"Building Urban Resilience"

Workshop Results

Panama City, Panama

September 26-27, 2013

Global Disaster
Preparedness Center

Executive Summary

On 26th – 27th September the 'Building Urban Resilience' workshop was held in Panama City as the last event in a series of three regional workshops held in Africa (Tanzania), Asia (Thailand), and the Americas (Panama). The workshop was supported by the Global Disaster Preparedness Center (GDPC) with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), with the objective of sharing learning and knowledge about building resilience in urban areas in the Americas.

This workshop brought together more than 50 participants from 16 national societies, as well as representatives from several of the Federation's (IFRC) sub-regional offices and from the Red Cross regional and global reference centers.

The workshop was recorded and broadcast through live-streaming in the Desaprender Urban Risk Forum, with the participation of more than 470 contacts who were able to take part in all the presentations and plenary sessions with questions and comments (http://www.desaprender.org/topic/livestreaming-1).

During the course of the workshop, a range of existing work experiences within the Red Cross / Red Crescent (RC/RC) were shared, and expectations of each national society were set out in relation to how to work in urban areas using a resilience building approach.

Many of the conversations that took place during the workshop showed alignment with the progress made in Latin America and the Caribbean in the last few years in the area of Urban Risk. The workshop therefore provided continuity for a series of meetings and events held over the last few years, which analyzed the way urban risk is addressed in both theoretical and methodological terms.

Key questions examined by the participants:	1. What are the challenges for the RC/RC working as disaster preparedness and aid professionals in urban areas? 2. What are the new or different approaches and what new ways of working are we adopting to address these challenges? 3. What are the causes and root causes of the problems identified? 4. What is the RC/RC's role in terms of change, influence or transformation in these approaches?

Key conclusions	Urban resilience is a multi-dimensional and multi-sectorial concept to address underlying drivers of risk like migration, violence, climate change, cultural changes, etc. This requires the RC to work holistically and bring about a **change in its "business model"** incorporating: A. The main **theoretical and practical advances** in the Americas region in the area of urban resilience. B. The **complexity of urban contexts** and the importance of "studying the reality" before intervening, which entails investing in RC/RC volunteers to provide them with a more holistic and systemic vision. C. The importance of creating **networks and partnerships** with all the relevant actors and sectors, and the fundamental role that the RC/RC can play as a convener. D. The recognition of the roles of **non-traditional partners** (foundations, private companies, universities, etc.) in building expertise in a range of RC/RC work areas (including risk analysis, protection of livelihoods, market research and opportunities). E. The need to review and adapt **traditional tools to work with the communities** (e.g. the VCA) as well as utilizing new and innovative tools for advocacy, which leverage the available technologies for greater dissemination and information sharing.

Background

The Red Cross / Red Crescent (RC) recognizes the growing need and public demand for services aimed at reducing disaster risk in urban areas.

> *"The defining feature of the 21st century will probably be, together with climate change, the great movement of human populations out of the rural and agricultural lifestyles towards the more diverse and densely constructed environments known as cities."*
>
> Report on Resilience of Urban Communities in the Asia-Pacific Region.
> "Earthquakes and Megacities Initiative" (April 2012)

The Red Cross has long been active in providing aid and preparedness services to rural and urban communities, especially in its auxiliary role to governments for disaster relief and response. What has changed over the last years is the recognition that urban and peri-urban centers, in addition to being places where there are more and better economic opportunities, they are also areas where vulnerability and risk are constantly on the rise. This trend is being enhanced by several factors:

a) **Climate change**, which is altering the patterns and intensity of natural hazards/threats, in such a way that makes it impossible to predict the impact of disasters on the basis of past experiences, thus weakening the usefulness of traditional preparedness or coping mechanisms.

b) The processes of **urbanization** and demographic growth are increasing the exposure levels. As more people seek opportunities and residence near urban centers, overcrowding in these marginal areas increases more and more with a high level of exposure to natural hazards/threats.

c) Access to **employment, economic growth** and changes in **land ownership** patterns are leading to what some are calling the "urbanization of world poverty"[1] which leads to a rapid increase in the levels of vulnerability in most of the urban areas worldwide.

Every year, on average, the population of the cities increases by 44 million people, and the total urban population consumes 75% of the world's resources. Latin America is the region with the highest rate of urban growth among developing countries. In just a few decades, a largely rural landscape with economies based on agricultural and agro-industrial production has turned into a landscape of accelerated urbanization, with a fundamental change in economic and social activities, in productive flows and the relationship between the center and the periphery.

At present, Latin American societies are mainly urban – over 80% of the total population lives in urban areas and metropolitan regions, including medium-sized and small cities. Economic opportunities in urban centers are one of the main attractions behind the growth of the cities. Economic activities in urban areas represent more than 50% of global production and more than 80% in the more urbanized Latin American countries. Urban areas are where the society's power, riches, communications, science, technologies and culture are concentrated. At the same time, these cities are also home to a large number of poor people: it is estimated that approximately 30% of the region's urban population lives in slums.[2]

The urban socio-economic context represents a challenge for development, risk mitigation and disaster impact. Latin American experiences of disaster risk management in urban contexts demonstrate the need to find alternatives for incorporating risk analysis into development processes, especially in informal urban growth contexts, by increasing social demands and political and economic debates on the role of the municipal councils.

Although the Red Cross national societies, governments, civil society, and private sector partners are already tackling urban risk challenges, the RC/RC as a movement has not yet incorporated all the attention, capacity and potential for tackling these issues.

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[1] Mike Davis, "Planet of Slums," 2007

About the "Building Resilience in Urban Environments" workshop

Purpose

This workshop is an opportunity to bring together representatives of national societies in the Americas to share experiences and jointly develop ideas to strengthen approaches for building resilience in urban communities.

The workshop offers the opportunity to:

1. Review our shared experience and learning in dealing with urban risks;
2. Identify the gaps and challenges for building urban resilience and ways of overcoming them;
3. Explore what we can do collectively, in order to make the most of RC/RC resources;
4. Identify relevant components for a plan of action and research, to be developed further in the national society, the Federation and the GDPC plans.

The central idea of this workshop is to create a new definition of partnership, capable of attracting allies (new and historic) who wish to contribute to the challenge of building urban resilience. In order to achieve this, the workshop participants looked at what is currently being done at a national and local level to support new activities from a global perspective, which will promote resilience building in the future.

Organizations represented at the workshop

National Societies
Argentinean Red Cross
Barbados Red Cross
Belizean Red Cross
Chilean Red Cross
Colombian Red Cross
Dominican Red Cross
Ecuadorian Red Cross
Guatemalan Red Cross
Haitian Red Cross
Jamaican Red Cross
Mexican Red Cross
Nicaraguan Red Cross
Panamanian Red Cross
Suriname Red Cross
Trinidad & Tobago Red Cross
Uruguayan Red Cross

Regional Partner National Societies
American Red Cross
Canadian Red Cross
Norwegian Red Cross

Regional Partners
CRI Reference Center
Global First Aid Reference Center
Caribbean Regional Representation Office - Trinidad
Global Disaster Preparedness Center (GDPC)

IFRC Secretariat
IFRC - CPDRR Dept (Geneva)
IFRC - Relationship Management
IFRC - Cooperation & Services
IFRC - IT
IFRC - URRCU Team
IFRC - PADRU
IFRC - Volunteering & Youth

External Partners
Zurich Financial Services

Introduction

Linking the concepts of urban DRR with urban resilience

In the last few years a number of meetings have been held in the Americas region (in Haiti, Dominican Republic and Central America) with the aim of defining what should be done in an urban context and understanding where the national societies are in terms of urban resilience[3].

Figure 1. Introducing the workshop

It is important to demonstrate the extensive experience and quality of work being done in the Americas in relation to building urban resilience, leveraging experiences of countries like Haiti and Colombia, among others, which allow for a broader, and methodologically more solid vision of resilient urban communities.

The final objective of this work is to review and adapt the "business model" of the movement of the RC/RC. This is the way of working of the movement, so to have a **comprehensive programme perspective**, that addresses issues such as DRR, violence prevention, shelters (e.g. PASS workshop), and livelihoods. This entails new approaches to organizing and communication , in order to respond to unveiled complexity of resilience in the urban contexts. The implications of all this, are reflected in the need to guarantee the sustainability of the building resilience effort; including the resource mobilization issue.

In the Americas a multitude of activities has been carried out since 2008[4] to analyze the specific characteristics and challenges of urban environments which have yielded some important findings on risk in urban context:

- Differentiation between urban and rural environment, and its implications on the work of the RC/RC;
- A clearer definition of the possible urban risk scenarios;
- The strong relationship between urban and rural contexts;
- The humanitarian (and legal) implication of migration in the cities (dormitory cities);
- The need to conduct more careful and detailed analysis of work contexts;
- The importance of land management as a fundamental aspect of integrated DRM work (and not only from an emergency response point of view).

Case Studies from National Societies

Trends, impact and challenges of the urban context in the Dominican Republic

The history of the Dominican Republic includes several significant **disasters in urban contexts**. In 1979, Hurricane David damaged or destroyed 90% of homes in the affected areas and caused widespread damages on roads and communication infrastructure. In 2004, heavy flooding hit the city of Jimaní, with a strong flood in the Río Blanco that left more than 700 people dead. Recently, in 2007, more than 150 cities across the country were left without potable water and sanitation services following tropical storms Noel and Olga.

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[3] It is worth pointing out that the Urban Resilience workshop has followed two days of workshop on the review of the IFRC "Road to Resilience" document, which analyzes the key concepts of resilient communities at the global level of the movement. The inputs for this workshop provided the basis for a more detailed analysis of the urban context from an urban resilience point of view.

[4] See Annex II for more details on the specific exploratory and learning activities that have been undertaken by the RC/RC on urban risk in the Americas.

The trends during the last few decades have increased the **displacement of the population from the countryside to cities**, creating a great demand for humanitarian assistance among the displaced population. The erratic growth of the cities and the **accelerated environmental degradation**, linked to activity in several sectors agriculture, mining, etc.), which make it a priority to carry out reforestation work and protect the riverbanks.

The lack of adequate **land use planning** has led to the growth of informal settlements in high-risk areas, also overloading the already fragile potable water and sanitation systems. Trends related to climate change (e.g. stronger storms and irregular rainy seasons) increase the pressure on these systems, making it necessary to add new adaptation perspectives as a central pillar of risk reduction work.

For the RC/RC it was necessary to redefine the way of working, a "re-engineering process" geared at solving governance problems with the local authorities in charge of helping the population with emergency services and care.

Work was also done towards achieving **integration of disaster risk management (DRM) in public policies** (health sector, pre-hospital care, road safety, psycho-social support, security, food security, etc.). In this area access to basic services could not just be seen from an emergency response point of view. It became necessary to consider resilience building for the population, prioritizing the suburban areas where there was most overcrowding, social vulnerability and greater exposure to natural hazards.

In order to achieve this, strategic alliances had to be built: with local governments, the private sector (from successful companies that had generated or accelerated the urbanization process) or the universities (e.g. with the Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo, UASD, the first university in the Americas with more than 200,000 students).

The Dominican Republic's challenges are the same challenges faced by the region and the continent as a whole. Institutional capacities have to be strengthened for an integrated DRM, which is translated into resilience building. Risk in a city is the same risk as in the rural setting, but in a setting that has **different vulnerability characteristics** (e.g. problems with housing, overcrowding, WASH services, access to employment and market opportunities, high population concentration). Nonetheless, there are also many **capacities**, and it is easy to create alliances, as well as to work in partnership with experts from universities and/or the private sector.

Finally, work has to be done with the political sector and the decision makers that may take on the role and responsibility of ensuring the affected population's right to receive assistance.

Trends, impact and challenges of the urban context in Colombia

Colombia is a country with 42 million inhabitants, of whom 70% live in cities. The particularity of the Colombian urban context lies in the need to cater to a population that in the last few decades has been affected by **armed conflict** and other forms of violence.

Although it now appears that the country is entering a post-conflict phase, the reality is that the violence is moving from the rural to the urban areas (and especially in the capital) particularly in the domestic setting[5]. There is also a return to the smaller cities, but the problems of the big cities (like violence, prostitution or drug addiction) are being dragged along in the process.
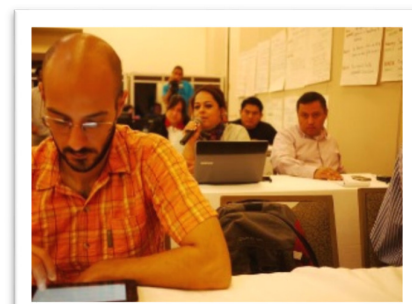

Figure 2. Presentation by the Colombian RC

The marginalized urban population is characterized by living in highly dangerous places. However, when considering alternative areas for their relocation, one ends up confronting **the complexity of the dynamics**

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[5] Although a reduction of deaths due to armed conflict in the rural areas is being registered, an increase in deaths due to domestic violence is being noted, with a special emphasis on gender violence, with some 15,000 victims in the past year.

that link the population with the territory. Issues like land ownership are linked to the interests of the real estate sector (which influence the value of land) and can exacerbate the exposure of populations in areas prone to hydro-meteorological hazards). The community also has a relationship with its environment in terms of social spaces, access to markets and to livelihoods, so issues that increase environmental degradation can also have a negative impact on the social and environmental capital available to vulnerable populations. Due to the armed conflict, the problems of territorial control in Colombia, especially in rural or peri-urban areas, end up being strongly linked to drug trafficking.

The Colombian RC has traditionally worked with street dwellers; however, needs have often exceeded capacities. In less than 10 years, the population of the capital Bogotá has doubled from almost 4 million at the turn of the century to the current level of 10 million, and its **absorption capacity has been overwhelmed**.

The complex challenges in urban areas, including unemployment and lack of education, limited access to basic services, violence, drug trafficking, combined with other factors like climate change impacts, required the Colombian RC to adapt its traditional ways of operating. In addition to adjusting tools to the specific urban challenges[6], the need to guarantee adequate care for the urban population made it necessary to **build partnerships** and form alliances with the local government and relevant actors in urban settings.

In this way, **humanitarian diplomacy** work was strengthened, focusing on advocacy with local governments for definition and respect for minimum housing standards (in terms of basic services).

Recreation spaces were created, as well as informal work spaces, opportunities were created for young people and especially for people who had come from the countryside, so that they could lead a decent, dignified life in the city.

Building Urban Resilience – experience and challenges in Haiti

Since the 2010 earthquake, Haiti has lived through a series of experiences in the reconstruction process of the capital Port-au-Prince, which allow for the identification of aspects for **reverting the vulnerability accumulation dynamic** in the urban context.

The first experience relates to the work done through neighborhood committees to respond to the health and security demands of the displaced population. As a result of the earthquake, it became essential to understand the needs of the displaced population. The creation of **vigilance committees** helped understand the population's new community organization and provided inputs for planning interventions with urban communities, including the organization of Preparedness and Response Committees.

The post-disaster situation was marked by a lack of basic services (health, potable water and sanitation, markets, etc.) and infrastructure, which also affected livelihoods aspects, and the population's priority of finding ways to overcome their situation. The Haitian RC (HRC) saw the need to attend the population beyond its mandate. While "the people built another city," the Haitian RC realized that it needed "polyvalent" (**multi-skilled) volunteers**, i.e. capable of interpreting the population's many needs with a minimum level of understanding and response capacity in any area of work (health, livelihoods, DRR, shelter, etc.).

Figure 3. Presentation by the Haitian RC

The HRC had to create new strategies for addressing the many needs of the population. DRR was not a priority for those affected, and tools like VCA had to be adapted so that they incorporated a more holistic approach for improving people's living conditions, as well as preventing false expectations (e.g. distribution of food or other items). Local leaders' involvement was strengthened, and the choice was made to conduct house-to-house visits to sensitize the population. A wider and more integrated perspective was proposed,

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[6] E.g. particular features of the urban context and the effects of Climate Change were added to the VCA.

which left open the HRC commitment towards the population for a longer period and in support of the diverse aspects. The HRC could not attend or respond to all the needs, nonetheless, it established itself as a **reference system**, seeking solutions to specific problems and acting as a "bridge" with the responsible government institutions, even by simply enabling transport and accompaniment for partner agencies to visit vulnerable, hard-to-reach communities.

The main challenges that were identified:

- Establishing capacity for adapting the current methodologies and tools in the urban contexts
- Identifying "urban community" in a dynamic and socially broken context
- Taking full advantage of the potential of new technologies (also for risk analysis)
- Effectively collaborating with other institutions, universities, and centers of expertise
- Analyze and providing guidance for an adequate response to livelihoods needs in urban environments
- Prioritizing the many problems that have been identified, in a perspective of assisting the population and the RC/RC mandate at a national level.

Building Urban Resilience – experiences and challenges in Guatemala

Guatemala is characterized by an urban risk context with new and diverse vulnerability factors. The reality of the cities is shifting rapidly, and a key challenge is the process of evictions aimed at improving the living conditions of families that move to live in lower-risk areas with improved access to services. Guatemala's **urban context** is also characterized by **internal migration** linked to work factors. The health sector is affected by environmental pollution, combined with stress and violence. In some areas of the big cities there are serious situations of **violence**, robberies and the *mara*[7] phenomenon.

Women's roles are also changing, and in the urban environment they are taking an increasing part in decision-making. On the other hand, food security cannot be achieved through traditional farming practices in the rural areas, which means that investment has to be made in diversification of livelihoods through specific training processes for accessing both formal and informal markets.

The work of the Guatemalan RC has thus focused on the creation of new alliances with the authorities and local governments, joining wider initiatives like the UNISDR **resilient cities campaign**, concentrating on vulnerability reduction and increasing resilience efforts in urban contexts.

In this aspect, **socio-labor insertion** has been the most effective option. The decision was taken to work for the development of technical areas that could open the way for more options for the population's livelihoods, adopting a **peer-to-peer strategy**, which has been very effective in a highly mobile population), aggravated by the security-related logistical difficulties in certain neighborhoods or times of day.

Guatemala also has a lot of experience of **violence reduction** work with young people, sometimes combining DRR work with violence prevention. As in the Haiti experience of 2012, the working methodology with young people means that they themselves take on the leadership role in peace building work. This work builds resilience through citizen training, promoting values (like co-existence, solidarity, self-worth) and socio-labor insertion[8].

The main challenges that were identified are:

- Identifying the "community" in an urban context

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[7] Organization of associated criminal gangs, dedicated to a range of illegal activities and trafficking.
[8] More experiences of work with young people and DRR have been shared about Nicaragua, where youth empowerment and leadership has been achieved through the identification and signposting of evacuation routes, which after more than two years are still there, and in good conditions.

- Recruiting and retaining facilitators (usually volunteers) with the skills and sensitivity for using traditional risk analysis tools (e.g. VCA) and for studying Livelihoods in urban contexts
- Working with local coordination structures (local COE) and other networks, influencing power relationships but without entering into political conflicts (out of respect for the principle of neutrality)
- Reaching communities through humanitarian diplomacy (work with coordinators/consuls) to be able to influence the decision-making processes for protecting the population
- Contributing to the municipal development agenda from the point of view of access to basic services (already the responsibility of the competent authorities);
- Obtaining the 'green light' from the local authorities to be able to work with the population, particularly in contexts with a high level of violence;
- Providing correct and timely assistance to the population from the NS in conflict situations and clarifying the role of the military forces in humanitarian assistance (possibility of recurring to the fundamental experience of the ICRC).

Sector components of resilience

The participants, divided into groups, analyzed the critical questions in five specific sectors of the RC work (Disaster Risk Reduction, Livelihoods, Advocacy, Role of Urban Branches, and Health) and identified the priority challenges and new approaches needed for addressing them.

SECTOR	CHALLENGES	NEW APPROACHES
Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)	• **The RC/RC does not have the institutional habit of defining integrated and multi-sector programs** • It is more complex to define and reach the community • Land management, land ownership and the informal nature of the marginal settlements • Resistance by the population to accepting help • Duplication between different institutions (government and non-government) • Communications: differences in learning capacity and culture between the rural and urban areas • Social class difference of origin and capacity to respond to the population's needs • Difficulty in motivating a response, despite having access to mass communications media • Different access and technology management • Different Livelihoods and not linked to the environment (and not to the initiative of the individual) • Migration • Relationship with the military forces in humanitarian aid work (especially in conflict zones)	• Draw up comprehensive projects (if internal coordination is better ensured) • Open ourselves to other participation and influencing spaces, taking on the role of facilitators (in order to include other actors) • Adapt volunteer training to other integrated approaches • Change of RC/RC image: from pre-hospital care to social problems • Strengthen relationship with communications media • Build cooperation spaces (also with the military forces) without creating rivalries, in detriment to the principles of neutrality and independence • Strengthen psycho-social support work for the most vulnerable groups • Work with local governments to improve coordination of land management.
Livelihoods	• **The National Societies don't have much experience or expertise on the theme of Livelihoods** • Recognize Livelihoods as an essential component of Resilience: strong Livelihoods mean capacity to resist and recover more quickly from adverse events. • Identify how to make the most of existing experience in the rural agricultural sector (planting strategies, seeds, etc.) for the urban context	• Align the Livelihoods sector to the RC/RC's auxiliary role to government (advocacy for livelihoods) • Include Livelihoods in a more holistic perspective of resilience building • Economic revitalization for affected populations with experiences of cash transfer, Cash for Work, microcredit, micro-entrepreneurship, etc.)

SECTOR	CHALLENGES	NEW APPROACHES
	• Analyze and strengthen the chain that links rural production to the urban areas (distribution networks, storage, marketing, etc.) • Extend the principle of "protection" to work and to income generation (in the face of a series of threats/hazards) • Promote economic reactivation or early post-disaster recovery actions, without creating distortions or false expectations in the long term. • Link Livelihoods to government responsibilities (market chain, tax policies, etc.) • The great diversity of Livelihoods in the urban context, and the big differences between cities, make it difficult to define a single "recipe" • Promote sustainability of Livelihoods in the urban context • It is essential to build a Monitoring & Evaluation system.	• Adapt the existing tools (e.g. VCA) so that they are sources of information and analysis for livelihoods • Examine the effect of climate change on Livelihoods • Conduct pre-studies for the Livelihoods programs (market analysis, including workforce) • Pre-agreements for enabling response to emergencies and early recovery • Programs for integrated solid waste management in urban areas (recycling, reduction, reuse), in coordination with the local government • Build Resilience through technical training that improves the professional curriculum of the population (vocational centers, official employment offices, universities).
Role of Urban Branches	• **Limited capacity for self-management and ensuring the sustainability of the processes** • Superimposition of roles when an operational central headquarters and a non-proactive affiliate join forces • Branches still don't provide strategic inputs • Gap between local government and the branches' management • Renewal of leadership and structure of the staff • Professionalize the branches by internationalizing the approaches • Participation of branches in strategic processes • Adequate internal communication • Ensure coverage in all of the national territory • Have tools and volunteers with the qualities needed for resilience building work • Need to change the 'business model' so that urban branches maintain (or obtain) a leading role in their area of coverage.	• Define effective plans for strengthening branches, based on personal training (emphasis on the cycle and curriculum for developing volunteers' competences) • Open up to the use and maximization of new communications technology platforms • Visualize the branches as the muscle of the NS, by recognizing their operational role in the work towards building a more resilient community • Strengthening the work team and volunteers by adding people with different qualities compared to the traditional: more professionals and older people among the volunteers • The branch takes on a fundraising role for fulfilling its responsibilities at a local level: work with the community to strengthen work on the ground.
Advocacy	• **The NS are not proactive enough in taking on a leading role in humanitarian diplomacy for meeting the multiple needs of the population** • Complexity of the urban context is greater than in urban areas • Each city is the result of different (historical) processes of vulnerability accumulation that makes them unique • Extend the mandate of the RC/RC to provide a response (or facilitate the assistance process) to the many needs of the urban context • Fine-tune the use of Humanitarian Diplomacy and of the capacities it contains • Adopt a facilitation role so that all the actors who take decisions make take on responsibility linked to resilience building.	• Promotion of the RC/RC as a global movement with great resources (human, logistical, financial) that only needs to create synergies • *Networking* (building work networks), for effective advocacy work with National Disaster Officer, NGOs, etc. • Obtain advance knowledge of the key actors, to make it possible to work together in emergencies • Intervene in support of the local authorities, for adequate coverage and attention to those affected. • Create the conditions for the NSs to learn from each other (*peer-to-peer*) • Support the preparation of local development agendas with a DRR perspective • Capitalize on previous experiences with candidates, legislative frameworks, universities, and others.

SECTOR	CHALLENGES	NEW APPROACHES
		• Promote global humanitarian mobilization.
Health	• **Non-integrated health programs due to the limited technical skills of volunteers** • Identify the mission of the RC/RC health sector (prevention, primary, secondary care, ETS, epidemics?) • Few countries with dedicated health programs • Limitations of community level infrastructures make it difficult to have a good reference system • Drug and alcohol abuse problems, domestic violence and mental health (some cities in the region are among the top 10 most violent places in the world) • Specific health programs for migrants could create discrimination and identity issues • Environmental health and risk of epidemics (vector control) • Increase in the number of elderly people • Health behaviors in the urban setting (rural-urban migration, lifestyle, nutrition, etc.)	• Promotion of dedicated health programs • Encourage partnership between the public sector, the private sector and the universities • Become involved in primary health care (multiply the successful blood bank experiences) • Move towards a larger number of volunteer-led programs • Paradigm change around elderly people, from vulnerability to a resource for society • Establish cooperation agreements with specialist homes for productive skills reactivation and social reinsertion programs for vulnerable groups.

PRIORITIZED CHALLENGES

➢ **DRR –** Lack of integrated approach in DRR programs

➢ **LIVELIHOODS –** Lack of experience and expertise in the Livelihoods sector

➢ **URBAN BRANCHES –** Limited capacity for self-management and sustainability of the processes

➢ **ADVOCACY –** NS is not very proactive in getting to know the response actors

➢ **HEALTH** - Limited integration of health programs and volunteers' technical skills

Stories of the future of Resilient Urban Communities

The 2-day workshop in Panamá is intended to bring together RC/RC practitioners in the Americas to build a collective understanding of the complexities of resilience in urban settings, and to identify creative solutions that may better address the challenges around urban vulnerability.

The participants used the "backcasting" (Retrospective Vision) method, an abstraction method aimed at visualizing a future situation, to then go back and analyze it from a "look backwards".

The groups initially designed a future urban **scenario** (2020) where a **resilient urban community** has been successfully built in four different scenarios: migration, violence, flooding, and environmental pollution. For each scenario, the characteristics and key elements that allow for the definition of a resilient urban community were identified.

After visualizing what a resilient community will be like in relation to a risk (as specifically as possible), each group "looked back in time", to hone in on the **obstacles** and the **essential steps** that were taken to overcome the obstacles and build out a resilient community.

Relevant **gaps** and **challenges** were identified for each step in the chain, and **strategies** were suggested to resolve each of the gaps and challenges.

The final result is evidence set of all the elements considered necessary for successful resilience planning in an urban community and for a specific risk scenario.

> **Notes on "back-casting"**
> The "back-casting" (or retrospective) approach used in the workshop is a revised version of the approach used in the workshop in Arusha, Tanzania on Urban Resilience Building. To benefit the discussion on the role of the RC, a greater emphasis has been placed on the identification of the root causes, and on differentiating the actions that the movement can change, influence and transform, according to the types of alliances needed for strengthening community resilience.

The group discussions were very productive, and have provided a good opportunity for peer-to-peer learning. The presentation of the results also enabled sharing of new viewpoints and cross cutting elements for each scenario, adding value to the sector-based discussion held the previous day.

A brief summary of the presentation follows:

Road Map to Urban Resilience - Migration

Increasing **resilience of migrant population** in urban requires full respect for their Human Rights. It also entails the identification of the decision makers and interest groups in urban areas, who have to be educated about the needs of migrant population and the risks that are connected to ignorance and stigmatization of migrants Another important factor to increase resilience of migrant groups is to create mechanisms for reestablishing family contacts and ensuring access to basic services.

Figure 4. Analysis of migration

A multitude of causes for vulnerabilities of migrant population were identified, including: the risk of suffering (workplace/ sexual) exploitation, social invisibility, lack of knowledge of their rights (due to legislative change), limited economic power (fewer opportunities), absence of social networks of belonging, limited access to health and education.

Some of the work areas that were identified to increase the resilience of migrant population included:

→ "**Direct work**" with people who possess documents, work in border regions (language barriers), joint work between the national societies in the country of origin and the destination country to increase knowledge and awareness of migrants and be better placed to provide basic services.

→ "**Support work**" for undocumented-refugees, through humanitarian diplomacy, and setting up alliances with other actors and sectors with previous advocacy experience with groups that work with migrants (including church groups, human rights defense groups in migration) to ensure access to basic services.

→ "**Work on the environment**", dedicating specific funds and resources for mitigation of stigmas surrounding the migrant group, communications work with society, information and advice points (experience of the RC/RC kiosks and the mobile information units); training volunteers for psycho-

social support, also including the migrants themselves in the volunteer work and encouraging "peer to peer" approaches; promoting cultural and recreational activities around the culture of migrants to sensitize population and political actors; and providing access to basic services.

Figure 5. Results of resilience scenario on migration

Road Map to Urban Resilience - Gang Violence

The group presented a resilience scenario from marginal urban com-munities in Trinidad & Tobago (Caribbean region) characterized by **gang violence**.

In this context, a resilient urban community is visualized when public safety, good health, complete accessibility and integration with the surroundings, economic productivity and adequate provision of infrastructure and social services are guaranteed.

The group analyzed the context and the root causes linked to the problem of gang violence in the city. The community structure (with sub-communities) is very complex: social classes with different socio-economic status mix on the basis of the following elements:

Figure 6. Analysis of gang violence

-   A historical urbanization process, which has displaced deprived population groups to the cities in search of socio-economic opportunities.
-   The issue of the returned deportees from the US, who have no more social connection in the island,
-   The disparity created in the installation of low-income activities in higher class areas
-   The creation of a competitive dynamic between different gangs over control of territories
-   The role and responsibility of the political sector in promoting the "what can you do for me?" attitude among the population, based more on an inability to capitalize on opportunities than on the real absence of opportunities
-   Gang leaders taking on the governance of the territory and filling the gaps in security, protection, unemployment and lack of basic services
-   The presence of many organizations in the city can create a feeling of fatigue on part of the population, so the RC/RC must find a different approach in order to work effectively.

From a retrospective vision of **resilience building** under the scenario, the work done by the RC/RC would have been accomplished through the following **steps**:

- The traditional way of doing things had to change.
- Anthropological studies were conducted in order to decipher reality, interact with the communities, and finally to involve their members in the RC/RC activities (in partnership with churches, schools, etc.)
- The national society is accepted as part of the community, part of the change that it wants to propose in society
- Receive support from the volunteers who live in the community, by re-incorporating them and motivating them, so that they may serve as a point of entry into the community
- Work with young people has been prioritized by making proposals for free time, to concentrate their energies on something productive, creative and positively linked to the territory, as well as filling the existing gaps in the psycho-social support programs especially for children
- Change the perception of the most dangerous neighborhoods, by promoting positive life experiences and testimonies, linked to the neighborhood (e.g. the new US Ambassador, a high-ranking US Army officer, who was born and raised in one of the most violent areas of the capital)
- Build alliances from a holistic perspective with positive messages, use humanitarian diplomacy for access to basic public services.

Figure 7. Results of resilience scenario on gang violence

Road Map to Urban Resilience - Flooding

The group visualized a **resilient urban community** in the face of **flood risk**, by ensuring integrated disaster risk management.

The context of the analysis for the problems of flooding covers many complex aspects that can lead to poverty and urban violence: lack of sanitation, risk of epidemics, effect on vital infrastructures, effect on Livelihoods, the influence of food insecurity, lack of road safety, inadequate housing (which can also affect education when schools are used as shelters).

From a retrospective vision, the **steps** that were taken to achieve **Integrated Disaster Risk Management** cover the following areas:

Figure 8. Analysis on flooding

- A better organized RC/RC and with controlled risk scenarios;
- Provision of a school curriculum that encompasses DRM in the education of the population; Contingency Plans for flooding drawn up;
- Focal points in companies and organizations (public and private) that have been identified;
- Diversified funding, where the RC/RC completes the contributions and donations from other actors that participate via a multiple donor fidelity mechanism (members' network);
- An adequate accountability mechanism;
- A program of associated companies on the themes of communications, logistics, funding, among others;
- Training programs (internal to the RC/RC and community-based) on a range of themes (VCA, WATSAN, Shelter, etc.).

Figure 9. Results of resilience scenario on flooding

Road Map to Urban Resilience – Environmental Pollution

The group visualized the **resilience of an urban community** in the face of the risk of **environmental pollution**, in the necessary cultural change that encompasses a new inter-sectorial vision of urban solid waste management, and that ensures an adequate waste management system, widespread community participation in decision-making, and the use of alternatives and community initiatives.

Figure 10. Analysis on environmental pollution

The context in which environmental pollution is generated is very broad, and covers:

- Public education / lack of civic culture
- Poverty and access to services
- Legal regulatory framework (may exist, but is not applied)
- Population growth / of the city in relation to areas originally designated for industry
- Destruction or modification of the ecosystem
- Old sanitation networks (defined for another type of city)
- Climate change / variable weather
- Final availability of solid waste (management)
- Local government and waste management systems
- Effect on the health system.

From a retrospective point of view, the **steps** that have taken place to build urban resistance to environmental pollution have been:

1. Conducting a diagnostic exercise to define the reality table (or in a pessimistic scenario)
2. Implementation of formal, informal training programs and with academic sectors, which promote a holistic intervention for solving the problem
3. Humanitarian diplomacy work (or advocacy) to coordinate with other organizations that can contribute to the solution of the problem that was identified, from different perspectives and experiences
4. Building a public policy for defining the legislative framework concerned and to bring about change (*enabling environment*)
5. Effective cultural change, through recognition of young people's (and volunteers') work in the promotion of a cultural change, also involving other actors and sectors (e.g. school brigades, churches, etc.).
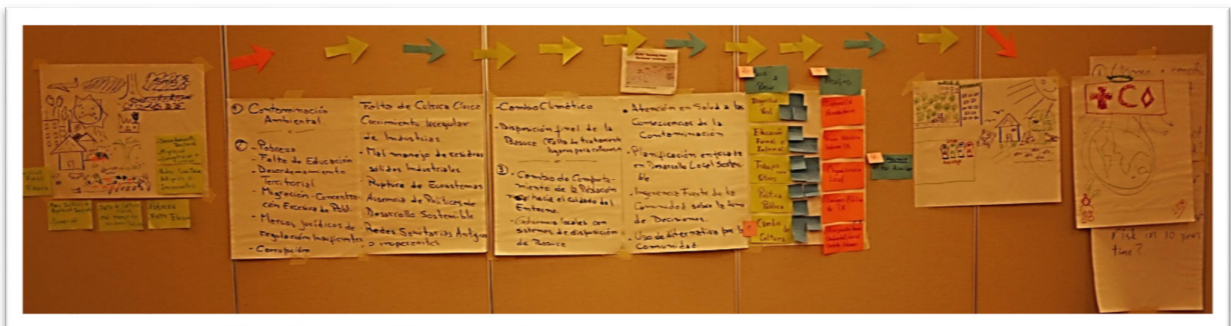

Figure 11. Results of resilience scenario on environmental pollution

Opportunities for follow-up

We present below the ideas and suggestions for continuing to make progress in the process of learning about building urban resilience, to ground our future work (over the next year or two) and readjust the guidelines if necessary.

Networking

- A need has been demonstrated for adapting the "business model" so that the NS can truly take on the convener role for creating networks of partners and allies with a view to building urban resilience;

- Throughout the whole workshop the importance of creating alliances with the different actors and sectors, which can contribute to building urban resilience, from universities, other NGOs, private companies, grassroots community organizations etc. has been expressed;

- A special mention is made of the role that can be taken on by companies and universities for building expertise in all the areas of risk reduction work, as well as for protecting livelihoods;

- It is considered interesting to conduct the "visions of the future" exercise involving other actors and the universities in the region (e.g. University of West Indies), to truly project the American continent to the end of the 2020 strategy ("towards a resilient and participative American continent").

Guidance Manuals and Tools

- The need for completing the review and adaptation of the current work tools with the community (e.g. VCA) was reiterated, so that the methodology for working in resilience building in an urban context can be clearer and more concise;

- The need was demonstrated for tools that inform and simplify partnership-building work and work networks.

- Increase the use of available technologies, for the greatest possible diffusion and sharing of information, as well as the progress achieved to date.

- All the topics tackled from the resilience point of view, make it interesting to replicate this type of workshop at National Societies level, in order to concentrate on the different skills and experiences, and be able to contribute to urban resilience building work that is supported by a road map.

Evidence Base

- Need to disseminate the perspective on building resilience in the continent through the NS to systematize and consolidate the experiences and visions, and to promote a harmonized concept at regional level.

- A major area of theoretical and practical progress from the Americas region has been recognized on the topic of urban risk, and the proposal is to capitalize on these experiences from the urban resilience perspective.

- On several occasions there is a reference to the complexity of the urban contexts, stressing the importance of "studying the reality" before intervening, to ensure the population's integration and participation in the resilience building process.

- It is proposed to organize interdisciplinary campaigns, which include external agencies to the RC/RC, so that they may join in the definition of case studies.

Conclusions

The workshop that was held is considered to be an important exercise on the areas of analysis and work of Urban Resilience that need to be structured and strengthened. Discussions focused on the need to create alliances, as well as knowledge management. At this time we need to jointly define "how to do it".

From the IFRC office in the Americas, work is being done so that the experiences and tools for building urban resilience already in use can be leveraged and disseminated.

Resilience should not be considered as the latest buzzword, but as an area that has been worked on in many different ways over the years, and which is now taking on a different, broader significance, with direct implications on the way the RC/RC works.

The themes dealt with throughout the workshop (migration, violence, climate change, cultural changes, etc.), imply very deep changes in society. Urban Resilience in this context is multidimensional and multi-sectorial, and entails working in an integrated manner, taking into account a change of perspective in terms of interventions, including the different areas/challenges identified (violence, Livelihoods, DRR, health, advocacy, etc.).

In order to achieve this, there has to be a change in the RC/RC's "business model". Not just from a technical point of view – the system itself has to be changed: recruitment of volunteers as active members of social change, the knowledge diffusion mechanisms from the headquarters, strengthening the role of auxiliaries of the public authorities, along with other aspects.

Resilience is a concept laden with cultural elements. It needs to be studied and learned about, so that the RC/RC is capable of taking on the leadership role in humanitarian diplomacy work from this renewed perspective. The challenge today is to move on from a Disaster Risk Management perspective to a broader and more integrated resilience perspective. The consultations continue: the Americas region frames the "urban" component in the resilience framework, and the NSs will go on being asked to continue supporting the review of the framework to add this analysis to other relevant regional frameworks (e.g. the Caribbean Disaster Management Strategic Framework).

In the same way, we will capitalize on existing experiences, in order to simplify them, and thus divulge them at NS and branch level in the region, to become an engine for urban resilience for the Red Cross national societies in the Americas.

Organization	Name/Participant	E-mail address
NICARAGUAN RC	Daraysi Palma Gutiérrez	planificacion@humanidad.org.ni
GUATEMALAN RC	Lic. Fermín Cojón	Femin.cojon@cruzroja.gt
GUATEMALAN RC	María Eugenia Montufar	Sheny.montufar@cruzroja.gt
CHILEAN RC	Jorge Orellana Muñoz	Jorge.orellana@cruzroja.cl
ECUADORIAN RC	Roger Wilmer Zambrano Cedeño	rzambrano@cruzroja.org.ec roger_ec@hotmail.com
COLOMBIAN RC	Miguel Ángel Gil Gil	miguel.gil@cruzrojacolombiana.org
DOMINICAN RC	Gustavo Lara	gustavo.lara@cruzroja.org.do
DOMINICAN RC	Lidia Comery	lidia.comery@cruzroja.org.do
URUGUAYAN RC	Guzmán Moresco	ggmg17@hotmail.com
TRINIDADIAN RC	Margarita Elliot	
CARIBBEAN REGIONAL REPRESENTATION OFFICE – TRINIDAD	Cecilie Clarke Marshall	cecilie.clarkemarshall@ifrc.org
BARBADOS RC	Michael Beckles	beck@caribsurf.com
JAMAICAN RC	Marcia Alexander	malexander@jamaicaredcross.org
BELIZE RC	Fred Hunter	fhunterj@yahoo.com
ARGENTINEAN RC	Pablo Bruno	pbruno@cruzroja.org.ar
SURINAME RC	Kenneth Letterboom	kennylboom@hotmail.com
MEXICAN RC	Luis Edmundo Pérez	luisperezgarcia@cruzrojamexicana.org.mx
FACILITATOR	Mjrko Rennola	mjrko.rennola@gmail.com
BARBADOS RC	Tamara Lovell	tamaralovell@gmail.com
COMMUNITY RESILIENCE REFERENCE CENTER, COSTA RICA	José Zúñiga	Jose.zuniga@ifrc.org
IFRC-DOMINICAN REP.	Joe Lugo	Joe.lugo@ifrc.org
PANAMANIAN RC	Julio Vargas	Jvargas36@hotmail.com
HAITIAN RC	Santiague Garibaldy	g.santiague@croixrouge.ht
HAITIAN RC	Clerge Agenor	Jc.agenor@croixrouge.ht
COLOMBIAN RC	Alba Salazar	alba.salazar@cruzrojacolombiana.org

Global Disaster Preparedness Center (GDPC)	Nathan Cooper	Nathan.Cooper@ifrc.org
General Insurance Risk Engineering, ZURICH, MSc, MAS Natural Hazards Management	Michael Szoenyi	
IFRC – GENEVA	Marjorie Sotofranco	Marjorie.Sotofranco@ifrc.org
NORWEGIAN RC	Marte Kristin Fremstedal	marfre@redcross.no
GLOBAL FIRST AID REFERENCE CENTER	Diane Issard	Diane.issard@croix-rouge.fr
Global Disaster Preparedness Center (GDPC)	Ian O'Donnell	Ian.odonnell@redcross.org
Global Disaster Preparedness Center (GDPC)	Karin Metz	Karin.Metz2@redcross.org
LOCALS		
IFRC - COOPERATION & SERVICES	Margarita Griffith	Margarita.griffith@ifrc.org
IFRC - URCRU COORDINATOR	Daniel Ureña	Daniel.urena@ifrc.org
IFRC - URCRU DRMP	Krystell Santamaria	Krystell.Santamaria@ifrc.org
IFRC - URRCU – HEALTH	Loreto Barcelo	Loreto.barcelo@ifrc.org
IFRC – URRCU	Zoila Castillo	Zoila.castillo@ifrc.org
IFRC – URRCU	Pablo Egea	Pablo.egea@ifrc.org
IFRC – PADRU	Omar Robinson	Omar.robinson@ifrc.org
IFRC - VOLUNTEERING & YOUTH	Valerie Whiting	Valerie.whiting@ifrc.org
IFRC - VOLUNTEERING & YOUTH	Anu Tyvijarvi	Anu.tyvijarvi@ifrc.org
IFRC - RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT	Karina Lapteva	Karina.lapteva@ifrc.org
IFRC – IT	Christopher Alvarez	Christopher.alvarez@ifrc.org
IFRC – IT	Daniel Urriola	Daniel.urriola@ifrc.org
AMERICAN RC	Gavin White	Gavin.white@redcross.org
AMERICAN RC	Jose Bonilla	Jose.bonilla2@redcross.org
CANADIAN RC	David Campfens	David.campfens@redcross.ca

The concept of risk in urban contexts has been the subject of meetings and discussions in the Americas over the last few years that have contributed to defining with greater clarity the specific risk scenarios and proposing possible solutions for tackling them through the sector mandates and programs of the RC/RC.

These studies have highlighted the following characteristics of urban context that may require different approaches than those that have traditionally been used in more rural contexts.

Table – Main differences between urban and rural contexts (IFRC – Urban Risk, 2011)

INDICATOR	URBAN	RURAL
Accessibility (For people with disabilities)	In some cities there are initiatives for creating more favorable conditions for people with disabilities.	This is not a discussion or agenda item.
Cost of land	High	Relatively low
Power	The main public and corporate authorities are there, and they take decisions that have an impact on the rest of the territory.	Presence of local Governments, in the case of Central America, with few resources and low levels of territorial governance.
Environment	The artificial predominates over the natural.	Human beings have altered the ecosystems that exist in the rural areas. Nonetheless, the predominance of the artificial over the natural is not as marked as in the cities.
Population	High density and concentration Higher school attendance rates More specialized workforce	Dispersed Lower school attendance rates Less specialized workforce
Services[9]	Concentrated Diversified	Dispersed Less quantity (low level of decentralization) In some cases inferior quality.
Vital lines[10]	High density	Low density

The table below outlines the key exploratory and learning activities on urban risk that have taken place in the Americas.

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[9] Trade, health, education, banking, liberal professionals: doctors, lawyers
[10] Electricity grid, aqueducts, communications, fuel pipelines, bridges, road network, fuel storage systems, others.

Table – Background for the Americas on Risk in Urban Areas

Year	Event / activity	Objective / contribution
2008	Study on Urban Risk (University of Florida)	First definition of the Urban Risk approach for the Americas region
2009	DIPECHO regional with research focus	Knowledge management in urban areas
2010	*Started preparing methodological guides and approaches for UR*	
2010	***World Disaster Report 2010 Focus on urban risk***	
2010	Earthquakes in Haiti and Chile	Case studies of field experience of DRR work in urban settings
2011	Workshop for Exchanging Experiences in Urban Risk Reduction (Haiti)	Practical Guidelines for Implementation of the Conceptual Framework
2011	Regional Workshop on Urban Risk Management in the Americas (Haiti)	The design and implementation of an operational structure for urban DRR
2011	***Conceptual guidelines and methodological approach (NS case studies from Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, etc.)***	
2012	Document "No Time for Doubt"	The DP and DRR approach through case studies from a range of countries (Jamaica, Panama, Peru, etc.)
2012	***Implementation of the RC Inter-American intervention Framework***	
2012	Forums on Urban Risk	Four forums in Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Nicaragua.
	First systematization initiative for Urban Risk projects in the Americas	Small compilation of experiences and information to contribute to a future capacity development process.
2013	DIPECHO Central America on safer and more resilient communities	Development of a series of materials on methodologies, tools, checklist on Urban Risk
2013	***Awareness raising and advocacy on Urban Risk at NS and local level***	
2013	Study on Livelihoods in Urban Contexts (DIPECHO Central America)	First analysis of Livelihoods in an urban context that will define a pilot project for validating guidelines, work tools for Livelihoods in an urban context

In addition, in coordination with the Community Resilience Reference Center in Costa Rica (on DRR) specific pilot projects have been conducted on "EWS in Slums and Urban Areas", as well as a "Global Guide for Communications Tools in Urban Contexts". Coinciding with this pilot initiative, major dengue fever outbreaks in Central America confirmed the importance of including the aspect of epidemic prevention and control, which is why this aspect was added to the pilot project.

Other initiatives have contributed guides, reference frameworks and tools: the Nicaragua experience with earthquakes ("The Tectonic Family" story), the inclusion of the topics of disability and work with older people, guides for working on violence in schools and neighborhoods, tools for DRR Cost-Benefit Analysis, which includes elements of urban environments (promoted by the UK development cooperation agency DFID), a range of case studies from Honduras on working with parents and schools, analysis of the cross-border dynamics in Guatemala, work with candidates and mayors in the Dominican Republic, other work with universities and aid institutions for Search and Rescue in collapsed structures, work on Youth Violence Prevention in Central America, road education, work with the private sector (corporate social responsibility) and the promotion of economic development in urban contexts.

ANNEX III. – WORKSHOP AGENDA

BUILDING URBAN RESILIENCE
26th September 2013 - Day 1 (Panama)

Introduction / Description of urban contexts:
What are the challenges and opportunities? What is our experience telling us?

Day 1	Main theme / Activity
	Welcome – What has brought us here? Definition of the scene, summary of conclusions of the previous urban DRR forums and concepts of urban risk in the Americas
9:00 – 9:30	Introduction and explanation about the workshop, expectations and interests of participants (presentation) The best understanding achieved by the NSs of the concepts of Resilience in the Urban Setting (Presentation) Rockefeller Foundation, the DGPC and the IFRC – a new partnership model (presentation) DRR linkages in urban settings and community resilience (presentation)
9:30 – 10:30	**In relation to cities in the Americas: what is happening?** Trends and impact on the urban and peri-urban environments in the Americas and how they relate to the strategic responses at a global level and in the Americas. Examples from the Dominican Republic and Colombia (exchange of experiences)
10:30 - 11:00	Break
11:00 – 13:00	**The increase in urban resilience: "Telling the Truth"** "Short stories" of the application of tools and methodologies for tackling urban vulnerabilities in the Americas – specific challenges and key questions that need to be explored in greater depth Examples from Haiti and Guatemala (exchange of experiences) Discussion of key questions on application of tools and methodologies (small group discussions)
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00– 15:00	**An Urban Approach for the Americas – What are the challenges and how are we responding?** What are the challenges in each of the RC/RC areas as disaster preparedness and response professionals? What are the new or different approaches and what new ways of working are we adopting? (Small group discussions)
15:00 - 15:30	Break
15:30 - 16:30	Plenary presentation of the priority themes discussed and conclusions
16:30	Close and recap

<p style="text-align:center">**BUILDING URBAN RESILIENCE**</p>

<p style="text-align:center">**27th September 2013 - Day 2 (Panama)**</p>

<p style="text-align:center">**Building Urban Resilience**
What ideas do we have for collective action and what will support us in implementing them?</p>

Day 2	Main theme / Activity
9:00 – 9:30	Welcome: fundamental themes and questions from the previous day to guide the discussions of day 2 (main challenges identified for building resilience in urban settings)
	Imagine and create resilience – 'Stories from the Future'
9:30 – 10:30	Thinking of urban scenarios that present particular challenges at this time or that will probably emerge in the future. (Work groups with a range of possible approaches for building urban resilience).
10:30 – 11:00	Break
	Imagine and create resilience – 'Stories from the Future'
11:00 -13:00	Reflection and debate in small groups (continues): When looking back in our vision of resistance – how have we achieved it? What were the causes and the deep-rooted causes of the problems that were identified? What have we, and others, done collectively to overcome the challenges? What were the approaches/steps that allowed us to achieve this? What was the role of RC/RC in terms of change, influence, or transformation of these approaches?
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
	Report out of small groups on 'Stories from the future' (plenary session)
14:00 – 15:00	• Share points of view in the discussion
	• How have the key challenges related to the urban environment been tackled?
15:00 – 15:30	Break
15:30 – 16:00	Next steps: the first inputs for an outline Plan of Action for resilience building in the Americas (plenary discussion)
16:00 – 16:30	Reflections on the workshop (plenary)
16:30 - 17:00	**Close of workshop**