key opportunities: communication in urban areas could be targeted in a much more varied way, for example by SMS, phone lines, radio sessions for call-ins, not just to answer questions.

In high population densities rumours can spread fast. For example, in Haiti, one rumour was that if you were to receive aid then you could not get a visa to travel to the USA.

We need to review how risk, both perceived and real, changes over time. We need to make sure that our programmes do not contribute to the higher risks in urban areas e.g. transactional sex.

When staffing for an urban response it is critical to use relevant skills and to know how to work with local governments. How do we recognise the skills that are already there and build capacity?

Urban cities are whole countries condensed into small areas. Donors can pressure agencies to respond to a whole area, which is an unrealistic and often a knee-jerk response. It is important to target the response in order to be effective, for example you would not aim to target an entire population. Agencies need to balance and respond to that pressure better by responding thoroughly to a smaller group rather than trying to reach a large area poorly.

**Conclusion:**

* Urban settings do not challenge our definition of accountability but they do change how we achieve it.
* Aim to communicate less at a city-wide scale, but rather at a smaller community-size scale.
* Think about whether it is important to have teams across cities rather than to have one large office?

**Questions & answers Session:**

**Q1:** What do you mean by accountability? I see it as accountability as a donor which is very narrow and may be wrong.

**Response:** Accountability is how we balance the needs of stakeholders and how we take into account different views, channels of communication, collaboration and dialogue between communities and governments. It’s linked to responsibility.

**Q2:** How can we ensure that self-selected committees are working for the good of the population and not just their own self-interest?

**Response:** Community Based Organisations were there before the earthquake (Haiti). There are different techniques that can be used to assess the committees, what their roles are and what they can do to help, and how much decision-making power to give them.

It is important to also go directly to the communities, and to work with them, even the most badly perceived committees.

We need to be clearer with whom we are working with and why so they can raise concerns.

**Q3:** What kind of regulation is needed in order to correctly base new volunteers and actors? And who should be responsible for this?

**Response:**There are many suggested models. One idea is a clearing house for volunteer groups when they first arrive. A big problem is they tend to be outside the humanitarian system e.g. church groups, making it very hard to regulate. If it were to be regulated then ideally this would be done by the government. In the case of a weak government then it is not clear who should take over the regulation.

**Q4:** How is it possible to achieve good practice of accountability to beneficiaries in an urban area?

**Response:** Communication is one aspect. How are we choosing who we work with and how do they represent the community? We struggle with this and are still trying to put rural models into the urban; we need to work on a smaller and more local scale.

For response and complaints mechanisms in an urban context it is made easier with the accessibility of communication technologies e.g. free phone lines.

**Q5:** Comment: How can you make committees more responsible? In setting them up you are investing power and responsibility. There needs to be a clear terms of reference. We have the same problem in Kenya with volunteers and groups arriving thinking that they want to do good, but putting themselves in danger because of their actions. There should be a minimum code of conduct for volunteers and they should know what type of activity is prohibited.

**Q6:** How do you deal with strong interlinked communities with strong leaders?

**Response:** You can have small strong communities within an urban context. We are still looking at it geographically and that may not be the right response an fails to take into account the different vulnerabilities. IOM is trying to create community platforms with access into different levels of community, bringing representatives together and creating clear linkages.

**Q7:** To whom are you accountable? With localised urban plans, whose plan trumps whose? E.g. People may be used to paying for water whereas a donor says it should be free.

**Response:** There are so many stakeholders within each setting and we want to collaborate with all of them. When IFRC stopped water trucking in a number of camps, they expected people to phone in and ask why they had stopped, whereas they received very few calls because people were used to paying. The free supply of water was keeping people in camps and undermining local businesses.

**Q8:** What is the role of diaspora in macro disasters?

**Response:** We are not looking at how we are accountable with diaspora, though they do have a role to play.

**Q9:** How many local people were employed from the local community in your organisation (Haiti)?

**Response:** We have 800 employees from Haiti. Shelter and Wash programmes would try and hire labourers from the local areas. When we move to a new community we would once again work with a new group, rather than taking people with us. We keep training new people so they then have the transferable skills.

**Q10:** What is the overlap between accountability and the leaving and exit strategy, for example when the IFRC withdrew the water supply and when Merlin withdrew their surgical team?

You need strong accountability to have a good exit strategy. What would they do if the assistance is no longer there? Who are you going to work with so that they can be trained? How will they be able to work when you are longer there?

**Q11:** How do you engage with prominent actors such as gangs and what is your accountability towards them?

**Response:** If gangs are not being heard they will make sure they make themselves known - they demand attention! CRS has offices in five communities so that close relationships can be built with the community. Because we are based in a community we are often seen as ‘the’ NGO so gang members will come and take out their frustration about all NGOs. It is difficult as gang members are everywhere and are part of all powerful groups. It is important to try and engage with them in a professional manner. In one case we had to leave an area as groups were protesting outside our office for things we could not give. Using the communication tools we had in place such as SMS we let the population know what was going on and that our services would be interrupted but we would be back. It’s about keeping a two way communication.

**Lessons learned from working in urban environments: Session Three**

**Urban Risk Reduction and Rehabilitation: UN-HABITAT Experience**

**Dan Lewis, Chief, Disaster and Post Conflict, UN-HABITAT** ([presentation](http://www.alnap.org/resource/6280.aspx))

There is a constant struggle to try to organise the complexities of urban systems. The humanitarian and development communities need to take these into consideration in their programming. This presentation is about the examples and case studies of UN-HABITAT with regards to urban risk reduction and rehabilitation.

Agency Wide Policy

* The process began in 2002 to develop and derive policy which would provide the agency and partners on the principles of engagement in the urban settings in disaster and conflict situations.
* The most important principle is the principle of trying to catalyse change.

What is sustainable relief and reconstruction?

* Principle is so important in times of crisis.
* Opportunities to change are greater in crisis than in stability
* Have developed an approach relating to sustainable relief and recovery.
* There is no reason why development actors should not be on the scene following a disaster, if they aren’t already there.

(SLIDE 4): Architecture of ‘delivery’ - IASC

* Formalised engagement of the cluster system
* Work in yellow areas has taken place

Sustainable reconstruction strategy

* Our policy looks at 5 entry point areas:
  1. Emergency rehabilitation of permanent shelter in the built environment
  2. Land management and property rights
  3. Economic recovery and restoration of livelihoods
  4. Urban environment
  5. Rehabilitation of critical infrastructure

Sectoral entry points for urban risk reduction and reconstruction

* A major restructuring in our organisation went live yesterday which has changed the previous departments we used to work in.

Why land issues are important?

* Land issues are the hardest hurdle to overcome, especially in conflict areas.
* There are political and social vulnerabilities when it comes to land.
* Virtually every crisis has land management/ rights as a critical issue.
  + - 90% for UN HABITAT. It is a critical factor for resolving crisis & recovery
    - This is increasingly recognised, organisations are taking interest.

DRC land mediation

* There are emerging conflicts over the rights to occupy and use land.
* No systems for managing disputes or functional administration.
* Used mediation not to resolve tenure but to resolve conflict
* Many actors were involved in trying to solve conflict.
* 3000 cases have been registered, 1000 actually settled disputes.
* Over time land rights will be formalised.

ICGLR – Regional approach to land - also happening in Kenya and Rwanda - resolutions of land disputes

Other recovering countries e.g. Somalia: tax revenues are finally starting to emerge.

Key Principles: Shelter housing

* Starting with a principle of permanent housing and not ‘temporary shelter’ is important.
* Principle of organisation is to focus on communities and then scale up.
* Using planning as a means of understanding land use
* Building standards in relation to resilience.

Haiti: Safe return strategy

* Developed this strategy after the earthquake in Pakistan where there were hundreds of people in tents while there was empty habitable and available space which is structurally sound.
* In 2010, almost 50% of buildings were green or yellow in Haiti, yet the building of mass temporary shelter continued.
* New principle to start looking at available space.

Corail, November 8 2010

* Planned IDP camp led to invasion of property surrounding it, this solution will takes decades to remedy.
* This is one of the main arguments against temporary shelter.

Sustainable reconstruction through… urban environment

* Environmental issues
* Critical to the function, protection and recovery of urban areas (big and small).

Kiribati

* Effects of sea level rises. May take 30-40 years, but soon the whole country may be submerged.
* Looking to the future. Many people will no doubt be forced to move from their houses

Tuvalu

* In October this year the whole country ran out of fresh water.
* Very vulnerable to sea level rise

Bangladesh

* Many climate-related issues.
* Huge rates of urbanisation.

El Salvador – flooding/displacement

* Hit hard by heavy rains last year.
* One of the places where we are promoting the ‘safe return strategy’.

Challenges-Opportunities

* Issue of scaling up both within and outside our organisation. We are a small organisation with a large mandate.
* Important to look to big partner organisations to do what we can to assist there.
* Increasing capacity within academic institutions; therefore we are increasingly partnering with them.
* Regional initiatives.
* APRU- Universities developing new curricula for urban DRR.
* Need to go from talk to action.

New Resources for Partners

* Guidelines and assessment tools (focusing on shelter as an entry point).
* Shelter catalogues.
* Publication- ‘Urban Frontlines’. Coming out soon and will be available online.
* Sourcebook with 14 case studies

**Questions and answers Session:**

**Q1:** Emergencies creating opportunities for a ‘build back better’. Two main prongs of interventions:

* Traditional bricks and mortar
* Policies

When it comes to the issue of sustainability in an urban setting, what have you learnt about how to incentivise people to move back from camps and into organic communities?

**Response:**

* Should be looking more at disincentives. For example, receiving support external to their neighbourhoods. Too much centralised service delivery.
* System needs to build on support systems for affected communities.
* Need to understand that things which are built as temporary are actually temporary.
* We need to reconsider how to distribute humanitarian support and aid, even if it is more difficult and diffuse.
* Need to get people back into their houses as fast as possible in order to shorten response period.

**Q2:** As a small organisation with a big mandate - what is your strategy on housing?

**Response:**

* Working on lessons learned from other contexts.
* Can’t do it all, trying to focus on pilots and new ways of doing things.
* E.g. Darfur- low carbon technology delivery- stabilised soil block construction and training people to use it.
* E.g. Pakistan, we built less than 2000 units.
* The idea is not to take it all on, but take a concept of the delivery of ‘permanence’ and learning lessons.

**Q3:** There is a big push from many agencies and donors to do the temporary rather than permanent. How do you change that?

**Response:**

* Not sure that the donors have got it right.
* Idea of incremental programming and projects, i.e. creating starting points. This may be in terms of the policy system or material supply system (utilising survivors, and seeing them as assets rather than vulnerabilities).
* Concept of transitional housing – current models cost too much to transition. Communities can’t afford to improve the structures.
* Temporary on the most part (unless meeting an extreme immediate need), must be reconsidered on its utilisation in the long term.
* SPHERE not appropriate to high density urban environments.

**Responding to urban disasters-the experience of the Red Cross Movement in Haiti**

**Margaret Stansberry, Deputy Country Representative, IFRC Haiti** ([presentation](http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/day1-mstansberry.pdf))

Red Cross Red Crescent movement works in natural disaster zones and in disaster preparedness. ICRC works for humanitarian issues and better conditions.

**3 Key Messages for Operating in Urban Settings:**

**1. Innovation and Urban Response and Recovery: Relief software**

Relief software was introduced. The challenge here was that with more than a hundred camps how do you get relief out with accountability? The Mexican Red Cross brought in a beneficiary card with a barcode linked to a database. One hundred families were able to be served in 10 minutes; in some cases it was even faster. There were no long lines of beneficiaries waiting to be served, but rather a more efficient and faster system. This being said you cannot record a lot of information about the beneficiary on the card and there is no way of having any photograph for the family on the card. This is a system that has worked well in an urban setting. The beneficiaries weren't waiting for aid; it was the other way around. However, the drawback is how you make sure the right people are getting the right aid.

In urban settings there have been great uses of beneficiary communications. IFRC have good relationships with mobile phone providers, which means they can target areas across Haiti enabling them to SMS prevention and preparedness messages. Haitian call centres have toll free lines with pre-recorded information so that beneficiaries can access information when they want to.

A new system coming out next month is the Interactive Voice Response (IRV) system where more beneficiaries can provide feedback in greater depth through voice recognition messages. It is still to be seen how well this works reaching out to a wider group of people and how well it receives feedback. It will be interesting to see if this impacts data and beneficiary participation and accountability. This information can also be fed back to the government and provide them with some data.

**2. Skills sets in urban response: nice to have or minimum necessities?**

Skill sets in urban response recovery should not only be dependent on the size of an organisation. If we do not do a good job assessing risks in communities we will not do a good job in response and in recovery. An example from Haiti is the mapping of where and why violence is happening. This was taken to the construction company and they then were able to work to help to make a safer community.

Are there any urban community development specialists and, if so, are they recognised for what they do? It is often the case that HR and Donor resources do not understand the need for someone so specialised. If they do not have these people working in the community then it is possible the work being carried out may not be sustainable.

**3. Urban response and recovery: be prepared to think outside the box and ask for flexibility:**

In Haiti 80% of the population were tenants before the emergency. If they rented before could they not rent again? Building transitional shelters was an original idea but the need for rental shelters to be built was later also seen as a solution. Because of the change in plans trying to get the donors on side was hard.

An example of thinking out of the box was rubble reduction and the use of rubble for building structures. This is then turned over to local businessmen so that they can sustain their livelihoods for the short term using this initiative.

**Questions and answers Session:**

**Q1:** Are you working with others on the innovations such as bar-code scanners?

**Response:** Probably, I think we are working with UN and other organisations but I am not that involved.

**Q2:** Are the questions on the IVR open or closed questions? Which mechanisms were there or who distributed the money for rent?

**Response:**The majority of questions are closed, but there is an additional way to leave longer responses and share opinions.

Through the banks and through electronic pins, no physical cash and this was often the first time they had a bank account. ARC raised money to give to each Haitian family but this didn’t happen and politics got in the way. Now the money gets channelled through partners.

**Q3:** Is it possible to get a reliable beneficiary list?

**Response:** There is no one beneficiary list in Haiti, but we now have a good relationship with other UN agencies which at the time there was no link.

**Q4:** What does the IFRC/RC do that the government couldn’t do and what stops the US government giving the money to the government of Haiti?

The preparedness strategies, beneficiary lists and other systems are developed under pressure after the event. If the IFRC had been there the year before, what would the priorities have been?

**Response:** We were there and were pushing for preparedness and pushing to get people together but you cannot always get people’s attention before an event; we now have their attention.

There was some preparedness and the situation could have been worse without it. Now we are more prepared and we hope to continue with this development over the next 5 years.

**Q5:** Is there a beneficiary database and what are the beneficiary criteria?

**Response:**There is no one database across the country, but many local offices have their own, therefore there is a pretty good reach across the country. Use beneficiary list for household levels. In general there are no strict criteria but in some cases some elements may be used. For example the British RC has followed a community back to their neighbourhood to work with them as the transition into this next stage.

**Q6:** Can you list anything that went wrong with the Haiti response?

**Response:**The secretariat carried out a lot of work and research- however the relief teams in the field were not ready to deal with this information. It was a year before they were able to move people from the camps.

**Q7:** Why could you not add a picture to the beneficiary card?

**Response:** In the context of Haitian families it is best to use the card without pictures. There are monitors based within the camps to make sure it was all handed out correctly. In cases where there may have been a problem it was assessed and then dealt with.

**The Great Japan Earthquake and Tsunami – response and lessons learned**

**Tsukasa Katsube, Information Management Advisor, Secretariat of Japan Disaster Relief Team, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)** ([presentation](http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/day1-tkatsube.pdf))

JICA is the implementing body for ODA.

**Part 1: Overview of the disaster**

1. Multi-hazard: earthquake, tsunami and radiation
2. Widespread affected area
3. Local government was affected – example of an office building that was washed out completely. Six people held onto the aerial on the roof and survived. Therefore it was not possible to implement the disaster management plan as the ‘caretaker’ became a victim also.
4. Less populated area. Comparison with Hanshin 1995.
5. Economic effect on the global supply chain. There are mixed feelings about disasters in urban settings in relation to those in high income areas of the country. Though the affected area produced only 6% of the total GDP, it did have manufacturing plants for the car industry.

**Part 2: Response**

1. Management Mechanism: JICA works internationally in disaster management but is omitted from this official framework, which prevented it from getting involved on the ground during the crisis. Though the JICA office are able to act as the operational focal point we are currently outside the system of coordination. Our knowledge of OCHA coordination was not used effectively. The government set up OSOCC in Tokyo, far away from the crisis which meant that its role was limited to reporting, whereas it should have been positioned on the ground alongside the Local Emergency Management Authority (LEMA). Similarly, the government invited in the UNDAC but again restricted their terms of reference to reporting and dissemination of information.
2. First domestic responders were mainly police, fire services, self-defence posts and the coastguard.
3. Japan did not need relief goods given by other countries, but accepted them anyway for political reasons, which led to confusion on the ground with distribution.
4. JICA’s response: facilities and shelters, working with NGOs, donations, relief and recovery, media relations, knowledge sharing. Messages of sympathy from around the world were really valued by those affected.

**Part 3: Lessons learned**

* **Relief teams:** Aid should be given on request. Japan only requested four teams: UK, USA, Australia and NZ. More than 20 teams arrived mainly due to connections with embassies: a case of politics versus practice. It reflects the priorities of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.
* The UNDAC team was very helpful.
* Many people came but it was hard to know who was capable or who was a disaster tourist. INSARAG (under OCHA) is a useful way of classifying organisations and identifying those using a common international methodology.
* **Relief goods.** The Japanese government failed to disseminate the information of what was needed, and therefore received too much international aid which caused confusion on the ground. High-income countries can provide many of their own goods to their own standards of quality. For example, diapers were given which were unusable as they were not the right quality.
* **Overall lessons:** We need to prepare for the unimaginable, even though these disasters occur once in a thousand years.
* We need greater awareness of multi-hazard emergencies.
* We should prioritize on response to minimise confusion in making decisions to accept offers of help from abroad. For example, national assistance should be prioritized, followed by regional assistance (i.e. other Asian states) and finally international assistance should only be accepted if these are insufficient.
* Tokyo-Yokohama is still at the top of the Risk Index produced by MunichRe of vulnerabilities and risks for cities and remains a great concern.
* Picture of tsunami from 300 years ago, and seemingly nothing has changed. We need to find a way to co-exist with the hazards around us.

**Questions and answers Session:**

**Q1:** The media plays a role in the problems of relief goods. Westerners identified with the urban disaster in Japan because they viewed them as ‘people like us’. We found that so many people wanted to give that we had to open a portal to receive donations and Oxfam Japan had to find projects to spend the money on.

**Q2:** What was the time difference between the earth quake and the tsunami?

**Response:** Thirty minutes.

What was the time of the initial response?

**Response:** The official response was one minute.

**Q3:** You mention your frustration with Tokyo, but you had a Japanese certified team on site. What prevented you from setting up a quasi-team on site with a link to the virtual OSOCC website?

**Response:** Provisional OSOCCs were set up by the Australians and the South Africans. We had some problems with setting up a Japanese OSOCC.

**Q4:**  Do we know how the radiation has affected health so far?

**Response:** JICA doesn’t have direct relations with those involved handling the issue of radiation**.**

**Q5:** What role does national pride play in deploying international teams?

**Response:** It’s not necessary to accept help only from teams classified by INSARAG, but it is helpful to work with them because at least they know the international methodologies.

**Q6:** Was there an early warning system?

**Response:** There was a very advanced early warning system in this area but it didn’t work as the height of the tsunami was underestimated. People also thought that they could outrun the tsunami. Some did escape to higher ground due to the early warnings.

**Q7:** Why didn’t the disaster management plan work?

**Response:** It was dysfunctional. The commander was killed and the office was washed away so they had nothing. The mayor died.

**Follow up:** Wasn’t it linked with a national plan? Why is JICA outside the government’s system?

How would you rate the coordination between departments e.g. fire and police?

**Q8:** DEC had a huge response from the public – we have trained them to respond! Do you have any strategies of response to prevent disaster tourists and unwanted aid?

**Response:** It is essential to convince the Minister of Foreign Affairs to share information more widely about the foreign aid that is required.

**Q9:** Are there any changes that you are making or follow up regarding the problem of unwanted assistance?

**Response:** It is in progress. We have made suggestions to the government.

**Q10:** Are the self-defence forces at community level or government level?

**Response:** This is part of the military.

**Table Discussion: What works and what do we need to do better?**

*Table discussions on the lessons learned from the presentations: what should humanitarians be doing differently?*

*Points raised by the table discussions were:*

**GROUP 1:**

**UN Habitat:**

* Urban Framework using Key Sectoral entry
* Points for Rebuilding Cities

**JICA**

* Sectoral coordination mechanisms including urban violence
* License to work certification to allow select agencies to work with Governments
* INGOs to lobby then responsible governments regarding visa

**Haiti International Disaster Response Law**

* Urban Specific Skills
* Beneficiary Communication Staff
* Urban Community Development Staff
* Liaise with governments at local level and at all levels
* Urban violence (disaster or development issue)
* Need to define a disaster

**GROUP 2:**

1. Build capacity with focus on expertise relating to urban issues and DRR (Not technical, but “softer” expertise e.g. awareness of urban issues
2. Better causal- Effect Analysis and Livelihoods joint needs and risk assessments and shaping responses to build back better

**GROUP 3:**

1. Set up mechanism of effective coordination between international and national actors
2. Mirror cluster approach within national coordination strategy
3. Urgency for acting now on preparedness including risk reduction
4. Have a framework/policy of urban engagement of each organization

**GROUP 4:**

**3 top things we learnt we need to do:**

1. Develop better framework for “systems” in urban context. Use this as a basis to define needed associated skill sets (source new staff and build skill in existing staff)
2. Determine scope and opportunities to use technology to effectiveness (including analysis of rights associated with “missing” vulnerable groups)
3. Linking local authorities, municipalities in preparedness and response ( as a humanitarian system)

**GROUP 5:**

* Think outside of the ‘box’. Keep an open mind to innovative approaches- from beneficiary registration to rentals for shelter
* Recognise the significance of rural and urban connections especially for food security
* Make better use of comparative advantages

**GROUP 6:**

**Challenges**

1. Responsibility and accountability of government, beneficiaries and donors
2. Clear definition of Urban Humanitarian Crisis

**GROUP 7:**

1. Embed ‘urban sensitivity’ within humanitarian organizations (bring in new skills)
2. Mobilise community organizations and local capacity

**GROUP 8:**

1. Thinking “Outside Box” (creatively/flexibly). Human Resources (Technical skills, job profiles) and types of interventions, other actors (eg. Private sector). Include also Donors- appreciation and support for same
2. Improved preparedness and response – transparency in sharing of risk analysis with populations, groups and communities
3. Coordination and linking on land and tenure issues including as part of emergency preparedness and contingency planning- under- standing context to improve response and mitigate risks.

*Overall, the points were summarised as:*

1. Establish clear **definition** of ‘urban crisis’
2. Each organization develop **framework / policy** for urban engagement
3. Build and embed **capacity** on urban issues and DRR based on conceptual framework
   1. Include ‘missing’ vulnerable groups; rural-urban linkage; Land tenure; Urban violence
4. Better **preparedness** 
   1. Share risk assessments broadly
5. Better assessment and analysis **methods and tools**
6. Encourage **innovative** approaches/technology
7. Set up mechanism of effective **coordination**
   1. Mirror cluster approach within national coordination strategy
   2. Build on comparative advantages of different actors
   3. Recognise importance of line ministries
   4. Recognise and prioritise local capacity
8. Determine scope and opportunities to use **technology** to increase effectiveness

1. Could there be some clarification on the understanding of “thinking outside the box”, as written on the flipcharts of at least two groups?

**Response:**

Two examples could be:

* Rental support – was a prominent issue in Haiti, many humanitarian agencies were not prepared for this, need to engage with many different actors, some of whom agencies may not have worked with before.
* Human resources – many agencies use conventional groupings of resources such as WASH, shelter, etc, however capacity in other non-conventional areas may be required. For example, with urban violence becoming an important component, humanitarian agencies may need a specialist on board who is equipped to mitigate this violence.

2. There has been no mention today of the media, which is a critical component especially in an urban context.

3. Panellist 1

* Issues of limited space in an urban setting (for example, pit latrines may be impossible in some urban areas). People should be encouraged to think differently about their responses.
* Violence in urban slums (example of Nairobi).

4. Panellist 2

* Redefining boundaries. Current boundaries need to be rethought and redrawn, so that the status quo is challenged.
* Although it has been talked about for the last ten years, there is still an institutional divide between the relief and development communities.
* It is good to see exchange of knowledge between different agencies at events like this.

5. Panellist 3

* We are currently discussing the city as it is, but what will the cities of the future look like?
* The importance of media and local markets will be covered tomorrow.
* There has been an extremely rapid increase of the use of technology (for example mobile phones).
* Livelihoods and jobs of local people must be taken into account in relief and rehabilitation.
* Importance of the role of victims and the poor (for example, slum dwellers, who can be the most vulnerable or marginalised).
* Importance of the role of the middle class, who are educated. How do you mobilise them?

**Things to consider:**

* The status of a city’s preparedness.
* The role of democratic governance in urban areas, for example civil society leaderships.
* The role of the corporate sector
* The need for long-term evaluations using examples from the recent past.

**DAY 2, 18 JANUARY 2012**

**Scenario Session: How ready are we for urban disasters? David Sanderson**

**Table Discussion: Setting priorities: 10 key actions for a ‘Global Urban Disasters Action Plan’ for the humanitarian system’**

**Expert Panel: Next steps: ‘A Global Urban Disasters Action Plan’ – How to make it a reality**

**How ready are we for future urban disasters?**

**Scenario Session**

**Facilitated by David Sanderson, Director, Centre for Development and Emergency Practice (CENDEP)**

In this session, participants divided themselves into thirteen groups (see abbreviations of participating groups, below). Each group represented a different organisations involved in preparing for, and responding to, an earthquake in the (fictional) Himalyan sity of Mishal.

In part 1, each organisation was asked to develop a five part plan for disaster preparedness in Mishal. A representative from each organisation then attended a meeting, in which the various groups attempted to create a single, cross organisational five point plan.

In part 2, participants were told that an earthquake and dam-burst had occurred in Mishal, and given information about the effects of these twin disasters. Again, each organisation was asked to provide a five point plan, and then all organisations met to discuss these plans.

The exercise concluded with a debriefing, which aimed to identify main themes.

**Abbreviations of participating organisations:**

Mayor - The Mayor's Office

MPD - Mishal Planning Department

EFB - Enterprise and Food Bureau

UN R. - UN Relief

UN S. - UN Shelter

UN L. - UN Livelihoods

ACRE - ACRE International

FFCI - Food for Children International

MASF - Maisons Sans Frontieres

SVF - Street Vendors Federation

SDRC - Slum Dwellers Resource Centre

MMS - Make Mishal Safe

RTE - Real Time Evaluation

**PART 1: MISHAL – A CITY AT RISK**

**Five-point plans from each organisation:**

**The Mayor’s Office:**

* Early warning system and education/awareness
* Establish a committee with regular meetings
* Link with the Minister of Internal Affairs
* Assign responsibilities for relevant departments in government
* Rapid response force. Prepare for evacuation and search & rescue

**Mishal Planning Department**

* Map hazards and socio economic zones
* Ensure mayor commits to a five year plan for enforcing critical infrastructure
* Identify sites for temporary settlements
* Review local government preparedness
* Ensure legal framework is understood e.g. for seizing land for temporary sites
* Make pre-existing agreements with neighbouring districts who will probably provide assistance

**Enterprise and Food Bureau**

* Clarify roles and responsibilities. We should be lead coordinators for food and enterprise
* Conduct structural assessments of places used for food distribution points
* Vulnerability assessments
* Make agreements with traders and NGOs who will be involved with relief and response
* Prohibit unlimited free food distribution except in the very early stages
* Use technology e.g. mobiles and vouchers. Work with vendors

**UN Relief**

* Coordinate relief operations. Activate clusters. Lead in organising NGOs.
* Organise direct provision of food
* Support logistics: activate coordination mechanisms (contact info, roles, alternative methods of communicating in an emergency etc.)
* Resource mapping, vulnerability and risk mapping
* Align with existing departments

**UN Shelter**

* Scenario planning and contingency planning. Identify sites for relocation
* Pre-position supplies for shelter, WASH, education etc
* Awareness raising programme
* Infrastructure
* Rejuvenation planning in the long-term

**UN Livelihoods**

* Connect with vendors
* Discuss zoning with the mayor
* Partner with Red Cross and TF and strengthen civil society
* Foodbank in each zone with a two week supply of food
* Prioritise local vendors, service provision and use cash grants

**ACRE International INGO**

* Access information from the Mayor’s Office
* Vulnerability mapping e.g. population
* Coordination mechanisms and responsibilities
* Access information on access, local market, supplies and importing food
* Explore site locations for shelter

**Food For Children International:**

1. Vulnerability assessment
2. Assessment of supply lines, highways and information on existing agricultural supplies
3. Map the key distribution points
4. Go to schools to work on preparedness curriculum. Partner with Make Mishal Safe
5. Know the coordination mechanisms

**Maisons Sans Frontières**

* Identify food, shelter, location, stakeholders
* Discuss housing options
* Plan coordination
* Anticipate recovery – mapping registration of land/property
* Arrange pre-commitments between building owners and tenants to organise priority of return to rebuilt homes

**Slum Dwellers Resource Centre:**

1. Strengthen the community centre. In an earthquake could be used as a resource centre.
2. Awareness raising campaign - EWS and sirens
3. Recognition of ID cards for cash for work and food distribution
4. Ensure a seat on the emergency committee
5. Long-term: move to a less vulnerable location

**Street Vendors Federation**

* Ensure livelihoods are restored as soon as possible
* Remove rubble
* Guarantee the supply chain – speak to wholesalers
* Protect against undercutting by agencies giving donations. Price regulation
* Be seen as part of the response, not as victims

**Make Mishal Safe**

* Push for community-based consultation with government
* What is ‘risk’ for various communities and vulnerable groups?
* Use consultation to assist in community preparedness plan e.g. evacuation routes and sites
* Create partnerships for food, shelter and livelihoods
* Identify suitable sites

**Meeting 1 called by Mayor’s Office – Preparedness**

Mayor:

* Welcome and thank you for attending this meeting

MDP:

* We have already done an extensive mapping exercise of the city (including zoning, socio-economic mapping, identifying vulnerabilities, existing links and transport networks).
* This was achieved through a three-day community participation process.

EFB:

* We need to clearly establish roles and responsibilities in the event of a disaster.
* We would like to take the leading role on coordination of food and livelihoods.

MDP:

* What investment is there in infrastructure? (protecting schools and hospitals, roads, airports and bridges).

Mayor:

* There should be plans to retrofit these structures.

MMS:

* We propose we start by looking at what could be at stake in the event of an emergency/time of crisis (whether an earthquake or not).
* There should be a brainstorming process of common goals.
* It is not so important who does what, but thinking more about how the communities will be affected.

Community representative 1 (housewife):

* Require more precise information on when this earthquake will happen.
* Will it affect my business?
* Will I need to move out of my home?
* Will my children be safe?

SVF:

* The communities are our strength, therefore it is important to restore their livelihoods and get them back to a functioning state as quickly as possible after a disaster.

UN L.:

* It is important to plan and coordinate. We need to agree a coordination plan. The matter of who takes the lead is important.
* Livelihoods should be supported through cash-based support.
* Everyone must take on board the planning of hazards and the mapping of vulnerability.

Police Commissioner:

* There are serious security issues to consider such as the threat of riots.
* There could be tensions between the rich communities of Bollywood stars who have their second homes in the mountains, and the poor slum communities who can be troublesome.

ACRE:

* There needs to be site planning for temporary shelters. Allocation of these sites should be communicated and coordinated with others so that there is not duplication.

MASF:

* In agreement that site planning is important, there is a need to identify the sites to relocate people should a disaster happen.
* Coordination should be established.

SDRC:

* Slum dwellers are a resource. They will be the first responders in the area in the event of an emergency.
* We are upset to hear that the police believe them to be troublesome, rather than a useful resource.

UN R.:

* There needs to be a strengthening of local government departments. This will ensure that they are well equipped in the case of a disaster and have the capacity to coordinate all agencies so that they can work smoothly together.
* All aspects need to be considered, whether it be supplies, peacekeeping, socio-economic development, etc.

Insurance company:

* The 5-point plan is needed urgently, so that we can write our report.
* Has anyone considered health, one of the main priorities? A large percentage of the population will be affected with a possible 15,000 people being injured. What are the plans for this?

UN S.:

* Offer of support for a contingency plan. We will provide advice to the government offices and planning department for a strategy regarding this.
* There should be a public awareness-raising campaign to 'make Mishal safe'.

MMS:

* To summarise what has been said, and move forward to a five point plan, we would like to propose the following:
* Risk assessment mapping (consultation update, locations, market, housing, etc)
* Preparedness plan (evacuation procedures, criteria of beneficiaries, defining roles, etc)
* Coordination system
* Setting up consultation processes
* Campaign

Mayor:

* I would like to propose the following points with regards to preparedness for a disaster:
* Contingency plan
* Emergency stock piling
* Make Mishal safe campaign
* Medium-term retrofitting of critical infrastructure

SVF:

* What about restoration of livelihoods? Surely this should be one of the main points.

MDP:

* There needs to be leadership agreed on all of this.
* Who should be involved? Should there be sub-committees and standing committees?

Expert on disasters:

* There are some key points which need to brought to the table:
* Health problems, both primary AND secondary need to be taken into account. For example, there may be pollution from fires or cholera outbreaks.
* We must ensure that the Ministry of Health and the Police are on board.

Community representative 2:

* Beneficiaries need to be included in the discussion.
* Can there be a translator, so we can understand what is being agreed?
* What about corruption, accountability and keeping promises?

MASF:

* What about funding sources? What support is the UN bringing? The government has limited resources available.

UN S.:

* There needs to be a cluster system set up to include all sectors (WASH, shelter, settlement planning, livelihoods, etc.). The UN is in a position to lead this system.

FFCI:

* We can go into schools and work with school children on preparedness.

Mayor:

* The meeting must be wrapped up here. Thanks to all for participating.

**PART 2: MISHAL – TWO WEEKS AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE**

**Five-point plans from each organisation**

**The Mayor’s Office**

1. Recovery strategy – long-term priority is community resilience
2. Clear needs assessment via collaboration with other stakeholders
3. Joint prioritization led by Mayor’s office
4. Accountability framework with emphasis on transparency and beneficiaries
5. Aid capacity assessment
6. Pledge additional support

**Mishal Planning Department**

1. Lead a thorough damage assessment using a simple traffic light system to indicate need for demolition. Connect with affected population with extensive communications plan. International community should focus on restoring hospitals and reaching remote areas.
2. Army should clear major roads
3. Set up temporary settlements. Mayor’s office need to clear space, at least 75 hectares
4. Proper burials
5. Energy and communications structures

**Enterprise and Food Bureau**

1. Address the issue of access to food. Get supply chain moving. Act on pre-arranged agreements
2. Scale up cash for work
3. Get cash into vendors’ hands

**UN Relief**

1. Progress reports
2. Activate disaster preparedness plan
3. Explore exit strategies
4. Ensure transparency all round
5. Integrate local suppliers
6. Accountability

**UN Shelter**

1. Joint assessment with UN Relief on sector needs
2. Joint fundraising and appeal for international assistance
3. Household supplies
4. Tools and supplies for shelter
5. Cash for work

**UN Livelihoods**

1. Act on pre-existing agreements with vendors
2. Attend to livelihoods options outside the city because of the impact of migration from rural to urban
3. Road access
4. Long-term livelihoods options
5. Prohibit free feeding except for vulnerable groups
6. Set up business directors and match businesses to recovery needs
7. ID card restoration

**ACRE International**

1. Cash for work – debris
2. Shelter support – thermal support (winter)
3. Use empty guesthouses for accommodation
4. Bring in skilled labour to make the shift from transitional to permanent housing
5. Coordinate with agencies on WASH

**Food For Children International**

1. Combine food and livelihoods clusters
2. Broaden food catchment purchase area
3. Stabilise supply – consult traders and private sector
4. Supplementary feeding at schools. Use this to also create learning and playing space for children, especially orphans. Identify most vulnerable.
5. Set up cash for work scheme e.g. removing rubble
6. Extensive needs assessment to monitor migration
7. Explore alternative foods. Nutrition

**Maisons Sans Frontières**

1. Relief is ongoing
2. Close contact with suppliers
3. Complete survey of destruction and use relevant classifications. Involve both Shelter and Livelihoods specialists
4. Partner with cash for work programmes. Rubble removal
5. Link with local authorities on planning and permanent shelters
6. Displacement: work with community-based organisations on identifying where families lived to enable return to homes

**Slum Dwellers Resource Centre:**

1. Lobby for rebuilding
2. Cash grants instead of cash for work
3. Reissue ID cards
4. Be the intermediary for accountability mechanisms and provide two-way information
5. Complaints mechanism
6. Lobby price control
7. Help INGOs and UN with matching skills, jobs and training

**Street Vendors Federation**

1. Get cash into the economy
2. Access credit
3. Price control
4. Be part of the livelihoods cluster

**Make Mishal Safe**

1. Build networks on the ground and conduct a needs assessment
2. Advocacy for vulnerable groups
3. Integration of DRR practice
4. Set up complaints mechanism

**REAL-TIME EVALUATION TEAM**

1. Timelines of transition from relief to recovery (e.g. evidence of discussion, planning, allocation of budget etc.)
2. Relevance to changing needs.
3. Level of beneficiary consultation, involvement and feedback
4. Level of operational coherence
5. Vulnerability and capacity assessments including needs assessments
6. Amount of money allocated to capacity development

**Meeting 2 called by UN Relief – Relief and Recovery**

UN R.:

* Thanks to all for coming. The Mayor is currently still recovering, therefore the Vice Mayor will be stepping in for this meeting.
* As we have limited time, we would like to make this as concise as possible.
* Firstly, we need to look at what coordination is taking place, if any. It would be useful to hear from the various clusters with regards to needs assessment, gap analysis and participation.

Mayor:

* There is definitely a comprehensive analysis needed.
* Also, local capacity needs to be taken into account.

MDP:

* There is already a thorough assessment underway of the damage to infrastructure and roads.

FFCI:

* The food and livelihoods clusters should combine their efforts.

MASF:

* Similarly, the shelter and WASH clusters could also be linked, and work together on an integrated relief strategy.

UN S.:

* There needs to be more clarification on the demographics, i.e. How many people have been affected and how many can we realistically aim to support?
* Basic needs and WASH factors are important, these need to be remembered.

UN R.:

* It is important to find out what the current situation is, two weeks after the earthquake. Would it be possible to establish a gap analysis from all clusters?

EFB:

* There needs to be more involvement with the agencies who were involved with the preparedness planning.
* Supply chains are a priority.
* There is assistance required from the UN to control all the international agencies and NGOs.
* NB. Please remember cultural issues with regards to clothing (no exposed shoulders).

ACRE:

* We are in agreement that shelter and WASH need to communicate.

UN R.:

* How are local actors currently being involved in the relief effort?

MMS:

* We would like to be involved in the needs assessments to identify current gaps.
* We should reconcile for better recovery planning.
* With regards to accountability, a complaint mechanism needs to be set up.

UN R.:

* Are the clusters working? Is the gap analysis working?

Community representative 1 (IDP):

* How are my needs being addressed at this meeting? My husband has been killed and I am not currently registered for an identity card.
* Can someone communicate with me?

SDRC:

* We are in agreement that accountability is very important.. We will set up a complaints mechanism and a two-way feedback system.

Mayor:

* Accountability to the beneficiaries is definitely extremely important.
* Let us identify one main priority from each area.

RTE:

* Due to the large scale of this emergency, there will be a real time evaluation which will be launched in the coming weeks and months. The evaluation team understands that constraints are heavy and that agencies have limited time, therefore the process will be as light as possible.
* Through consultations with everyone (INGOs, local NGOs and grassroots organisations), we will be able to learn from this response.

Community representative 2:

* MORE ACTION!

UN R.:

* How are we bringing in local partners? What are our priorities?

UN S.:

* Basic needs are a priority, ie. cash grants, household NFIs, shelter NFIs, etc.
* Surely this is not the time to be talking about complaints mechanisms?

MDP:

* The planning department already has a recovery plan in place, which all other organisations must take into account.
* We are coordinating everything, including the clusters, damage assessment, etc. Therefore we are the ones who are accountable to the affected communities.

UN R.:

* Is there anyone looking at a communication strategy?

Community group representative:

* We believe that a complaints mechanism is vital. Otherwise, how will we know whether things are working?

Community representative 3 (slum dweller):

* There are huge problems with hunger and shelter. Currently there are at least 30,000 people who are homeless.

UN R.:

* There needs to be agreement on price control and community participation.

MDP:

* There needs to be more coordination of temporary settlements. Other than that, we are on track with our recovery plan.

SDRC:

* Would it be possible to consider cash grants rather than cash for work programmes?
* On another note, please do not call us beneficiaries; we would prefer to be called 'affected population'.

SVF:

* We need cash!

FFCI:

* Agreement on cash being needed now, and action being needed now.
* The local supply of food will run out in two weeks’ time, therefore there needs to be a broader catchment area for supplies.

MASF:

* There are big issues with supply chains.
* Local capacity needs to be used for building shelters.
* MDP needs to release its recovery plan as soon as possible.

ACRE:

* The logistic supply chains need to be opened up as soon as possible as well.

Community representative 4:

* More support needed for victims.

MMS:

* There needs to be a push for the integration of DRR principles in the recovery plan.
* Coordination is vital.

UN L.:

* Is there a database for collaborating information about skilled workers and where local skills and capacity can be used?
* Need supplies for local shop vendors. There needs to be price control of these supplies.

UN S.:

* How about setting up a matrix of roles and responsibilities?
* Permanent housing and reconstruction needs to be on the agenda.

MDP:

* Our recovery plan will be announced by the end of the week. We will ensure it will be in the local language.
* Communications need to be improved.
* Five burial sites have been identified, which is important for the mourning process.

RTE:

* How is the current system ready for predicted as well as unpredicted risks?

EFB:

* We are in agreement with setting up a complaints mechanism, working on supply chains, reinvigorating the economy and improving access.
* 95% of street vendors were insured; therefore compensation of these people needs to be activated.
* Patience and understanding is required from the international community.
* Don’t forget to cover any bare shoulders!

SDRC:

* We would like to be represented on the real time evaluation team.

UN R.:

* It is clear there are calls for more action. This needs to be stepped up!
* We should be looking at more cash-based approaches.
* Need on-going status reports.
* There will be another meeting tomorrow.

Mayor:

* Over the next few weeks, we need to ensure that the recovery plan is updated, and that there is wider consultation on that document.
* Thank you for your participation in this meeting.

**PART 3: DEBRIEF**

**Process:**

* Government needs to express its priorities
* Strong leadership needed – should be the government
* UN should support not substitute government’s leadership
* Good practice to strengthen local government – sustainable
* Practical considerations of allowing everyone at the table – meaningful coordination vs. information
* Unrealistic simulation – absence of military, capital city, line ministries (who might be in tension with the mayor’s office), journalists, politicians
* Control, command and coordination
* Lack of awareness of what others are doing. Importance of communications
* Constant preparation and communications in advance is essential
* Where it’s successful, coordination is decentralised
* Process: information-sharing vs. action-oriented
* Complexity of substance and process in meetings – many dynamics. People want to be heard. Hard to facilitate at every level

**Substance / best ideas:**

* ‘Complaint mechanism’ is problematic – use ‘participatory evaluation’ or ‘feedback systems’ instead. More positive. BUT if dumbed down it discourages complaints. Forget semantics?
* Declaration of a state of emergency? Wasn’t discussed

**Specific urban challenges:**

* Sector line ministries deliver services in an urban setting and we need to align ourselves to work with those structures
* We are quicker to move to cash-based initiatives in urban than in rural places
* Call for accountability is stronger in the urban context
* Need for strong communications and media
* Conflict situations e.g. Afghanistan. Security problems. Need for buffer stock
* We can assume a more competent local skills base in urban contexts eg. private sector is more qualified
* Cash is more important because of business centres
* Higher risk of corruption, sexual violence and abuse
* Our level of understanding of/ empathy with service providers must increase. We tend to focus on rural producers instead of service providers
* Power dynamics? Urban violence and power brokers
* We are so unprepared for the complexity of the urban situation and need to work on contingency plans now
* Importance of vulnerability mapping to fill in information gaps
* Land tenure, slums, difficulty of cash for work with a very mobile slum community
* Damage to critical infrastructure in urban contexts
* Increased scale of coverage – level of response and attention needed, increased competition for space
* Cash for work for rubble removal – unrealistic. Heavy machinery needed in urban context
* Higher dependence on central services
* More educated population in urban areas who are able to engage as equals with global organisations

**Setting priorities: 10 key actions for a ‘Global Urban Disasters Action Plan’ for the humanitarian system’**

Discussion of Priority Actions to further address Urban Challenges for (a) own organisational type and (b) others

**1. DONORS DISCUSSION**

* The urban context is a more complex arena and therefore donors should be more ready and prepared to finance differing initiatives. This could include looking at areas which they had before not considered, for example rental options; how to register quickly and the barcode system.
* It may also be important to fund other solutions than we are used to; to take risks and work with more flexibility. We have financial budgets and restraints but these should still allow us to be flexible with the system. It may also be important to further develop the legal frameworks in which they work, we need to try and have some influence on this.
* We as donors should not beat ourselves up too much about the lack of flexibility we have but rather we should be stimulating useful ideas and spark new initiatives within our organisations but also with our partners.
* If agencies do not think out of the box then they are less likely to appeal to funders. There is a need to be more flexible than the standard framework.
* It is vital to link humanitarian response with people who are working on other urban areas. DFID don’t have the urban knowledge base- no one to work with on reliance and preparedness.
* Donors need to think about preparedness as well as response. .
* It is important for us to strengthen urban capacity in own organisations but we also need to encourage this in partner organisations in order to fund their contingencies.
* Who has the expertise and the capacity to manage during an urban disaster? Looking at this may effect who you ultimately partner with in the long run.
* A key problem is that accountability gets lost, especially in translation.
* In an urban area there is a more educated and aware population and they start to demand accountability. Because of this it is worth working with communication platforms to make all parties aware of accountability.

**Donors: Priority actions for donors**

* Encouragement of innovative solutions and taking risks, allowing for pilots and failures. We encourage funding for research of innovative ideas for urban areas.
* Raising capacity within our own programmes on urban issues. Not just on the humanitarian side but also on the developmental side as well as promoting resilience.

**Donors: Priority actions for the UN:**

* Prioritise urban disaster preparedness and planning. Identify lead agencies to work within urban agencies. : Encourage humanitarian organisations to come together.

**2. UN DISCUSSION**

* Some of the same issues as in rural context: child protection, immunisation, WASH, restarting schools as soon as possible in an emergency.
* Engage with service delivery systems as these are central to recovery in the urban context
* Nepal: need to develop disaster and response plans at municipal level in addition to district level, and develop search and rescue teams
* UNCT needs to appropriately identify urban violence as a sudden crisis
* All agencies need to consider the development of policies, programming, frameworks and protocols to build urban capacity
* Establish relationships and partnerships with urban partners (NGOs, INGOS, global networks of grassroots organisations). Many entry points here. Start to move away from UN-National basis and build more networks
* Build our knowledge of cities
* Shift our assessments from field to cities. Need for more complex assessments
* Need for more data and studies, more aggregated data. Specific studies needed e.g. the distinctive features of the flood in Thailand.
* Change our thinking: not just member states, but cities.
* Support the IASC as a reference group for meeting the humanitarian challenge
* Address the higher risks for children and youth in urban contexts
* Allow children and youth to play a role in advocacy, DRR and preparedness
* Need serious discussions in UNCT to make sure each department is addressing the urban challenge.
* Move away from linear thinking on relief, response and development - it’s all simultaneous.
* Partner with local level governments for a preparedness agenda
* Add in mapping of the most vulnerable cities
* Need to revisit cluster system for addressing urban disasters. May need to merge some e.g. WASH is very different in an urban setting, therefore it might go with Shelter
* Connect urban context with SPHERE standards
* Move away from ‘camp management’ – presupposes camps
* WHO attended a convention in SE Asia last year that came up with 11 benchmarks for preparedness – this should be promoted more widely
* Need to help national and city governments to do preparedness planning
* Examine human resources within agencies
* Different UN agencies in each country make it too unpredictable. We need to stop and codify and build up a more structured response. Need to learn from those who have moved ahead and get our house in order.
* Dangerous to talk about who or which organisation should do things, it should be the most competent or those with the best resources (pre-condition is that revised policies and framework would be in place). However, surely greater clarity on systems and agencies is needed? For example, in India we would expect a similar system from one state to another.
* Revisit the Disaster Management Training that the UN used to do with countries 20 years ago?
* Need common targets and minimum standards

**UN: Priority Actions**

* Understand the urban context better and look at our current procedures, frameworks, clusters, organisation, customised tools
* Invest more time with service delivery partners
* Work more systematically with local government which is currently not happening across the board
* Systematise more across the UN family
* Ensure greater predictability from the UN as the UN response currently differs greatly from country to country

**UN: Priority Actions for others:**

* Include the urban context in polices, programming and frameworks
* Building capacity at country level: NGOs should translate and localise the specialised expertise that is at global level to country level. Move the skill set to the operational level
* Expand our partnership networks
* NDMAs should develop their relationships with municipal governments. Humanitarian community is shifting towards greater support of local structures. More clarity and communication on roles and boundaries between federal and local government is helpful for external partners.

**3. NGO DISCUSSIONS**

**NGOs: Priority actions**

* **Adapt appropriate tools to an urban context** – For example, gaining a better understanding of the commercial environment, carrying out needs assessments/analyses, identifying profiles of community and household level in urban areas, minimising risks of having misleading information, etc. Once existing tools have been adapted they should be piloted in an urban context, and made effective so that agencies can learn from each other.
* **Capitalise on existing urban disaster evaluations** – Use assessments and evaluations carried out following previous urban disasters (eg. Haiti) more wisely. Learn from them.
* **Define vulnerability in an urban context** – Understanding better how to distinguish between different types of vulnerabilities (for example, understanding the importance of jobs, livelihoods and the business sector in urban areas). Assessing urban vulnerability in order to target (for example, maybe the ‘poorest of the poor’, but also the service providers or local street vendors). NGOs must work with community groups to define this urban vulnerability, and may use parallel programming to target different groups.
* **Partnerships** – Creating different types of partnerships to the ones we are used to (with different parts of the supply chain, for example, with insurance providers). Championing partnerships with local NGOs, and community groups, which are probably already existing and stronger in an urban context.
* **Understand environmental concerns in urban areas** – Do we need to bring in expertise in safety and environmental risk? Do we need to understand infrastructure and building materials better, such as concrete and asbestos roofing? What about waste collection in urban areas? Garbage is already a huge problem in many cities, and could become critical to health and sanitation. Currently, solid waste collection is covered by some cash-for-work programmes, but this is not something which enough NGOs are taking into consideration. Need to support municipality with their solid waste management.
* **Coordinate with local organisations and authorities, while respecting systems which already exist** – Must assume that in an urban context, a plan already exists. Rather than coming in with their own mandates and ways of doing things, NGOs must respect that plan and try to fit into the systems which are already in place. Should work more with local authorities and other local groups who have a better understanding of the ways which the city functions.
* **Redefine mandate and devote a percentage of funding for urban programming** – Develop an urban framework, and integrate DRR policies into development plans. Devote more funds to urban development and preparedness.

**World Vision specific priority:**

* **Develop an urban Disaster Risk Management (DRM) framework for World Vision** – Focus this framework on resilience, preparedness and response. Look at organisational preparedness as well as community preparedness.

**NGOs: Priority actions for others:**

* **Donors** - Much emergency funding is in place for only 6-12 month periods. While this short-term funding is limiting in both urban and rural settings, it could have more consequences in an urban area. Therefore there is a vital need for short-term donors to extend their funding and for long-term donors to bring in their funding earlier. In addition, there needs to be more urban-specific funding from the donors, so that this can go into urban programming.
* **Coordination mechanism** – The cluster system needs to be improved and decentralised. The numbers who attend cluster meetings are currently too high, meaning that there is inefficiency in this system. As long as there is a good filter of communication, then a hierarchal system can work. Must establish who is best to lead that, whether it be the UN or the local authorities (both parties must build up a good relationship and trust one another). In addition, mapping the focus areas of the various INGOs could be an extremely useful exercise.

**4. NDMAs DISCUSSION**

Government: should immediately go for comprehensive contingency planning, along with resource mapping and stockpiling for response.

Need to look at capacity of response force and build upon capacity to react effectively and timely.

There should be three angles;

- institutional capacity

- physical capacity - basic equipment for response

- Human resources development

Need to ensure governments fill in resource gaps, whether it's fire-fighter training/equipment, HR development or table top exercises. Build the capacity of first responders. Need to improve preparedness and put stockpiles in place for things like medicine, water supply, education, governments need to be ready with more stock as soon as an emergency hits.

**NDMAs: Priority actions**

1. Comprehensive contingency planning, including early warning systems. Mainstreaming DRR into the curriculum.
2. Effective implementation of response
3. Emergency operations center

**NDMAs: Priority actions for others**

1. NGOs need to build awareness: during disaster, a community based development response plan (CBDRM)
2. Fundraising (Donors)
3. Technical Assistance (NGOs)

Need to ensure civil society is mobilised to raise awareness and media support.

**5. RED CROSS / RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT DISCUSSION**

* British Red Cross have been looking at urban areas in other sectors – ‘urban learning and innovation’. Trying to glean the best from the sector and bring to BRC. Tapping into what is happening in the movement. Not pushing the movement, just to learn. This is an opportunity to bring together agendas. Disaster preparedness isn’t just about one thing –links to broader dialogue with health, food security, livelihoods. Use as a way to improve pre and post disaster working. Also includes learning component for staff. One deliverable is workshop for staff and partners. Also want to produce handbook.
* IFRC East Asia working in rural DRR – don’t have that information, also more initiatives in Latin America. Some within movement working on Urban violence and protection – disconnect between these areas. Lack of communication.
* IFRC Haiti had learning conference at end of April to set up what are expected research questions after Haiti e.g. What is IFRC learning after Haiti? This framework could be used to help understand what happened in Haiti.
* National societies deal with small and medium disasters. Need to encourage them to look at risk in national plans and support them. Fears that this is another agenda that distracts national societies.
* Not about reinventing the wheel, don’t need to rename. Should stay true to value-add and niche of the movement.
* Can promote aspects of good practice while knowing limits. Risk analysis too top-down.
* American Red Cross doing work in central Asia on high-risk urban programmes targeted to families, focus on family-level preparedness – making kits, having plans to survive a few days.
  + Criticism from BRC – how do you convince people to invest in prep when they can’t pay school fees?
  + Response – That is a rural concern. This is a primary problem in urban areas which we are addressing.
* IFRC Haiti suggests one priority is to emphasise disaster preparedness in urban settings.
  + Agreement is key. Need more dynamic engagement in multi-risk environments. We have niche value to combine disaster & health, day to day as well as big issues.
* Need to encourage culture of evaluation and learning even after small events. This builds capacity for larger events. Too much focus on large events means no plans for small ones.
* RC in all countries but not doing DRR in every city – this is daunting work.
  + Need to prioritise. Perhaps have 20 priority cities for next 10 years?
  + Not sure if that’s possible, can’t tell national societies to do that. Hesitance to ask this.
* IFRC Geneva – Should the ALNAP conference be more focused around monitoring and evaluation? These suggestions require input from programming. (Comment: two around table are programme staff). Also not convinced of difference between rural and urban. Also, there is a lot of experience with urban disasters like tsunami that just hasn’t been documented. Didn’t get act together to collect lessons. Have done better after Haiti.
* BRC – should encourage risk analysis of now and future, how to plan. Failure of national societies and the movement to support them on this and to support communities. There is breakdown, drawn in different directions even though resources are there.
* Don’t just need preparation, also about delivering response and recovery. Need to understand urbanisation’s complexity. Saw no difference between rural and urban in Malawi program. How do we identify differences? Need to see real challenges, what has happened.
* Acknowledgement that Red Cross movement is behind learning in these areas. WFP, ACF, World Vision all doing these things already.
* DRR and preparation are different and it’s harder to engage with community in urban areas. Schools can be one area to work, but overall it’s a different mind-set.
* How do you assess situation you’re in? Differences will be bigger/smaller in some places. Don’t need new tools, just to repurpose them.
* Is it about operational preparedness? Can’t assume we don’t deal with conflicts, other situations.
* Need to update tools along with adding emerging expertise to deal with urban settings. Some have said they have updated tools, but they haven’t been synthesised.
* Need sensitivity to different disaster contexts.
* Actions – updating guidance/model for urban environment is a good point. Programmers must assess.
* In a way, have started working with other Red Cross societies to create Red Cross version of EMMA including how to make it work in urban situations
* Do we need urban VCA? Can we just add guidelines of how adapt it to urban context?
  + Problem with VCA is in the analysis. This is an opportunity to revisit and reinforce proper analysis.
* BRC – need to consolidate what makes urban disasters different before updating tools.
* Proposed action: link with recovery working group cutting across national societies to say ‘We’re doing this, do you want to join in? So it becomes a wider exercise without having to come as a directive from the Secretariat.
* There are a range of tools to create capacity, but they are generic. Need to ensure urban differences are fed into tools.
* See opportunity in innovation, lots of technology-driven tools – programme management, GIS. Also have expertise in setting up bank accounts for beneficiaries. This has not been documented well.
  + In urban environments, these technologies will work better.
  + Quite a few national societies are piloting new technologies
* ARC – What is the benefit of ICRC? – have presence in all countries, most urban settings, large volunteer network. We exist in most places so how can we train and prepare local Red Cross to have better relationships with local ministries? How can we make sure they’re ready to deal with disasters?
* As an auxiliary role, we have a unique position to negotiate with government, but must also engage with other actors.
* Chinese RC raised billions. Fundraising in urban environments may be easier. How did they raise this much?

**Red Cross: Priority actions**

* Discussed RC’s value added – every country, auxiliary role of disaster preparation (different in different countries)
* There is a role in the movement to focus on each society’s capacity, rural and urban. Don’t just focus on preparation – is our organisation ready to respond?
* Many tools – are they updated/ urban aware? We have good data-gathering tools, but are they being evaluated properly?

**Red Cross: Priority actions for others (by IFRC Haiti, not discussed with wider RC group):**

* Need to work to overcome relationships between preparation, response, recovery
* Others should increase awareness on what’s happening in disaster preparation in countries they work in, including laws and framework. Then look at how your organisation fits into that framework. Also know international disaster response law.
* ALNAP & Academics – thanks for information and reports, but please synthesise this information for us and make it usable. Put it into easy to read terms as practitioners don’t have time to read 100-page reports.

**6. CLOSING COMMENTS**

* The urban context is changing rapidly, and planning, funding, and relationships between actors must take that into account. A high level of flexibility is needed.
* A question for donors: how do we address the divide between emergencies and development? The consequences are felt acutely in an urban situation. Funding adds to the divide. What can we do to get away from the position of ‘we don’t fund that because it’s not development/emergencies’. It’s a real issue that no one group can solve.
* We need to revisit the links between public health and urban planning and develop new frameworks.
* We are driven by a humanitarian heritage of caring for people. What is the history of major cities that have recovered from disasters? We need to find constructive ways of linking this knowledge to the humanitarian heritage.
* In addressing the gap between development and humanitarian action, two areas of overlap are vulnerable communities and governance

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | Q&A initiatives | Universities / research | Donor | World Vision |
|  |
| We should change... | Good Practice Review | Be more active at building evidence base for what works in urban contexts and being seen as valuable partners in this. | Be ready to fund innovation in urban responses; support DRR more strongly; allow for failure as part of the funding of innovation | Drafting / updating urban disaster mgmt. Framework:include DRR and community resilience |
| Review Q&A Guidelines to ensure that they are relevant and useful for urban contexts | Becoming more effective at enabling research uptake -reach out to operational agencies in a variety of ways | Reduce the Dev / Hum. Divide internally, within donor organisations | Engage in new collaboration mechanisms with broader range of stakeholders who are important in urban context |
|
|
|  | More actively involved in university teaching (i.e. bringing more practitioners in the classes) | Establish a cross – donor agency working group |  |
|
| Others should change.... | ALNAP network members and secretariat Resources related to urban 'good practice' posted/shared on ALNAP portal | **Agencies** Work (possibly with academic support) to collect data and to ensure higher quality of data | UN to foster one-UN approaches; create consistency in who is responsible for what across countries |  |
|
|
|  |  | NGOs Embed accountability into urban programming |  |
|
|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | INGO | NDMA | UN | Red Cross |
|  | /Crescent |
| We should change... | Put more energy and resource into understanding the urban context | Get prepared / draft / update Contingency Plans for urban response (incl. Resource mapping / analysis of resource gaps) | Work with local govt networks - ensure their inclusion in UN fora | Strengthening operational capacities of Nat. Societies to respond to urban disasters |
| Integrate DRR into dev.plans | Establish EW systems / adapt systems for urban contexts | Increase predictability related to urban response so it is obvious who will do what and who will lead | Improvement of data collection + analysis, learning & eval. |
| Allocate % of funding to urban programming | Map and organise response force available (incl. focus on skill mix) |
| Systematically engage with local urban partners, including local / muniicipal authorities and NDMAs | Create city by city response plans for wide variety of disasters |
| Adapting, piloting existing tools to ensure applicability in urban contexts: build capacity of local partners in using these tools | Effective set up and mgmt of IM systems |  | Overcome internal silos - create cross silo working around urban issues |
|
| Others should change.... | UN to create a database showing who has capacities to do what in terms of urban response; and where | Local communities and NGOs to support Gov. To increase disaster resilience in urban contexts | NGOs and Red Cross /Crescent move capacities form global to country level (NGOS / RC) | NDMAs Increasing awareness on IDRL, CP in own countries + advocate uptake in other countries |
|  |
|  |
| Donors to allocate funds to urban programming | international NGOs and international actors support Gov. w/ fundraising | NGOs who don't engage with UN look for opportunities to engage with UN in urban contexts | ALNAP to *synthesize* learning and good practice |
| (agencies who don’t normally engage) |
| NDMAs to re-focus their relationship with UN and other aid counterparts |  | NDMAs consider how to include municipal authorities in planning |  |

**Next steps: ‘A Global Urban Disasters Action Plan’ – How to make it a reality**

**Panellist 1:** From a donor perspective I advocate the innovation of thinking out of the box, but what does that mean? It is important to find context appropriate humanitarian action and reaction. An example of this is the cash solution for food distribution; for shelter solutions you can look at the example of rental properties in Haiti. There are many areas in which we can think innovatively to develop new and effective solutions.

We also need to fund preparedness, to be ready for the more complex urban environment. There are comparative advantages of using different agencies as in an urban context it can be hard to see that any one agency that is totally right. Because of this there may need to be the formation of a cluster with a lead agency incorporating newer partners and non-classical partners.

In an urban context there are more defined and diverse structures. It would be better to use the markets that already exist and the use of local organisations. Humanitarian aid focuses on security, survival and dignity, this should be building upon structures that already exist.

**Panellist 2:**

1. Flexibility: be prepared to change your course. Stick to your instinct and if you need to change then do. Even with flexibility you are still going to be accountable and say what has been done with the money. Help to document what has been done so that it can be fed back to donors
2. Preparedness: What does this mean to your organisation? How does what I am doing help with the preparedness and the capacity of the government I am helping?
3. Need a stronger evidence base of what makes preparedness sustainable in urban settings. What are the ranges of interventions that can be sustained?
4. Reducing the humanitarian and development divide. We should be setting aside for capacity building efforts of the government. So that the governments can respond now and in the future.

**Panellist 3:**

1. Government and NGOs think they are working in parallel roles.
2. It is important to review aspects of the humanitarian system as a major disaster has much to do with preparedness. Because of this we need to invest more in capacity building or risk reduction.
3. One lesson identified is the new actors, these are the governments, they want to find a way they can work, and it is not always easy. What we can do as governments so that you can trust us, what we can do to complement your work?
4. The sum of all of the effort that everyone does every single day. We cannot do everything alone but together.

**Panellist 4:**

1. To make an obvious point, the whole agenda of humanitarian reform needs to be reviewed. The reality of the urban environment means the problems are amplified. Our shortcomings are more obvious in an urban environment. That being said, the opportunities are also greater in an urban environment.
2. Lots of good ideas have been raised with a general sense that we need to learn and research more, and re-think ideas for urban environments.
3. We also need to expand partnerships as we need to continually prepare for more urban disasters.
4. Working from behind rather than in front, and where demand is not there we need to nurture demand, working with the citizens so that they demand more of their governments.
5. We have a duty of care and responsibility; whether it is governments or donors pushing it.
6. The importance of working with and through governments and local communities should be highlighted as without this we do not go anywhere.
7. Resources: We have come up with many ideas but they are mainly very costly so, we should working with the governments to try and access some of their resources. There are also funds in the private sector and there are the banks which are hugely important for this effort.
8. We need to learn from Haiti and the amount of experience that has come from there, asking the question what we would have done differently if we were faced with the same situation again today. Each organisation needs to look at this and assess it, if something good is to come
9. Out of Haiti then it is important to look at what we can do to prevent the next big disaster repeating the same mistakes.
10. Urgency and perfection must not be the enemy of the good. We cannot do things perfectly overnight, but we also need to keep some sense of urgency in what we are doing.
11. Many of the cities we are living and working in are much larger than some countries. It is our challenge to try and figure out how to work with the huge and vulnerable positions that needs to be confronted.

**Panellist 4:**

1. Segregate the category of urban disaster into what is happening outside of the city but has an impact on the city.
2. We should look at the new types of possible disaster in an urban context. Many new types of disaster are poorly covered when considering urban disaster, for example technological disasters; new forms of urban warfare and urban violence.
3. A badly managed crisis in an urban context can lead to a revolution. We need to manage these crises.
4. We have to think critically- the simulation is a very good tool.
5. Relevance: How do we make sure our work is relevant to the context for example: WaSH, shelter, food security.
6. Every hour counts, we as actors are there in the first few days but should continue to aim to be faster.
7. Collectiveness: linking emergency with development.
8. We should be speaking with the local community and local structures, it is not always easy but we need to do more and more on this.
9. The fact that cholera didn’t spread in Port-au-Prince is because the population had their own practices of cleaning the water. We can learn a lot from local practices and why they do certain things.

**DISCUSSIONS**

* Don’t stop the dialogue, keep talking!
* A group that are still missing are the global networks that consolidate local governments. There are many international organisations that should be engaged with.
* Humanitarian needs- the needs of refugees. We should not forget these people as a vulnerable group.
* It is clear from the discussions that we have a multifaceted topic. This may call for adaptation. Because of this I would like to re-iterate for ALNAP to synthesise this information into manageable chunks, especially so that it can be taken back to organisations and governments.
* Some are affected by man-made disasters - request not to forget about Afghanistan.
* Concern of national governments, it is difficult selling DRR activities to UN and donors. Pakistan have developed Disaster Safety Net with which the fund is going to provide for disaster risk insurance, life insurance for head of family, insurance for food security and shelter. This is to ensure resilience of the national governments and resilience of communities

**John Mitchell: The action points from ALNAP**

* Distribution of learning knowledge:
* The meeting minuets will be made available
* The meeting report: this will be conceptual and also offer a new framework for answering urban disasters. It will also represent the findings from this meeting.
* There is a blog on the website to continue discussions from the meeting.
* We have written a press release for disaster management authorities to take back and highlight initiatives raised.

**Learning: Use of Knowledge**

* We need to redefine the boundaries of the humanitarian system; there is a need for this to happen if we are going to make real changes.
* New relationships are going to have to be created if we are going to bring about change.
* The Humanitarian Innovation Fund: Funding for innovative ideas that will make changes and impacts.
* New responses desperately require innovation to lever changes and practice in complicated urban settings.
* The ALNAP lessons paper on urban response will be updated with the lessons learned today and will then be ready for practitioners for the next urban disaster.
* We are going to look at all work streams of capacity and leadership and we encourage you to do the same, this should to be a collective effort.
* New next steps will result from this meeting.
* We are committed to continuing the relationships and to build trust between different stakeholders. It is important to keep them together and to use them as a platform for potential future action.

**DAY 3, 19 JANUARY 2012 - ALNAP Full Members’ Day**

**Introductory remarks**

**Meeting Chair: Nigel Timmins, Oxfam GB**

Over this session we will look at the pros and cons of various Q & A initiatives.

**Introduction: John Mitchell, ALNAP**

Announcement: New ALNAP Steering Group Chair will be Nan Buzard from the American Red Cross. As she has a fantastic reputation, we are delighted she will be joining our organisation.

(Message from Nan read out to the audience).

Turning to the context and background of today’s session: a variety of approaches have grown up in the last five to ten years based upon different assumptions of how organisations can change and improve.

There are five key approaches to improve accountability:

Voluntary Standards; Accredited Standards; Evaluation, learning and results; Quality Approaches and the Professionalisation movement.

There are five key questions we need to answer about these approaches:

* What are the key elements?
* What is the theory of change behind the approach – how can they bring about change?
* Evidence – how do we know that they are working? Where is it working and where not?
* Key signposts for the future – what needs to happen next?
* How do these approaches work together? How do they relate and support each other, but also do they have any tensions between them?

Through asking these questions about the five key approaches, we hope to generate an overview, so we can understand collectively what the quality and assurance landscape looks like.

**Quality and Accountability Stocktake**

**Approach 1: Voluntary Standards**

**John Damerell, Project Manager, Sphere**

There has been a continuing discussion around greater coherence to Sphere standards, but during today’s session I won’t be touching so much on this. Sphere is perhaps the oldest and most well-known example of voluntary standards, but there are others which cover areas like livestock, education, and economic recovery. These are psycho-social guidelines for humanitarian work, and the ICRC also has a set of protection standards. Along with these, UNHCR also have standards within their organisation. What’s significant is what’s behind these standards. Sphere have been turning standards into a more rights based approach – a person in a disaster has the right to dignity. Shifted from what organisations could provide whereas now they are more what people have a right to.

**Background/History:** In the late 90s there was a shift to more information and knowledge about humanitarian work and issues, there was a larger media presence. Organisations were working in increasingly complex environments and there was a greater expectation on NGOs to deliver in difficult situations. The sector wanted to move towards self-regulation to ensure standards and accountability. Attention turned to how to implement and introduce quality standards into fieldwork. So, what does SPHERE stand for? Standards project for humanitarian relief – it was born out of the desire to have a standards project for the sector. The multi-donor evaluation after Rwanda acted as a catalyst for the standards.

There are common elements between voluntary standards. The standards are a compilation of what already exists in the sector and best practices. There has been a broad consultation process of inclusion, which has led to a feeling of ownership. There’s no membership, it’s an open source, the standards are there for everyone to use. There’s no compliance mechanism, the self-regulatory process means the standards work on peer pressure.

With regards to theory of change – users believe the quality of the humanitarian response will be improved through the application of these standards. They will improve the lives of those affected if improvements are made at both an organisational and individual level.

Is there evidence that voluntary standards are working? Not really, we have struggled to demonstrate whether the application of standards is working; there has not been a clear quantitative process to prove that yet. We’re unable to determine directly if Sphere has had an impact in improving humanitarian work. However, there is a widespread perception that Sphere has had a beneficial effect. Anecdotal evidence shows governments have incorporated the standards into their disaster response laws and policies. IFDL have mention Sphere as a standard framework to which the government are working. UNHCR will reference Sphere in their future emergency manuals. The standards have been referenced academically and the Sphere handbook is the bestseller at Oxfam.

**Future:** The standards are only as good as the practitioners using them. It needs to be ensured that the standards are relevant and up-to-date. Training in the standards also needs to be implemented, especially with the high turnover of staff in the sector. Future challenges include contextualisation, where do they fit in with the professionalisation element? Relevance to context is extremely important in an urban environment. Other issues to consider are how Sphere deal with the private sector and also the military.

As for linkages with other approaches, there is an ongoing discussion as to whether there can be greater coherence between them. SPHERE standards are included in evaluation and monitoring. We will endeavour to continue to find ways of not working separately.

**Questions and answers session**

**Q1:** The standards are rights-based but voluntary – so you can’t be held accountable – how do you tackle this?

**Response:**  Need to balance rights-based approach and voluntary standards and find out the extent to which the message has got to those affected. The standards are voluntary so how are they enforced – through the uptake of organisations it becomes a part of their accountability framework, if they are not seen to be doing their job others will find them accountable.

**Q2:** There are an increasing number of humanitarian actors that may not adhere to the standards, how do you bring them into the community which is upholding them?

**Response:** Standards should become a part of disaster response law. Governments must take up a role in adhering to these standards, but if the government is not functioning (as was the case in Haiti), who will take up that role? If a small group of people or an organisation are familiar with the standards other actors can take the responsibility of monitoring and policing.

**Q3:**  There are links to monitoring and evaluation – how will Sphere take these forward?

**Response:**  Sphere is working with organisations providing funds to make sure that standards are included in the monitoring and evaluation. Sphere standards need to be part of grant applications. If funding partners know what standards are they can ask better questions, however this is an ongoing issue.

**Q4:**  In terms of evidence base – we know the Sphere standards work and they save lives. However, over the last 10 years in post-emergency recovery the Sphere standards don’t apply – what is being done to ensure relevance in recovery and also what is being done to ensure relevance in urban disasters? Also, in Haiti, there was no way we could meet some of the SPHERE standards, therefore the standards aren’t relevant in some urban settings.

**Response:**  Standards are drawn from experiences and best practices. The new handbook will have a focus on humanitarian response but has ventured into preparedness with the inclusion of recovery approaches which start at the onset of a humanitarian response. In terms of the standards appropriateness to urban situations, Sphere is more than just numbers and meeting the quotas. Contextualisation is important and the standards are meant to be universal. They’re not specifically for rural, urban or camp use. Practitioners need to go through a contextual analysis and find out how they are able to best meet the standards. Meeting the standard means to ensure people have enough water to live rather than 15 litres of water per day. No two rural responses are the same.

**Q5:** The standardisation of response – the question of accountability – if the standards are not working who becomes accountable?

**Q6:** SPHERE standards are voluntary but life and dignity is not. Isn’t it time to bring in accountability to children? Should there be a separate chapter in the book with regards to children?

**Response:** With regards to children, here we’re looking at vulnerability. There’s been a lot of interest for this area to have a greater presence in the handbook, however, we have to balance how we can address things in a manageable way and not include too much information.

**Approach 2: Accredited Standards**

**Smruti Patel, Membership Services Coordinator, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP)**

Key Issues. There’s a difference between accreditation and certification. Clarity on common definitions. One must remember that certification is also voluntary, not imposed.

Important to recognise what we’ve achieved.

What makes a difference? How do we know whether the standards are being used? We are not the only organisation looking at certification. Need to look at this from a wider arena.

Citizen scrutiny is perhaps the most important. Not just humanitarian sector looking at this, One World Trust has many initiatives which are going on in terms of voluntary certification accreditation. Where is this taking place? How do we ensure change? Theory of change: HAP was the first self-regulatory organisation.

Pathways to certification. We need a more rigorous approach for testing the process of finding evidence. This comes from the organisations : evidence.

It is important to review the processes, and ensure they are inclusive of all types of agencies. There is a need to be flexible in order to move the sector forward to give the best response. We need to ensure we are making a difference to recipients’ lives.

**Question and answer session**

**Q1:** It was mentioned that we should ensure we give what we promise, however shouldn’t it be that we ensure we give what people need? Do you have a different purpose to Sphere?

**Response:** We’re trying to do the best for the population; we want them to be a part of the process. It’s important to have a dialogue with the community about what they really need.

**Q2:** Aren’t we in danger of setting up a system of making us feel good and tick boxes, and having something for our sake rather than the population?

**Response:** HAP standards have come from consultations with beneficiaries, NGOs and the UN. People have told us what is important to them. We do need to be more rigorous in evidence- gathering, anecdotal evidence suggests HAP standards are making a difference.

**Q3:** Individual certification processes and frameworks – are these similar to HAP certification processes?

**Response:** Processes are set, there needs to be rigorous checking. Processes from different organisations are similar.

**Question 4:** What is the role of Sphere standards in the certification process? If activities in the field are to improve accountability should there be a link between real-time evaluation and HAP?

**Response:** Need to look at the organisations’ commitment – where is the evidence that the standards are being put into practice? They need to be complementary and work together.

**Question 5:**  Can we start including governments on the boards of Sphere and HAP?

**Response:** With regards to citizen scrutiny – it’s crucial that we inform people and communities of what the standards are. In terms of advocacy and governments – we need to try to include them but more work needs to be done in this area, how can they use the standards in their relief work.

**Question 6:** What is the difference in the system from 18 years ago?

**Response:** The evidence has to come from the organisations. Lessons need to be learned but achievements should also be recognised. Situations are different but we are seeing an improvement. The difference is that we have standards now and a certification process.

**Approach 3: Evaluation, learning and results**

**Josse Gillijns, Head of Planning and Evaluation, IFRC**

Evaluations have a long history, we now see more evaluations and there’s more money to complete them. The methodology used has expanded, there are now more participatory methods. The field has become more professional. There’s evaluation policy and the publishing of evaluations has changed, also, evaluation associations are in place e.g. AEA and the field as a whole has broadened. However, there might be too many evaluations, and they’re too similar. There is waste and it could be dealt with. The practice is improving though.

**Theory of change:**

The model shows that following an assessment we design then implement then monitor and then evaluate in a linear way and this should lead to an improvement. But this process is too linear and too narrow and improvements can only happen after a disaster. Instead, this model shows evaluations should be in the middle. Evaluation is a tool and it’s more about learning or accountability or improving quality.

**Evidence:**

As a process evaluation has lots of benefits. The operational team can learn from it. In terms of accountability, the donors are probably satisfied with the evaluation as are the local authority but an improvement is needed to become more accountable to the beneficiaries.

**Future:**

We need to sustain the effort and broaden the methodology and embrace innovation. It shouldn’t be taken as a given that funding will always be there for evaluations. They should become more participatory. It’s much easier to collect data now with mobile phone technology and we should use that to our advantage. We need to ensure a tsunami situation is avoided in evaluation terms; there was too much information and too many evaluations. Investment should be made in longitudinal studies. Question which needs to be raised is should evaluations be accredited? Evaluations are nothing more than a tool but they can be beneficial and could benefit professionalisation.

**Question and Answer Session**

**Q1:** Evaluation is an important tool, especially in terms of accountability and quality to measure our performance against objectives. Evaluations should have standards to be interpreted better.

**Q2:**  The UN has set standards for evaluations to improve accountability. Peer review is also used to improve performance. WFP is working to improve their evaluations.

**Q3:**  The constraints are attribution and contribution. We are showing donors what we said we were going to do. Is there a way of showing our impact without showing our contribution?

**Q4:** Leadership is important in the uptake of evaluations and whether agency or country team will take it forward. What’s the role of evaluation in ensuring it’s used and whether recommendations are achieved?

**Q5:**  Want to underline the longitudinal method. We have a duty which must not be neglected. What about thinking in the long term and the impacts we have? For example, an evaluation of Gujurat earthquake 10 years on revealed a disappointing situation. There is reputational damage which must be taken into consideration, especially when the names of organisations are put on post-disaster housing.

**Q6:**  Should evaluations be impartial?

**Q7:**  Our accountability is to ensure we produce the highest quality evaluations – we have to become more rigorous but not burden colleagues. It’s about supply and demand – work needs to be done on the operational side to enable colleagues to hold us accountable and know what a good evaluation is and to ensure uptake.

**Q8:** Where in theory of change does monitoring come in? It’s an important tool for evaluation and accountability. In terms of accreditation are there any ideas of how we could do that and what would be the body/mechanism? We need to look at how we communicate with the broader humanitarian world – there’s potential for confusion in broader community – how do these fit together?

**Q9:**  There’s a need for long-term review – and to bring in the community.

**Response to questions:**

* Leadership – there are a few ways of influencing it, by being transparent about process and putting evaluations on websites.
* Communicate – make sure we have communities and leaders on board when we’re planning an evaluation. Pressure will come from them and our peers, which means a better chance recommendations will be followed up.
* The quality of monitoring and programme makes a good evaluation. There is not enough money currently available for this. It’s costly to look at long-term evaluations, e.g. it would cost half a million dollars to look at long-term Haiti evaluation. We need to think outside of the organisation’s collective evaluation framework.
* Impartiality – needs to be an honest process, evidence-based with lots of data. A hybrid model of evaluating should be used with some external and some internal staff members. We also need to champion innovation in the sector.

**Approach 4: Quality approaches**

**François Grünewald, Executive and Scientific Director, Groupe URD**

Learning cycles are part of the way our institution is set up. We organise our training using evaluation. We have developed innovative evaluations and learning methods since the late 1990s. We use iterative evaluation. We have evaluation and learning offices. We were part of an ALNAP exercise in Orissa and Kosovo. We use videos and plenary evaluations. Where does the role of evaluators start and stop? What continues then?

The launch of Sphere started a completely different process of reviewing existing quality methods. Since 1999 we have had one quality assurance person on board to develop the concept which people are generally not aware of. We want to move from quality control to bad quality prevention. We focus on the management of the critical point. When you reach a problematic place in the process there are two ways to manage it: by questioning or prescription. We have to choose questioning. With the right question you can have a site-specific response.

First, we need a system of referential and criteria. Removing the negative impact is part of quality criteria. We are accumulating evidence on the impact of quality approaches and we do 15 evaluations per year. We encounter people who have found our resources on the internet and are using them in many different ways. Next year we will do a consultation to see what is happening with it all.

Second, we need continuous quality improvement that can adapt to changing contexts. We need evolving processes. For example, in an analysis of hospital systems, one part of a hospital can be totally standardised whereas others can’t be – medicine is an art. With regards to theory of change, you can develop quality criteria, but what matters is how you do it. People have asked us how to manage negative impacts and we have developed materials. We are also developing coaching processes and helping people to conduct additional research and evaluation and training models.

How do we manage our data, evidence and knowledge? Using a quality approach is costly and people have to make time to use it. In our analysis with a group of NHGOs on management they said that managing time, data and timelines is a challenge. We are developing a system to help them do that which is very flexible. It’s free software, open-source. It has been done in a collaborative manner so it is something people can use and design according to their own needs. These are the three pillars of quality assurance, knowledge management and different types of coaching.

What about our interactions with other initiatives? We started small with only a few people. It seems like we are outside the system and are a different constituency. Sometimes we feel we are not considered and generalised as ‘other initiatives’, which is frustrating! We are part of the quality and accountability initiative. We continuously engage with others.

We anticipated that Sphere would be poorly used because people start thinking that the the recommendation is 15 litres of water a day, whereas in camps people will drink three litres, use three litres for vegetables, three for bricks and give the rest to the donkeys. It is the challenge of application of standards. We are compiling evidence on how Sphere is wrongly used, but then what do we do with it? Who do we share it with?

**Questions and Answers Session:**

**Q1:** Are there differences in the categorisation of URD as ‘other initiatives’ in the Anglophone and Francophone worlds?

**Response:** No, it’s the same.

**Q2:** The Red Cross is on the same road as you with quality management. It’s difficult working with criteria instead of precise standards. How do you decide what’s good enough?

**Response:** Each of our 12 criteria has 10 indicators and 2-5 questions. Indicators are qualitative. What would be the context-specific relevant indicators that you need?

**Q3:** Have you come up with targets for quantitative/ qualitative criteria?

**Response:** We are context-specific. For example the amount of water you need varies across hot or dry areas. We give a range so we are not prescriptive. What makes best sense in your context? I am an engineer, so for example, the consistency of cement is not the same in different climates. References must be context specific.

**Approach 5: The professionalisation movement**

**Jess Camburn, Director, ELRHA**

Defining professionalism:

* OED definition.
* Structural attributes and attitudinal attributes (Richard Hall)
* Ability of the professional to be a reflective practitioner, to respond uniquely to each context as it changes

It’s not just about qualifications, it’s about experience too. We have a problem with access in the humanitarian system. Some people can have qualifications without experience, while other national staff have great experience but cannot access qualifications.

Advantages of professionalisation

* Increase the effectiveness of aid delivery
* Increase accountability to recipients
* Increase accountability and trust towards donors
* Increase equity and open up the boundaries of who can be a professional
* We have a dominance of mega organisations – only they are recognised as professionals. Need to open up boundaries.

Be a humanitarian worker first and an employee second.

Concerns over professionalisation:

* If we have certain standards, does it undermine the solidarity and compassionate responses of people who recognise a need and just get up and do something?
* It could create a two-tier system between those who are qualified and those who are not.
* We could create rigid standards that are set for 20 years that are unable to be adapted to changing contexts
* People could then bring individual lawsuits against humanitarian workers
* It values one type of expertise over others
* It pushes out innovation

These arguments are about getting it right, not getting rid of professionalisation.

Professionalisation over the past 10 years:

* Lots of investment in capacity building such as two-week workshops, however most of these have not been turned into recognised qualifications.
* Explosion of Masters degrees which tend to be in the global north, which is not where we are operational
* Huge explosion in e-learning
* Major inequalities in access to qualifications
* Shift towards competencies-based frameworks in the humanitarian sector – most agencies have this now.
* What do these competency frameworks have in common? IASC have started looking at it. ELHRA and others published a framework in 2009 that identified 26 competencies. Fifteen agencies in Britain wanted to develop their own framework and chose six from ours. It has been tested all over the world in Indonesia, Kenya and Bangladesh. It seems to be working well. We checked this in summer 2011 and asked people if they felt it was useful and if they used it in their work. We did a big survey in French and English. Overall people said it was fairly useful. Once we have collated the missing information, we will turn it over to the public. No ownership.
* Accreditation in the sector, for example NGOs are interested in accreditation for the courses they run. It can happen through recognised bodies, universities, Edexcel, LINGOS.
* More challenging is the validation of experience – we need more work in this area.
* Professional Associations and groups – PHAP, HLA, online communities, LinkedIn, HPN, ALNAP. Some clustering of communities.
* Lots of networks.
* Mapping the systems – ELHRA is doing this. Need to understand clear pathways of what’s working and what isn’t. Advisory groups.
* Evidence? Does increasing professionalism make an impact on our work? Who is doing long-term impact studies?
* Need to look outside our sectors to other professions
* Lots of evidence about what’s not working e.g. career blockages. We will publish a study next month.

We have seen a huge explosion of activity and we need to step back and reflect. We need a framework where we can use competencies as an indicator. We need entry- and mid-level training, and we need long-term funding for impact assessments.

Connections to the other four approaches: professionalisation brings a balance. There is too much organisational power in the sector at the moment. In terms of monitoring and evaluation, professionalisation creates a more dynamic and long-term relationship. Citizen scrutiny is a very important perspective. People want to know what they can expect of you as an individual, not which organisation you are from.

**Questions and answers Session:**

**Q1:** What is professionalism? How do we know the difference between a professional and unprofessional worker? It’s also not straightforward to say there is a divide in education and experience between the global North and South, they are not necessarily divided, but mismatched.

**Response:** The recognised professionals are employed by big organisations. There are lots of equally competent people whose skills aren’t recognised. There is already a two-tier system. I take your point on the disparity on education within countries as well as internationally. Our information based on surveys suggests that those with degrees from the US and Europe want to find out more on what is happening in Asia and other places and gain experience. We want to map this and make it more visible.

**Q2:** What’s in it for the worker to get qualifications? How do we educate our agencies to accept that there are incentives for qualifications? What difference does it really make?

**Response:** The feedback from organisations was that major skills were missing, such as listening, the ability to engage. Feedback shows us that humanitarian workers feel frustrated with workshops and want qualifications that are recognised. They are saying please do something about it.

**Q3.** Who should you demonstrate this professionalism to? The large agencies or the humanitarian victims?

**Discussion and Summary**

**Paul Knox Clarke, ALNAP**

There are a variety of approaches here that all exist to do the same kind of same thing: improve the quality and accountability of humanitarian action. They have grown up in parallel. There are fairly loose relationships between them. They have different hypotheses and differ in their theories of change and motivation. All these approaches want people to do things differently tomorrow. They are all about change. In order to catalyse those changes, they are all making different assumptions about why people change. Some are motivated by the esteem of their peers, or more access to resources, or to more fully complete themselves, or answer their own curiosity. They are all about individual behavioural change.

Another difference between the approaches is their value base. It is not an absolute difference, but to do with the relative differences in weighting of values, for example, the importance of universal rights and values alongside local knowledge and context. There may also be some cultural differences in these approaches; the new public management approaches have been taken up in the UK and Canada etc. but perhaps less well elsewhere.

Some approaches are very broad and differ in locus; some are about organisations, while others are about individuals. Perhaps the irony is that amazingly there is little evidence about the degree to which these approaches work. There is a sense of burden and confusion that each thing is good in its own right until you put it together. There are still more approaches such as longitudinal analysis and community-to-community mechanisms in addition to the other approaches mentioned here.

Do we need more formalised areas for coherence or collaboration? A second option could be that different approaches might be better suited to different parts of the agenda. A third option is that some approaches might suit some organisations better than others. Organisational culture might determine what works.

We do need to look outside the sector. It is important to recognise that we are not the first to look at how you change behaviour.

**Key questions:**

* How do we as a sector best use these approaches to create the greatest improvement in humanitarian action with the least burden?
* How do we motivate ourselves to change the way we change the humanitarian sector?
* What might be stopping us?

**Questions and comments: How does change take place to improve learning, accountability and assurance?**

* HAP network in Pakistan – people who were not HAP members didn’t know if they could come to the meeting. Fieldworkers feel overwhelmed by codes and guidelines. I’m surprised you said there is a lack of evidence. It is a struggle to turn principles into practice. How do we explain all these investments we’re making to disaster-affected communities? A positive alignment process is going on. What’s ALNAP’s position? Independence?
* What is the demand side of these issues? Isn’t this all from the supply side? In general, it is important to have evidence of what we have achieved, but what are we losing in this whole process? Keep an eye on it because we might lose something important. All five approaches are useful, but how do we define humanitarian work? Is it who you work for? Or if your products meet Sphere standards? Or what qualifications you have? There’s far more to it.
* What are we losing? Aren’t we creating more exclusive clubs so you are in it or outside it? We are still dominated by volunteers, community-based organisations, local chambers of commerce, and people who just respond. These are our largest workforce. One possible direction for ALNAP today is how we extract learning and create networks where we can create more learning. Are we really listening to these voices and helping them to document their own experiences better. Can ALNAP help with that?
* What about first responders? How do we as a learning network consider the wealth of knowledge of the relief workers who are less visible? Listen to the voices. Children have a right to be heard.
* Don’t forget that individuals still work in teams! Focus more on teams who deliver a task.

**Closing remarks by the panel**

**Panellist 1:**

I’m hearing a lot of concern about elitism, which is very big and we have to address that. Things *are* happening now, but who is really accessing these initiatives? This is a big worry for me. Capacity building occurs in the big INGOs. Why are we not using training facilities and universities in the affected areas etc. We have to address this. It cannot be the organisations that dominate our profession. Why can’t the new actors have more of a say? Others can help define what it means to be a humanitarian worker.

Look at the competency framework – there is evidence that it does work, not just in the NGO world.

**Panellist 2:**

Introduce bigger learning commitment. Trust intelligence. If people are properly supported, they will make the right choice. We tend to think we have to tell them what to do.

There are contradictions in this discussion. First, we have our standards and we have to inform people; second, we have to participate and listen. What if they don’t want what we have to give them? I know of one NGO who had checked off all the indicators in their report, yet when we visited the area eight months later, we discovered it was all nonsense and not at all what people wanted.

Participation is opening a Pandora’s box – you don’t know what will come out. It’s not comfortable and you can’t assume you know what is in there.

**Panellist 3:**

Humanitarian action will change, it is always evolving. Are we less and less relevant as western agencies? Look at the big recent disasters e.g. China was able to fundraise by itself and be in charge of how it spends it all. Look ahead – maybe what we have learned may not be useful anymore. Don’t assume evaluations will show that we have made an impact. Beware of keeping up myths.

**Panellist 4:**

There is a feeling of ‘us’ and ‘them’ in this room between the floor and the panel, however, these approaches are things that *you* identified. You said there was a need for self-regulation before it is imposed on you by others. I came from outside the sector. We try to hold other sectors to account for their malpractices; we need a systematic process by which that can be done for us. Huge progress has been made with consultation from you all. This is your process! We need to learn from organisations going through the process. Be inclusive of small and large organisations. I feel like you’re not recognising what *you’ve* done. We can’t go backwards. We can’t go back from certification. It might then be imposed from the outside. Certification is a systematic health check for your organisation.

**Panellist 5:**

Yes, voluntary standards are talking to each other. There is more Sphere can do, admittedly. Coherence discussions are ongoing. There is a need for evidence-based studies. Perhaps there is a role for ALNAP here.

**A report on the high-level forum on aid effectiveness, Busan**

**Steve Darvill, Executive Director, CDA Collaborative Learning Projects**

* He was not actually in Busan (Korea) but rather his colleague Dayna Brown was one of 300 CSOs in Busan.
* Background/history – Fourth high level forum on aid effectiveness in last 10 yrs. First in Rome, then Paris, Accra.
  + Delivery of aid in conflict situations has led to things like Fragile States Principle
  + Dialogue on peace building and state building
* Paris Declaration introduced principles for aid effectiveness
* Accra Agenda for Action, 2008 – deepened Paris agreements, promoted more inclusive partnership including CSOs for first time. Further emphasis on delivering results, capacity development.
* Accra – many commitments – capacity development, humanitarian term appears for first time in this process.
* Throughout, humanitarian action wasn’t excluded; however discussion about official development assistance was just not explicitly included.

**Busan, last November**

* Move from aid effectiveness to development effectiveness
* Non-aid actors have a role to play in development
* Inclusion of policy discussions around trade, migration, private sector’s role.
* Signing on to outcome document were emerging donors like India and China, South Africa, South Korea, UK, etc.
* CSO role reaffirmed commitment to facilitate an enabling environment for NGOs. More explicit recognition that business as usual in conflict not working. Need new modalities.
* Set of principles between Accra & Busan called Istanbul principles by CSOs.
  + Process involved open forum for CSO effectiveness, 70+ regional meetings all over world
  + Humanitarian voice notably absent. Mostly development agencies participating
  + Produced eight principles
  + In preamble is a statement that principles guide work.
    - Seen as applying to humanitarian NGOs but those organisations didn’t have a role in drafting principles
* Signed by donor states and G7+ group.
* New Deal components
* Funds to go into trust funds, released based on conditions led by peace-building and state-building goals which will measure progress. Now looking at what indicators will be used.
* Commitment to build trust, strengthen capacities, etc.
* Single sentence acknowledging humanitarianism on fourth page – assumption but no engagement with humanitarian community
* Paragraph on strengthening resilience – recognition disasters derail development, commitment to resources and investing in infrastructure. This is what ALNAP meeting has been all about
* Issues for ALNAP members are that there’s barely a mention of humanitarian action. Risk that it’s not been specifically included, so each actor will make up own mind as to whether it applies to humanitarian actors or not. Also an important opportunity as a community to take some of these issues forward because the door has been opened a bit.

**Questions and answers Session:**

**Q1:** Was part of the CSO open forum process in relation to NGOs’ effectiveness and the reality of aid and better aid focused on donor effectiveness? Transparency agenda was in Busan, many donors announced signing up to international aid transparency initiative, and also a working group of NGOs to see how agreements of donors are going was established. In own experience at open forum, while forum allowed for regional consultations it also allowed NGO consultations. Invested time in good faith, set up discussion strands hoping to demonstrate standards for selves and donors but almost backfired. Session they ran showed that international NGOs are seen to be in old paradigm – old donors, being challenged by private sector, criticised by southern NGOs for stealing staff and imposing western values. This was a wake-up call. I want to encourage the group to think of how the international context has changed and how we are struggling to catch up and therefore may lose our place and become irrelevant.

**Response:** International aid transparency initiative – DFID requires compliance. That’s now in contract. Need to negotiate some exclusion. Can trace who is funding you, will be out in public domain that parties to certain conflicts are also funding you to work in those areas. That is duty of care issue. Need to negotiate some exclusion clauses, be able to say no.

**Q2:** Discussion of conflict between principles of these negotiations and the GHDI? Most are parties to both, but clear contradictions and tensions between the two sets of principles.

**Response:** No, because the humanitarian community has been disengaged. This may be by design because they were not invited or not wanting to know about development stuff – not sure.

**Response 2:** There is contradiction. For most donors there is distinction even in Busan agreement with development funding and humanitarian funding separately. Some initial drafts included humanitarian funding or seemed to in statements, and specifically, include it and it was taken out for that reason. Language on GHDI specifically put in there. If you read GHDI principles, you can draw conclusions that there is a separation, some principles for development, some for humanitarian aid. In future, how do we overcome this divide? How to look at challenges like urban disasters? How to look at separate principles when trying to look at same issues?

**Open-space discussions**

The last session of the day was devoted to discussions on questions of interest to the ALANP membership. Participants raised five issues for discussion. Discussions were held using an ‘Open Space’ methodology. Notes of the key points raised in each discussion are given below:

**Value for Money**

* Different interpretations
* Not about being stingy
* Evaluations not good at measuring VFM
* Volunteerism can provide more VFM than professions in some situations
* Amidst budget cuts, VFM is not going away
* “Don't be afraid'...main division is between political and budget part of donors and humanitarian part of donors

**Can humanitarians be intellectually curious?**

* Need to look more closely at the private sector and how they innovate
* Foster a culture of intellectual curiosity and find mechanisms to support it
* Carve out time and space and find it
* Get creative with incentives
* Integrate and value innovation in evaluations
* Learn from and value failure
* Capture existing innovation in the field

**What should ALNAP be doing? (View from the South)**

* Diversify the centres of excellence
* Retain the key principles
* Make sense of the changing international power relationships; do stakeholder analysis.
* Influence the emerging donor countries to work by humanitarian principles
* Keep the process of engagement with the South creative and open
* Field test engagement with new actors/ countries and gradually draw them in
* Neutralise ideas like North-South, provider-recipient by bringing focus to achievement of humanitarian goals
* Understand what drives India and China as donor countries to what they do
* More localised learning through South-based NGOs

A more detailed note of this discussion can be found here

**How learning and evaluations addressing people living in sub-human conditions (may be clue to development) as disasters**

* Quality/private sector timeliness
* In early stages often know what people need- basic needs
* Then need to contextualise later for recovery
* Participatory needs-assessment does not give much more information than staff could have known (ACAPS survey)
* Early phase- communication and transparency more important
* Need to think why we are doing it in the early stages
* Need to factor in the fact that people are traumatised
* Dignity- do no harm are important but should not be overburdening.
* Teams can become “paralysed” if being faced with reality but forced to take all standards into consideration

**Are quality initiatives slowing down our responses (timeliness issue) and could the private sector do it better?**

* We must not think we as NGOs have the right to be the responders- there are other actors and we must work with them
* At what stage do community accountability/ involvement make a difference? -Let's get our priorities right!
* Do quality initiatives hamper flexibility? May not want to change programmes.
* Timeliness is a quality issue as well: are NGOs up to it?
* In the changing world of humanitarian response, we need to put a dignified respectful rapid response first (have realistic quality standards) in immediate response
* Are NGOs the first responders anyway- so may need to assess if NGO arrives later
* In states, large companies have pre-positioned stocks in hurricane-prone areas- they find NGOs/ governments slow
* Flip side: Too little assessment after the initial rapid assessment, they may not do any consultation later to check if rapid assessment was correct.