



SETTLEMENTS' APPROACH

Asia Regional Consultation

Bangkok, Thailand
November 2019



USWG

Urban
Settlements
Working Group



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Urban Settlement Working Group (USWG)

Asia Pacific Regional consultation

November 2019

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1. Event details / Participants

On 21 November in Bangkok, Thailand, the USWG convened a 1-day technical / expert consultation on the relevance and application of the Settlements Approach in the Asia-Pacific region. Approximately 20 regional representatives attended the day's proceedings, including representatives from donors, UN agencies, NGOs, the RCRC and Inter Government Organisations.

Discussions over the course of the day were structured according to the following:

1. **Overall Plenary discussion:** Implications of the approach; what needs to change?
2. **Small group discussion:** The application of the approach across the Humanitarian Program Cycle
3. **Plenary discussion:** Where to from here?

Complementary documents:

- See annex 1 for the day's agenda
- See annex 2 for the participant list

2. Summary of key discussions

2.1 Armchair / plenary

A plenary conversation was facilitated as part of the morning's proceedings, with discussion primers including

Within organisations

- Does this **change the way you currently work? How?** What does this look like?
- What are the **key blockages / things** that get in your way?

System wide

- How does this approach **complement our current system & ways of working?**
- **How does it align with the system? Is it possible to mainstream?**
- What are the **key blockages / things** that get in your way

Key discussion points from the plenary discussion are listed below:

- **Clarify & communicate:** There is recognized value in the approach – which is likely to become more relevant with increasing rates of urbanization and protracted human movement / migration. However, there is a need to solidify the components of the approach and communicate these clearly to those in positions of leadership.

- **Communicate the benefits of the approach:** There remains a need to clearly articulate the benefits of the approach; the contexts it is most appropriate for application, and its subsequent benefits.
- **Continue building the evidence base:** Although an evidence-base exists, there is a need to continue developing evidence about effectiveness/benefits of approach, clear and concise benefits.
- **Terminology:** Confusion remains with some partners with regards to the terminology. Settlements-, area-, neighbourhood-, place-based approaches have all been used interchangeably. Majority of participants agreed to not get stalled by semantics, and focus on the common principles and application of the approach. However alongside, there is a need to clearly communicate (if) all these different terminologies mean the same thing.
- **The relationship with the cluster / sector approach:** Further focus is needed to unpack the relationship between settlement approaches vis-à-vis the cluster approach, especially in contexts of high density such as cities and towns. There is a need to continue building the evidence base for this. For example, in Liberia – in a context of public health. Incident management lead to the creation of **clusters / WGs for specific issues (i.e.: dead body management), rather than centered around the cluster system.** Participants reflected that we are currently locked into the cluster system and need to break out of traditional binds. This questions the need for to create new context-specific clusters and bring in new technical experts.
- **Clarity vis-a-vis other approaches:** Due to different interpretations and definitions, the potential of approach is not obvious to organisational management, and therefore not prioritized within organisations. For example, the relationship between settlement approaches with other approaches (individual need-; systems-; market-based approaches). How the approach may complement other approaches needs to be clarified.
- **Complementing / supporting nationally-led bodies:** Governments, especially across Asia, are increasingly requiring international humanitarian actors to operate within / follow the national / government-led systems. This will increasingly become a normal way of working – which may, at a local authority level, reflect a settlements approach, or – especially if led at a national level, may remain a sector-led approach. Whichever approach is applied by national and local authorities will need to be respected and complemented.
- **Identify further champions:** There is need to bring in heads of agencies and NGOs as champions for this approach. With a strong message to not solely apply the approach in contexts of humanitarian crisis, but to utilize the approach as a means to promote transition / recovery and development (ie nexus).
- **Preparedness - systems must be established prior to a crisis:** Agreement that wherever possible, this approach needs to be agreed upon prior to a crisis – especially one that may result in the activation of clusters / sectors. To encourage this, further engagement is needed at the regional (and global) IASC bodies.
- **'The Middle':** The value of settlement approaches in the nexus and in contexts of recovery: Participants reiterated the value of the approach in:
 - o **Mid-scale crises:** Noting the challenges associated with applying this approach when the humanitarian cluster / sector system is activated, this approach may be more useful in contexts of crisis when the humanitarian coordination architecture has not been activated
 - o **Preparedness & recovery:** This approach, which often aligns closer to national and sub-national structures, may be more useful in contexts of preparedness / risk reduction, and in contexts of recovery where national actors are predominantly leading response / programming.
- **Notable lessons from practice:** A number of major events that have influenced American Red Cross (ARC) thinking:
 - o The Indian ocean earthquake, ARC ending up funding everyone, which limited the ability to make an impact, partially as a strategic. Following a settlements approach based off complementarity and comparative advantage was not applied.
 - o The Philippines Red Cross took a settlements approach following Typhoon Haiyan. Partners were assigned geographical areas and assigned what they were going to do, with subsequent financial resources. What was missing, however, was Housing, Land and Property (HLP) rights expertise.

- There are numerous instances of settlement based programming across Asia. What needs further thought, is scaling and the relationship between various government bodies. For example, **how does community level link to next level to next level to next level etc**
- **Prioritise the easy-win / clearest context of added value:** Participants discussed the challenge of promoting the approach in all settings and contexts, and recommended to focus in the application of the approach in contexts with potentially more traction – ie risk reduction / preparedness; recovery; ‘smaller-crises’

2.2 Summary of group discussions

Following the morning’s plenary discussion, participants were divided into groups, considering the application of area-based approaches within the Humanitarian Program Cycle. The group discussion primers included:

- What is different of this approach than the status quo?
- What could be the challenges to mainstreaming...externally and internally...
- Please offer solutions / recommendations / advice and aspects to look out for.

A summary of group discussions include:

1. Needs assessment & analysis

- Acknowledge there are many actors (OCHA, REACH, WFP, ADPC, IOM, UNHCR, Rhymes, Pacific Disaster Centre)
- Assessments often solied into sectors in contexts of crisis response – rarely multi-sector
- For effective assessments applying an area-based approach – must be sufficiently granular
- Challenge of no clear plug-in from assessment results to inform programming
- Detailed / granular area-based assessments take time. Up to 3 months. And cost money
- Consider its strongest added value not in context of time-bound crisis, but in preparedness and recovery.

2. Implementation & Monitoring

- The approach implies delivering holistically – which can pose challenges with resourcing (donor restrictions)
- Key inpetus to continue advocating, diversify donors, promote a consortia-type approach
- Highlights general good practice
 - Understanding and acting on complex, inter-sectoral needs of communities
 - Engaging all population groups
 - Listening to the community
 - Stronger community-level engagement

3. Collaboration & partnerships

- ABAs could represent an idea example of collaboration – but no guarantee, again, comes down to good practice
- Condisive to developing pre-established partnerships with
 - Local & international humanitarian & development
 - Local Government
 - Private sector
- Whilst greater opportunities exist, what exact role, how to leverage this?
- Further engagement is needed with the private sector
- Strong entry point with local government which inherently brings a long term mandate

4. Resource Mobilisation

- Example of Beira discussed.
- Preparatory phase
 - o risk modelling and analysis with local government needed – identifying existing resourcing plans
- Crisis context
 - o Short term appeal – how to identify and plug in area-based priorities into quick turnaround appeals and decision making processes
- Consider the Humanitarian / Development / Peace nexus as a key opportunity
 - o How to influence key donors?
 - o Which non-humanitarian stakeholder to engage with?
 - o Could role be focused on local capacity building – eg local municipality, as much as implementation
- Key question of how to shape the HRP to accommodate ABAs?
- Key donor modalities / funding pools relate to multi-year and multi-sector

5. Strategic Planning

- Challenge:
 - o Advertising to donors
 - o Showcasing value
 - o Reconciling with donor mandates
- Identify existing contributions
 - o Show how actors are already utilising ABAs
- Identify gaps
 - o Learn from and extrapolate from cluster experience
- Present ABAs as inherently non-competitive
- Key question of how to ensure the approach remains consistent? Who is the custodian of the approach?
- Should the HRP even be yearly in contexts of protracted crisis?
- Relationships with local government is key – especially in contexts of funding uncertainty
- Question / challenge how donors prefer to fund. ie by sector, or by geographic area?

6. Area based coordination and information management

- When operating in contexts where the cluster / sector system is active, what are the modalities? Eg:
 - o National Cluster >> Sub-national clusters >> Multi-sector focal points (agencies)
- Plug into / second resources into municipalities – ie a focal point within city or municipality
- Need to be cognisant of deciding the key priority areas of need – ensuring this is an equitable and transparent process – key added value of humanitarian actors
- Consider how OCHA (or others) can consolidate / create an area-based or multisectoral mapping of needs
- With different potential modalities – what could a common approach look like? How to ensure consistency, predictability, accountability?

Draft regional action-plan

Overall take-aways and next steps as discussed during the session include:

Theme	Action	Who	When
Dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence base: Continue building the evidence base of the application of the approach – add to the compendium periodically. - Proactively approach key focal points (HCs, HCT, OCHA, AHA, National Government, Local Authorities,) 	USWG	Ongoing (annual update)
Clarity & communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demystify: Create documentation / 'cheat sheets' to demystify and communicate the concept and added value of the approach 	USWG	March 2020
Predictability & preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tools & guidance: Develop and disseminate clear guidance and tools to assist agencies apply the approach (Settlement guidance note) - Partnerships: Predictable Partnerships Model, in infancy – intends to create a set of common best practices/ways of working in preparedness, crisis or recovery contexts 	USWG	Settlement guidance due to release September 2020
Preparedness & Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider how to proactively promote and apply the approach in contexts of preparedness and recovery. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Example cited as Asian Preparedness Partnerships - six countries, co-chaired by governments and CSOs – sub-working groups - Willing to review the draft Guidance and promote the approach 	USWG ADPC	To confirm
Champions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocating & Implementing: Need to further identify possible champions both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Organizationally</i> o <i>Regionally</i> 	TBC	Ongoing
Institutional influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote at IASC/regional director's level – get ABA on the agenda of regional IASC meetings, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o IASC regional – emergency preparedness WG o IOM chair Emergency Preparedness Disaster Displacement WGs. Willing to present ABA to these groups for their feedback - Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR: To be held in Australia in 2020 – good place to showcase practical impact of ABA/case studies would be well received – facetime w other actors, agencies and donors - Asia Preparedness partnership (APP): A range of pilot countries & cities which this approach could be applied - 	IASC Regional IOM UN-Habitat ADPC	End 1st quarter 2020 June 2020 TBC

Annex 1: Consultation Agenda

09:15 – 09:30	Welcome coffee
9:30- 10:00	Introduction/Setting the scene: - Settlements / Area-Based Approach: <i>What and Why?</i>
10.00 – 10.30	Settlements / Area-Based Approach: <i>How?</i> - Selection of case studies: Unpacking how agencies have applied the approach
10.30 – 11.00	Morning coffee
11.00 – 12.00	Plenary ‘arm-chair’ discussion, discussing two themes: System wide changes & implications - <i>How does this approach complement our current system & ways of working?</i> - <i>How does it align with the system? Is it possible to mainstream?</i> - <i>What are the key blockages?</i> Organisational readiness and implications - <i>Does this change the way you currently work? How? What does this look like?</i> - <i>What are the key (internal) blockages?</i>
12.00 – 1.00	Lunch
1.00 – 1.15	Introduction to afternoon session & group discussions
1.15 – 3.00	Operationalisation: Applying a Settlements/Area-based Approach within the humanitarian program cycle Open space discussion, with discussions focused on the below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need Assessment & Analysis 2. Strategic Planning 3. Resource Mobilisation 4. Implementation & Monitoring 5. Collaboration & partnerships 6. Coordination & Information Management. Potential questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What is different?</i> - <i>Challenges to mainstreaming, both externally and internally</i> - <i>Specific questions related to each phase</i> - <i>Solutions/recommendations:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Suggestions, what must we look out for?</i> ▪ <i>Unresolved issues.</i>
3.00 – 3.15	Summary / Wrap Up
3.15 -	Close, coffee, drinks etc

Annex 2: Participant list

#	Name	Organisation
1	Jonathan Baker	OFDA
2	Travis Betz	OFDA
3	Ashley Carl	ADPC
4	Marc d'Silva	CRS
5	Michaela Friberg	IFRC
6	Denis Heidebroek	ECHO
7	Seki Hirano	CRS
8	Tam Hoang	UN Habitat
9	Andrew Lind	IOM
10	Adbullah Mamun	CRS
11	Sisira Madurapperuma	ADPC
12	Valentina Mirza	CARE
13	Hilmi Mohamed	InterAction
14	Sylvie Montembault	ECHO
15	Gavi Rosenthal	OFDA
16	Katja Rytkoenen	UNHCR
17	James Schell	IMPACT
18	Kathryn Sidlowski	InterAction
19	Margaret Stansberry	American Red Cross