



Transcript

Area-based Programming and Coordination Approaches in Urban Response

ALNAP Urban Webinar #11

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Paul Knox Clarke: Hello everyone, and welcome to the ALNAP Urban Webinar on area-based programming and coordination approaches in urban response. This is going to be a great webinar, I think I can guarantee in advance. One I've certainly been looking forward to. It's a very salient, very interesting topic, which I know there's a lot of energy around, and we have some great speakers to discuss it, with real experience in how these approaches work, and also with a very thoughtful approach to understanding some of the positives, and potentially some of the challenges in implementing area-based programming. So without further ado, let's me introduce you to them. Holly Fuller, the first of our discussants, works for Catholic Relief Services, CRS, as the programme manager for the Typhoon Haiyan Recovery Program. She manages the team who implement individual and community level interventions in transitional shelter, in WASH, in DRR, and in protection. Holly started her career with CRS in Guatemala in 2011, and she's also managed food security programmes, and provided programming and M&E support in Dhaka Bangladesh.

As a discussant, Holly is joined by Andrew Cusack. Andrew's been working with the CCCM team to support displaced communities since 2012, and he's currently working as the head of the CCCM unit in UNHCR. Andrew's previously worked on emergencies in the Central African Republic, in Turkey, and in Iraq. He holds a master's degree in architecture from the University of Oregon, and has previously worked in architectural practice and in design-build firms. So we'll be hearing from Holly and Andrew in a minute as they address some of the questions that you've sent in, and some of the questions that we hope you will be sending in over the course of the webinar. We will first go to Elizabeth Parker. Now Elizabeth is a researcher whose work is focussed on urban resilience, on disaster recovery and regeneration, across a geographical range of areas, and she's been doing this since completing her MA in Development and Emergency Practice at Oxford Brookes. She originally trained as an architect, and then spent five years working for Arup, including on the Rockefeller Foundation funded Asian Cities Climate Change Resilience Network, which condenses, although not very much to the acronym ACCCRN.

Now Elizabeth is going to start off today's webinar by giving us a review of the excellent report that she recently co-wrote, *Humanitarian response to urban crises*. She'll be giving us, if you like, the top line. I'm sure many of you will have read it, and certainly if you haven't got round to it, we really do recommend that you take a look at it, if you're at all interested in this topic. Knowing that time is short for everyone, Elizabeth has kindly agreed to give us an introduction to the session by introducing this paper. So Elizabeth, over to you.

Elizabeth Parker: Hello, thank you, and thank you Paul for that introduction. On behalf of Victoria Maynard and myself, we're really pleased to be able to present to everybody today, and thank you to Leah and the team for inviting us. Our paper is called *Humanitarian response to urban crises: A review of area-based approaches*, and it's hot off the press, and it's just been published this month. The purpose of the paper was two fold, it was an initial, rapid review of the available literature, both in order to synthesise the findings and also to identify gaps in documentation and knowledge for further research. We have four key research questions. We were asked to answer, 'what are area-based approaches to urban humanitarian crises?' That was a critical, critical question in order to then answer the next three. 'Why are they being adopted?' 'What are the consequences, both positive and negative?' and also, 'How can they be improved?' In the interest of time today, I'll only really briefly present our findings to question one and to question three.

A bit of background to the method that we used, given the various interpretations and alternative terminologies of an area-based approach, we took a multi-pronged strategy to identifying the literature documenting such programmes. So we firstly went through a literature search with key search terms through a variety of databases, including academic databases, humanitarian publications, online practitioner libraries, working papers produced by academic institutions. We also then contacted a variety of practitioners and agencies directly, and we tapped into the Urban Response Community of Practice, so if anybody's online who responded to our request, thank you very much. We also supplemented this literature and document search with a number of interviews with experts who've been involved in implementing various urban programmes in recent crises, including a facilitated workshop at the UK Shelter Forum back in April. The purpose of this engagement was to focus on identifying relevant documents, especially those where different terms may have been used to discuss our key findings and the themes that were emerging. There were, as with any research, a number of limitations, and the main one for us really, in our research, was that only documents available in English were able to be included in the review, due to time and cost reasons.

So I'll move on to the findings, the interesting part. So the first question we were asked was 'What are area-based approaches to urban humanitarian crises?' We found that there was no official definition in the literature, so that was a big question. How do we all know we're talking about the same thing? So we reviewed the documents we'd identified, including a number of different case studies, and based on that analysis as a starting point, both for discussion and to test, we

proposed that area-based approaches in an urban context have three defining characteristics. They are geographically targeted, adopt a multisectoral and participatory approach. In this case by participatory, we're really referring to the active engagement, active involvement, active participation of all relevant stakeholders in the area. That would be including residents, local government authorities, private sector, and civil society organisations.

Through our research we proposed that what makes an area-based approach distinct is that all three characteristics are integral to its delivery. We recognise that this might not be a complete or definitive definition, but it is one based entirely on the available literature, but we also recognise that in this field, as in many, the vast majority of knowledge sits with practitioners. What we know collectively as a sector is not necessarily the same as what we've written down collectively as a sector. So I'm really please to be able to present today, and to have a bit more of a discussion, and we have a poll coming up later to hear a little bit more about your experiences as well. On this slide there's a couple of examples, just to talk to. So the first one on your left is Delmas 19, which is a British Red Cross project in Port au Prince, following the 2010 earthquake. On this programme they used the term 'integrated neighbourhood approach', so it wasn't an area-based approach, it was an integrated neighbourhood approach.

So thinking back to the three defining characteristics, it took a participatory approach, mobilised local residents. In this instance there were three or four smaller, socially defined communities that were in this area, which was an informal area, and the British Red Cross adopted the approach that the IFRC have been developing over the last couple of years called, PASSA, which I'm sure many of you are familiar with. It was also a multisectoral programme. It was shelter, livelihoods and community health components, among many others, and it was geographically targeted. As you can see there's a red line around the outside, which defined where the boundaries of this programme were run. In total around 4,000 households were planned to benefit from different packages of shelter solutions, improved security and public health.

The project on your right hand side, that's called the Kabul Area Shelter and Settlement Programme. That was a CARE programme in 2006, and the name that was used there was 'an integrated shelter led humanitarian intervention'. It took a participatory approach in such that it engaged key stakeholders, such as the Kabul municipality, and local residents also, into many, many different aspects of the project, beneficiary selection, choice of project sites, and on going project discussion and decision making. It took a multisectoral approach, there was shelter, water supply, sanitation, road upgrades and maintenance, ditch drainage, health education, and hazard preparedness were all incorporated into the same programme. You can also see that on this map, this is only showing District 6, which is one of a number of different districts that they worked in, and of course this would be connected into the bigger city. In this case the maps were all hand drawn, because there weren't up to date digital maps available.

A big question that arose out of our research as well, was one of scale. Most of the case studies we had were typically at a community or a neighbourhood level, especially in informal settlement areas, such as the one you can see on the left, or they were structured around administrative boundaries, such as district level, which is an example you can see on the right. As we were doing the research, a lot of people were asking us, can this approach be adopted city wide? We said, well, our hypothesis is perhaps yes, but our research didn't identify any programmes at this scale. That doesn't mean to say that there hasn't been any, it just means that maybe they were called something different. Perhaps the documents weren't available in English, or maybe a different approach is required. So that's still a question mark.

In my last few minutes I'll just talk a little bit about the consequences, both positive and negative that we found for agencies, or others looking to influence area-based approaches. Our findings we drew from both humanitarian literature, and developmental literature. So we concluded that area-based approaches are neither good nor bad, and that their positive and negative effects depend entirely on the context in which they're conceived, their programme design, and the manner of their delivery and the appropriateness of adopting such a strategy. Potential positives, they can act as a catalyst for local change. They present effective mechanisms for focusing resources where they're needed. They can prevent or reduce consultation fatigue for disaster affected populations. They can mobilise a 'bottom-up' approach, and they can attract much needed investment.

Potential negatives on the other hand, are that they can enhance inequality between target areas and surrounding areas. Also they could potentially create a distraction from the underlying problem, or shift responsibility onto the wrong stakeholder and prevent action. This is especially in incidences where the underlying problems or vulnerabilities sit at a level that's bigger than the area that's been defined. The last two, costly to implement and take a long time, this was mentioned very frequently throughout the literature. It was often framed such as, 'it is more costly to implement', or 'it will take a longer time', but it was not always clarified, take a longer time or more costly to implement than what? So there was limited evidence of what the comparison was with. Later on in the paper, the fourth question about how you can improve area-based approaches, the important factors there were how you can design your programme and manage the risks in order to design out these negatives, and design in the positives. A lot of those were about decisions you make very early on in the programme.

So I think that's my time up, so we have a poll now to reflect a little bit on those three defining characteristics, how much they reflect your understanding of what an area-based approach is. We've called them defining characteristics, because I think this might change, largely because the research that we did is based on what's been done so far. I think another important question might be, is this the right thing to do? So I'll pass over to Paul now, who will take over for me. Thank you.

Paul Knox Clarke: Great, thank you so much Elizabeth. You packed an awful lot into a very short time there, and we'll hear more about some of these ideas I'm sure, in a minute. Before we do, we wanted to just do this poll, because as Elizabeth said, a lot of this is very difficult to really work on something or make it better if we're not agreed on what the thing is. This has been part of the challenge I think, for Elizabeth and Victoria in addressing the area-based approaches. So we thought we'd just get a sense from experts out there round the world, which is you, whether or not you agree with the definition that was just put forward. We'll put the final scores up after. I think we have 20% would say that this is exactly the right definition, and they'd agree exactly with this definition. 50% broadly agree, 30% mostly agree. We're getting very few not agreeing at all, or agreeing with some parts but making significant changes. So it sounds like we're more or less on course here. Thank you very much every one. We can broadly use this, and I think we'll interrogate this definition a little bit as we go forward.

First I'd just like to pick up on some questions that some of you sent in beforehand, and I think this is a good one, following up on where Elizabeth left off. The approaches don't appear to be intrinsically good or intrinsically bad, is what the report says. A lot of it is about how they are designed. So I wondered Holly, if we might go to you first as someone who has a lot of experience in the design and implementation of these, to ask what are the barriers or challenges that you've found related to an area-based approach in an urban context? Do you have any examples of how you may have attempted to overcome these barriers?

Holly Fuller: Yes, good evening and thank you for the question. Here in Tacloban we've been working on the Typhoon Haiyan Recovery Program for the last year and a half, and we have faced quite a few challenges in programme implementation, so I've briefly outlined four challenges and how we've addressed them. The first has to do with the multisectoral piece of the area-based approach. Obviously for the different sectors you need different types of staff from professional backgrounds in order to implement that project. Of course the challenge becomes, in a small geographic area, like we have in Tacloban where we're working in 17 neighbourhoods that are very close together, it's how to schedule all of the different activities that we need to complete without overlapping, or without causing neighbourhood official fatigue, or beneficiary fatigue. Because we're working with shelter, WASH, disaster risk reduction and protection, there are many trainings and many different activities that the neighbourhood officials and other leaders, as well as the community members need to attend, so we have tried to combine activities to kill two birds with one stone. So trying to combine the activities to get the same people that we'd need there, in order to complete both of the activities.

We've begun to engage and build the capacity recently, of the local committees, so that they are the ones that are in fact taking on more responsibility for organising the trainings, or for actually conducting the trainings when it's best for them and their constituents and their community members. In terms of the challenge that Elizabeth talked about with the surrounding areas, this is the case that we have. We

have faced this in Tacloban. We have received a lot of feedback, or complaints, from neighbouring neighbourhoods to the area where we work. Thankfully in this particular project, we have very distinct landmarks that we're able to explain to the people who come to our office asking for shelter support, we can say, you know, 'These are our landmarks, and the neighbourhoods that fall within that area are the ones that we are able to work with.' Thankfully it's been relatively easy for us to be able to explain the geographic location.

We're also working with constructing transitional relocation sites, which are actually outside of the neighbourhoods where we're currently working. So there are many informal settlers who are living very close to the transitional sites where we work. In Tacloban there's a very big shelter gap with many of the different barangays. There haven't been enough NGOs providing shelter support to cover all of the needs that occurred after Typhoon Haiyan. Currently we have three transitional relocation sites, and many informal settlers around them that don't have access to good water or basic services, like we have provided in the transitional shelter site just across the street. Another challenge is that the area-based approach does take a really, really long time. The project was originally a one year project, and we were able to get an extension for an additional year. So it'll be about a two year project. There are different phases to the project. So we first started with cash for work, for debris removal, and then we moved into shelter and latrine support. Then from there we were able to go into more of the neighbourhood level support, such as drainage and other infrastructure projects that we're constructing.

The challenge with this is, when we first started back in February of 2014, we only had two engineers and one community organiser. At this point we have about 60 staff working on the project, so at the beginning we were very focussed on the individual household level, and every time we started to roll out a new part of the project we would need to go back and re-engage to explain the next phase of the project. We've recently expanded onto seven additional coastal barangays in Tacloban, and so thankfully we are learning, and had the staff available to be able to do stakeholder meetings at the very beginning to explain all of the different phases of the project, which makes it easier to do action planning with the community leaders, as well as scheduling of activities across all of the sectors.

Then the final challenge that I'll discuss is being dependant on the city government plans. Within Tacloban the city government still has not announced what their plans are for the No Dwell Zone, or the danger area on the coast. There's a possibility that a large embankment project will come to fruition, which would negatively impact a lot of the infrastructure that we're currently building, but to date there's been no announcement about that, and the only thing that we can do is continue to attend the meetings, as well as communicate with the neighbourhood. Of course the city doesn't have the same timeline as our donor, so it just make it a little more complicated to make good programmatic decisions, when you have someone who has a different timeline.

Paul Knox Clarke: That's great, thank you Holly. I wondered if I might pick up on one thing there, of the many interesting points, because it's something that Elizabeth mentioned at the end of her presentation earlier. You say that it takes a long time, and I just wanted to come back to Elizabeth's question. A long time compared to what, I think is how Elizabeth asked it. If we imagine that instead of taking this area-based approach you were managing a variety of different sectoral programmes, shelter, WASH and so on. The variety that's covered by the area-based approach that you're currently using. Do you think that the area-based approach takes more time, and I know it's difficult to answer, but is taking more time than it would if you were doing all of these things separately, and if so, why?

Holly Fuller: It probably would actually take longer if we were doing it separately, but in terms of the original timeline of the project, which was a one year project, we've now doubled that amount of time, and it will end up being a two year project. Perhaps rather than saying that it takes more time, maybe the better thing to say is, we need to understand better what the possible timeline is for a project to be able to implement the entirety of the project.

Paul Knox Clarke: Thank you, that's a very helpful clarification, and we'd be very interested from anyone else who is online who has run or participated in these projects, to have their ideas, to type in on that particular question, or any of the others that are raised here, so please do type them in. Andrew, I'd like to turn to you now, if I may, going back to this idea of definitions. We've seen that there's a broad, general agreement with the three part definition that Elizabeth and Victoria have identified through the research that they've done, but there is also the question of defining the 'area' in area-based programming. When we're talking about area-based programming, in your experience, are we talking about the whole city? Are we talking about a single, densely populated area, or an administrative district, or an informal neighbourhood? How, in your experience, have these boundaries been defined, and what are the implications of this? Does it actually matter, and if so, why?

Andrew Cusack: Thank Paul. First, just to say quickly, thanks to Elizabeth and Victoria for the paper. Very excellent, I've enjoyed reading it. In terms of your question on defining the area, as I mentioned in the paper, in my experience, we begin with the administrative barriers, or administrative boundaries, the reason for which is because of the generally accepted convention, and the need to interact with such a broad spectrum of stakeholders, specifically local government and local communities. So then just to go on about what an example of that might be, is perhaps after a baseline assessment of the population present throughout the response area, in the largest possible sense, looking at population densities, and based on those densities, breaking the various sub-districts up, according to population density. So let's say you have approximately 5,000 families, so each neighbourhood now, or combination of neighbourhoods, depending on the density, can be defined as an individual area for the purpose of the humanitarian response.

Paul Knox Clarke: That's very interesting, thank you. I'd like to follow up on that, if I may, in just a second Andrew, but first I'll put the same question to Elizabeth, because I think you probably had some findings, which you haven't had time to share with us, looking across the various different cases. Same question to you Elizabeth, how are people defining the area, and what are the implications?

Elizabeth Parker: I think building on what Andrew said, really what came out of our research was that the administrative boundaries across the case studies that we'd identified, really was one of the best places to start, for the reason that Andrew explained, as well as it presents the best opportunity for partnering, or working in a complimentary way to local government. Other agencies also reported that it strengthened links between the communities and the government, because they had a clear structure to plug into, which also helped with all the development and exit plans. So what happened when the agency's programme was finishing, as well as on going maintenance and management of assets that were built or repaired or reconstructed through the programme. Another way that was often adopted in informal settlements, because of course, as we all know, informal settlements typically are located in the most vulnerable areas to natural disasters, and also the construction of the shelters, buildings, may not be as good as in other areas of the city, which leaves the residents more vulnerable. In these areas there's often more of a need for extra support, but they don't have the government structure that you would expect in a formal area, or maybe they have a government structure that exists, but isn't recognised formally anywhere.

In these instances, in informal settlements, often physical features, roads, rivers, very steep slopes, things like that became where the boundaries were. Or strong social communities, different religious communities for example, living in a certain area. My personal perspective is that when thinking about defining an area, I think we need to avoid trying to develop a 'one size fits all' definition. I don't think we should be seeking to say an area in an area-based programme is always a neighbourhood, or a district, or a city-wide level. I think it's important that we always think a lot more about the context and what's needed, and what would work best for that city or that town.

Paul Knox Clarke: Thanks for that Elizabeth. I'll just throw in an additional question to both of you if I may, maybe starting with you Andrew. What we're hearing here is very strong support for the idea of following administrative boundaries for where this is possible, for the reasons that you outlined. Where it's not possible, or where one's working at a smaller level, a smaller number of households or residential units level, the question that I wanted to ask was, there often appears to be an assumption that there is a relationship between community and neighbourhood, or community and location in urban areas, in the same way that in rural areas one thinks of the village as a community. Some of the area based discussion does talk about communities, and uses that term almost as if the area, the geographical area, is inevitably a community. I wondered what your experience was

with this. Are urban communities, in your experience, generally communities which are taking place in the same place, as it were, if you like urban villages, or are urban communities not so closely related to geography, or does it differ from one city to another? Andrew?

Andrew Cusack: I think that the way that we define community is important to this discussion, of course. I would say that we've discussed previously the administrative boundaries. I would define community, at least for the sake of this discussion, as the anthropological boundaries of an urban environment, or of any environment. As Elizabeth had mentioned, I think how we define this for the purpose of area-based response needs to be contextual. I can absolutely imagine a situation where it would be important to identify the community boundaries, and they would not necessarily line up with the administrative ones. What are our implications of deciding to choose an administrative boundary, or a community boundary in this situation? Are there protection implications? Are there historical tensions that we need to be aware of, that don't necessarily play along the lines of the administrative layout of an urban environment? So I think that it's very important for us, when looking at programme design to be aware of not only administrative boundaries, but all of the other potential implications. This would be part of an initial programme assessment and trying to set up those maps and coordination with not just local government, but local community members and community leaders.

Paul Knox Clarke: That's very interesting Andrew, thank you. I suppose as you're talking I'm also wondering how this relates to the degree to which the programme exists, if you like, to mirror and support existing communities, and or the degree to which the programme exists to actually build community or build social cohesion, because that's also something which one sees in some of these projects. You also had some very interesting thoughts there on mapping, and I'm sure quite a lot of our participants today would like to hear a bit more about that. Elizabeth, I wondered if I could just go back to you very briefly on this issue of area and community. Are they the same? Does it matter?

Elizabeth Parker: Yes, I think I might slightly disagree there with Andrew. I think when working in an urban context, I don't think it's really the most important thing. I don't think it matters too much, and I think that's because we have to think a lot more about how cities work, and how they govern. I think 'governance' is the key word here, not so much 'community'. That's quite a big shift for us, because like you say, we do, especially coming from rural backgrounds where a lot of our experience is based, we do talk about communities a lot, but I think we need to be careful about not using them too interchangeably. We try to talk a lot about residents, and I think that frees us up a little bit. Our research suggested that area-based approaches don't really assume that areas are the basis of community in urban developments. There's such a lot of literature on urban communities, the diversity, the mobility, the networks, that we can tap into, and as I mentioned earlier, and as we've just been discussing, it does seem that the favoured approach, or the favourite starting point

to finding an area is through administrative boundaries. Towns and cities do have administrative boundaries at a range of scale.

When looking at ways that the humanitarian community's going to work in urban areas, that we're seeking to intervene at these levels, where you have got an entry point, and I think it's that question of where is your entry point, which is why we shouldn't necessarily be talking so much about communities, unless we're talking about informal areas where you perhaps don't have that same formal structure to tap into. I think Holly was keen to answer this question as well, perhaps.

Paul Knox Clarke: Yes, Holly. A very useful distinction there Elizabeth, by the way. Andrew, I'll certainly give you an opportunity to come back on that later when we come to the next question, but maybe Holly, do you have some thoughts on this?

Holly Fuller: I think that obviously what works in a rural community development programme is very different than in an urban context. In rural areas you generally have a very homogenous population and a very cohesive community. From what we've seen, that may not be the case, and I think that we should distinguish between looking at individual household interventions versus the neighbourhood level interventions. In terms of the neighbourhood level interventions, for us that would be community wide drainage, neighbourhood infrastructure projects, obviously the administrative boundary is going to be the most important, because you can partner directly with the neighbourhood officials to get buy in, and to get the resolutions passed that you need. When you're looking at the household level, it's a little bit different. Even though they all live in the same area, in an urban environment they may not know each other.

In CRS we've been doing conditional cash grants after Typhoon Haiyan in two rural municipalities as well as in Tacloban, an urban setting. We ask households to self select into accountability groups, so that's a group of ten households that they're under the understanding that for each cash payment that they receive, none of them will be able to move onto the next payment until all households finish. What we say in the rural areas is that people would help each other out, let the other households, borrow their carpenters or their materials so that they could all move forward. What we saw in the urban environment is that they may have self selected into groups together, but that doesn't mean that they know or trust each other, so we didn't see that same cohesive group mentality, which meant that what we were trying to implement was not actually working, so we had to, in that case, totally do away with the groups, then people were actually able to more quickly move through their conditional cash payments.

We've also seen on a household level where we're offering both apartment rental subsidies, as well as host family subsidies. Households are much more keen on choosing apartments, because they have control over where they're going, versus the host family, wherever their family is living, that means that that's where they

have to go. People would rather have control over their location, versus their natural community.

Paul Knox Clarke: That's very interesting. What I pick out of that, that I think is particularly interesting for programming terms, is the idea that maybe, you know, this urban society being more atomised, arguably, into individual households or individual residential units, still is very heavily reliant on common goods like drainage, water supply and so on. So there is almost paradoxically the possibility of dealing with this high level of individuality to a degree, slightly focussing on these common areas. I think that's, for me, a very interesting thought. Going to move forward a little bit onto a new question, because I think it comes almost directly from what you were saying about the moving from rural participatory group approaches, which rely on rural group and societal dynamics, to urban participatory approaches. Holly, if I can leave the question with you for a moment, the question here is, how do area-based approaches increase the inclusion and participation of the population? We often think participation is almost a group activity, but you were speaking about some of the difficulties there. Maybe you could speak a little bit more about the practical approaches that have been effective in including urban communities in urban based programming. How have you brought all these very disparate, individual households together in some form of participative manner?

Holly Fuller: For this project we are doing a blanket approach to individual shelter and latrine support, so regardless of economic status, all households whose shelters or latrines were affected by Typhoon Haiyan, we have been able to provide support. Of course in an urban setting there's a huge variation of living arrangements, which has been one challenge that we have had to manage. What we've seen is the need to have more clearly defined beneficiary criteria. For example, we offer one shelter or one latrine per household. The household could have three families, or it could have one family, but within an urban context, because there's such a huge variety of living arrangements, we were not able to, at the beginning of the project, come up with very strict criteria. That did cause a few difficulties later on. So even though we were including everybody, without very clear definitions to present to the community, the community would come back and say, 'Well, what about us?' or, 'Why aren't we being allowed to receive support?'

Also, at the start of the project, that was back in February of 2014, people were still living in tents and evacuation centres, so we were trying to push forward as quickly as we could, because we had a lot of pressure from the city to get people out of those circumstances and into safer and more durable shelters. So, with that we did not go through as much of a community, I guess, cleaning process of the neighbourhood master list. Again, that caused problems for us. Recently when we expanded into the additional seven neighbourhoods, we were able to do a much more clear process of beneficiary selection, so even though again it was a blanket approach, there were certain definitions that we needed to lay out, so that people would know who could receive and who couldn't. I think the main lesson here that we have learned, is just trying to get more buy in from the neighbourhood officials and from the leaders, as

well as the community, to fully understand the inclusiveness of the project, while at the same time having clear beneficiary selection criteria.

Paul Knox Clarke: Great. I'll hand this question again over to you Andrew, because I see a continuation from some of the things we were discussing earlier, particularly of course, if the one way of achieving participation, if there are local government structures which are representative, is that people will be represented through those local government structures, but that's obviously not always the case. On this and on the previous question, maybe running some of those ideas together, what have your observations been in terms of how these approaches can potentially increase inclusion and participation, and practically what is required to do that?

Andrew Cusack: Thanks Paul. I think for me, this question falls into two primary elements. One is accountability, and I mean, we know that definition well enough, I won't go into that in detail, but to say accountability to this population that we're trying to engage with, and sustainability of the project. In terms of, if we're really hoping to make any gains in these programmes, and we don't engage the population, then how sustainable are those gains really, and how likely are they to come back? For me, coming from the CCCM sector, the methodology for us, looking at participation and active engagement of a formal displacement site, a collective centre or a camp, is a cornerstone to the response. So for us, understanding community leaders and structures, and or facilitating the establishment of those structures in order to engage the population, active participation of the population in the site, to move all elements of site life forward are critical. So the main tool there, essentially, is ensuring adequate empowerment of the population in all sectors of the response in a formal site, to move this forward. Looking now, transferring that learning into an urban approach, is something that we're trying to pilot now.

So for urban areas, I think trying to run a programme without the engagement of both formal and informal leadership structures, risks even being impossible. Without getting the buy in of local structures, local population and leadership, are we potentially alienating them? Are we creating potential problems that weren't there before? So I think for those questions, one, accountability, it should be something we should do, we have a responsibility to engage in, but sustainability, making sure that those gains don't just die off when, inevitably the humanitarian response begins to close up.

Paul Knox Clarke: Thanks, and I'm wondering, you mentioned formal and informal. Of course the formal leadership structures are hopefully fairly easy to identify. You walk up to the village hall or whatever. The informal leadership structures, how would one go about that? Does one wait for them to come to you, or you talked about mapping and social assessment earlier on. I wondered what the experience of identifying these informal leadership structures have been.

Andrew Cusack: I think that's really important, this anthropological element to our humanitarian response, and in CCCM it's something that we deal with a lot. I would say it's generally identified based on community engagement, and whether that's through individual staff, or creating different opportunities, I would actually suggest a multitude of different opportunities to look at community engagement are required to identify and fully appreciate the informal community leadership structures. Sometimes historical information may be available to actually physically map out the locations of these communities, but I think most importantly for us in terms of humanitarian programming, it's important to understand who those informal leaders are, what is their role in this community, or even within the population that we're working with, and sometimes I think the success of a project hinges on the advocacy and buy in of these informal leaders. So whether that's through key informant interviews, or perhaps it's even easier. Maybe it's an elder that everyone knows and goes to. Community engagements leading to an opportunity to not only discover, but to engage the formal leadership structures, and thereby creating the buy in that you need to make your project successful.

Paul Knox Clarke: Thank you very much Andrew, and again, I'm sure that there are people taking part, listening out there, sending in questions out there who have done this for themselves. If any of you have any tips or experience about this that you would like to share, we'd love to put it up on the Community of Practice. Similarly, any links to documentation or reports or research that talk about how some of these issues could be addressed, we'd welcome that so that we can share it more broadly. Elizabeth, I might go to you, and back to the report for a minute, if we may, because in the report, in the research you did, you did note that there were some significant gaps in the evidence. Some of them were that there were no examples that you identified in short term emergency response, and that it was quite geographic, so some geographical continents didn't have examples. I wondered, were you able to form an impression of whether this is because this approach just doesn't work in those areas, so there are no written examples, or is it just a documentation gap?

Elizabeth Parker: This is a great question, and one that I think as a researcher, you just can never answer. We asked ourselves the same thing throughout the research, and we have a number of responses really. One of the things I mentioned earlier was that we weren't able to include literature that wasn't available in English, and also because of the wide range of terms used to describe similar programmes, those two factors really could mean that whilst there are documents available in English, we weren't searching for the right terms. We used a lot of different terms to find the documents that we were able to include, but I think especially delving into more developmental literature, I think there's a huge amount of learning that we can take from that, but the terms were of course, entirely different. So, due to the limitations of our research approach, it is possible that there's a gap in documentation, and that area-based approaches have been used in short term emergency responses, but using a different name, or perhaps it's documented in Spanish, or Arabic.

From an evidence based perspective it would be difficult to say that something doesn't work unless it has been tried and tested and documented, but we could build on the research we haven't taken, and the information we know already, especially about the possible positive and negative consequences of adopting area-based approaches that we've been talking through. We could ask ourselves, would that work in this instance? So for example, in a short term emergency, do we have enough time to bring together local stakeholders? Do we have the right staff with the right skills to facilitate detailed and often roundabout negotiations about long term plans for the area, etc.? I think we can take what we know and say in these areas where we're not sure if there's documentation, how would this work? How would this apply? What would be the reality of this? Finally I would probably say, we only included literature that was available at the time, and I think that this is a topic that there's a great deal of interest in at the moment, and there will be case studies that come out over the next couple of years that we can really tap into.

Paul Knox Clarke: So, just taking that thought a bit further forward, because you started something, which I'm sure a lot of people would be interested in, almost a check list of conditions which need to be in place to suggest that this is going to be successful. You talked about having the time, having the skills, and we heard from Holly earlier in the research, things to put onto that checklist, things that our participants, if they were considering area-based approaches, really would need to ensure that they have in place. Similarly, are there any situations in which, on the basis of the research you'd say, 'It's really not very likely to happen, and people should be very sceptical before starting area-based approaches'?

Elizabeth Parker: That is a great question, and I think that is a research paper in its own right. I think we can only really extrapolate from what we know. I think it would be hard to say, 'Yes, this is a definitive checklist,' or something like that, because like I said, the documentation that we have available, that we were able to include in the review, is not sufficiently comprehensive I think, to say, 'This is best practice,' or, 'This is good practice.' We're at the stage now where we can say, 'These are lessons learnt,' but I don't think we can categorically say, 'This is how you should do it,' which I think you would need the confidence. There are a number of possible things, or characteristics to look out for, and I guess as well it would be the relationship during the context that you're in, and how you design your programme. So if you find yourself in a certain situation, and you're saying, 'Am I working in an area where government and officials have sufficient capacity to engage with me?' I think it would be less of a checklist, more of a series of starting questions, which would then help inform how you design your programme. Something more like that.

So for example, one of the questions would be, 'I need to define the boundaries of the area', or 'I'm working, I think that I'll start with the administrative boundaries', like Andrew was saying. 'Do local government agencies or officials that I would need to engage with have sufficient capacity?' Then through finding out the answer to that, you'd be able to tailor your programme. So perhaps they do, and that's great, and you can engage them, perhaps they don't, and then you have to think about

what you need to do in order to make sure that your programme, or the outputs, or the outcome of your programme is sustainable. Another important one that Holly touched on earlier was around linking with wider city or regional plans. That's critical. That was one of the key learnings from our research, that that's so important in order to avoid isolated urban island programmes, as they're being referred to as, where you target one very clearly defined area and you're pumping a lot of support into that area, but all the surrounding areas don't get the same level of assistance. It can create a great deal of tension and animosity, and that can escalate quite quickly.

The starting question would be, what existing city or regional plans are there, and now if it's a rapid onset disaster such as an earthquake, there may be existing ones but they may have changed. If it's a slow onset disaster or conflict situation that would be different again. I think that says in a rapid onset disaster, often those plans, they're developing at the same time as your programme is developing, so it can become very difficult, kind of a 'chicken and egg' situation. What comes first? So you then have to plan your programme around that, and there's different approaches. So I have a project management background, so one of the most important things that we often do, is write down assumptions, because you find it's very rarely done. So that would be something you would do around that. 'Our assumptions are, X, Y and Z'. You probably actually have pages of them, but that's where you'd start, and as the programme moves forward, you'd regularly come back and say, you know, 'How are these assumptions? Do they still stand true? What do we know that's different?' Then you'd need to make sure that you have the flexibility to change them, and you can think about that in advance so that you're being proactive rather than reactive.

So that was just two starting questions. I think there's a lot more, but I think perhaps you don't want me to talk about them, to go on too long, so I'll probably stop there.

Paul Knox Clarke: I'll tell you what, thank you very much. I think this idea of starting questions is superb. I wonder if we could ask Holly, from your experience, if you could build on that list of questions? Some that we're hearing so far, if I can abstract from the conversation we've had, Elizabeth was already saying, you know, do I know the area I'm working in? Do I know that the government has capacities in that area? Are there wider city level plans? I think Holly, you mentioned earlier on, do I have skills and capacities? Do I have the sufficient skills within my organisation to do this? Do I know who has power and influence in this area, is one that we've talked about. As Elizabeth said, there are probably many more starting questions, so Holly, would you have any other really burning things that people should ask themselves before initiating an area-based programme?

Holly Fuller: The only other thing I could think of, I think this is a pretty comprehensive list, is just in terms of the donor. A lot of times donors come with very strict timelines and strict definitions of what they want, and so depending on who your donor is, and how strict they are, does their timeline meet up with an

area-based approach? Are they flexible enough to understand that as the programme develops over time, different needs are going to come out of engaging with the community, and engaging with city officials, and engaging with the neighbourhood officials?

Paul Knox Clarke: Thank you. How has this been, without going too much into your relationship with your donors, but if you don't mind me asking, has this been something that you've found easy to do? Is it a discussion that you've found that has been easy to have, or hard to have? How have you been able to build in this flexibility, and the ability to respond to unexpected, but legitimate request from the people with whom you're working?

Holly Fuller: Thankfully our donor is a very, very flexible donor. I think the one challenge, our donor mainly focuses on natural disasters or conflict areas, so they're looking at the immediate response and recovery. So when we needed to extend our project by another year in order to complete all of the targets that we had set for ourselves, including for transitional shelter, we're still at this point a year and a half later doing transitional shelter, they've been very great about extending the paperwork, the bureaucratic parts of the timeline, but there is a bit of pressure from them saying, 'Hey, it's been a year and a half. Why are we still doing transitional shelter?' So I think that is one piece, but on the other hand, you know, when we were offering our shelter solutions for relocation, and we saw that people were very, very hesitant to leave, we decided to take 1,400 households up to the permanent shelter relocation site that the city government and NHA are building, they're constructing together. We did have the flexibility to say, 'You know what, we need to put other programmatic things on hold to take these 1,400 households up, to see what they could potentially be receiving in two or three years time.'

We were able to get a really great response from those households to say, 'Okay, we understand now why CRS is offering us transitional shelter. The permanent shelter site is not ready, it's not going to be ready for several years, so now we need to figure out what to do in the meantime and CRS is providing us that support.' Our donor is very flexible and we've been able to really, as the project moves forward, innovate different activities, or strategies to help us manage the needs that are coming up in the project. I do think that the timeline of providing transitional shelter, it's a little more challenging to explain why we need so much time to complete that aspect of the project.

Paul Knox Clarke: Thank you. I'd like to turn now to one of the things that we've touched on, but I don't think we've looked at in great detail. We've looked at the geographical part, and I think we've looked at the participatory part. Maybe turning a little bit more now to the multisectoral element of area-based programming. Andrew, in your experience, I wonder, with the multisectoral element of this, which indicators are used? One of our participants have asked which indicators are used, and how, when you've got different sectors working to a common programme, are the different sectors accountable to integrated multisectoral indicators?

Andrew Cusack: To hate to go back, but with your permission I'd like to just touch on one point about the limits. I think one of the things, the limits that are part of an area-based approach are that it's collaborative. This is a blessing and a curse, and what's the potential drawback, is that collaboration is always slow. So that's one of the limits, is that this is very slow because of all those involved. It plays into that multisector element. The other element is that, and this is always the case, we're guests. So in an area, this type of programme where we're much more directly involved potentially with local government, they may have a very different idea of implementation or what gets implemented. Just a couple of thoughts on limits.

To go to what you were mentioning about the indicators, I think for me, this plays a little bit into the previous question on starting questions, how do we identify that area, the area that we'd like to intervene in? Why are we intervening in area A, and not area B? In my experience these indicators make up a part of the baseline assessment, and if we're looking at the initial phases of a humanitarian emergency response, these indicators should be core, life saving indicators, that when put together can be quickly collected, are designed not to be extremely detailed, not to be sufficient to design necessarily a whole programme, but in place to take the pulse of the situation, and then create a ranking of these areas, according to the most vulnerable. This prioritised list, according to vulnerability of areas, can be used to support very transparent and informed decision making about which areas to intervene in, and how to intervene in them.

To be more specific about the indicators, I wouldn't say necessarily that we have a list of go tos. Again at the initial phase, when we're talking about emergency, these should be indicators that are indicative, or measured life saving needs of populations in each of these areas, and it should be done collaboratively. Whoever's coordinating the assessment is not making decisions on behalf of the other sectors, but what information should be collected? It's a joint initiative that should be done as quickly as possible, and then implemented. Once a specific area or the areas have been identified and partners or actors are going to move in a place to intervene in a specific area, indicators there again would be drawn up and be more specific to the type of needs expressed in that baseline. Just to stress, like the programme, the indicators should be multisectoral, should focus, at least initially on saving lives, and then get down to specific programme intervention requirements.

Paul Knox Clarke: Thanks. I wonder Andrew, if you could recommend to us any particular baseline assessment tools that you've come across, or that you've seen used elsewhere? If there's anything that's particularly useful for doing these various analyses that we've talked about? I'll ask you first, I'll then go to our other speakers, just to see if anyone's got any ideas on assessment tools that can be used that are particularly useful for area based approaches.

Andrew Cusack: Sure. To say that there's a specific tool for the overall baseline, the overall assessments related to area-based approach, I would say no. Let's say my

approach would be to consider it more or less a toolbox, with a bunch of different tools that are appropriate to different contexts. One of the tools that I most appreciated using was the ODK on a mobile data collection platform. In a situation where there's adequate cell coverage and so on, this approach for us was very well used, extremely fast with real time information coming in, as soon as the data collectors were able to connect to the internet. I think that, for me, that was one of the most effective and efficient tools that I really enjoyed working with. Otherwise, very solid information management staff, who understand the context, who were good at coordinating, and who really have a strong command of the assessment tools in their toolbox. They can be flexible, and I think we talked about that a few times.

Paul Knox Clarke: Great. Certainly this issue of geo-referenced information is particularly important, I'd imagine, for area-based programming, and I would advise those of you who weren't able to participate in the previous webinar on this topic, to look there also for some tools. I'd also like to thank Megan Passey for reminding us on the issue of indicators, that there is a humanitarian indicator registry, with core indicators for each cluster, which is publically available and which Megan says is a great baseline for this type of information. Holly, I wonder if I could ask you about any specific assessment tools that you used, about vulnerability, but first of all baseline assessment.

Holly Fuller: Our baseline assessment was actually conducted before I arrived. What I can tell you is that because we're working in so many different sectors with a lot of different activities, we have 53 indicators that we are measuring throughout the project. So I would agree that having a good database and information management system is absolutely essential, and having the staff understand the full scope of all of the different indicators and part of the project, it's absolutely vital to making sure that all sectors of the project are moving forward in a cohesive manner. We have used a UAV, an unmanned aerial vehicle to actually take an aerial shot over our project area, back in February of 2014. With that image we've been able to hire a GIS specialist to connect our database with that image and digital footprints of each of the different households that we're working with. Again, it's a high degree of technology, and it's just important that M&S staff the programme staff are communicating and collaborating to ensure that everyone understands the full project and everything that needs to be measured, and how the technology can help.

Paul Knox Clarke: Thanks Holly. It sounds to me like we're adding, in our starting questions, the question of, do we have the information management capacity to pull this off? It does seem to be coming through as an important element in these successful programmes. I wondered also if I could ask you a separate question, but one that we've touched on, which also has come in from a colleague here who's taking part in the webinar. That's this, in your experience, has the area-based approach that you've been using in Tacloban, has it made it easier or more difficult to identify the most vulnerable people? In general, what sort of approaches have you

taken to ensure that you're prioritising those people who are most vulnerable or most affected?

Holly Fuller: Because we are doing blanket coverage, like I said, we're not choosing people based on their economic status, I would say that in some ways it does make it more difficult to identify the most vulnerable, precisely because we're not necessarily asking their economic status or their land ownership status, etc. If we were using a different selection criteria, then I think we could identify the most vulnerable easier. In terms of prioritising the most vulnerable, I think that this can be the case very often in shelter responses, that there are certain documents that we need in order to move forward with providing a structure on a piece of land. The people that are able to give us the land title, or their deed of sale, or their tax certificate for that piece of land oftentimes are the ones who are the least vulnerable.

When we were starting the project, again because we were facing so much pressure from the city, as well as the clock ticking with our donor, households that could come to us with all of the documents that we were requiring, did in fact receive support before an informal settler who wasn't able to get the documents. With time we've been able to work with households much more, in order to help them get the documents. We also have a paralegal on staff, who is working with households as well as the National Statistics Office to recover several documents that many of the households need, not only to get our support, but to enrol their children in school, or receive other benefits from the government. I'm not sure if that totally answered the question.

Paul Knox Clarke: I think it's a very helpful answer to the question. From what I hear you saying, there are challenges in working with the most vulnerable or the most affected people, partly coming out of the area-based approach, but also coming out of the realities of shelter programming more generally, which we've all come across. Difficulties around land tenure, and rights to construct. So not all of the difficulties around the vulnerable people are inherent in the area-based approach itself. Some of them are common to other approaches to shelter programming. Also, you have attempted and you have had some success in overcoming this, but it is not easy, and it requires additional resources. I think that's probably worth bearing in mind more generally, as well as within the context of area-based approaches. We recognise, all of us I think, that there aren't easy answers to these things, but it is very useful to hear how CRS has gone about addressing this in the past.

Elizabeth, I wondered if I could go back to you. We have a question here about an issue which has come up a couple of times, which is this thing about the other areas. So those areas which are outside the area that the area based approach is working on. In the work that you were looking at, did you find that programmes had generally needed to, or worked to get any form or approval or support from outside the area, or was most of the work with government and most of the work with

community being done inside the area? Was it important to reach out beyond the boundaries?

Elizabeth Parker: Yes, there was a lot of information that we found around other areas, and big questions being raised about equity. Why would you work in one area and not another? Especially in developmental literature, we found a lot of interesting information, and I guess this does link back to the earlier question about how you identify the most vulnerable people, because you're really seeking to identify the most vulnerable area, or the area that most requires extra support. There was some discussion and some advice coming out of some of the interviews that we did with practitioners about how you do potentially blur the lines between the area where you defined where your programme is going to be run, and the surrounding areas. For example, extending some aspects of the project into the neighbouring areas, especially what you might refer to as some of the soft support, psychosocial support, training, things like that. That could be extended out, or the people in the surrounding areas could be invited to the training, or similar support within the project.

If your area-based approach includes larger interventions or investments such as health care centres, or other community facilities, locating them along the boundaries lines was suggested as a positive way of making sure that there was less of an 'us and them' divide, to ease the tension. I think linking back to what Andrew was saying about how you decide which areas you do work in, I think that's just where the decision has to sit, and I think that's a step change as well, and linking to the other question, you're not saying, 'How do I identify the most vulnerable people?' It's really the question of, how do you identify the most vulnerable area? Across the area we reviewed, that seemed to be where area-based approaches were most effective, where you had areas that specifically required additional assistance. They were the most deprived areas, they were in the most vulnerable locations, and I think that also recognises that working at a city scale or a bigger scale than individual households, is just really important in cities and towns.

Paul Knox Clarke: Thank you. Now I'm conscious of time. I'm also conscious that we have many questions left unanswered. We've got a question here, which I think is particularly interesting. I'm going to put it to all three of our participants today, and ask you to try and keep the responses quite brief. The question is, 'do we need an area-based coordination structure to replace the clusters?' Or, 'do we think there are ways of making the existing sectoral based coordination structure more effective in urban areas, and in multisectoral programming more generally?' Let me go first to Andrew with that, if I may.

Andrew Cusack: From a CCCM perspective, the answer is absolutely yes. With an admittedly small footprint, we're trying to implement initial pilots that are looking at taking a CCCM based approach, so essentially looking at a camp management team, and the multisectoral approach that they're looking at in camps, so already engaging with. Just to say quickly that looking at how to apply that kind of model in

an area-based approach is something we're trying to pilot now. If indeed, and I think the criticism is certainly viable or appropriate that we've been, not everywhere, but in many cases we've been insufficiently supporting host communities and looking at target populations in urban environments. I think some form of coordination mechanism is definitely required.

Paul Knox Clarke: Great. Holly, your thoughts about the clusters. Do we need to change them, or do we just need to adapt them?

Holly Fuller: From a programmatic implementation standpoint, I would definitely say that an area-based coordination mechanism would have been extremely useful back when the project was just starting. If I wanted to know what was going on in all of the different sectors that we are working on in the project, I would have had to go to maybe four different cluster meetings. So it would have been much more efficient and effective for me to just go to one area-based meeting.

Paul Knox Clarke: Thank you Holly. Finally, on the same question Elizabeth, your thoughts on the clusters and area-based coordination.

Elizabeth Parker: I think here I would probably have a caution about changing a system that hasn't been established too long in order to adopt one specific approach. I think what we need is a coordination system that's flexible. In this situation I think that in any city you wouldn't just be adopting, you wouldn't have all agencies only adopting area-based approaches. You would have some taking a targeted, individual, most vulnerable households approach, you'd have some taking a cash approach, or a systems based approach, looking at the infrastructure, or maybe an institution based approach. You'd have a range of different approaches, and I think perhaps in this situation, or in this context, what's missing is the coordination at a city level. Rather than having lots and lots of different area-based approach coordination mechanisms, you'd look at overall, who's doing what within that city. That would be my personal view, or suggestion.

Paul Knox Clarke: Thank you very much, and thank all three of you very much for your thoughts on this. We will hopefully continue this conversation in the Community of Practice. Particularly interesting I think, if any of our three panellists, or anyone else has thoughts on this issue of the clusters, thoughts on additional starting questions that we didn't cover on assessment tools, or any of the other issues that we've raised here, do please write in with either questions or ideas so we can share them more widely.

Before we go, we wanted to do one final poll, which you'll see on the screen now. After this discussion today, what do you think about area based approaches for urban response? Should programming always be, sometimes be area-based, generally not be area-based, or do we need more evidence before recommending area-based programming? We just wanted to take the temperature here, so please vote now. Okay, and looking at this, what we're seeing is broadly the group agrees

with the recommendation of Elizabeth and Victoria's research, which is programming coordination in urban areas should sometimes be area-based. 70% are saying that, 10% more evidence needed, 20% it should always be area-based. That's very interesting. Thank you very much everybody for your time today, and thank you very much to our guests. Thank you very much for everyone who sent in questions and participated. We look forward to welcoming you in the next ALNAP Urban Webinar, and would very much like you to fill in the questionnaire that we'll send you, because we do use these questionnaires to adapt the format and content of our webinars. For now however, with final thanks, we wish you the very best and we'll speak to you soon. Goodbye.