Humanitarian Response to Urban Crises

Workshop Report 29.08.2014

Introduction

By 2030 almost 5 billion people or 60% of the world's population will live in urban areas and nearly three quarters of the urban population will live in cities in low- and middle-income countries.[i] Projections from the UN and other international bodies also point to increased frequency and severity of natural disasters occurring in towns and cities. The impacts of climate change are likely to be compounded by existing vulnerabilities in urban areas, where low-income populations are often housed in poor quality accommodation on marginal land. This presents a significant challenge for the international humanitarian system; both in the scale and complexity of responding to urban disasters and in operating in an environment in which traditional humanitarian actors do not have significant experience and expertise.

The UK government's Humanitarian Emergency Response Review recognised that 'the concentration of populations in urban areas will change the nature of many humanitarian disasters.'[ii] DFID is exploring how it can increase understanding, confidence and capability to prepare for and respond to urban crises within the humanitarian community. As a first step, a series of stakeholder consultations were held in March 2014. Four workshops discussed humanitarian response to urban crises through the topics of working with governments, the built environment, complex communities and markets. Each workshop followed a similar format with presentations of specific case studies followed by discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of current practice and identification of recommendations.   More than 65 participants from 40 organisations attended over the four days.

'Rapid urbanization and population growth are combining to create enormous new challenges for the humanitarian community and pushing us out of our comfort zone to deal with a strange new urban world.'

Bekele Geleta, IFRC Secretary General
World Disasters Report 2010

This document is intended to capture discussions from the workshops. As such, it does not reflect DFID policy. The primary audience is workshop participants but it may also be of interest to other humanitarian practitioners, policy makers and researchers. The report is structured in four parts summarising the presentations and discussions from each of the workshops. In conclusion the report highlights the key recommendations of workshop participants to strengthen the capacity of donors, local governments, and humanitarian actors to prepare for and respond to urban crises.

Photo: UNHCR/E.Dorfman

Governments

In the first workshop participants discussed working with municipal, sub-national and national governments in response to urban crises. Presentations covered working with governments in response to 'natural' disasters and conflict situations while breakout groups discussed working with governments in different types of cities; mega-cities, capital cities, secondary cities with weak or strong local government, and cities with emerging or informal governance structures.

Types of government: Participants highlighted that different approaches to working with government will be required depending on the strength of government and which level of government (municipal, sub-national or national) is affected by the disaster. For example a disaster directly or indirectly affecting a capital city may negatively affect both municipal and national government capacity; secondary cities affected by disasters can still draw on the support of national government, while the poly-centric nature of mega-cities means that they are unlikely to be completely destroyed. Participants noted that national government is generally responsible for setting the overall strategy for response while municipal government may be responsible for coordination of implementation. However, capacity of municipal or sub-national governments can vary widely depending on the level of decentralisation: they may or may not have decision-making authority with regard to the provision of different public services; they may be able to raise their own funds through local taxes or remain dependent on national government funding. Participants felt that power analysis was critical to understanding the relationships between national, sub-national and local government and the influence of armed or illegal groups. However, humanitarian organisations currently lack the tools and expertise to undertake this type of work.

View disasters in the context of development: The importance of linking relief, recovery, reconstruction and development was also discussed. This includes taking a developmental approach to humanitarian response in urban areas: i.e. ensuring that response focuses on building local capacity and reducing vulnerability to future disasters but also working with governments prior to disasters to reduce the risk of disasters occurring and plan for response. Participants noted that the growth of cities is now largely informal; often creating a gap between the extent of a city and the power of municipal authorities to manage it. Humanitarian actors therefore need to better understand the relationship between their interventions and the longer-term formal and informal processes of urban development in the context in which they are working.

Surge capacity: Humanitarian response to urban crises places government officials and agencies under abnormal levels of demand. They may require technical expertise in specific aspects of urban humanitarian response but also extra staff to cover the additional administrative and management burden. Secondments were felt to be effective in rapidly providing additional capacity to governments – particularly national, rather than international, secondments in order to provide contextual knowledge and build long-term capacity. Humanitarian response to urban crises requires types of expertise that may not be available within humanitarian organisations – and that may be needed at very specific moments during a response – for example industrial hazard management or micro and macro urban planning. While several organisations already maintain rosters of rapidly deployable personnel, participants felt that a shared roster of urban 'technical surge-capacity' would increase the quality and predictability of urban response. This could include national and international staff from governments, development organisations, the private sector and academia in order to access the relevant expertise.

Coordination: Participants highlighted the role of governments in coordination: noting a correlation between weaker national governments and poorly coordinated activities by international humanitarian actors. Others argued that the number of external actors was critical; with high-profile crises leading to a proliferation of actors and additional complexity. While there has been a considerable focus on coordinating the relief phase of rapid-onset disasters, participants noted that there is less predictable funding for recovery and reconstruction phases, agencies lack the mandate or technical capacity to engage in recovery/reconstruction activities, and developmental donors may be unfamiliar or unwilling to engage with the cluster system. To address this challenge, participants argued that humanitarian response to urban crises requires inter-sectoral coordination of recovery and reconstruction led by government and development actors from the outset of the response. Urban humanitarian response requires greater integration with government coordination structures, 'expert coordinators' to deal with the complexity and better coordination of donor funding to remove artificial divisions between humanitarian and development work.

Key recommendations included: supporting governments throughout relief, recovery and reconstruction (rather than just working with them on specific projects); establishing a system to provide 'urban technical surge-capacity' to governments; working with governments to understand their power structures, needs and capacity; and establishing a recovery/reconstruction platform led by government immediately after the disaster.

Supporting refugees in Lebanon and Jordan

Ewen Mcleod (UNHCR) described the challenges of working with government to support refugees in Lebanon and Jordan. He began by highlighting that in March 2014 there were approximately 1 million registered refugees in Lebanon and 600,000 in Jordan and that this represents a 23% population increase in Lebanon and a 15% increase in Jordan. Both Lebanon and Jordan are more than 80% urban,[iii] and relatively few refugees are living in camps. Some live in self-built informal settlements, but the majority have made private rental arrangements for housing in urban or peri-urban areas. They currently face increasing competition with host communities for limited housing, livelihood opportunities and access to services.

The responsibility for support to refugees in Lebanon has largely fallen on more than 1,000 local municipalities; exposing pre-existing weaknesses in the relationship between local and national government. Local authorities face challenges such as a doubling of solid waste production and a massive increase in demand for housing (both requiring large-scale investment). However, they have limited ability to generate their own revenue and limited capacity to manage large-scale infrastructure systems. Roughly half of education and health services in Jordan are provided by the private sector, requiring humanitarian organisations to rethink their typical approaches. Local authorities also have limited familiarity with the international humanitarian system, creating challenges as existing developmental procedures and policies take time to adapt to the speed and scale of humanitarian response.

Humanitarian space in the Philippines and South Sudan

Joseph Ashmore (IOM) used the cities of Tacloban in the Philippines and Juba in South Sudan to highlight and contrast the challenges of working with governments in large-scale disasters and conflict situations. Even though the Philippines has significant experience of disasters and disaster management systems the scale of damage caused by typhoon Haiyan overwhelmed their capacity and required international assistance. For example, in Tacloban only 10% of municipal workers had returned to work two weeks after the disaster. Similarly IOM had undertaken Camp Coordination and Camp Management training a few months before the disaster but only two of the people trained could be located after the disaster.

Prior to December 2013 the work of international actors in South Sudan had been focussed on nation-building in the world's youngest country. After December 2013 the international humanitarian community faced a conflict

situation – with 700,000 people displaced by March 2014. The security situation meant that many types of shelter programming – for example working within neighbourhoods of origin, or urban host family programmes – were not possible. Even completing assessments was a significant challenge as access required an escort from one side or the other of the conflicting parties. Most assistance was therefore restricted to supporting the 70,000 people who had sought refuge within UNMISS bases within cities.

Working with government in Haiti

Jean-Christophe Adrian (UN-Habitat) analysed the approach of humanitarian actors to working with government following the Haiti earthquake in 2010. One of the main issues was the lack of engagement with development actors as this could have facilitated the working relationship between humanitarian actors and the Haitian government. This was illustrated, for example, by the PDNA not involving humanitarian actors and remaining a one-off exercise without proper follow-up. However, the creation of the Haiti Reconstruction Commission at the end of 2010 enabled national government to gain greater leadership. The establishment of cluster hubs and coordination meetings at municipal level was also effective in supporting humanitarian and local government actors to share information.

Jean-Christophe identified three key challenges which shaped the response: that donor funding could not be allocated to support government because it had to prioritise 'lifesaving' activities; too much relief funding while recovery/reconstruction funding failed to arrive; and the diverging agendas of donors. To tackle these issues he recommended: reshaping relief financial instruments to include support to government; strengthening government with secondments, equipment and office space; beginning to plan for recovery/reconstruction immediately after the disaster (jointly between humanitarian actors, development actors and government); better defining roles and responsibilities for urban humanitarian and recovery coordination and very importantly advising the government with one voice.

'Humanitarian actors are trying to deal with a crisis in a city and local authorities are trying to manage a city in crisis. These are two very different animals.'

Jean-Christophe Adrian, UN-Habitat

Built Environment

In the second workshop participants discussed humanitarian response to urban crises from a built environment perspective. Presentations covered urban humanitarian water and shelter interventions while breakout groups discussed multi-sectoral and market-based approaches, risk management and working with the construction industry and service providers.

Multi-sectoral, multi-level and flexible programming: To meet the complexity of needs in urban areas, participants felt that integrated or multi-sectoral programming is essential and that a broader 'menu' of assistance options is required. The breadth of expertise needed to deliver these programmes may be beyond the capacity of any one organisation; thus partnerships can help to meet the diversity of needs. The scale of intervention was also discussed, with humanitarian response to urban crises requiring multi-level understanding and intervention at household, neighbourhood and city scale. Participants also highlighted the need for flexible funding to meet the needs identified in assessments and the ability to adapt programmes over time.

Multi-sector assessment: It was noted that the complexity of assessment in urban areas requires longer timeframes. However, working in urban environments presents opportunities such as the triangulation of assessments with secondary data and the benefits of including local professionals and academics rather than relying on international 'experts'. Examples of successful joint multi-sectoral assessments were noted (for example some participants felt that the MIRA following typhoon Haiyan was effective) but participants felt that they typically experience challenges with agreement of indicators, timing of the assessment, and quality of the data collected. To tackle these problems participants suggested assessment of only certain sectors immediately, with others to follow later, or the implementation of strategic interventions in the relief phase while more participatory, in-depth and multi-sectoral assessments are undertaken.

Market-based approaches: The delivery of humanitarian assistance through markets, and the contribution of humanitarian assistance to their recovery, is particularly important in urban areas. Beyond just the provision of goods (such as food, water, or construction materials) interventions in education, healthcare or housing can also support or hinder recovery of pre-existing systems of provision. Participants noted an increased use of the Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis tool[iv] which has started to change the way programmes are designed. However, they cautioned that there have not been many

uses of the tool for urban or shelter-related assessments, and noted the tool's focus on assessing only a small number of items (for example timber) rather than a broader approach.

Infrastructure networks: The rehabilitation of existing infrastructure networks (such as water or telecommunications) was felt to be particularly important in response to urban crises. Some participants noted that repair of formal systems generally benefit those in the formal economy (rarely the most vulnerable). Others argued that formal and informal systems of service provision are inter-connected and that rehabilitation of formal systems may also benefit informal city dwellers, depending on the specific context. Technical assessment of existing infrastructure networks (pre- and post-disaster) was felt to be a weakness within humanitarian organisations, leading to ineffective programme design and delays in implementation. Participants emphasised the need for assisting organisations to rehabilitate rather than replicate existing systems. However, donors may not want to fund 'non-life-saving' interventions or support the reinstatement of a previously vulnerable system.

Private sector expertise: Participants recommended greater engagement with built environment professionals to access the technical expertise needed to work with complex urban markets and infrastructure networks. However, they cautioned that humanitarian organisations lack understanding of how to work with the private sector (for example tendering processes) and that they cannot assume the private sector has capacity in all contexts. It was recommended that assessment of the capacity of the construction industry be completed (by the construction industry itself) either before or immediately after a disaster. This would then enable partnerships with the private sector and support the recovery of local supply chains later in the response.

Risk management: A key challenge of working on built environment interventions is the relatively high cost of programmes. Participants expressed concerns regarding risk management in complex, large-scale infrastructure programmes. They noted that NGOs can feel as though they are 'taking all the risk' - caught between donors and the private sector – and that risk transfer is one of the reasons for organisations limiting themselves to semi-permanent interventions.

Key recommendations included the need for multi-sectoral, multi-level and flexible programming with a focus on 'enabling' rather than 'providing' approaches.

Urban humanitarian WASH in Kabul and Gaza

Richard Luff (independent) described lessons learned from Oxfam's work on urban water networks. Richard argued that urban humanitarian WASH interventions typically have short time frames of less than one year, focus on re-building what was there before rather than re-designing the system, and rarely include private sector expertise. However, the most vulnerable populations are typically not connected to piped networks and short humanitarian timeframes do not suit infrastructure interventions. Humanitarian organisations are also used to social rather than institutional/infrastructural complexity, thus infrastructure projects carry significant risk for humanitarian organisations as they are outside their traditional expertise. This combination of factors means that humanitarian organisations typically avoid working on infrastructure systems and focus on low-tech solutions. Richard argued that humanitarian organisations should recognise the limits of humanitarian intervention in what can become permanent infrastructure in the city, be cautious about being drawn into major infrastructure interventions on the basis of early recovery, and focus on supporting populations without access to piped networks as these are likely to be the most vulnerable.

'We don't have the skills to appraise systems properly. How to know when to repair? When to start from scratch?'

Richard Luff, Independent

Using tenure systems to shelter the urban displaced in Lebanon and Jordan

Jake Zarins (NRC) described the NRC's market-based approach to the provision of shelter assistance. In both Lebanon and Jordan access to credit for housing construction is limited or prohibitively expensive, while houses are often left unfinished – with additional rooms added as families grow or sub-divide. NRC have used this as an opportunity to offer finance to owners to finish their houses on the condition that they allow refugee families to live there rent free for 12-18 months. The intention is that this programme provides better living conditions for refugees than other situations, encourages communities to host refugees, and increases the longer-term availability of housing stock without inflating the rental market in the short-term.

NRC have found that the time needed to assess buildings, draft Bills of Quantities, prepare contracts and match families to houses has limited the scale-up of this programme to 6,000 households (Lebanon) and 4,500 households (Jordan). Challenges have been experienced with some landlords pulling out or increasing rents, while follow-up programmes

to prevent evictions may also be required. For these reasons significant understanding of rental laws is required and the programme has been found to work more effectively where there is a strong rule of law. Despite these challenges the improved physical conditions, access to services, and aspects of choice and dignity for beneficiary families along with tangible long term benefits for hosting communities has made this approach extremely popular with both host and hosted communities in both countries.

'In rural settings people are much more self-reliant... In an urban setting households rely on somebody else providing services but this is dependent on their ability to pay.'

Jake Zarins, Norwegian Refugee Council

"Menu of options" for shelter and settlement assistance in the Philippines

Seki Hirano (CRS) described the decision-making processes CRS had undertaken regarding the provision of shelter assistance during the first four months of the response. Firstly he described the factors influencing CRS's decision whether or not to work in Tacloban City. These included assessment of pre- and post-disaster damage and needs but also coordination with other agencies, levels of media attention, organisational capacity, security concerns and donor influence. Secondly Seki highlighted the diverse 'menu' of assistance options CRS needed to develop to support families in urban areas effectively, in contrast to the more limited range of needs the organisation found in rural areas. Seki argued that choosing to work in the urban context may not yet come naturally to humanitarian organisations but that building organisational experience and understanding external influences on decision-making may enable this to become a more conscious choice. He also noted that organisations cannot solve all shelter-related issues in the urban context on a case-by-case basis. Instead humanitarian organisations should support households and communities to identify their own solutions. This takes time, and priorities may change throughout the recovery process. Can humanitarian programming be flexible enough to remain relevant to the changing needs of the affected population?

'Density, community cohesion, land, informal settlements, politics. Everything is intensified in the urban context. Thus it needs a different strategy and it needs more time and resources.'

Seki Hirano, Catholic Relief Services

Complex Communities

In the third workshop participants focused on the social complexities of urban areas and how to ensure humanitarian response takes these particularities into account. Presentations described approaches to working with communities in Afghanistan, Nepal and Lebanon, while breakout groups discussed beneficiary identification, engagement and communication following 'natural' disasters or conflict situations.

Beneficiary identification: Urban populations travel within the city on a daily basis for livelihoods and other purposes. They may also migrate between rural and urban areas seasonally or within and between different parts of the city over time. Urban populations also hold multiple identities: rather than being part of one 'community of place' they are more likely to be part of several 'communities of interest' in relation to their work, religion, etc. For these reasons participants felt that it is more difficult to identify commonalities of need and vulnerability in urban areas and that it requires more analytical approaches and more fine-grained analysis. Integrated assessments were considered to be time-consuming, while existing tools (such as the IFRC's Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment[v]) were felt to be less appropriate in urban areas. Participants therefore recommended the development of or agreement on a standardised tool for rapid assessment in urban areas.

Targeting: Discussions considered moving from household-specific to area-based interventions, but participants noted that this can result in a certain level of inclusion error (providing assistance to households who are not the most vulnerable, but live within an area of elevated need). In general a phased approach to programming was recommended, with 'good enough', blanket, or community-wide interventions in the relief phase, followed by additional household or individual support later where required. Participants noted, however, that while area-based approaches might work well for shelter or infrastructure interventions, workplaces might be better entry points for livelihood programmes; for example working with factory workers or market traders.

Engagement: Participants noted the importance of understanding the political, economic and social situation in an urban context and the challenges of working within the existing political economy. Several participants argued for the importance of long-term engagement including all stakeholders in dealing with sensitive issues. They noted that risk-based community mapping approaches are critical in giving priority to local concerns but that skills to facilitate these typically lie within development rather than humanitarian departments or organisations.

Communication: Two-way communication with urban communities offers several different challenges and opportunities when compared with rural environments. There is often increased use of technology in urban environments, but also a greater variety of audiences with different information needs and preferred communication channels, each requiring targeted approaches. Increased use of technology also creates vulnerability, however, as telecommunications infrastructure will often be damaged in a disaster. It is therefore important to have backup systems in place, such as radio, while systems for rapidly licensing emergency broadcasters were also recommended. Urban areas have greater concentrations of people, connections and information channels. This creates a lot more 'noise', making it difficult to identify and analyse pertinent information, and to convey messages to target audiences. Participants highlighted the importance of an evidence-based approach to analysing feedback received from communities and to adjusting programmes accordingly. They also noted the importance of collectively agreeing humanitarian messages to ensure critical information is communicated.

Private sector: Service providers, telecommunications companies, broadcasters and digital humanitarians[vi] can all have important relationships with urban communities, providing additional information channels in these contexts. UN-Habitat has used Citizen Report Cards[vii] to enable communities to report on public services. Other participants recommended allocating staff to collect, analyse and communicate data from service providers, or asking private sector organisations to contribute data to humanitarian 'who, what, where' databases.

Protection: Participants noted that access to and collection of information is itself a protection issue and that access to information should be included in vulnerability assessments. In some cases populations may have rights to services and benefits (such as healthcare or pensions) but may not know about them, or humanitarian agencies may not have the mandate or legitimacy to share such information. In others individuals may choose not to register for assistance to avoid detection by authorities, while language itself can exacerbate tensions.

Key recommendations included the development or adaptation of existing tools for context, vulnerability, capacity and needs assessment, community engagement, power analysis and communications for the urban context.

Community-based approaches in Afghanistan

Szilard Fricska (UN-Habitat) described UN-Habitat's approach to working with communities in Afghanistan since 1995.[viii] Central to the organisation's work has been the establishment of a Community Forum and fine-grained analysis of hazard, vulnerability and needs. Szilard highlighted the importance of integrated approaches in urban environments, noting that once UN-Habitat had completed a holistic mapping process this made it easier to partner with a range of other organisations to meet the variety of needs.

Through case studies in Kandahar and Herat, Szilard then described UN-Habitat's process of community-based mapping, analysis and action-planning. Through a combination of mapping with surveys, focus groups and interviews UN-Habitat gains a detailed understanding of issues such as risk, access to services, housing quality, land tenure and how these relate to social factors such as ethnicity and exclusion. Having detailed evidence on a map, Szilard noted, was key to working with municipalities to provide access to services to communities which had previously been ignored. Multi-sectoral assessment and mapping is also crucial, he argued, in providing spatial disaggregation of need to identify the most efficient and effective response.

Szilard noted the importance of establishing or working with existing Community Development Councils and locally rather than externally defined vulnerability criteria/beneficiary identification. While recognising that community engagement does take longer Szilard argued that this is appropriate. He argued that few activities can be thought of as purely 'life-saving' and the importance of investing time to thoroughly understand needs. UN-Habitat have not found social heterogeneity to be problematic when working in urban areas as people share common interests once a platform for engagement has been created.

Understanding urban communities in Nepal

Samuel Carpenter (British Red Cross) presented findings from the British Red Cross study on urban preparedness in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. Understanding the urban population, Samuel argued, is the first step in identifying, accessing and responding to the needs of those most at risk. The Red Cross have experienced challenges using their existing assessment tools in the urban environment – where individuals may be unable to participate in daytime activities due to work commitments, or where migration can make it hard to sustain engagement with a community over time. On the other hand, significant amounts of secondary data are available in cities to compliment community-level assessments and there are opportunities to engage key

decision-makers within the community through pre-existing networks – for example engaging with business leaders through rotary clubs.

With regard to response, the Red Cross are training first responders within at risk communities. The majority of the first responders they are training are women, and this may prove helpful in that they are more likely to be within the home in the event of a disaster. On the other hand, there are questions as to whether they will feel sufficiently empowered to use their newfound skills in a crisis situation. He also noted the importance of connecting first responders with wider networks of information and operations. When working with urban communities in preparedness and response Samuel highlighted the need for sensitive adoption of new approaches, partnerships and technologies. However, the humanitarian community is only just beginning to make systematic efforts to improve both analysis and operational practice in relation to working with complex urban communities.

Using ICT for mobile protection monitoring in Lebanon

Bryce Perry (IRC) described the IRC's mobile protection monitoring programme for refugees in Lebanon which aims to: gather a holistic (rather than sector-specific) profile of the vulnerability and needs of refugee populations in different areas; capture the diversity of needs; and 'shine a light' on the most vulnerable and identify emerging trends. The use of Information Communications Technology (ICT) in this programme has been critical to gathering data in dispersed or 'invisible' urban and peri-urban environments. Information was provided to refugees through bulk SMS messages and as is done in IRC's Iraq program, they plan to roll out additional functionality allowing refugees to use their mobile phones to report critical incidents and subscribe to receive additional information. Mobile data collection has also reduced error and provided real-time, customisable, data. The key challenges of working in this context included: identification of the most vulnerable; keeping data on service providers up to date; precarious legal status environment, and an information gap on rights and services. Bryce noted that urban contexts provide greater opportunities for holistic support but that coordination of information on different services is critical. He also argued that services must be mobile to reach the most vulnerable and that technology can support two-way communication with dispersed and/or mobile populations.

Markets

In the final workshop participants discussed using market-based approaches in humanitarian response to urban crises. Presentations described market assessments and programming in Kenya and the Philippines, while breakout groups discussed approaches to urban humanitarian response through working with different market actors and systems, coordination, preparedness and market analysis and market-based approaches. Market specialists questioned the need to disaggregate urban markets specifically because market tools already review the market network and interaction between national, regional and local markets. However, urban environments do offer a cash economy and the concentration of market actors.

Heidi Gilert (DFID) opened discussions on humanitarian response to urban crises through working with markets by describing three types of market-based programming:

- 'Market-integrated relief' is the practice of delivering relief and basic services through markets (for example through cash transfers or vouchers);
- 'Indirect support through markets' which describes short-term activities (for example to remove bottlenecks) and restore market functionality. It can both contribute to the effectiveness of relief and promote recovery.
- 'Market strengthening and development' is a longer-term approach that seeks to strengthen livelihoods and build resilience to future crises.

Standardisation of market assessments: There are a number of existing tools for market assessment; some provide a snap-shot of specific commodities while others take a broader focus. Participants highlighted gaps in the usage of current tools and that market assessments should inform all humanitarian programming whether it is provided in cash or kind. They also recommended greater agreement on and harmonisation of different tools; the integration of market assessment and awareness within existing needs-assessment tools (such as MIRA); and the development of a standard market assessment checklist for each cluster. Participants highlighted the need to use secondary data from developmental organisations as part of response preparedness. Another suggestion was that a consortium approach to market assessments could be more frequently used.

Understanding the scope of market-based approaches in urban settings: Participants emphasised that working in urban environments requires assessment of a wide range of markets including health, education, telecommunications, solid waste management, electricity and transportation.

Participants recommended that assessments analyse connections between different markets and ensure emphasis on macro and micro level market analysis. Participants also cautioned that while humanitarian organisations have experience in supporting service delivery in certain sectors, such as health or education, they may not have expertise in adopting market-based approaches to these sectors.

Timing: There was a broad discussion around the parameters of market interventions at different phases of a response. Participants recommended rapid light-weight market analyses initially, while donors fund detailed market analyses during the relief phase, as a stand-alone product, to inform longer-term decision-making across the whole response. Participants felt there was a temporal aspect to partnerships – partnerships with a greater number of actors are needed in later phases, and different actors are useful at different stages of the response. Others felt that one of the main problems is not engaging with non-traditional humanitarian actors early enough in the response.

Coordination: Participants highlighted the need for a coordinated approach to market assessment but questioned where this should sit within the cluster system and which agency should take the lead to inform operational responses. It was also noted that in some cases market assessments lack linkages with government, and that governments should lead market assessments and analysis with NGOs as implementing partners.

Preparedness: Participants noted that opportunities exist to engage in pre-disaster market strengthening and development linked to multi-hazard disaster risk in specific contexts. This could be through: working with governments to review the possibilities for market engagement and undertake contingency planning; compiling a register of all actors working on markets in a specific context; working with market enablers such as banks or money-transfer providers. Participants noted the challenges of macro-level market assessment, but also that market assessment is undertaken by development actors and that NGOs should take advantage of this secondary data.

Power analysis: Participants highlighted that power analysis is critical when adopting market-based approaches as markets are often controlled by elites, including governing elites. Building capacity in undertaking power analysis was therefore recommended. Participants argued that humanitarian organisations need greater clarity on what they intend to achieve by working with markets, which actors to work with, what the unintended consequences might be, and how to manage potential risks.

Private sector: Working with the private sector was a key topic of discussion, with participants noting that market-based approaches are not so much about 'engaging with' the private sector as much as facilitating delivery. Private sector is a broad term and encompasses many different types of actors. Discussions did not always differentiate between different market systems and actors.

Participants argued that humanitarian organisations can learn from global companies who rapidly re-establish local supply chains after disasters and that humanitarian organisations could benefit from the market intelligence gathered by the private sector. However, there are ethical challenges for humanitarian organisations in working with for-profit organisations and participants questioned the processes for maintaining quality and standards when delivering services through different private sector actors. These discussions did not always differentiate between local and global private sectors. Some participants questioned whether humanitarian organisations are adequately equipped to work with the private sector. Others noted that the skills do exist within humanitarian organisations but within specific departments such as logistics rather than humanitarian shelter, health or education.

Key recommendations included: greater understanding of market networks and stakeholders as part of preparedness measures; supporting market-recovery interventions during the relief phase while funding more detailed open-source market assessments to inform recovery programming later in the response; the expansion of market analysis to include markets such as health provision, insurance, housing, land, water, sanitation and waste management; and greater collaboration with the private sector from market traders, through remittance providers, to international corporations.
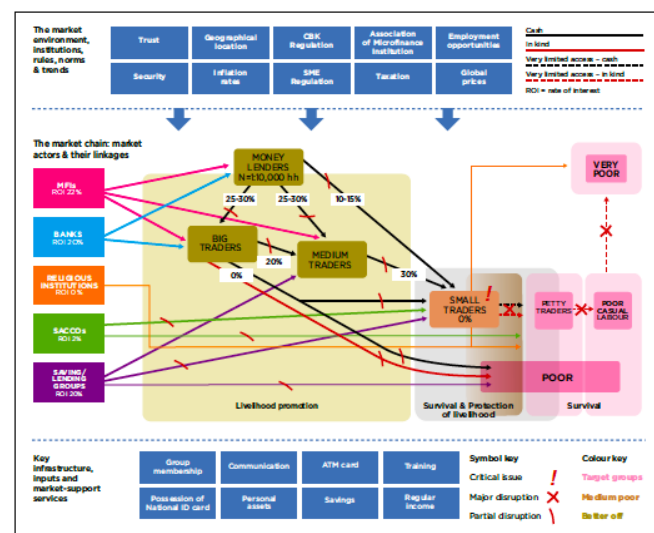
Rapid market assessment in the Philippines

Typhoon Haiyan swept across the Philippines in the early hours of 8 November 2013. More than 16 million people were affected and 4 million displaced as approximately 1.1 million houses were damaged or destroyed.[ix] Andrew Collodol (HelpAge) described the Rapid Market Assessment HelpAge undertook in Leyte using Oxfam's 48 hour assessment tool three weeks after typhoon Haiyan. The assessment found that both municipal and village-level markets were functioning and could support cash-based interventions. Also that cash transfer systems were operational in urban areas but not in villages. As a result of the assessment HelpAge immediately switched from food distribution to cash programming to support market recovery. Cash transfer systems were used in urban areas while cash in envelopes was distributed to beneficiaries in more remote villages. Coordination of HelpAge's market assessment and cash programme with other agencies was key to ensuring that multiple cash programmes did not overload existing supply chains and create inflation.

From market analysis to market based programming

Emily Henderson (Oxfam) noted that there is growing interest in emergency market analysis after disasters. However, experiences to date indicate that much of the information gathered post-crisis could have been collected beforehand, emergency market analysis can be quicker in the relief phase with additional detail added later, and that staff lack confidence in undertaking market analysis. To address these challenges Oxfam have developed a 48 hour assessment tool and piloted pre-crises market baseline assessments in seven locations.

Access to credit market system map in Nairobi

Emily highlighted that market baselines and assessments open a wider range of response options but that appropriate entry points will depend on the context. For example in Haiti Oxfam provided support to small traders and food vendors who were women headed households and vulnerable groups. In Jordan the organisation is working with water vendors and distributors, while in South Sudan Oxfam plan to increase food security through supporting traders to re-establish their businesses. Emily argued that market-based programming in urban contexts follows the same logic as in rural areas but it needs to take account of urban issues (for example relevant vulnerability criteria). She noted that markets in urban areas may be more resilient to shocks and that there are greater opportunities for partnering with the private sector in both assessment and response.

Recommendations

Participants felt that humanitarian response to urban crises requires **integrated rather than sectoral interventions** and a shift in targeting from **individual to larger scales**. The increased importance of **'enabling' rather than 'providing'** approaches was also noted. This includes supporting the recovery of **institutions** such as government, service providers, media; **infrastructure networks** for example water and electricity; and **markets** such as food, healthcare and housing through supporting existing systems.

To better **link relief, recovery, reconstruction and development** participants recommended:
- establishing a recovery/reconstruction platform immediately after a disaster
- supporting recovery interventions (particularly with regard to infrastructure and markets) during the relief phase while funding detailed assessments of needs and capacity to inform recovery programming later in the response
- providing reliable funds for cluster coordination and ensuring that clusters have clear plans for the speediest transition to recovery and reconstruction/development phases, minimising the transition period.
- longer-term funding cycles with opportunities for periodic review and re-direction;
- increased funding for recovery, reconstruction and preparedness;
- ensuring that development programmes incorporate disaster risk reduction.

To better **support city, sub-national and national governments** in responding to urban crises participants recommended:
- supporting governments on the recovery/reconstruction journey through targeted long-term programmes rather than just working with governments on specific projects;
- establishing a system to provide national and international 'technical surge-capacity' to governments from other city, sub-national or national governments, the private sector, the diaspora or academia;
- spending more time working with governments to understand their power structures, needs and capacity in order to provide effective support;
- supporting capacity-building programmes for governments such as training, knowledge exchange with other officials, and the development of multi-hazard assessments and contingency plans;
- involving governments in assessments;
- providing more funding for post-disaster coordination at the local level;

- supporting municipal governments to be more accountable to affected populations and to demand accountability from humanitarian organisations;
- providing office space, facilities, vehicles and fuel for government officials.

Participants recommended **greater collaboration and coordination among humanitarian agencies**. To support this, donors were encouraged to:
- coordinate with other humanitarian and development donors;
- support the development of standard vulnerability indicators;
- promote coordinated assessments;
- require sharing of assessment and programme data;
- fund or provide knowledge management initiatives.

Greater involvement of affected populations and community-based organisations was recommended as they bring local knowledge and continuity and can deliver programmes in certain areas, leaving government to focus on critical infrastructure. Recommendations included:
- developing a common framework to engage communities in coordination structures and ensure proper feedback is collected;
- identifying and scaling-up existing local initiatives (e.g. micro-insurance, disaster risk reduction);
- establishing a post-disaster fund for local organisations;
- including members of the affected population in market assessments;
- establishing a market coordination forum to coordinate with local actors/business people.

Participants also recommended **greater engagement with the private sector** in order to:
- access specialist technical expertise, networks and data;
- provide surge capacity or remote technical support and mentoring;
- implement infrastructure or market-based approaches.

However, participants also noted that in order to work effectively with the private sector, humanitarian organisations needed to build their own skills, clarify expectations and establish mechanisms to engage with private sector actors at local, national and international levels.

To support greater use of **market-based approaches** participants recommended that donors define their policy on market-based programming. To strengthen humanitarian response to urban crises participants recommended:

- establishing a group responsible for collective and open-source market assessment and analysis;
- surge deployment of technical specialists;
- the use of common tools; the use of new technology to crowdsource information from market traders and users;
- the development of mapping tools to visualise markets and trade flows;
- the development of tools which analyse impact of both in-kind or cash/vouchers and sharing market assessments through a dedicated website;
- including private sector actors in the cluster system;
- working with global market specialists such as Bloomberg;
- working with market enablers such as banks or Western Union prior to or during a response.

To support a paradigm shift to urban humanitarian programming participants recommended the establishment of an **Urban Task Force** to undertake deep thinking on humanitarian response to urban crises. Activities of the group might include:

- researching existing tools, systems, networks and mechanisms related to humanitarian response to urban crises and supporting existing initiatives where possible;
- documenting experiences of infrastructure or market-based approaches to urban response;
- researching cash and inflation, remittances, behavioural economics, and micro-insurance;
- mapping people/organisations with relevant skills before/during a response;
- the development of policy and guidelines on area-based approaches;
- establishing agreed minimum standards;
- assessment, analysis and preparedness planning in specific cities;
- establishment of early warning systems for big cities at risk;
- working with pilot cities to develop long-term, integrated and enabling approaches to humanitarian response to urban crises.

Following a disaster the establishment of a **Strategic Urban Planning Task Force** (incorporating state of the art urban expertise) was also recommended to develop a strategic plan/urban framework. This plan should be led by government, include relevant humanitarian and development actors and provide clarity so that donors and implementing organisations can adopt long-term approaches.

With regard to **funding, policy and advocacy** participants recommended that DFID should:

- develop a strategy or position paper on humanitarian response to urban crises;
- establish an 'urban unit' or a network of urban specialists to support humanitarian programming;
- ensure that the Value for Money approach focuses on long-term outcomes and impact, rather than short-term outputs alone;
- use the resilience debate to engage with developmental donors, international financial institutions and governments as well as other humanitarian donors;
- engage in the World Humanitarian Summit;
- provide funding for 'innovative' pilot projects

Adaptation and/or development of **tools and guidance** for the urban context was also recommended. Specific areas of focus included:

- the need for multi-sectoral needs assessment/response analysis tools and greater outcome/impact-based gap analysis;
- moving from an 'alphabet soup' of branded assessment methodologies to a flexible 'kit of parts' assessment which can be adapted to different contexts;
- the development of guidance on urban emergency planning and practice;
- ensuring that market analysis tools are appropriate for markets such as health provision, insurance, housing, land, water, sanitation and waste management;
- adaptation of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and related tools to the urban context;
- the need for guidance and tools on power analysis in complex urban communities;
- development of a suite of communication tools for the urban context.

List of attendees

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Amelia Rule	Independent	Laura Phelps	Norwegian Refugee Council
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Diane Archer	IIED	Seki Hirano	CRS (remote presentation)
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