GLOBAL URBAN CRISIS PARTNERSHIP

WHS urban recommendations
DRAFT 30 June 2015

Recognize the nature, scale and complexity of urban crisis

Emergency interventions must recognize the specificity of urban crises and that they require a tailored response than is currently practiced. Complex urban crises demand multi-scale, multi-faceted, cross-sector based approaches well beyond traditional humanitarian and development boundaries. As such local actors, development agencies and humanitarian responders, should:

a) Identify the most at-risk cities and take steps to strengthen urban resilience. This means building from below, with local actors leading the response, and international actors playing a supportive role.

b) Establish a 'trigger' for urban response, similar to the protocols put in place for a Level 3 crisis, that sets in motion a systems approach, backed up by city-level analysis, use of existing data and involvement of local actors and urban expertise.

c) Adopt area-based approaches to programming and coordination that are adapted and appropriate, identifying and building on existing city systems.

d) Foster collaboration between city, humanitarian and development actors so that all are contributing to assessment and strategic frameworks for recovery.
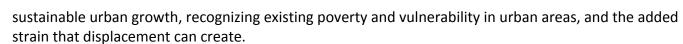
Work with the systems that shape cities

Move from a mindset of supply to one of support, and invest in the systems that shape cities (governance, society, enterprise and infrastructure).

e) Understand context through urban specific assessments, including a spatial analysis, assessments of services, supply chains, critical infrastructure and land tenure. Avoid duplicating service provision and weakening local institutions.

f) Establish rosters of national, regional or international deployable urban leaders, managers and technical experts, who can surge through local authorities, to support, transfer knowledge, and strengthen local responders' ability to lead and coordinate crisis response and recovery.

g) Prioritize cash-based and responses alongside economic stimuli for markets. Develop standards and approaches to re-establish and support local enterprise.

Manage urban displacement

Ensure that the most at-risk towns and cities are able to manage displacement by supporting access to housing, and investment in infrastructure and services, contributing as much as possible to longer-term

sustainable urban growth, recognizing existing poverty and vulnerability in urban areas, and the added strain that displacement can create.

h) Improve understanding of the specific vulnerabilities and capacities of displaced women and men in urban areas, and develop tools and approaches for the protection of dispersed, mobile and less visible populations.

i) Consider the wide range of shelter options already housing people in the city, and support authorities and communities to find appropriate housing solutions for the displaced, rather than camps being the default option.