



URBAN SETTLEMENTS WORKING GROUP

AREA-BASED APPROACHES IN URBAN SETTINGS

Compendium of Case Studies

MAY 2019 EDITION

USWG

Urban
Settlements
Working
Group

www.sheltercluster.org



Source: CRS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document was coordinated and overseen by the Global Shelter Cluster's (GSC) Urban Settlements Working Group and with the support of DG-ECHO.

This current iteration of this Compendium of case studies includes case studies from the following organisations:

- ACTED
- American Red Cross
- Care International UK
- Catholic Relief Services
- Feinstein International Centre at TUFTS University
- Global Communities
- Habitat for Humanity International
- Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team (HOT)
- IMPACT Initiatives
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
- Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS)
- Kenya Red Cross Societyz
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS)
- Norwegian Refugee Council
- Project Concern International
- SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE
- Shelter Projects 2011 – 2012
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)



Source: CRS/Ismaïl Ferdous

SPECIAL THANKS

This report was produced with the support of the above agencies and specific thanks to Amelia Rule, Andrea Quaden, Anna Hirsch Holland, Ausde Bertrand, Brett Moore, Catherine Sherwood, Charmalee Jayasinghe, Daniel Mutinda, David Humphries, Davide Nicolini, Donal Reilly, Ela Serdaroglu, Giulia Frontini, Giovanna Federici, Ibrahim Suada, James Schell, Jenina Allia, Jessica Sadye Wolff, Jim DiFrancesca, Lora Vicariot, Louise Thaller, Luca Pupulin, Manual Vega-Cuberos, Mario Flores, Mhairi O'Hara, Miguel Urquia, Nadia Carlevaro, Nanki Chawla, Pankaj Kumar Singh, Richard Evans, Rudra Adhikari, Ryan Smith, Samer Saliba, Tom Corsellis, Tulio Mateo, Will Cragin, Yantisa Akhadi, Zeynep Balcioglu, and Ziggy Garewal.

Project managers: James Schell, Mohamed Hilmi, Seki Hirano
Analysis and executive summary: Elizabeth Parker, Victoria Maynard
Graphic Design: Sneha Malani
Copyeditor: James Schell

Links:

[Urban settlement Working Group](#)

For reference literature see [Area-based Approaches Channel](#), [Humanitarian library](#)

This compendium was made possible through the support of EU humanitarian aid

About EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid: The European Union and its Member States are the world's leading donor of humanitarian aid. Relief assistance is an expression of European solidarity with people in need all around the world. It aims to save lives, prevent and alleviate human suffering, and safeguard the integrity and human dignity of populations affected by natural disasters and man-made crises. The European Commission ensures rapid and effective delivery of EU relief assistance through its two main instruments: civil protection and humanitarian aid. Through its civil protection and humanitarian aid operations department (ECHO), the European Commission helps over 120 million victims of conflict and disasters every year. With headquarters in Brussels and a global network of field offices, the Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations department provides assistance to the most vulnerable people on the basis of humanitarian needs. For more information, please visit the European Commission's website .

This document covers humanitarian aid activities implemented with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein should not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of the European Union, and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.



Source: Unicef/Noorani

EDITORIAL

Affected communities do not perceive their recovery in sectoral terms, but from a holistic, multi-sectoral perspective. Whilst sectoral approaches and technical expertise remain important ingredients in humanitarian response and recovery, understanding the holistic needs of affected communities require improved sectoral and stakeholder collaboration. Applying an area-based / settlement-based approach, which “advocates for assistance that considers the whole population affected by a crisis, living in a specific geographic area in need of multi-sectoral support by working with multiple stakeholders”, contributes to this achieving holistic understanding and program logic.

Area-based / Settlement-based approaches define “an area, rather than a sector or target group, as a primary entry point”. This approach can be particularly appropriate if residents in an affected area face complex, inter-related and multisectoral needs. Whilst this approach is recognised as one of many, its strength is realised through building a deeper understanding of the affected populations’ holistic needs and complex contexts, and by building on existing community cohesion and capacity, governance structures, markets and service delivery mechanisms.

In recent years, this approach has gained traction among humanitarian actors seeking to provide more effective responses to crisis affected populations and pave the way for recovery. The increasing application of this approach builds on experiences of urban and regional planners working on community renewal through ‘area-based initiatives’ in poor and vulnerable locations since the 1960s and 1970s. This was reinforced by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee’s call in 2010 for a “paradigm shift in humanitarian assistance in urban areas, based on a community-based - rather than - an individual or household approach”. More recently, the Habitat III summit, the Global Alliance for Urban Crises, InterAction, and strategy papers by OFDA, ECHO, and UNHCR have acknowledged and promoted these approaches. However, whilst humanitarian and development agencies are increasingly applying this approach, it occurs in a rather sporadic nature and is yet to reach scale and be recognised as ‘a tool in the toolbox’ by the overall humanitarian system.

To support the adoption of this approach, the Urban Settlements Working Group (USWG) was established in May 2017. Co-chaired by Catholic Relief Services, Impact Initiatives and InterAction, under the auspices of the Global Shelter Cluster, a key objective of the USWG is to identify and promote best practice and lessons learnt from existing practices. With over 60 organisations engaged, the USWG provides a platform to bring together global clusters, implementing agencies, donors and academics to research, discuss and operationalize these approaches in humanitarian assistance. This publication represents a key output and important milestone of the USWG, consolidating current practices, identifying common challenges & constraints and providing operational guidance.

The USWG would like to thank the numerous agencies who have contributed to this compendium. We hope this publication will serve as a useful point of reference for organisations applying a settlement-based approach to response and recovery.

Overall, the approach requires further research, application and evaluation to create an informed evidence base to influence change across the traditional humanitarian response mechanisms. Looking ahead, the USWG will continue to champion this approach in global and regional discussions, develop accessible guidance and tools wherever it can add value and count on humanitarian and development communities’ continued support.

GSC Urban Settlement WG co-conveners
Catholic Relief Services, IMPACT Initiatives and InterAction





Source: OCHA/Audrey J...

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	4
------------------------	---

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS

1. What is this document about?.....	6
2. What are area-based approaches?	9
3. Reasons for adopting area-based approaches	10
4. What do area-based approaches look like in practice?.....	11
5. What can we learn from the case studies?.....	12
6. How can area-based approaches be improved?.....	13

CASE STUDIES

CITY LEVEL SCALE

- C1** Ar-Raqqa, Syria / **Ar-Raqqa Area Based Assessment**
- C2** Dar es Salaam, Tanzania / **Open Mapping for Flood Resilience**
- C3** Jakarta, Indonesia / **Enhancing Capacity within Disaster Management Agencies through Open Exposure Data**
- C4** Mosul, Iraq / **Settlement Based Coordination following the Mosul Offensive**
- C5** Various, Sri Lanka/ **Disaster Resilient City Development Strategies for Sri Lankan Cities**
- C6** Aleppo, Syria / **Multi-sector prioritisation to rehabilitate conflict-affected neighbourhoods**
- C7** Governorates of Erbil, Duhok and Sulaymaniyah, Iraq / **Urban Profiling in Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq**
- C8** Roxas City, Panay, Pontevedra, Estancia; Philippines / **Post-Yolanda Support for Safer Homes and Settlements**

DISTRICT/BOROUGH SCALE

- D1** Afghanistan / **Supporting the response to urban displacement in eastern Afghanistan**
- D2** Maiduguri, Nigeria / **Application of Local Area Based Coordination mechanisms for Cholera Response**
- D3** Mogadishu, Somalia / **Tri-cluster support in response to the 2011 famine and conflict**
- D4** Kabul, Afghanistan / **Kabul Area Shelter and Settlements**

NEIGHBOURHOOD SCALE

- N1** Bangui, Central African Republic / **Support to settlement-based response and recovery planning**
- N2** Kampala, Uganda / **Partnering with Kampala Capital City Authority on refugees and migrant integration**
- N3** Nairobi, Kenya / **Building Resilience in Urban informal settlements through innovation and partnerships**
- N4** Tripoli, Lebanon / **Supporting urban rehabilitation for Syrian Refugees and Host Communities**
- N5** Beirut and Mount Lebanon, Lebanon / **Lebanon Refugee Crisis response**
- N6** Tripoli, Lebanon / **'El Hay' Integration multi-scale interventions for vulnerable populations**
- N7** Colombia / **Legalisation of Urban Settlements**
- N8** Portmore, Jamaica / **BRACED: Disaster Risk Reduction in Vulnerable Urban settlements**
- N9** Port-au-Prince, Haiti / **Neighbourhood Revitalisation in Simon Pelé, Port-au-Prince**
- N10** Port-au-Prince, Haiti / **Neighbourhoods Approach to Urban Disaster in Ravine Pintade**
- N11** Port-au-Prince, Haiti / **Applying the neighbourhood approach**
- N12** Port-au-Prince, Haiti / **LAMIKA – Integrated neighbourhoods approach to recovery and reconstruction in Port-au-Prince**
- N13** Port-au-Prince, Haiti / **The neighbourhood approach to 'build back better' in Christ Roi**
- N14** Barrio Mio, Guatemala / **The neighbourhoods Approach for Emergency Response and Urban Resilience**
- N15** Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif, Kandahar, Herat and Jalalabad; Afghanistan / **Community-Led Infrastructure Programme**
- N16** Tacloban, Philippines / **Typhoon Haiyan Recovery Program in Tacloban City**
- N17** Istanbul, Turkey / **Innovative Local Solutions to Migration Crisis**



INTRODUCTION

1. What is this document about?

This Compendium is a pioneering collection of case studies describing area-based approaches to urban challenges (2010-2019). The case studies were sourced from multiple agencies, collected by the Urban Settlements Working Group of the Global Shelter Cluster, co-chaired by Catholic Relief Services, IMPACT Initiatives and InterAction. The case studies documented here are in responses to both humanitarian crises and developmental challenges and from a mix of contexts such as rapid onset Natural disasters, Conflict induced crisis and effects of Rapid urbanisation. The case studies are organised in three sections according to the administrative scale of project / initiative. From City level scale (C) to District/ Borough scale (D) and to Neighbourhood / ward level (N).

The matrix below is a log key information about the case studies which may guide the reader to find the case study they wish to learn from. From the matrix one can see which combination of multi sectorial interventions were implemented, such as Shelter, WASH, Health, Protection DRR, Urban planning, Early Recovery, Livelihoods, Infrastructure and Psychosocial support and includes experiences which focused around multi-sectorial assessments and coordination. The period of the projects/ initiatives varies in duration from a few months (for multi-sectorial assessment/action planning) to several years (including implementation across multiple sectors and scales).

The term 'area-based approaches' is used to include a wide-range of approaches described in policy, practice and academia as 'area-based', 'settlement-based' or 'neighbourhood-based' for this compendium project / initiative included here are one that has the characteristics of area-based approaches: multisectoral, multi-stakeholder, geographically targeted, and consider the whole population within that location (further defined in Section two and Figure 1). Whilst the focus of the compendium is area-based approaches undertaken in urban areas, area-based approaches remain equally applicable in per-urban and rural areas with high levels of complex, inter-related and multi-sectorial needs. This introductory chapter is based on analysis of these case studies in this compendium supported by a review of existing literature on the topic by subject matter experts.

See Table 1 and Figure 3 for more detailed information on each case-study.

Table 1: Case studies summary table

Case Study Number	Location (city, country)/ title	Year(s)	Type of crisis			Type and Scale of Coordination	Multi-sectorial assessment	Multi-sectorial coordination	Multi-sectorial support										Implementing or lead agency / donor
			Rapid urbanization	Conflict	Natural disaster				Shelter	WASH	Health	Early Recovery	DRR	Urban planning	Infrastructure	Protection	Livelihoods	Psycho-social	

CITY LEVEL SCALE

C1	Ar-Raqqa, Syria / Ar-Raqqa Area Based Assessment	2017-2019			None specified														REACH + partners
C2	Dar es Salaam, Tanzania / Open Mapping for Flood Resilience	2015-2019			Project based coordination														'Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team (HOT) + partners / DfID, The World Bank
C3	Jakarta, Indonesia / Enhancing Capacity within Disaster Management Agencies through Open Exposure Data	2016-2019			Project based coordination														Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team + partners/ USAID/OFDA
C4	Mosul, Iraq / Settlement Based Coordination following the Mosul Offensive	2017-2018			Cluster system														UNHCR/IOM/CRS/ NRC
C5	Various, Sri Lanka/ Disaster Resilient City Development Strategies for Sri Lankan Cities	2012-2014			Project Unit (including a Steering Committee)														UN-Habitat + partners
C6	Aleppo, Syria / Multi-sector prioritisation to rehabilitate conflict-affected neighbourhoods	2017			Three-sector taskforce														UNHCR + partners

Icons Source: Kiddo; Symbolon; Andreas Vögele from The Noun Project

Case Study Number	Location (city, country)/ title	Year(s)	Type of crisis			Type and Scale of Coordination	Multi-sectorial assessment 	Multi-sectorial coordination 	Multi-sectorial support								Implementing or lead agency / donor
			Rapid urbanization	Conflict	Natural disaster				Shelter 	WASH 	Health 	Early Recovery 	DRR 	Urban planning 	Infrastructure 	Protection 	

CITY LEVEL SCALE CONTINUED

C7	Governorates of Erbil, Duhok and Sulaymaniyah, Iraq / Urban Profiling in Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq	2015-2016			Profiling Steering Committee, Technical Working Group facilitated and supported by the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS)												Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS) + partners /DfID
C8	Roxas City, Panay, Pontevedra, Estancia; Philippines / Post-Yolanda Support for Safer Homes and Settlements	2014-2015			Homeowners' associations												UN-Habitat

DISTRICT/BOROUGH SCALE

D1	Afghanistan / Supporting the response to urban displacement in eastern Afghanistan	2017+			Neighbourhood committees												Norwegian Refugee Council
D2	Maiduguri, Nigeria / Application of Local Area Based Coordination mechanisms for Cholera Response	2017			Local area coordination group (primarily (I)NGOs)												Solidarites International (SI) and CRS
D3	Mogadishu, Somalia / Tri-cluster support in response to the 2011 famine and conflict	2011-2013			Tri-cluster coordination												Various (14 partners)
D4	Kabul, Afghanistan / Kabul Area Shelter and Settlements	2008-2010			Community councils (gozar shuras)												ACTED/ USAID/ OFDA

NEIGHBOURHOOD SCALE

N1	Bangui, Central African Republic / Support to settlement-based response and recovery planning	2017			Urban-level working group inclusive of local and international actors												AGORA (IMPACT and ACTED) and CUF/UCLG / ECHO
N2	Kampala, Uganda / Partnering with Kampala Capital City Authority on refugees and migrant integration	2017-2018			Government (Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA))												International Rescue Committee and IMPACT Initiatives
N3	Nairobi, Kenya / Building Resilience in Urban informal settlements through innovation and partnerships	2008-2020			Community committees												Kenya Red Cross Society
N4	Tripoli, Lebanon / Supporting urban rehabilitation for Syrian Refugees and Host Communities	2015-2018+			Neighbourhood committees												CARE International Lebanon and Akkarouna/ BPRM (USA Gov)
N5	Beirut and Mount Lebanon, Lebanon / Lebanon Refugee Crisis response	2015-2016			Community focal point networks and committees												ACTED
N6	Tripoli, Lebanon / 'El Hay' Integration multi-scale interventions for vulnerable populations	2016-2018			None specified												Solidarites International + partners /Lebanon Humanitarian Fund, managed by OCHA

2. What are area-based approaches?

Definition

Area-based approaches provide multi-sectoral support and work with multiple stakeholders, considering the whole population living in a specific geographic area with high levels of need (see Figure 1).

Characteristics

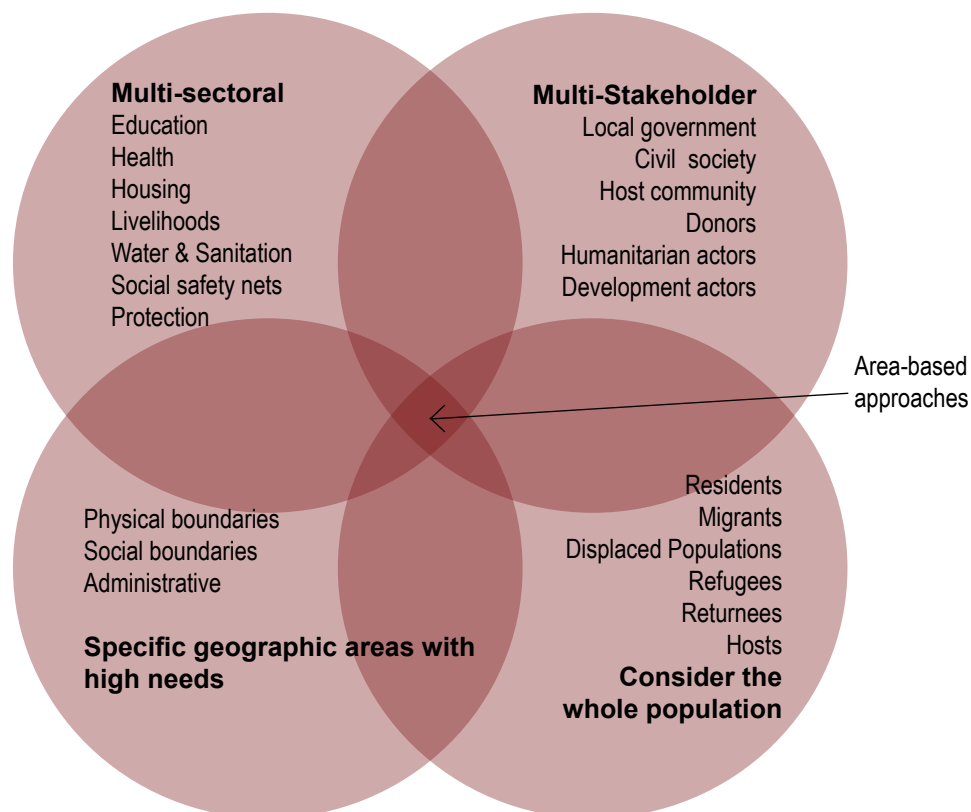
Multi-sectoral support can include interventions in sectors such as health, education, housing, livelihoods, social safety nets, water and sanitation. Not all needs will be met, but all individuals in the target area will receive a level of support appropriate to their relative needs (such as access to improved public spaces, information or training).

Multi-stakeholder refers to active engagement of numerous, diverse stakeholder groups present in the target area, including local government, civil society, international humanitarian and development actors, the private sector and the affected community (see below).

Area-based approaches consider the whole population of an area, which includes all affected people regardless of their legal status, or risk category or associated groups. (Sphere 2018). The whole population also includes long-term residents who could have been affected in different ways. Providing a degree of assistance to the whole population in an area can be described as an 'inclusive' approach.

Specific geographic areas with high levels of need can be delineated by physical, social or administrative boundaries (or a combination of factors) and vary in scale from neighbourhoods, through wards and districts, to the whole town or city (see Figure 3).

Figure 1: Characteristics of area-based approaches



Source: Adapted from Parker & Maynard (2015)

Common attributes of area-based approaches

Learning from the case studies in combination with the existing literature, area-based approaches are more likely to be successful if they:

- are **people-centred** and include meaningful, early and ongoing engagement with all impacted population groups in the target area;
- include the **active participation of all stakeholders relevant to the context**. The type of stakeholder and the level of engagement will vary but could include local, regional and national government, civil society, faith-based organisations, diaspora, academia and the private sector;
- are based on **multi-sectoral, multi-agency assessments** ;
- are used selectively and **focus on areas with a high concentration of needs**;
- are **linked to wider city or regional plans and policies** (across multiple sectors and scales);
- address **immediate needs** while focusing on longer-term outcomes and impacts (including the transfer of roles and responsibilities to local actors);
- allow **sufficient time** to build relationships and bring together multiple stakeholders;
- adopt **iterative, flexible and adaptive approaches** to programme design, management, funding and coordination;
- work with, and **build on existing systems** of local governance and service delivery;

- monitor and evaluate **multi-agency contribution to change rather than solely single-agency attribution of outputs to outcomes**.

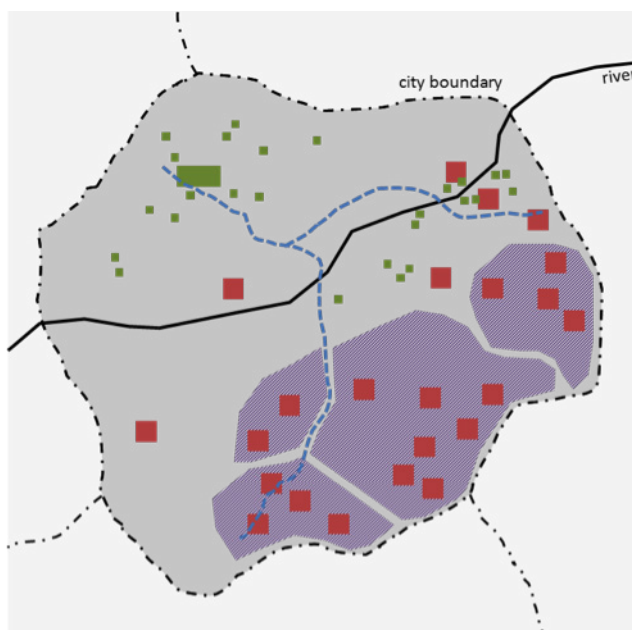
3. Reasons for adopting area-based approaches

Policymakers and donors are calling for a **paradigm shift in humanitarian response in urban areas as the complexities of urban crises require a greater understanding of urban systems, collaboration with local government, and interventions across multiple sectors and scales**. If well designed and implemented area-based approaches can:

- create “a ‘platform’ which brings together a diversity of actors with different capacities to discuss the collective response”;
- “complement existing governance systems and accommodate the multi-sector and multi-stakeholder approach that cities and towns require”;
- reduce the creation or reinforcement of tensions and inequalities and “contribute to improving social cohesion”
- effectively focus resources and “enhance clarity and understanding of how best to coherently provide multi-sectoral assistance”.

However, if poorly designed and implemented, area-based approaches can: increase inequalities between the target area and surrounding areas; create an unnecessary distraction from underlying social, economic or institutional problems; shift responsibility onto local stakeholders when national or international action is required; be costly to implement and an ineffective use of resources; take a long time to deliver; lead to a disconnect between local plans and wider city or regional plans, become highly politicised; and be difficult to monitor and evaluate .

Figure 2: How are area-based approaches different from other approaches?



Source: Authors

Individuals or households

Communities of interest
- such as schools or workplaces

Area-based approaches

Systems/infrastructure
- roads, water, telecommunications

Markets (not location specific)

Institutions (not location specific)

Advocacy (not location specific)

Comparison with other approaches

Humanitarian organisations have traditionally provided assistance to individuals or households in need, or to communities associated with a particular livelihood (e.g. fishing communities) or services (such as schools or health centres). In these approaches individuals or households are identified according to a set of specific criteria of need or vulnerability. For example, people facing unique protection risks, and groups at risk of discrimination and social exclusion due to their ethnicity, nationality, caste, indigenous group, or religious or political affiliation, their tenure situation, displacement status, informal settler status or renter status; the location of dwellings that are difficult to access, in hazardous areas, insecure areas, urban settlements or informal settlements; and their vulnerability and status within society. **Area-based approaches** define “an area, rather than a sector or target group, as the main entry point” – an approach which can be particularly appropriate if the residents in a particular area of a city have high levels of complex, inter-related and multi-sectoral needs.

Alternative approaches to delivering assistance in urban areas include (also see Figure 2):

- **systems-based approaches** – supporting the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure and improved access for vulnerable groups;
- **market-based approaches** – working through or supporting the recovery of local markets;
- **institution-based approaches** – such as providing urban planning support to local government or creating a network of community-based organisations;
- **advocacy-based approaches** – for example, challenging policies which limit access to services for vulnerable groups.

Deciding which approach is most appropriate depends on the mandate and capacity of the assisting organisation and “the proportion of the population that needs assistance, the type of programme contemplated, trade-offs between targeting cost and targeting accuracy, and the feasibility of targeting options”. Area-based approaches should not necessarily be prioritised over other ways of targeting or coordinating assistance. In fact, they are most likely to be successful when supported by, and linked to, interventions that restore or strengthen city-wide markets, institutions or systems.

4. What do area-based approaches look like in practice?

Different scales and stages of area-based approach

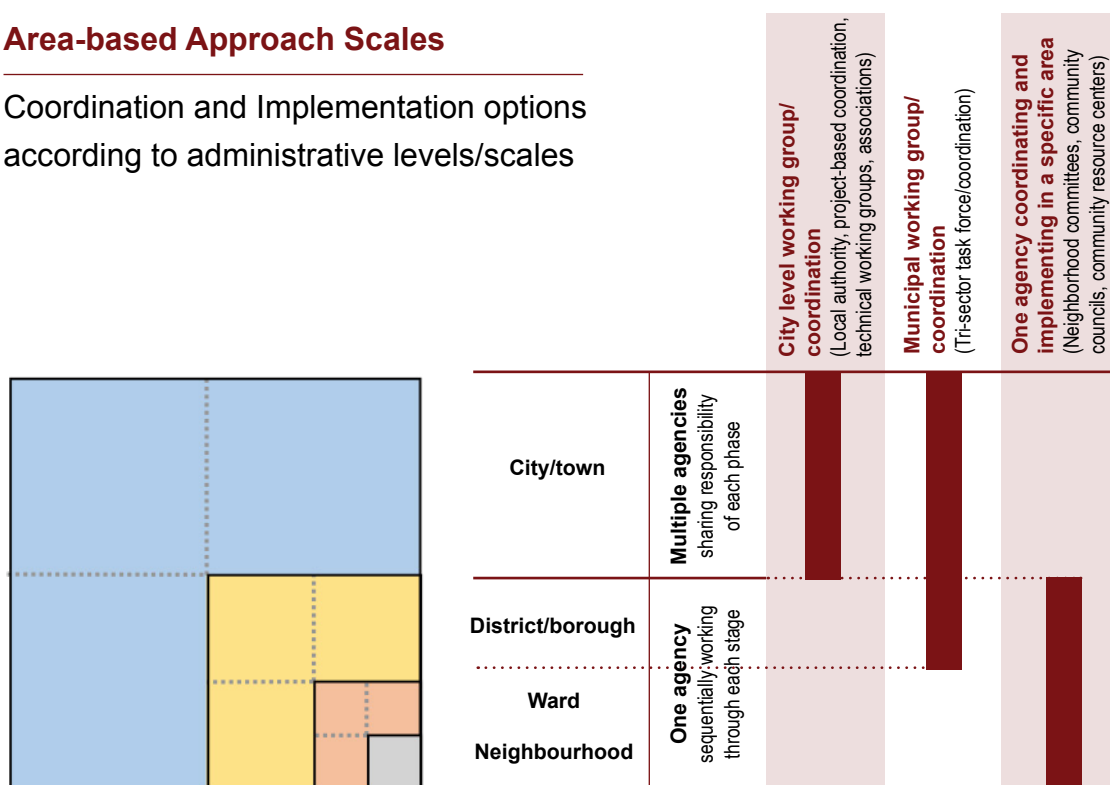
Within the programmes detailed in the case studies, there were three different scales of area-based approach, including:

1. City scale
2. District, Borough
3. Ward or neighbourhood scale

Figure 3: Area-Based Approach Scales

Area-based Approach Scales

Coordination and Implementation options according to administrative levels/scales



Programmes that adopted Approach 1 (city scale) or Approach 2 (district, ward or neighbourhood scale) typically followed a five-stage process:

1. Initiation
2. Assessment and data collection
3. Analysis and planning
4. Official (or unofficial) approval of the Plan
5. Implementation and monitoring

This process is similar to a typical urban planning process undertaken by cities and has a greater emphasis on the built environment (e.g. housing, infrastructure etc.).

In the programmes which worked at a district, ward or neighbourhood scale (Approach 2) typically one agency (and partners) worked through each of the 5 stages sequentially – as part as of one programme (for example case studies 4 in Mogadishu and 10 in Port-au-Prince). However, in the programmes working at a city scale (Approach 1) the stages were more distinct – typically with different agencies responsible for each stage (for example case studies 23 in Erbil or 27 in Aleppo). This highlights that when working at a city scale specialist staff, equipment and processes may be required to complete each stage (due to the more complex and specialist nature of the work) and that sufficient time and funding needs to be allowed.

Approach 3 followed a four-stage process:

1. Initiation
2. Assessment and data collection
3. Establish Community Centre(s)
4. Implementation and monitoring (e.g. running Community Centres)

In parallel to the two final stages, an outreach programme was implemented that identified smaller target areas for intervention, engaged the community through committees and carried out training (see case study 14 in Afghanistan).

Type and scale of area-based coordination models

All the programmes included coordination throughout all stages. A key part of coordination is establishing a multi-sectoral coordination body – see stage 1 (initiation). The majority of the district, ward or neighbourhood scale case studies- approaches 2 and 3- in both a humanitarian and developmental context, established new, or worked with existing, Community Committees (for example case studies 10 in Port-au-Prince, 14 and 16 in Afghanistan, 19 in Tacloban and 24 in Tripoli). A variety of other coordination mechanisms were adopted based on the scale of intervention (e.g. city or sub-city), type of approach (approach 1,2 or 3), context (e.g. developmental or humanitarian), type of crisis, or population affected (e.g. displaced or non-displaced). Different coordination mechanisms included:

- **City level working group / coordination body**
Establishing and supporting an Urban Working Group – led by local government/the Mayor and key humanitarian agencies and inclusive of local and international actors (see case studies 1 in Bangui and 6 in Kampala).
- **Municipal level / sub-city coordination body or cluster task forces.** Including experiences of establishing a three-sector taskforce. In Aleppo (case study 27) the

shelter sector set up and led a three-sector taskforce (Shelter, WASH and Early Recovery), led by the three national sector coordinators in close collaboration with national and local government and sub-national sector coordinators. In Mogadishu (case study 4) Tri-Cluster coordination (Shelter, WASH, Health) was established, facilitated by a specific Tri-Cluster coordinator.

- **One agency-led coordination.** Coordinating with, or via, existing humanitarian Clusters – typically with one humanitarian agency coordinating activities in a specific area and acting as a link between Clusters and partners active on the ground (see case studies 9 and 10 in Port-au-Prince and 22 in Mosul), including the creation of community resource centres.

5. What can we learn from the case studies?

Achievements

Key achievements identified in the case studies included:

- **Multi-sector, multi-agency assessment, planning, coordination and implementation** led to: shared prioritisation and planning; better communication between partners; faster response to evolving needs; more efficient implementation; and better links between humanitarian and development interventions and actors (for example case studies 4 in Mogadishu and 22 in Mosul).
- **High levels of engagement with all relevant stakeholders** helped to: develop consensus around a shared response plan; demonstrate impartiality and respect; ensure no key influencers were left behind; build the capacity of local actors; and create and/or strengthen relationships between communities and government (for example case studies 24 in Tripoli and 27 in Aleppo).
- The use of **participatory tools and approaches** for community-based assessment, mapping, action planning, settlement planning, coordination, implementation and monitoring helped to: build trust; generate ownership; strengthen community cohesion; efficiently identify needs; manage expectations; and work with communities to solve complex problems (see case study 10 in Port-au-Prince).

Challenges

The case studies highlighted the following challenges to implementing area-based programmes:

- **Targeting:** Defining boundaries and focusing assistance on specific (high profile) areas created tensions with residents in surrounding areas and a risk that they would not receive support (see case study 1 in Bangui).
- **Stakeholder engagement:** The number and complexity of stakeholders led to difficulties: mapping all the stakeholders (especially as their influence changed over time); clarifying the relationship between sector-based and area-based coordination structures; agreeing where to work and which agency should lead; synchronising the implementation of programmes at different scales (e.g. individual, household or community-level) and at different times (for example case studies 4 in Mogadishu and 22 in Mosul).

Linking between scales: Coordinating smaller-scale plans and interventions with wider city and national government initiatives – for example incorporating smaller-scale projects into city development plans or integrating national- or city-government plans into community-based planning (see case study 19 in Tacloban).

Other challenges identified in the case studies, which also included challenges associated with many humanitarian and development initiatives: the poor quality of existing housing and/or infrastructure; lack of clarity around land ownership and tenure; broader gender, cultural, governance, economic or security issues; lack of mandate, capacity, and/or funding of local actors; the diversity and mobility of urban populations; and limitations caused by funding conditions or cycles.

Enabling contexts

According to the case studies, area-based approaches were more likely to be successful in contexts where:

- they had sufficient funding as well as donor support for the multi-sectoral working group, assessment and response plan (for example case studies 1 in Bangui and 10 in Port-au-Prince);
- there was an existing multi-sectoral coordination system or culture (see case study 4 in Mogadishu);
- communities were less transient and more cohesive (see case study 6 in Kampala);
- local government was supportive and area-based programmes were aligned with government policies and plans (see case study 19 in Tacloban).

Scaling up

The case studies included examples of scaling-up area-based approaches through:

- **pilot projects in specific areas** to demonstrate results, develop standard tools and develop the capacity of partners prior to replicating the approach in other areas (for example case studies 7 in Colombia and 13 in Guatemala);
- **starting multi-sectoral coordination with just two to three core sectors**, then adding additional sectors and programmes once a system and culture of multi-sectoral coordination had been established (see case study 4 in Mogadishu).

6. How can area-based approaches be improved?

Area-based approaches can be a useful methodology for working in cities (or areas of cities) with high levels of complex, inter-related and multi-sectoral needs. As outlined in section two of this introduction, area-based approaches are best implemented when they adhere to a set of common characteristics or attributes. Within the framework of these characteristics area-based approaches can be further strengthened if they:

1. are based on **multi-sectoral, multi-agency assessments and focus on areas with high levels of complex, inter-related and multi-sectoral need.**

2. are **people-centred and include meaningful engagement** with the whole population in the target area. This can include establishing community committees and the use of participatory tools and approaches for community-based assessment, mapping, action planning, settlement planning, implementation and monitoring.
3. include the active **participation of all stakeholders** relevant to the particular context. The type of stakeholder and their level of engagement will vary but could include local, regional and national government, civil society, faith-based organisations, diaspora, academia and the private sector. Stakeholder engagement can include: stakeholder mapping (including relationships between actors and existing decision-making/approvals processes); establishing multi-sectoral working groups to coordinate activities in specific areas (potentially with separate but connected working groups operating at different scales); mechanisms to coordinate and share decision making, and engagement with local government (potentially as lead, or co-lead of the working group).
4. are **linked to wider city or regional plans and policies** (across multiple sectors and scales). For example, ensuring neighbourhood plans are aligned with city planning processes, and city plans align with regional strategies. Area-based approaches can link with wider plans for the city by complementing area-based approaches with other types of interventions (such as institutional support and advocacy – see Figure 2) and extending support to surrounding communities (such as protection, health and cash for work programming).
5. **work with, and build on existing systems** of local governance and service delivery to address **short-term needs** while focusing on **longer-term outcomes** and impacts. This can include supporting local actors and authorities to define priorities and deliver public services in the longer-term (rather than engaging in direct implementation) and the development, communication and implementation of clear exit strategy (including the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders).
6. have **sufficient funding** (including donor support), **staff with adequate experience and expertise** in urban environments (specific areas of expertise required included community engagement, land titling, settlement planning, shelter and engineering), and **allow sufficient time** to build relationships and trust and bring together multiple stakeholders.
7. adopt **iterative, flexible and adaptive approaches** to programme design, management, funding and coordination in order to respond to changes in context, shifting priorities or new emergencies when operating in complex operating environments.
8. monitor and evaluate **multi-agency contribution to change rather than single-agency attribution of outputs to outcomes.**

Key issues which would benefit from further research include: the **context/enabling environment**, such as what factors in the context help or hinder area-based approaches; the **outcomes and impacts** of area-based programmes (at different scales and over time); and comparing the **efficiency and effectiveness** of area-based approaches to other approaches (those targeting individuals, households, markets or systems etc.).



USWG

Urban
Settlements
Working
Group

URBAN SETTLEMENTS WORKING GROUP

IMPACT Shaping practices
Influencing policies
Impacting lives


CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

 **InterAction**
A UNITED VOICE FOR GLOBAL CHANGE



Global Shelter Cluster
ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter