

Urban stakeholder engagement and coordination

A quick reference for humanitarian practitioners

Why are urban areas different?



Markets and private sector have a larger influence and greater number of actors



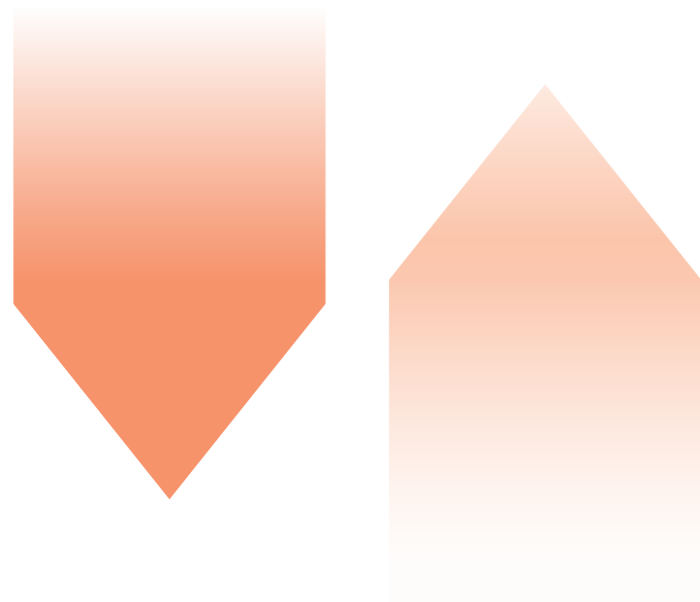
Greater density and diversity of affected populations



More complex and multiple levels of governance



Greater number of stakeholders to coordinate from local government and civil society to international organisations and donor agencies



What is coordination?

Coordination is broadly defined as the ways in which an organisation communicates, engages, and partners with local and international stakeholders in an urban setting, including participating in broader inter-agency coordination and response that might be in place at city level. Good stakeholder engagement and coordination can enable agencies to leverage opportunities for greater scale, to benefit from and support local response mechanisms, to do no harm, and to contribute to the resilience and longer term development of the city.

What are the principles I should keep in mind?



Understanding the context

- Leverage local knowledge
- Conduct context analysis to understand the distinct characteristics of the city
- Conduct stakeholder analysis and consider your response with the variety of actors responding



Strengthening local systems and resilience

- Utilise and build capacity of local systems
- Consider stakeholder approach and build trust



Accountability to affected populations

- Include population needs, preferences, participation and ensure two-way feedback mechanisms



Applying an area-based approach

- Consider entire population of a geographic area
- Look at achieving multiple outcomes
- Consider interconnectedness of city (block, community, municipality, city, state, etc.)

Practical decision-making steps

1

Conduct stakeholder analysis

examining the levels of influence and interest of each stakeholder and the existing forums for coordination.

2

Establish a coordination plan

leveraging highly influential and interested stakeholders, while mitigating harmful actors.

3

Identify key relationships and partnerships

formalising as necessary to establish how you will coordinate

Coordinate with stakeholders across the programme cycle based on their levels of influence and interest.

While each context will be different, below are common stakeholders and forums to consider:

Stakeholders

- ☑ Affected populations
- ☑ Community leaders
- ☑ Civil society:
 - ✓ local non-governmental organisations
 - ✓ community-based organisations
 - ✓ non-state armed actors
- ☑ International actors and donors
- ☑ National government, sub-national and local government
- ☑ Urban planning institutions
- ☑ Private sector
- ☑ Academia

Existing forums

- ☑ National, city, and area-level inter-agency groups
- ☑ Local government-led meetings
- ☑ Community meetings
- ☑ Existing client feedback mechanisms


Factors to consider when prioritising stakeholders may include:


- ☑ Authority or influence over permissions
- ☑ National or local actors responsible for providing services
- ☑ Peer organisation to coordinate activities with
- ☑ Influence among community members
- ☑ Resources to contribute
- ☑ Knowledge to contribute
- ☑ Accountability to affected populations


Use the following forums and strategies:


- ☑ Formal Inter-agency cluster or working group meetings at national or city-level
- ☑ Formal (MoUs, subgrants, contract) or informal bilateral relationship (regular meetings)
- ☑ Joint partnerships in consortia, coordinating on proposals, and funding appeals
- ☑ Brokered relationship in which one stakeholder facilitates coordination between two actors
- ☑ Client feedback mechanisms
- ☑ Key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs)
- ☑ Mobile technology platforms to facilitate communication with and accountability to affected populations


Example: Stakeholder engagement and coordination across the programme cycle


 International NGOs, local NGOs, and UN urban inter-agency coordination forums consulted to determine existing knowledge base and gaps in services

 Development actors consulted on potential linkages between humanitarian and development programmes

 Urban planning institutions consulted to determine highest concentration of displaced people and levels of vulnerability

 FGDs and KIs with host and displaced communities and leaders to determine needs and establish relations


 KIs held with key actors including local businesses/associations, local chambers of commerce, banks to understand market needs and gaps


 KIs held with local government to inform necessary permission/approvals, assess existing development plans for the area, and introduce them to humanitarian ways of working

Needs assessment and analysis


Stakeholder analysis


Evaluation and learning


 Participatory learning with clients on success of the project


 Learning from evaluation shared with peer international and local NGOs through inter-agency coordination forum

Project design and funding


 Human and financial resources planned for coordination/outreach both in inter-agency and project-specific coordination activities


 Affected populations and other key stakeholders identified in needs assessment are included in project design workshop


 Programme design informed by assessment of local planning processes and affected population needs


 Feedback mechanism and approaches to affected population participation are designed for project implementation


Implementation and monitoring


 Project coordination plan created to engage with different mechanisms for different actors


 Permissions requested from national and local government to begin work

 MOUs signed with private sector businesses to support project's apprenticeship activities and regular check-ins held with partners

 MOUs signed with training centres for trainings of clients

 Regular participation in inter-agency meetings at city-level to support case management

 Donors engaged to support advocacy issues including right to work of clients and safe-working conditions

 Regular meetings held at area-level with project's clients, community leaders, and local government to inform and consult on monitoring of activities

This document provides a quick reference guidance on urban stakeholder engagement and coordination. It was developed by the **Stronger Cities Initiative** with support from UK aid and EU humanitarian aid.

For more information see the **full guidance note** at <http://pubs.iied.org/10821IIED/>