

IASC WORKING GROUP

**Task force on
Meeting Humanitarian Challenges in Urban Areas
(chaired by UN-HABITAT)**

“Humanitarian Consequences of Urbanization”

Accelerated Urbanization

**Unprecedented population growth
in urban areas due to:**

- **Natural growth**
- **Rural-urban migration**
- **Forced displacements**

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Trends in Population Integration Processes

- **Large urban slum formations in Asia and Africa**
 - **Increased vulnerability of population**
 - **Decreasing coping mechanisms**

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Limited urban management capacity and lack of affordable land and housing markets leads to:

- **People settling in high risk areas**
- **Overcrowding and congestion increases risk of communicable disease epidemics**
 - **Insufficient urban health care systems**
 - **Inadequate water and sanitation facilities**
 - **Increased risk of epidemics**

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Accelerated Urbanization

Poor urban governance, political conflicts and limited urban management capacities leads to:

- **High risk constructions and development**
 - **Lack of regulation enforcement**
 - **Segregation of the poor**
- **Insecurity, violence and civil unrest**
 - **Further displacements**

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Climate change and urbanization:

- **New urban vulnerabilities**
- **Sea level increase makes high risk areas more vulnerable**
- **Frequent droughts and urban food insecurity**
 - **Frequent natural disasters**

Humanitarian Response Challenges

- **Adapt existing rural approaches and tools to urban settings**
- **Expand collaboration with national authorities to include urban authorities and communities**
 - **Collaborate with different layers of urban authorities**
- **Inadequate institutional and legal mechanisms for urban crises management**

Humanitarian Response Challenges

- **Registration and targeting of beneficiaries in complex urban settings**
- **Identify urban NGOs and rescue actors for response collaboration**
- **Provide protection and services in diverse urban settings**

Humanitarian Response Challenges

- **Advocate for integrated urban crises management structures and strategies**
 - **Organize communities for risk reduction**
- **Strengthening capacity of urban authorities and local structures**

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Expected Outputs

The Strategy Paper and Action Plan will outline the characteristics of humanitarian crises in an urbanizing environment and provide an assessment with actionable recommendations for adapting relief operations to complex urban settings

Draft Strategy Paper by November 2009

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Milestones in 2009

- **March:** Discussion of Background Document in 73rd IASC WG
- 2 Virtual Task force Meetings
- Survey/questionnaire
- **7-9 September:** Face to face Task Force Meeting in Rome to assess initial analysis and prepare strategy recommendations
- **October:** Final draft Strategy Paper and Action Plan