

SETTLEMENT PLANNING

UN-HABITAT IN DISASTER
& CONFLICT CONTEXTS

Haiti 2010, Photo: © UN-HABITAT



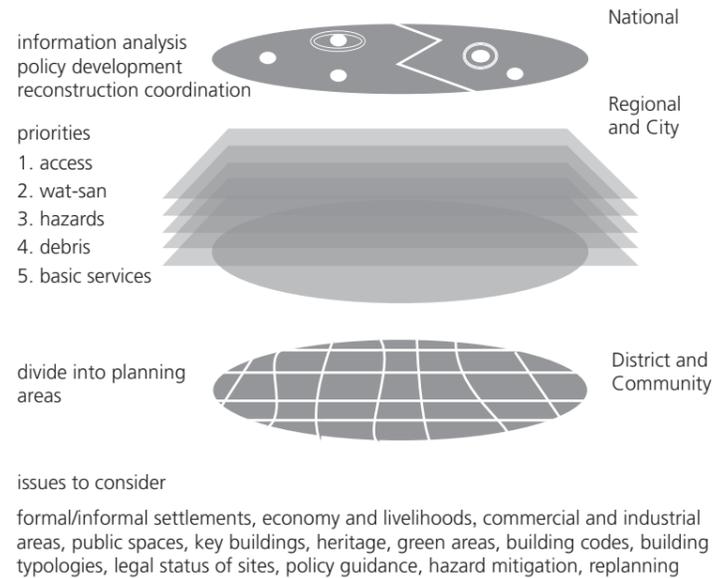
UN HABITAT SETTLEMENT PLANNING IN DISASTER & CONFLICT

Prior to disasters, many cities particularly in developing countries have high levels of vulnerability. When a disaster or a conflict occurs cities are ill prepared to cope with the crises.

After a disaster, cities face a massive influx of displaced people and relief actors; breakdown of services; weakened institutions; and destruction of infrastructure and buildings.

Post-crisis urban planning is an important tool for both managing displacement and guiding sustainable reconstruction by linking land, housing, services, infrastructure, livelihoods and governance. It is thus a crucial tool for post-crisis recovery and reconstruction. Post-crisis urban planning should take into careful consideration the specific context of the affected area as well as the evolving crisis situation.

Post-crisis immediate response actions at different levels



Planning starts immediately. It can serve as a tool for coordination, integration and reconstruction.

Examples of UN-HABITAT settlement planning activities in crisis-affected countries

- Mozambique**
Participatory vulnerability reduction plans on national, provincial and district level
- Haiti**
Technical advice to support settlement planning after the earthquake in 2010
- Peru**
Support to local authorities in reconstruction, tenure and planning after the earthquake in 2007

Sudan
Spatial planning to support IDP/refugee settlement planning

Serbia
New spatial planning legislation, training of local government

Kosovo
Priority action plans, development of new spatial planning legislation, training of local authorities and municipal planners

Lebanon
Regional development plan, training and capacity building of local authorities

Iraq
Participatory rehabilitation of houses and basic infrastructure, training and capacity building of local planners

Somalia
Reintegration, and resettlement of IDPs, upgrading physical environment, planning for public infrastructure

Afghanistan
Upgrading of informal settlements for IDPs, strengthening of local governance structures

Pakistan
Support to government and communities, technical support for recovery and reconstruction for IDPs

Sri Lanka
Community action planning for housing and infrastructure after the tsunami in 2004

Maldives
Technical advice to local administration on reconstruction after the tsunami in 2004

Indonesia
Community mapping and action planning, technical support, joint planning and needs assessments



Issues

Mitigation

Mitigation of hazards is important both before and after disaster events. Unsustainable land use, building on hazardous land, poor urban planning and growing informal settlements add to the vulnerability of cities to natural disasters and conflicts. Poor governance can exacerbate the situation.

Outdated and inappropriate masterplans

In many countries city master plans are outdated. Plans should always be verified in field. Simplified strategic planning may be more practical in crisis situations.

Relocation

Temporary relocation has a way of becoming permanent: early safe return of the affected people to pre-disaster sites should be promoted. Relocation is justified only in terms of environmental or public good requirements. When relocation is unavoidable, planning for sustainable relocation sites should be done according to international standards and should include infrastructure, services, and suitable livelihood options. New cities rarely succeed.

Resource management and the environment

Sound resource management should be supported by proactive recovery planning. Preservation of important environmental flora and fauna, green areas, wetlands and ecological corridors should be supported.

Long-term links between emergency solutions and sustainable urban future

There is an urgent need for early recovery planning inputs. Decisions made in early phases have crucial consequences. Consideration can be given to hazard risk reduction, location of infrastructure and basic services, improving informal settlements, density, safety, green and public spaces, preservation of heritage and local culture.

Approach

Consensus building and coordination

Urban planning can strengthen coordination among donors, government, private sector, voluntary agencies, civil society and the affected communities. National ownership is important: local authorities should be involved from early on. It is crucial to define clear roles and responsibilities and share information.

People-centred

Recovery planning should be people-centred to ensure suitable solutions that are developed by the communities themselves. Community plans need to be linked to the district and city wide plans.

Rethinking past practices

Reconstruction provides opportunities to change non-functional past practices and increase sustainability and inclusiveness. Recovery plans should be made according to the local context, connecting urban and rural development. Economic, social and environmental sustainability should be integrated.

Rebuilding critical infrastructure and services

Rehabilitation of basic infrastructure and services is crucial to recovery, debris removal, main road rehabilitation, water supply and identification of safe zones where reconstruction can begin are important priorities.

Planning as a catalyst for economic recovery

Creation of appropriate spaces and infrastructure for economic activity from early on is critical for livelihoods. Mixed land-use strategies that combine settlements with livelihoods, and respond to market demand and the potential of the informal sector, are important.

Land readjustment

When public funds are limited and there is no free land for specific urban needs, land can be pooled and land re-planned in more sustainable ways.

Promoting immediate actions: Starting with spatial analysis, damage, hazard and community identification, debris planning and coordination.

Technical advice: Addressing specific planning challenges and opportunities on local, district, regional, city and national level.

Training and capacity building: Strengthening capacity of governments, planning institutions, NGO's and communities.

Participatory planning on community level: Ensuring culturally suitable solutions based on the needs of the communities.

Mapping, GIS: analysing damage, hazardous land, community boundaries and structuring elements of the city

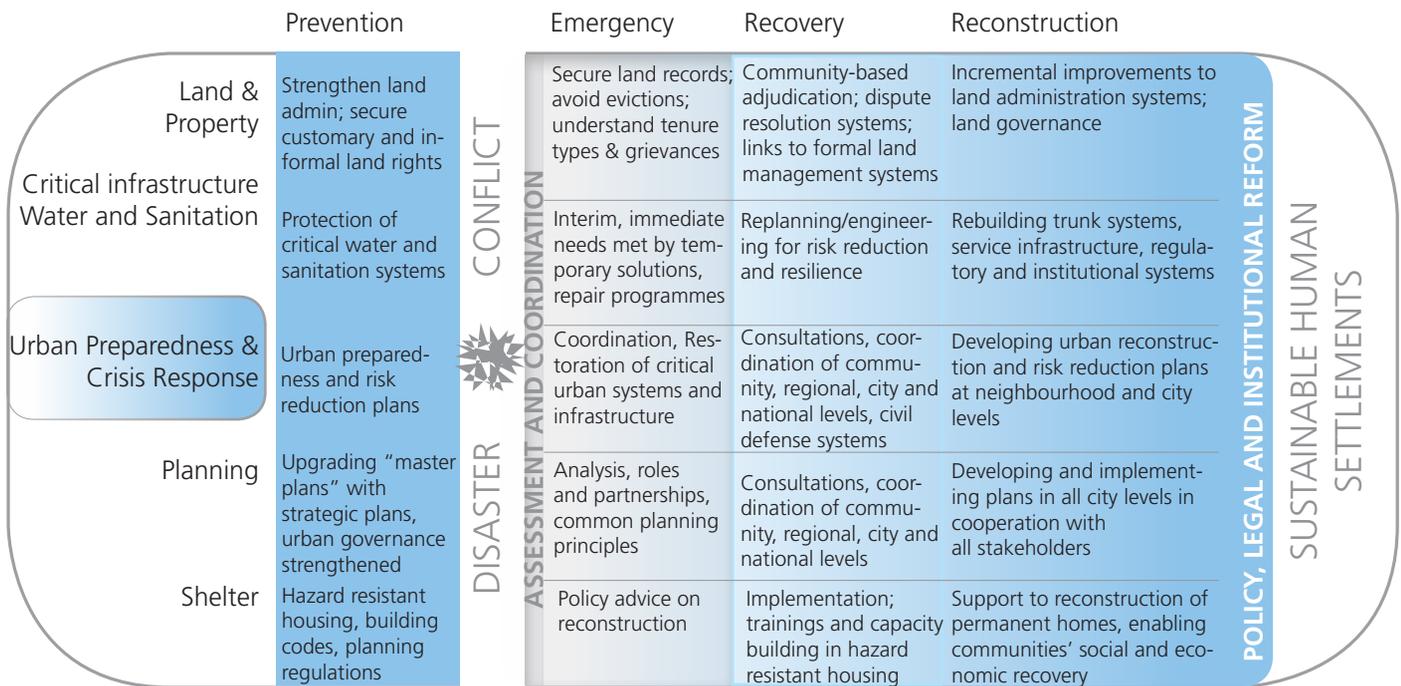
Policy, legal and institutional reforms

Livelihood: Mixed land use and appropriate spaces and infrastructure to support formal and informal livelihoods. Regional and rural linkages.

Environment: Sustainable resource management and green space in cities.

Women and youth: Women's and youth's social, livelihood and safety needs addressed through spatial design.

Governance: Capacity to promote vulnerability reduction, sustainability and crisis response.



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Networks and Partners

Commonwealth Planning Association (CAP)
ISOCARP
Prevention Consortium
ALNAP
Gender and Disaster Network
International Network on Displacement and Resettlement
Natural Hazards Center
www.Reliefweb.org

Publications

Urban planning in the state of flux, 2006
Quick guide to post-crisis urban planning for leaders, forthcoming
Quick guide to post-crisis urban planning for practitioners, forthcoming
Planning sustainable cities, 2010
Global report on human settlements, 2007 and 2009
Enhancing urban safety and security, 2007