World
Cities
Day October 31

BETTER CITY, BETTER LIFE

LIVERPOOL, UNITED KINGDOM 2018

Building Sustainable and Resilient Cities

World Cities Day 2018

Post-disaster Response in Building Resilient Cities

Post-disaster response is, in theory, short-term in nature and cannot fix a city's long-term problems. Nevertheless, when there is a post-disaster response in an urban area, the actions can operate in a way that better supports city systems, limits further disruption to urban development trajectories and promotes greater resilience to future crises.

KEY WORDS

Disaster Risk Reduction, Building Back Better, Urban Risk, Vulnerability, Hazard, Human Settlement, Humanitarian Action, Mitigation, Recovery, Urban Development, Urban Resilience, Humanitarian Crisis, Urban Crisis, Slums.

FACTS AND FIGURES

- Around 87 million homes and 130,000 schools, clinics, hospitals and education facilities were either damaged or destroyed in 2015, with floods and storms accounting for around 98% of houses damaged[1]
- Flooding is the most frequent and widespread disaster in the world with significant death toll and economic loss[2]
- Huge numbers of urban dwellers are already exposed to a variety of hazards: roughly one billion people live in slums, representing one third of the population of the developing world.
- Today approximately half of the world's estimated 16.7 million refugees and at least 33.3 million IDPs are thought to live in urban areas.[3]
- 325 million extremely poor people will be living in the 49 countries most prone to hazards by 2030[4]
- two billion people today live in countries in which development outcomes are affected by fragility, conflict and violence.[5]

---

[1] EM-DAT 2015
[2] EM-DAT 2016
[3] UNHCR (2013), IDMC January 2014.
[4] The geography of poverty, disasters and climate extremes in 2030
[5] http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/overview

ISSUE SUMARY

Ensuring that recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction are collectively aligned with long-term planning goals will determine how the city environment can improve and the affected community can become more resilient. Local government strategies for post-disaster recovery and reconstruction that consider economic and social aspects and seek to "build back better" will secure a more resilient future.

Urban risk is composed of a complex set of inter-related factors: the urban poor often live on land exposed to hazards, many urban residents are without adequate protective infrastructure, some suffer from poor housing conditions and/or lack access to basic services, and for many accessing adequate healthcare, education and employment opportunities remains a challenge. This context reinforces vulnerability and adds layers of complexity to any humanitarian response. With increased understanding, data and knowledge on the ground, post-disaster responses are more effective and efficient.

By maintaining a disaster management plan that outlines mitigation, preparedness and response to local emergencies, local governments facilitate humanitarian responses that support long-term development goals. Nevertheless, the roles, responsibilities, resources, cooperation and coordination modalities among stakeholders are often not clear, the importance of area-based, sectorally integrated responses to urban crises are not always understood, and accurate data can be limited.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Panellists will include representatives from Sendai in Japan, that experienced an earthquake and tsunami in 2011, Nepal that experienced an earthquake in 2015 and Byblos in Lebanon hosting Syrian refugee populations in urban areas. They will respond to the following guiding questions that will initiate discussion.

- Does the humanitarian system require a different set of procedures, standards and guidelines when responding to an urban emergency?
- How can crisis response support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in cities?
- What are key principles that can enable an urban conflict recovery process to address root causes of conflict, rebuild trust and safeguard risks of future conflicts.
- How can the private sector contribute to disaster management planning and response?