

Building Urban Resilience: A Guide for Red Cross and Red Crescent Engagement and Planning

Purpose of this guide

This guide provides an overview of key aspects related to National Society strategic engagement and planning in urban disaster risk reduction (DRR) and disaster management (DM). The guide reflects the breadth of experience of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in urban areas and provides guidance for better understanding of this rapidly evolving and dynamic landscape as well as enhanced capacity for more effective engagement. The guide is not prescriptive in nature but rather it seeks to identify issues which National Societies could take into consideration when developing their urban DRR engagement and planning strategies.

The guide has been informed by the IFRC and its member National Societies' work on urban DRR/DM, it has also taken into consideration the findings of a number of research publications and initiatives undertaken within the scope of the IFRC, namely the 2010 edition of the *World Disasters Report* focusing on urban risk as well regional studies undertaken in Asia Pacific and the Latin America and Caribbean regions. Moreover, the document has taken into account and integrated the findings of ten regional consultation workshops which took place from 2013-2014 across all five zones. It also builds on the findings of five city level pilot projects (Jakarta, La Paz, Nairobi, Tehran and Yerevan) conducted in 2013 and 2014 under the auspices of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) Partnership for Urban Disaster Risk Reduction and Management. The document has also incorporated key lessons and guidance from global references and sources including UNISDR's resilient cities campaign, UNISDR's *Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient*, outcomes of the World Urban Forums and the third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction which took place in Sendai, Japan in March 2015. The guide also responds to a call to action launched at the International Seminar on Urban Disaster Risk Reduction and Management held in Tehran, Iran in May 2015.

Why a guide on urban disaster risk reduction for the Red Cross Red Crescent?

Rapid urbanization coupled with climate change will constitute key issues in the coming decades facing the humanitarian community. It is estimated that by 2050, 66 per cent of the world's population will be urban,¹ while rapid and unplanned urbanization will also continue to see a dramatic rise in informal settlements. Currently, it is estimated that 863 million people live in informal settlements (i.e.,

¹ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2014), *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, Highlights* (NY, United Nations).

squatter and slum settlements).² This rapid rise in unplanned and poorly managed urbanization poses growing threats to people's lives, livelihoods, economic growth, environmental sustainability and social equity as public authorities lack the capacity to effectively provide basic public services to a rapidly growing population.

It is expected that the "concentration of populations in urban areas will change the nature of many humanitarian disasters,"³ as humanitarian actors will have to respond to an increasing number of people at risk in far more complex environments than rural settings. Rapid and unplanned urban population growth coupled with the rise in informal settlements in hazard-prone areas has generally surpassed public authorities' ability to respond with effective planning and has thus resulted in increased vulnerability of communities to risk as urban populations face a number of critical issues such as limited access to basic services (e.g., clean water, drainage, sanitation, transport), healthcare and education, lack of decent shelter on safe land, urban violence, migration and epidemics.

Within this context, there are a number of operational challenges in the design of risk reduction programmes and delivery of humanitarian relief and services. This includes the complexity of undertaking urban risk assessments due to a number of factors including multiple hazards (scale and frequency), multiple sectors (housing, communications, water and sanitation, education, healthcare, etc.) and multiple stakeholders (number of actors and mandates).

Increasingly National Societies will be faced with addressing the unique challenges of urban contexts – placing greater urgency in building resilience and increasing effectiveness of DRR and DM programmes in cities and urban areas in a changing climate, thus necessitating an enhancement of the Red Cross Red Crescent's institutional and operational capacities on urban DRR/DM.

While National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have been at the forefront of community-based DRR – most of their experience has been working with communities in rural settings. Community-based DRR programmes to-date have not had to address the complexity and interconnected set of risks and vulnerabilities which urban settings host. In order to find scalable, sustainable and replicable solutions a holistic and integrated approach towards urban DRR/DM is required. Siloed approaches will need to give way to multi-stakeholder, multi-hazard, multi-sectoral practices addressing a wide array of interrelated issues such as resilience building, local socio-economic development, environment, climate change, legislation, migration and violence.

This conceptual shift in approach and programming will need to take into consideration some key institutional challenges for the Red Cross Red Crescent in effective engagement and delivery of services in urban areas. Namely, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies will need to overcome the knowledge gap that

² UN-HABITAT (2013), *Streets as Public Spaces and Drivers of Urban Prosperity* (Nairobi, UN-HABITAT)

³ Dfid (2011), *Humanitarian Emergency Response Review*, (London, Humanitarian Emergency Response Review)

currently exists with regard to city-level hazards, vulnerability and risk; and to institute a systemic process of gathering and integrating information to feed into tailor-made and context appropriate programmes and policies. Additionally, existing guidelines, tools and training materials for disaster preparedness and response, which have been firmly embedded within the rural experience, will need to be retrofitted and adapted to the needs of urban contexts. Moreover, the skillsets required for effective risk reduction as well as relief and recovery activities are considerably more varied than in rural settings. Namely, internal resources and profiles should be expanded to include expertise and broad-based knowledge on issues such as shelter/housing rehabilitation, urban and spatial planning, water and sanitation when operating in complex environments within densely populated centres with limited access to basic services. There is also limited experience in establishing systemic processes that access, gather and integrate information on city-level hazards, vulnerability and risks into programmes and policy formulation. The overriding complexity of urban settings and the presence of a myriad of actors will require enhanced coordination and partnership with local authorities, professional organizations, private sector, academia and other local urban actors.

This document therefore aims to provide guidance on some of the key challenges hindering effective National Society engagement and planning on urban DRR while also capitalizing on the Red Cross Red Crescent's inherent strengths and capacity within this space. The expansion of activities into urban areas and cities will require an analysis of the Red Cross Red Crescent's existing capacities and strengths and a critical evaluation of institutional challenges to effective planning and engagement of urban DRR.

The following provides an overview of how National Societies can engage in urban DRR/DM. The guidance document is separated into the following sections: i) context and engagement; ii) capacity development iii) awareness raising; iv) programme implementation/activities; and v) advocacy. Due to the emerging nature of urban DRR and the dynamics of urban settings, this broad-based guidance should be tailored to reflect the specificities of National Society experiences and capacities as well as taking into account respective country and city contexts.

Understanding urban systems and risk for better programming and engagement

The knowledge gap that currently exists regarding urban areas and cities needs to be addressed to effectively ensure sustainable, scalable and replicable interventions. Enhanced understanding of and engagement in urban settings is contingent on overcoming the following challenges in urban areas:

- i) rural focus in DRR and DM programmes and approaches
- ii) limited experience in establishing systematic processes that access, gather and integrate information on city-level hazards, vulnerability and risks into programmes and policy formulation
- iii) limited experience on the part of National Societies in working with local authorities, private sector and other local urban actors

- iv) difficulties in adapting existing guidelines, training materials and manuals to national/local contexts and in particular urban settings
- v) integrating DRR and DM plans and programmes in various development sectors at national and local levels in order to address underlying risk factors more effectively.

In order to effectively address these challenges, National Societies will need to proactively enhance their existing knowledge base on urban risks, vulnerabilities, hazards as well as the composition and dynamics of urban communities. Urban DRR/DM is a systematic process that takes into consideration a number of dynamics including existing capacities, innovations and synergies which help to minimize the impact of hazards.

In order to tackle the knowledge gap the following activities will be need to be undertaken:

- **Enhance understanding of urban settings and communities within the Red Cross Red Crescent:** A major challenge to effective urban risk reduction interventions is lack of deep understanding of urban contexts. Considerable resources and time should be devoted to developing context specific definitions of urban communities and understanding the comparative advantage of the National Society in carrying out specific urban risk reduction measures. There is no singular definition of a city and in many contexts the demarcation lines between urban and rural are fluid in nature, however, in broad terms cities are often defined along the following lines – concentration and density of population, infrastructure, goods, service⁴ and utilities as well as presence of large informal settlements, with the likelihood for compound and complex disasters.⁵

Assessments will take into account the heterogeneous make-up of urban residents as well as external factors including mobility and informal structures of urban areas.⁶ Common criteria used to define urban communities fall along the following lines:

- a) geography: neighborhoods; districts
- b) functionality: trade and business associations
- c) cultural: ethnicity and faith.

⁴ Palang Merah Indonesia (2015), *Pilot Urban Risk Reduction Study Project: A Final Report* (Jakarta, PMI)

⁵ ALNAP (2012), *Lessons: Responding to urban disasters: Learning from previous relief and recovery operations* (London, Alnap)

⁶ IFRC's *Urban Disaster Risk Reduction Programme in Africa Design Workshop Report* held in Kampala, Uganda from 10-12 July 2013.

Characteristics such as dependence on markets and cash for access to public services and goods should also be underlined. It should also be noted that perception of risk will range from every day risks facing urban populations including unemployment, low income, malnutrition and violence to disaster risk resulting in the loss of lives and damage to livelihoods – such as hurricanes, floods, cyclones and pandemics; and rural and extra urban processes such as detrimental land-use patterns.⁷

Examples of coordination and collaboration activities:

- Coordination with officials at different levels within city management structures should be prioritized.
- Active participation in city level DRR and DM systems, mechanisms, legislative processes, plans and programmes should be promoted.
- Joint assessments and interventions with relevant stakeholders should be advocated to enhance efficiency and quality.
- Collaboration with other development sectors and actors such as health, education, environment and urban planning should be enhanced.
- Alliances with city resilience programmes should be built (e.g., UNISDR’s Making Cities Resilient campaign, ICLEI’s Resilient Cities programme, etc.)
- Comprehensive communication with relevant agencies should be promoted (e.g., provincial disaster management agency, related provincial/district government agencies).

The Red Cross Red Crescent’s entry point will be to develop a deeper understanding of the structural and socio-economic impediments that increase the vulnerability of the urban poor and marginalized groups to tiered risks present in urban settings and to promote their interest and engage in interventions aimed at enhancing their resilience.

- **Coordination and collaboration with myriad of actors present in urban settings.** Urban DRR/DM planning should be viewed as a partnership-building exercise aimed to coordinate and complement the efforts of multiple agencies and levels of government and society. In order to ensure that urban DRR is participatory, inclusive and streamlined across all sectors and secure appropriate funding allocation, it is necessary to engage with the appropriate levels of government at the municipal, provincial, state and national levels as well as all concerned stakeholders. As auxiliaries to their respective governments, National Societies enjoy a distinct partnership with national public authorities – this mandate proffers National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, in consultation with their respective governments, to establish roles and responsibilities in providing risk reduction and DM activities, health and social programmes and promote international humanitarian and international disaster management rules and regulations. This unique mandate provides the possibility for National Societies to further strengthen government action and regulation in mainstreaming DRR/DM into policies, plans and development agendas.

⁷ IFRC (2011), *No time for doubt: Tackling urban risk*, (Geneva, IFRC)

The scope of Red Cross Red Crescent engagement within this mandate should expand and include their participation in national and regional DRR platforms and critical examination of how existing capacities can contribute to national and municipal level interventions through urban DRR implementation and advocacy.⁸ Moreover, the position of the Red Crescent Red Crescent as neutral advocates for the most vulnerable and marginalized populations within overall planning, implementation and evaluation of urban development programmes should be highlighted.⁹ Equally, efforts should be made to establish and strengthen partnerships with relevant local and municipal government authorities, an area which needs to be strengthened throughout the Red Cross Red Crescent.

Coordination should also extend to the plethora of actors present in urban settings – local authorities, UN, professional organizations, academic institutions, international and local, private sector, etc. Through coordination and partnerships, National Societies can avoid duplication of efforts, foster synergies and more effectively advocate to communities, governments and donors.

Given the number of causes and drivers of vulnerability within urban contexts, there is a need for systemic engagement which is inclusive of all sectors of society and government. This cohesive approach will increase commitment on the part of all actors to effective planning and policies and appropriate budgetary allocations.

- **Integrated and inclusive urban programming:** Ensure urban DRR/DM programming is adapted to address the diverse and complex needs of

Potential stakeholders in urban DRR:

- Urban development authorities
- Local elected members such as mayor/governor and council members
- Local government representatives
- Heads of local departments (e.g. planning, communications, education, engineering, environment, health, transportation, welfare services, etc.)
- National and provincial or state government representatives from line ministries or agencies
- Donor representatives
- Emergency service personnel (fire department, police, army, search and rescue team)
- Researchers and academics
- Professionals of technical and scientific institutions
- Employers and workers of the private sector
- School teachers and administrators
- Health facility/hospital officers and staff members
- Representatives from non-governmental organizations (international and national)
- Representatives from community-based organizations (women’s groups, youth groups, neighborhood organizations)
- Community leaders
- Representative from at risk communities, including marginalized groups

⁸ IFRC’s *Urban Disaster Risk Reduction Programme in Africa Design Workshop Report* held in Kampala, Uganda from 10-12 July 2013.

⁹ IFRC and EMI (2010), *Programmatic directions for the Red Cross Red Crescent in building urban community resilience in the Asia Pacific Region*, (Philippines, IFRC)

vulnerable populations – including migration, food security, livelihoods, water, sanitation and hygiene, health, urban youth, people living with disabilities and gender-focused programming. At its foundation, preparedness, early warning, mitigation, recovery and livelihoods constitute the key pillars of the Red Cross Red Crescent’s DRR interventions across the spectrum.¹⁰ As a cross-cutting issue for national and sustainable development, urban DRR takes on significant prominence and further prioritizes its mainstreaming in national development planning processes as well as sectoral development – with priority sectors including health, shelter, infrastructure, education and agriculture.

Coordination and collaboration with other actors and stakeholders is crucial in conducting joint urban assessments and planning to reduce duplication, maximize efficiencies and benefit from community synergies that strengthen resilience. Efforts should also be taken to ensure that integrated urban risk reduction plans are developed in collaboration with other actors,¹¹ as the Red Cross Red Crescent cannot work in isolation in addressing the underlying causes and that it focuses on its known areas of strength. The pilot project in La Paz, Bolivia findings further substantiate the need for integrated programming – the project’s findings noted that urban resilience can only be understood on the basis of multidimensional and multi-sectoral approach thus providing the possibility of analyzing, planning and acting appropriately to a myriad of complex issues such as migration, climate change, cultural diversity, violence, etc.

Capacity-strengthening

National Societies’ institutional and operational capacities will need to be further enhanced and scaled up to address the scope of urban challenges. A number of issues will need to be taken into consideration and retrofitted to adequately meet the needs of urban communities.

- **Human resources:** In order to ensure strong institutional capacity for urban DRR, efforts

should be made to enhance knowledge of staff and volunteers on a number of issues pertaining to urban settings. A deeper look at the organizational structure and culture of NS ensuring their internal structure and divisions allow them to work in urban resilience building is required. Also qualities of resilient systems (reflective, resourceful, robust, inclusive, redundant,

Strengthening National Society capacity for urban DRR/DM

- Better understanding of urban context and planning processes
- Identification and engagement with relevant stakeholders
- Strengthened communications and documentation skills to better capture experiences
- Regional information sharing of lessons learned and good practices
- Training and simulation exercises
- Improved risk analysis skills and capacities
- Improved human resource skills including the recruitment of educated/skilled volunteers
- Increased fundraising capabilities

¹⁰ IFRC (2009), *Disaster: How the Red Cross Red Crescent reduces risk* (Geneva, IFRC)

¹¹ IFRC’s *Urban Disaster Management Workshop Report* held in Manila, Philippines from 18-21 August 2014.

integrated, flexible) can be considered. Institutionally, this will also require an examination of organizational structure and culture which facilitates work in resilience and urban settings. National Societies will need re-examine internal resources and to consider possibilities for expansion of human resource development by promoting skills development and specialization – “assessments in urban areas may call for different staff, with different skill sets, to be involved.”¹² Therefore, rosters may need to be expanded to include specialists in social sciences and urban planning, etc and skills such as managing change and increased engagement, as well as analysis of data should be considered. It should also include practitioners with skills in managing change, increasing engagement with stakeholders and data analysis.

- **Institutional capacity development:** Organizational and structural settings, legislation and disaster law, advocacy; and identification of opportunities and entry points to engage and collaborate with relevant stakeholders are essential in this regard.¹³ Some of the required capacities in this area include the skills to a) contextualize and integrate DRR and DM trends and priorities into local development plans, b) to contribute to developing parts of the laws, rules and regulations which support urban community resilience building, c) to develop targets and indicators for a measurable change in urban resilience building and d) to develop multi-stakeholder cooperation and partnership.

- **Urban volunteer management:** Considering the complex community dimension in cities and urban area, increasing volunteer diversity, providing flexibility with volunteer time commitments and preparing for spontaneous volunteers following an urban disaster.¹⁴ Urban volunteers serve as vital ‘points of entry into the community’¹⁵ – this may therefore necessitate a re-think and proactive diversification of the volunteer pool to include more professionals and older persons.¹⁶ Moreover, volunteer training will need to be adapted to embrace integrated approach to programming and service delivery.

- **Operational capacity development**
It is also critical that methodologies and tools for the following elements in the urban context are improved:
 - risk mapping and assessment
 - contingency planning
 - risk monitoring and early warning
 - rapid assessment
 - light urban search and rescue (USAR)

¹² British Red Cross (2012), *Learning from the City*, (London, British Red Cross).

¹³ IFRC’s *Urban Disaster Management Workshop Report* held in Manila, Philippines from 18-21 August 2014.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ IFRC’s *Building Urban Resilience Workshop Results* held in Panama City, Panama from 26-27 November 2013.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

- emergency relief, shelter, food, water and sanitation
- recovery
- migration and population movement and displacement
- context of armed conflicts, violence and social unrest
- resource mobilization
- community participation in DRR and DM.

Awareness raising

Awareness raising is of particular importance as it has been assessed that in order to effectively tackle vulnerability attention needs to be placed on education, awareness and advocacy skill sets of at-risk communities.¹⁷ Wider stakeholder engagement is required to understand drivers of risk and existing vulnerabilities as well as ascertaining appropriate tools and processes needed for comprehensive assessment and identification of underlying causes. Within the broader remit, National Societies can focus on the following awareness raising activities:

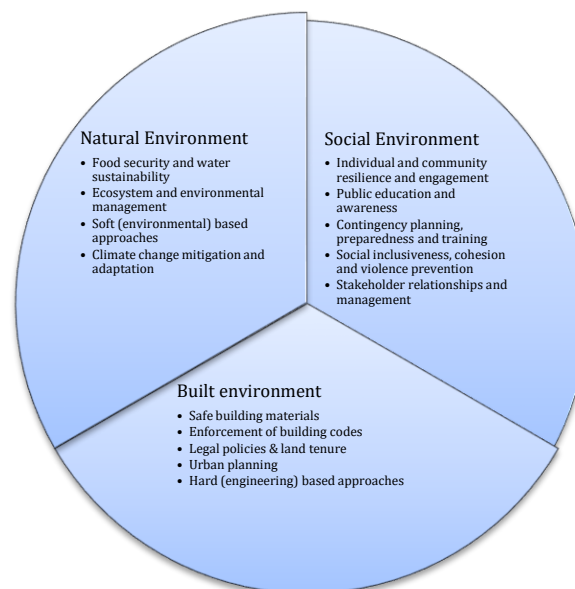
- **Public education and awareness** activities should be undertaken to raise awareness and engage people in urban risk reduction activities. Programmes can be tailored to meet the needs of specific populations, risks and target groups. These approaches can be integrated into almost all existing initiatives, whenever and wherever they take place. They can build on and support existing volunteer mobilization and peer-to-peer communications. The objective is familiarize communities with risk and interventions required prior to, during and following disasters. The pilot project in Tehran, Iran has further indicated that in order to be effective existing capacities of all institutions and organizations engaged in public education should be identified as well as the capacities of the audience within formal educational systems, healthcare networks and municipalities. Moreover, appropriate mechanisms for further and more effective coordination among institutions and organizations engaged in public education must be designed and implemented. Through a national public education initiative, the permanent and continuous role of all institutions and organizations engaged in public education must be taken into consideration.
- **Promoting specific mention of DRR in regulations for urban settings**, including references to building codes, land use planning, land tenure and informal settlements in legislative frameworks. This can be further strengthened through increased advocacy efforts on the part of the National Societies.
- **Effective integration of social and non-physical elements of DRR** into safety regulations and building codes.

¹⁷ ALNAP (2012), *Lessons: Responding to urban disasters: Learning from previous relief and recovery operations* (London, Alnap)

- **Campaigns:** National Societies are well-placed and experienced to take on large-scale urban awareness campaigns, and can leverage the power of their volunteer base to effectively disseminate information. Such campaigns enable a greater degree of familiarization on the part of urban residents and stakeholders of key issues.

Programme implementation/activities

Three distinct entry points define strategic approaches to urban DRR: built, natural and social environments. The built environment focuses essentially on issues related to urban planning, engineering approaches, legal policies and land tenure while the natural environment approach is strategically geared towards ecosystem and environmental management, climate change adaptation and mitigation. The Red Cross Red Crescent has substantial breadth of experience in advocating for and developing interventions within the social environment – which intrinsically places the role of the community at the heart of all programming. The scope of social environment interventions ranges from community engagement, public education and awareness to contingency planning and violence prevention. This should therefore inform the types of interventions that the organizational and contextual comparative advantage that National Societies have in terms of engaging and planning urban DRR/DM interventions. While the focus on the social environment has to date been minimal, recent global developments including UNISDR’s revised ten point checklist on essential for making cities resilient has propelled the community dimension forward.



The following provides an overview of key issues to bear in mind when embarking on programme interventions and activities.

- **Situational analysis:** identifying target areas and communities as well as mapping of existing government preparedness and response plans. The

objective of this phase is to gather relevant information so that National Societies gain a better understanding of the nature and extent of interrelated risks and vulnerabilities, better gauge the scope and number of actors, the effectiveness of current strategies employed by at-risk populations to manage disaster risk and to assess optimal entry points.

The following questions can be used to derive quantitative and qualitative data necessary to develop a more

holistic understanding of the conditions of exposure and vulnerability facing specific segments of the city and will highlight the multilayered nature of risk present in urban settings. It will also provide National Societies with the possibility of a) assessing the nature of risks and hazards present within defined city confines; b) identifying gaps in information; c) targeting at-risk communities; d) establishing viable entry points for advocacy

Situational analysis should yield the following information:

- National and local policies and programme that facilitate or impede integration of urban DRR.
- Potential partners and allies.
- Capacity of staff and partners to design, implement and monitor potential programmes.
- Social groups and livelihoods that are particularly vulnerable.
- Other initiatives that may complement or create synergies with potential programmes.

and awareness raising with regard to policy and legislation.

- What types of disasters have occurred in this area and how frequently have they hit?
- Which areas have the potential to be hit by a type of disaster they have not yet experienced?
- Which groups of people have historically been affected or are vulnerable to disasters?
- Is it possible to identify why they are more vulnerable than others?
- Are there disaster preparedness or response plans for the area?
- Are the communities included in these plans?
- How familiar are the communities with these plans?
- What are the existing gaps in policy and legislation on DRR?

It should be borne in mind as well that community targeting and entry points will be considerably different in urban areas in comparison to rural contexts – therefore sufficient time should be allocated to acquiring knowledge of the actors, identification of target groups, effective means of communication and navigation of multi-layered management systems.¹⁸ Participation of at-risk communities is critical and therefore an inclusive approach should be integrated at all levels of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

¹⁸ Urban DRR/DM Pilot Study Feedback Questionnaire: Armenia

Efforts should also be made to review existing DRR legislative framework and to map all stakeholders, and their respective roles and responsibilities.¹⁹

- **Risk mapping and assessment** are a necessity to effectively planning urban DRR, determining needs and developing activities for intervention. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have extensive experience in participatory approaches that put the community front and centre and a number of tools have been developed in line with these precepts, including the vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA), public awareness and public education (PAPE), community-based health and first-aid (CBHFA) and participatory approach for safe shelter awareness (PASSA). However, existing tools will need to be tailored to meet the contextual variations of communities in urban areas. Specifically differences between the essential elements of risk assessment in urban contexts will need to be factored in – currently there are “challenges for the methodologies that analyze risk” as they tend to be broad and do not take into account specific characteristics of urban setting such as population flow and other socio-economic factors.²⁰

Conventional sectoral approaches and service delivery mechanisms will have limited impact at citywide scale. It has been noted that “the VCA as a the main assessment tool is not designed to generate information that would allow analyzing city level systems and structures that have huge implications on the lives of vulnerable communities.”²¹ Therefore, concerted efforts should be made to develop a systematic risk and vulnerability analysis, narrowing down the assessment from city to community level. “City level engagement requires city risk analysis involving national, regional or provincial stakeholders and adopts a multi-hazard approach. Sub-city engagement requires developing “urban profiles” in partnership with district level stakeholders and can be designed to target specific hazard(s) or communities (geographical and/or communities of interest). Engaging in systems thinking requires clarifying the risks and

Challenges of working in urban contexts

- Lack of material related to urban DRR/DM
- Lack of coordination between sectors and actors
- Insufficient local and national budgets for urban DRR activities
- Non-functioning national platform for DRR due to lack of legislative policies
- Current legal policies do not allow for the implementation of insurance/risk transfer systems
- Multi-hazard nature of urban DRR
- Lack of sharing and access to information as data is decentralized and sometimes incompatible
- Reliability of information, especially when relating to population/census data
- Lack of human resources prevents full utilization of flood and earthquake early warning system
- Lack of appropriate methodologies and tools for effective DRR and DM planning and implementation.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Urban DRR/DM Pilot Study Feedback Questionnaire: Bolivia

²¹ IFRC ‘s *MENA Workshop on Urban Disaster Risk Reduction and Management: Building Urban Resilience* held in Beirut, Lebanon from 16-18 December 2013.

vulnerabilities to 1) people and organizations; 2) infrastructure, services and ecosystems; 3) legal and cultural norms; and 4) exposure to disasters. ”²² However, it should be noted that given the scope of the analysis and the resources required, National Societies should carry out this out in conjunction with other actors such as the government, academia, international organizations, etc. The pilot project in Jakarta, Indonesia is a prime example of using technology to support the contextualization of existing tools. The National Society’s use of GIS mapping in conducting VCAs helped to ensure the accuracy of community manual mapping. The tool was also integrated to facilitate efficient knowledge sharing between internal and external stakeholders.

Risk assessments should take into account the nature and impact of ‘socio-natural hazards’ which amplify risk such as environmental degradation and overcrowding.²³ As the pilot project in Nairobi, Kenya has indicated informal settlements also hold their specific challenges, namely the existence of a diverse population and lack of defined settlement patterns. However, the project’s findings also noted that the use of the VCA in informal settlements could be more effective, given that the tool has more discrete means of obtaining information from communities in comparison to other data collecting methods. This is particularly relevant for certain segments of the population that seek anonymity due to fears of harassment, detention or eviction.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

The pilot project in Yerevan, Armenia provided the following

recommendations on developing information basis for disaster risk elements and thus allowing for a holistic picture of targeted communities and defining hazard probabilities for community areas: community hazard maps, historic data on community hazards, historic data on hazards with disastrous consequences.²⁴ Equally database on vulnerabilities should be created to capture pertinent information related to vulnerable elements and systems within the community such as nature of buildings, construction, engineering structure, presence of hazardous material, etc.²⁵ Furthermore, the pilot project recommended that NGOs activate their DRR work at the community-level and contribute to urban communities in the operation of monitoring systems, hazard mapping, development of communities capacities and building DRR culture.

Key features of urban risk reduction interventions

- Engage a wide range of stakeholders in citywide and area-specific forums for urban risk management.
- Adopt approaches promoting resilience through risk reduction and adaptation and focusing location, structure, operational aspects, and risk financing and transfer options.
- Support communities and broader society to absorb disturbances, to self-organize or adjust to existing and new stresses, and to build and increase their capacity for learning and adaptation.
- Develop multi-sectoral programmes that address risks holistically, as well as multi-sectoral contingency planning for hazards events.
- Promote environmentally sustainable, hazard- and climate-resilient choices in construction techniques, materials, and land-use planning.
- Support the development of multi-hazard and multi-effect forecasting and early warning systems.
- Use the best available information on climate change to develop long-term strategies for environmental health, safe housing and employment generation.

Source: (IFRC,2013) *Mainstreaming DRR and CCA: a practitioner's guide*

- **Identification and entry strategies:** Rapid and unplanned urbanization coupled with development of informal settlements has yielded a number of substantial challenges. Notably, urban populations face prospects of limited access to basic services such as clean water, drainage, sanitation and transport. Moreover, the development of informal settlements often on land that is at high risk from hazards has further accentuated existing vulnerabilities of communities. Practice has shown that urban settings and the heterogeneous nature of communities demand specific approaches that often do not correspond to methodologies and tools that have proven efficient in rural contexts.

Although some of the tools, approaches, policies and practices have already been adapted from rural to urban areas, their scaling-up and the development of new tools to fill gaps is also essential to enhance the impact and efficiency

²⁴ Urban DRR/DM Pilot Study Feedback Questionnaire: Armenia

²⁵ Ibid.

urban areas and reach the most vulnerable. As has been noted above, community-based methodologies such as the VCA have taken into account the distinct characteristics of rural settings – such as intrinsic relationship between communities and with the land and food production. Moreover, there is heavy reliance on the historical knowledge of the territory, hazards and community relations. However, these approaches will need to be modified in order to take into account the fact that in urban settings, communities are not defined by where people live nor their productive activity but rather by ethnic, geographic and faith groupings. Moreover, there is a need to recognize the impact of internal migration and other socio-economic factors. However, existing capacity within urban areas also needs to be factored in – namely the presence of high level of knowledge and specialists as well as institutional, financial and economic capacities.²⁶

- **Upgrading and/or developing appropriate and relevant methodologies, tools and standards:** the IFRC and its member National Societies should seek to improve technical and operational capacities, methodologies and standards through innovations and efficient use of modern technology, in order to enhance urban risk understanding and assessment; the development of new or upgrading of existing operational tools; developing realistic disaster scenarios and operational standard operating procedures.
- **Strengthen intersectoral linkages and partnerships:** greater efforts should be made to establish and strengthen links between development planning, environmental planning and DRR with relevant authorities and stakeholders.²⁷ Bearing in mind that due to institutional constraints and the scope of activities involved, National Societies will need to establish partnerships with local authorities and other actors including the private sector, academic institutions and NGOs in order to capitalize on collective efforts and to avoid duplication.
- **Evidence-base:** Emphasis should be placed on establishing an evidence base across the IFRC and its member National Societies on urban risk reduction intervention strategies. This will allow for a cross-pollination of best practices and accumulation of knowledge on the scope of urban risk reduction activities as well as the contextualization and/or development of relevant and appropriate tools.
- **Documentation:** capturing and sharing of learning is crucial for the sustainability of urban DRR programming. It also allows for concrete coordination and collaboration – allowing partners to build on others' experiences, successes and lessons learned.

Advocacy

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Urban DRR/DM Pilot Study Feedback Questionnaire: Indonesia

National Societies' approach to national, municipal and local government authorities will vary depending on the context and on the nature of existing relations. It will be helpful to clearly define the Red Cross Red Crescent's objectives. Advocacy needs to be carried out both to and for vulnerable communities. Crucially, though, it must also be carried out alongside them. It is not for the Red Cross Red Crescent to decide what priority issues a community needs to advocate.

- **Creating synergies:** National Societies could be at the forefront of promoting inclusive multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral approaches which ensure effective consultation and coordination with communities, local organizations and other key stakeholders.
- **Risk-informed local planning and budgeting:** National Societies, through evidence base on DRR, convey that DRR is cost effective. Risk-informed local planning and budgeting for urban DRR activities will in the cost governments and donors less in the long-run, as well as saving lives and mitigating suffering. Emphasis should be placed on that fact that neglecting DRR leads to more deaths and damage, and pushes more people into poverty. Equally, advocacy should focus on integration of urban DRR in post-disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation projects in urban areas.
- **People-centred approaches:** vulnerable people must be the primary partners of humanitarian and development actors. Solutions that are imposed are rarely sustainable. The people themselves know the risks that they face and there is a moral obligation to prioritize risk reduction.
- **Enabling environment for urban resilience building** should be advocated through the development of national policies and legislation. Further information on how this can be done, what are the factors (enablers and drivers) of creating such an environment could be a deeper dive into the factors necessary before programs are actionable.
- **Promotion of tolerance and countering discrimination:** National Societies are best placed to advocate for safe urban spaces for women, persons with disabilities, older persons and children. Additionally, National Societies can be actively involved in the promotion of tolerance and addressing discrimination against migrant populations.

Red Cross Red Crescent Approach

While each National Society will tailor make their methodologies, tools and activities to fit the specificities of their urban context, they will be guided by overarching umbrella approach which provides principle elements. In order to find scalable, sustainable and replicable solutions the Red Cross Red Crescent advocates for a holistic and integrated approach towards urban risk reduction. The elements for the Red Cross Red Crescent's approach to urban DRR/DM has been informed by a number of factors including the IFRC and its member National Societies' mandate, comparative advantage, breadth of experience in urban settings, findings of the pilot city level projects and research undertaken within the scope of the IFRC. Moreover, global frameworks on urban resilience and DRR have also been taken into consideration – most notably UNISDR's Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient, which was recently revised and updated at the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

The key elements for the Red Cross Red Crescent's approach focus on the particularities and unique features of urban settings while concurrently ensuring that is it community-driven, a hallmark of the Red Cross Red Crescent's activities to date. The approach takes into account the multi-sectoral, multi-hazard, multi-stakeholder practices that will need to define the Red Cross Red Crescent's practices within urban settings. In particular, it is takes into account the number of interrelated issues present within urban settings such as myriad causes and drivers of vulnerability, population density, resilience building, local socio-economic development, environment, climate change, legislation, coordination with multiple stakeholders, violence and insecurity, migration and cash economy dependence on markets and cash for access to public services and goods.

<i>Red Cross Red Crescent Approach for Urban Disaster Risk Reduction and Management</i>	<i>Characteristics and functionalities</i>
1. Better understanding of urban context	<p>Reducing knowledge gap that currently exists regarding city-level hazards, vulnerability and risk and instituting a systemic process of gathering and integrating information to feed into tailor-made and context appropriate programmes and policies. This requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an in-depth analysis of the fundamentals, including the defining features of urban vs rural settings ▪ acknowledging that the urban-rural divide is fluid and subject to socio-economic, geographical and environmental variations.
2. Upgrading and/or developing appropriate and relevant methodologies, tools and standards for urban contexts	<p>Incompatibility of existing methodologies, tools and standards should be addressed and retrofitted to address the complexities of urban settings. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Risk mapping and assessment</i>: necessity in targeted urban areas to effectively plan urban DRR, determine needs and develop activities for intervention. ▪ <i>Monitoring, contingency planning and early warning</i>: improving technical and operational capacities, methodologies and standards through innovations and efficient use of modern technology, in order to enhance urban risk understanding and assessment; the development of new or upgrading of existing operational tools; developing realistic disaster scenarios and operational standard operating procedures.
3. Integrated and inclusive urban programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure urban risk reduction and disaster management programming is adapted to address the diverse and complex needs of vulnerable populations – including migration, food security, livelihoods, water, sanitation and hygiene, health, urban youth, people living with disabilities and gender-focused programming. ▪ Focus efforts to understand funding streams that could be accessed at national to local levels for urban risk reduction and adaptation programmes. ▪ Contingency plans should be part of the comprehensive process of risk mapping and assessment, disaster monitoring and early warning and institutional readiness and people preparedness.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effective monitoring and early warning systems are essential to ensure timely and efficient disaster response, but it should not be limited to technical and scientific systems and devices, but also should include multi-stakeholder collaborative mechanisms as well as engagement and participation of people and communities. ▪ Financial and budgetary systems for both pre-allocated resources as well as emergency donations and contribution should be developed in advance of disasters and integrated in the disaster management plans and systems. ▪ Risk assessment processes and contingency plans should include provisions for allocation of prospective required resources and budgets for the post-emergency phase of disaster in order to prevent gaps after relief phase and smooth transition to recovery.
<p>4. Urban sensitive capacity development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conceptual shift in institutional and operational capacity development and runs the spectrum strengthening volunteering and human resources systems to increasing accountability and improving knowledge of urban settings; developing urban tools for existing toolsets such as the VCA toolkit; and incorporation of research on urban development regulation to support DRR efforts. ▪ It equally extends to understanding underlying causes and identifying perceptions of risk and priorities of all urban vulnerable groups; being responsive to local contextual variation; testing and researching intervention strategies, establishing a clear evidence-base. ▪ Engage professionals (engineers, city planners and social workers) to provide expert analysis where necessary, for example, of construction, land use and social conflict. ▪ Build institutional capacity on risk profiling and risk mapping to link risk parameters to the conditions of the slum communities and the most vulnerable. ▪ Regular training and drills and exercise are required in order to ensure efficiency of disaster management system to face various unexpected situations. This should be based on developing various scenarios for disasters and effective recruitment, organization and management of volunteers and other community members. ▪ Develop and overlap maps of hazards and other effects of climate change on urban areas at different scales (regional, citywide, and of specific neighborhoods or sectors) to build a comprehensive understanding of the context for any intervention.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrate analysis of hazards and effects of climate change with other sources of urban risk, such as technological hazards and social violence, because the complexity of the urban environment requires resilience building strategies that seek to address multiple sources of risk. ▪ Consider potential effects of population growth, migration trends and unemployment/informal employment on exposure, vulnerability and capacities for resilience. ▪ Focus on illegal and spontaneous settlements where vulnerability and exposure are likely to be higher.
<p>5. Urban community resilience building and engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tailored approaches to community engagement, valorizing local knowledge as a central component in building long-term resilience. ▪ Effective community engagement in urban DRR decision-making and awareness raising on existing risks, means of prevention and response mechanisms. ▪ Use participatory risk assessment processes to generate greater social cohesion in heterogeneous urban populations. ▪ Support school-based awareness-raising and emergency preparedness drills. ▪ Support representatives of neighborhood associations and civil society groups to participate in forums on urban planning and development, and to raise issues of risk and resilience.
<p>6. Creating synergy between multiple levels and actors in urban settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The overriding complexity of urban settings and presence of a myriad of actors will require enhanced coordination and partnership with local authorities, professional organizations, private sector, academia and other local urban actors. ▪ Close cooperation and coordination with neighboring cities, regions and countries to exchange information, knowledge, and material, financial and human resources are essential and should be integrated in the relevant disaster preparedness and response and contingency plans. ▪ Need to foster coordination and partnerships by supporting the creation of local platforms for DRR; identifying new partners with relevant expertise, such as universities and private sector firms; establishing local coalitions on resilience (e.g., as part of UNISDR’s ‘Making Cities Resilient’ campaign)
<p>7. Effective use of science and technology within urban settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The complexity of risk necessitates increased use of science, technology and innovation. Science-based forecasting and early warning systems are critical to informed decision-making,

	<p>while technology provides innovative means of reaching wider, disconnected population rapidly.</p>
<p>8. Effective advocacy for urban communities and stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishing links to programmes addressing other types of vulnerability (e.g., livelihoods, traffic safety, first aid); addressing areas outside Red Cross Red Crescent niche (e.g., urban planning, violence reduction) through enhanced partnership and advocacy; linking auxiliary role; and engaging other stakeholders. ▪ Focusing on advocacy programmes that promote access to safe urban spaces for the poor, women, and people with disabilities. ▪ Raising public awareness of rights and responsibilities for basic services, such as water supply, sanitation and waste management, which have a major impact on vulnerability in urban environments. ▪ Promoting water and sanitation projects that improve access to safe water and hygiene for slum dwellers. ▪ Advocating for the creation/updating and implementation of legislation that strengthens accountability for disaster risk reduction of public and private sector actors.
<p>9. Urban volunteer management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing volunteer diversity, providing flexibility with volunteer time commitments and preparing for spontaneous volunteers following an urban disaster.

Key documents for Urban Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

ALNAP (2012), [Lessons: Responding to urban disasters: Learning from previous relief and recovery operations](#) (London, Alnap)

British Red Cross (2012) [Learning from the City](#) (London, British Red Cross)

Earthquakes and Megacities Initiatives (EMI) (2012) [Programmatic directions for the Red Cross and Red Crescent in building urban community resilience in the Asia Pacific Region](#), report commissioned by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Asia Pacific Zone

IASC (2010) [IASC Strategy Meeting Humanitarian Challenges in Urban Areas](#) (IASC)

IFRC (2010) [World Disasters Report 2010: Focus on urban risk](#) (Geneva, IFRC)

IFRC (2011) [No time for doubt: tackling urban risk](#) (Geneva, IFRC)

IFRC (2012) [Risk in Urban Contexts: Conceptual Framework](#) (Geneva, IFRC)

IFRC (2012) [Risk Reduction in urban environments project identification, design, implementation and assessment checklist](#) (Geneva, IFRC)

IFRC (2012) [Strategic guidelines and methodological approach to risk in urban contexts in Central America](#) (Geneva, IFRC)

IFRC (2013) [Better laws, safer communities? Emerging themes on how legislation can support disaster risk reduction](#) (Geneva, IFRC)

IFRC (2013) [Integrating climate change and urban risks into the VCA](#) (Geneva, IFRC)

Netherlands Red Cross (2007) [Urbanisation study into causes, trends and consequences of the rapid growth of cities and the impact on Red Cross and Red Crescent work](#) (Hague, Netherlands Red Cross)

Skat and IFRC (2013) [Sustainable Reconstruction in Urban Areas: A Handbook](#) (Geneva, Skat and IFRC)

UNISDR's Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient available at: www.unisdr.org/campaign/resilientcities/toolkit/essentials

Documentation related to the five city-level pilot projects available at:
<https://fednet.ifrc.org/en/resources/community-preparedness-and-risk-reduction/disaster-risk-reduction/Urban-DRR-DM/>