



HANDBOOK: BUILDING CITY COALITIONS

towards connectedness for resilience





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INTRODUCTION



A new commitment to partnership and coalition building is necessary if we are to help individuals and communities strengthen their resilience. We must fully realize the potential of our collective networks, our ability to work at scale, and coordinate our shared resources.

The number of those affected by disasters, natural or otherwise, has steadily increased over the years. In 2016, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) predicts that 125.3 million people will be in need of humanitarian assistance across the globe. Meanwhile, resources to help these men, women and children are not sufficient – the UN estimates a \$15 billion gap in what is available and the resources needed to respond adequately.

We, as humanitarians, have the responsibility to optimize our knowledge and resources to build resilience before disasters strike. Coalitions provide an opportunity to pool the knowledge resources of all partners. Taking advantage of social media and technology, knowledge and resource sharing becomes a two-way street, enabling individuals and communities to share their needs, knowledge and expertise.

Building City Coalitions for Community Resilience is a tool that provides lead organisation representatives with a

simple guide to enable the development of urban platforms that will work to build community and urban resilience.

In practice, a city coalition will work on three objectives: 1) identify opportunities and partners who will significantly contribute to community resilience; 2) engage extensively with partners and communities to incentivize and motivate local action and reach of the coalition; 3) link the local One Billion Coalition for Community Resilience initiatives and campaigns to the global Coalition platform.

Each city coalition will shape the initiative to suite their local circumstances by implementing practical actions to kick-start activities in their city or area. These actions are complemented by access to technology, such as the Community Resilience Marketplace, an online platform and tool that will connect decision-makers to community needs and the One Billion Coalition online platform (www.onebillioncoalition.org).

#1BnCoalition

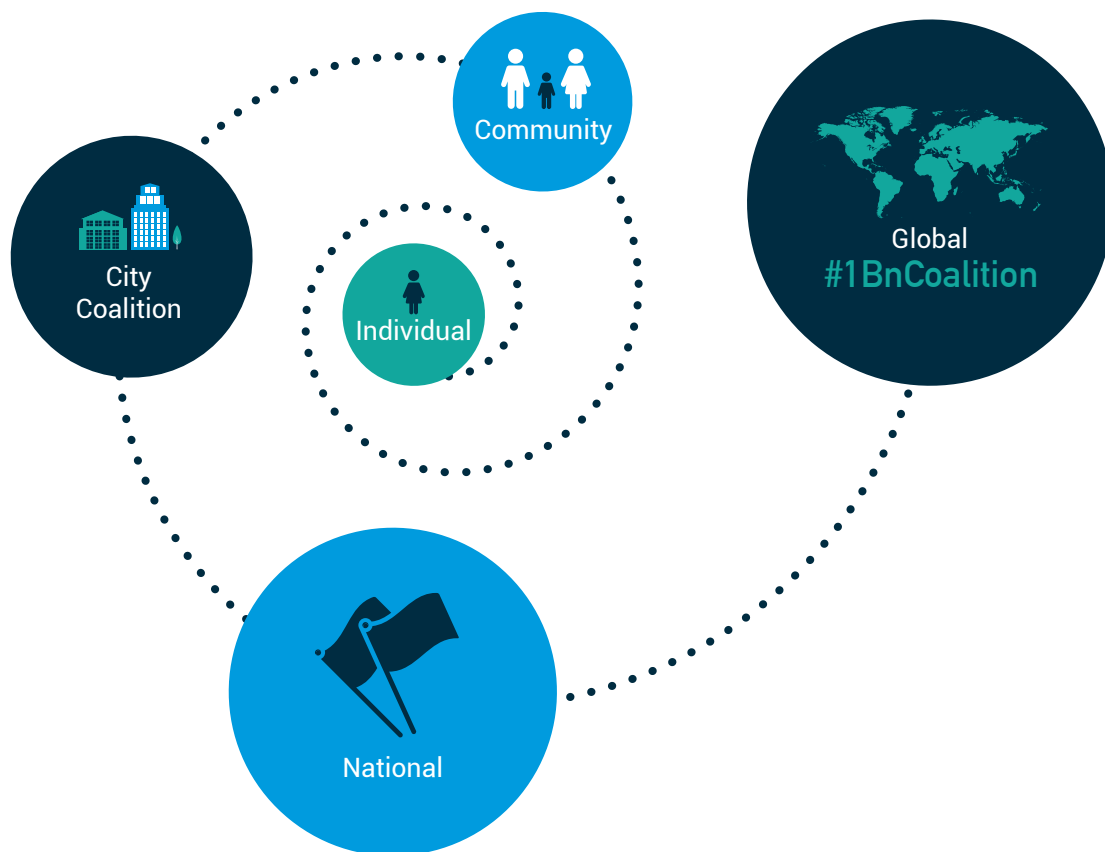
OneBillionCoalition.org

ONE BILLION COALITION FOR RESILIENCE

By 2025, at least one billion people around the world will have taken active steps towards strengthening their resilience – a world where all people are safer, healthier, and more prosperous, even in the face of adversity.

WHAT IS A CITY COALITION?

A COALITION IS AN ALLIANCE TOWARDS COMBINED ACTION



In cities, local problems are often caused by non-local phenomena. Therefore, solving problems requires engagement at all levels: collecting information and engaging a variety of partners and communities locally; but also, engaging with national or sometimes international scales for resources or advocacy on behalf of local needs.

Coalitions are not only networks of like-minded organisations: they are structured models of collaboration focused on achieving change, in this case for the benefit of the vulnerable communities.

A city coalition engagement model brings partners at various levels together by providing them with a space to discuss, evaluate and address resilience at the city level. Each coalition will have a different set of partners and actions, depending on the individual context of each particular city. However, a common factor is the involvement of a variety of partners, who are working towards a shared goal and a shared vision.

TYPES OF COALITIONS

Hub and Spoke

An institution or select partners from a small staffed organization that support alliance, develop strategy and tools and conduct fundraising.

Networked Model

Global partners are loosely affiliated and provide funding and capacity directly to local partners, based on individual partner needs.

Lead Partner

One partner assumes a strong, though not necessarily dominant role. Partner leads in defining strategic and technical agenda, and coordinates activities.

Simple Affiliation

Partners form a loose alliance based on shared goals. Partners operate as equals, with no strong steering committee and share practices organically.

WHY A CITY COALITION?

Cities are complex systems. There are countless networks, systems, feedback loops coexisting, overlapping and interacting. Dealing with complexity requires applying system thinking, not only for understanding the root cause of the issues, but also for untangling these connections, designing solutions that would work in this complex environment.

The most critical contribution expected from the city-level decision-makers is to support and take an active role in a sustained dialogue among a wide range of stakeholders. Here are some advantages that may result from forming or joining a coalition:

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Coalitions project a united front, especially when voicing support for a controversial issue or advocating at a national level for issues that cannot be addressed locally.

VISIBILITY

Joining a coalition can help add prominence to your efforts.

CONTACTS

Your partner(s) can help you reach influential people and decision-makers who can further your cause.

SYNERGIES

If you lack the expertise on a particular issue, you can reach out to other members of the coalition who have been working on that issue for years. This can save you much time and effort and ultimately help the community better address its needs.

SHARED WORKLOAD

Working with partners can help relieve demands on staff and volunteers.

WHAT MAKES A COALITION SUCCESSFUL?*

1. Be clear on the process of change you are looking to generate.

- What do we want to achieve?
- How will we get there?
- Who needs to participate?
- What are some of our assumptions or hypotheses?

2. Always focus on the work to be done.

A coalition is not a discussion group nor a research forum. It is a collective of organisations committed to change. There must be clarity on the goal to be achieved and the responsibilities of each organisation involved.

3. Change the perspective from what one organisation can achieve on its own, to what members of a focused network can accomplish when working towards a common goal.

- Always maintain one's image and credibility, being transparent - coalitions depend on the trust that organisations place in those leading the process.
- Clearly lay out the power-sharing model, offering guidance rather than imposing hierarchy.
- Be clear on the roles and contribution of each partner or member and honor the agreements and decisions made during coalition discussions.
- Keep the coalition open to contribution from other actors, ensuring the coalition structure is not closed.

4. Learn from each other. Always. At all times.

- There are no pre-defined recipes or manuals, each context will be different. But others have already been through similar situations. What did they do?
- Always maintain a diversity of participants in the coalition to ensure that there is a diversity of perspective on any topic.
- The type of leadership changes when the type of coalition changes. Always be aware of when leadership or personnel changes are needed.

5. Have a clear idea of the most appropriate level of action.

We often believe that solutions must come from the top. But the majority of actions will be implemented at a local level. It is important to connect the benefits from the top to those at the bottom. There may also be many levels in between.

6. Accept that many things will remain undefined.

As a coalition progresses, things may change, sometimes in extreme directions.

7. Maintain sustainability.

Stay open to engagement models to adapt the coalition to changing community realities and partner priorities.

* Source: adapted from Global Action Networks - Creating our Future Together, Steve Waddell, 2011

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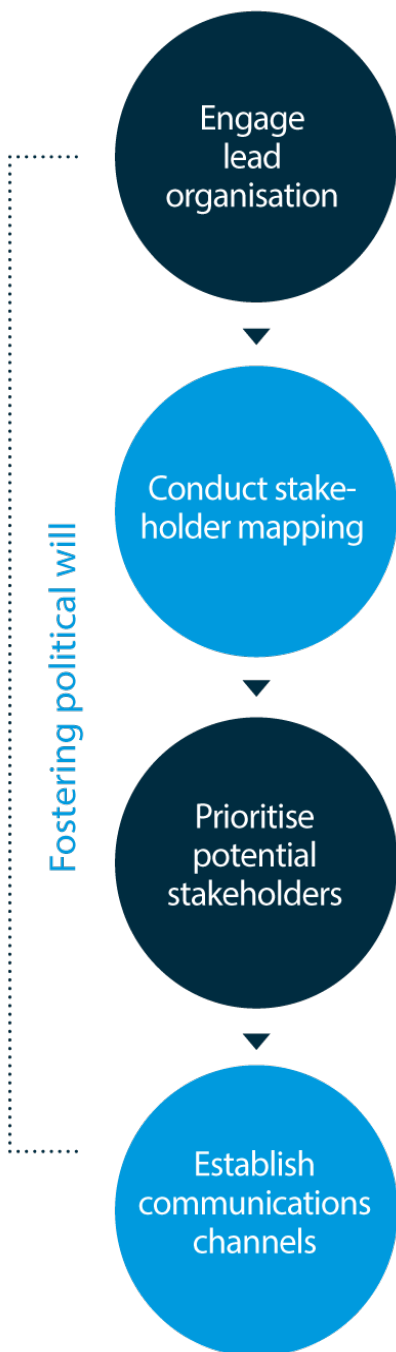
Essential Components for Building a City Coalition for Community Resilience

A coalition is not a linear process, but an organic system. Therefore, the different components that are essential for a coalition to come together may not happen one after the other, in a sequential manner. Rather, they are likely to be consolidated at different stages in the coalition building, or could be taking place all at the same time.

It is important to keep this in mind when planning how you will build a City Coalition for Community Resilience. Each context will have different entry points, challenges and successes, depending on the specific realities and ecosystem of that city. This handbook looks to provide the basic components of a coalition-building process, however your understanding of the local context will guide the steps necessary to be successful in your city.

COMPONENT A

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



A coalition is defined as an alliance or partnership for shared action. Without a variety of stakeholder, there can be no coalition. And if diversity of opinions and perspectives is lacking in the range of stakeholders participating, the coalition is likely to be unsuccessful. Therefore, stakeholder engagement is an imperative component in coalition building.

While a coalition can take many shapes, there should be at least one organisation to take on a leadership role to initiate the coalition. So the first stakeholder that needs to be thoroughly engaged in the process is the lead organisation. To achieve this, hold a meeting with the leadership within the lead organisation and explain the concept and benefits behind building and leading a City Coalition for Community Resilience, providing its most important aspects, the modus operandi and the pros and cons of the initiative.

Once the lead organisation is committed to the process, it is time to conduct a mapping of potential participants and partners of the City Coalition. This can involve the business community, schools and universities, grassroots groups, faith-based groups, community organisations and NGOs, among other actors. It is important that there be a diversity of opinions and different voices within the coalition. This will lead to the best results in building community

resilience.

After having identified the potential stakeholders, these then need to be filtered according to set criteria. For example, based on interest, potential for contribution and complementing, active outreach, etc.

Then, the lead organisation should establish communication channels and communication plans for sustained engagement. Note that the stakeholders you work with at the beginning of the process can be different than the set of stakeholders you would be working with once the communities and the desired impact is identified.

Please refer to Annex I - Models of Stakeholder Engagement

The sustainability of a City Coalition for Community Resilience is highly dependent on political will. This should arise through the coalition building process and will require dialogue with government authorities, primarily with the City Mayor, the Municipal Chief Resilience Officer (or equivalent) and any other relevant municipal personnel.

Refer to Annex II for the Checklist for a Planning Session with Municipal Authorities

COMPONENT B

URBAN PROFILE

This phase involves conducting multi-layer (city, sub-city, and community) vulnerability and opportunity analysis in the given city. It entails identifying resources for leverage through analysis of capacities of your organisation and other stakeholders. It is also closely related to and overlaps with stakeholder engagement activities.

Ultimately, you should end up with a map, by overlaying the different visualized data, such as streets, buildings, blocks, vulnerable elements, resources, historic hazards, and current risks, we are able to see the overall situation of the city or neighbourhood visualised on the map.

At the end of this process you should expect to have a clear understanding of how the existing systems and structures (political, physical, social, and economic) within the city influence the risks and vulnerabilities communities face; and what resources and opportunities you can leverage to reduce these risks and vulnerabilities.

The collection and analysis of relevant data would normally require utilisation of external technical assistance services, ideally through partnerships with academia and local government organisations that have a mandate to provide public services, as well as other organisations that collect and store relevant data and information.

Identify the existing systems and structures, for example:

- ▶ Potential hazards
- ▶ Demographic information
gender specific data for age, household size, employment, income, education, etc.
- ▶ Population density
- ▶ Built environment
building types, density, settlement patterns, infrastructure
- ▶ Socio-economic data
economic activity, markets, private sector, government structure
- ▶ Basic services
health, education, transportation
- ▶ Spatial quality
public spaces, environment, accessibility
- ▶ Identification of broader stakeholders

Combine the data and findings to generate the urban profile



Develop mash up maps

- ▶ Demonstrate hazard and risk
- ▶ Identify the most vulnerable areas in the city

Design scenario modeling maps

Elaborate profiles describing the most vulnerable groups in the city and in each community

COMPONENT C

CITY RISK ASSESSMENT

The most important aspect of coalition building is to create a forum for discussion among partners that should ideally lead to reaching a consensus on the resilience vision for the city and concrete steps to get there. Through a series of workshops, the stakeholders will identify:

- a) a resilience vision for the city,
- b) the range of risks the city faces,
- c) the most vulnerable areas, neighborhoods or non-geographical communities that require further community level assessment, and
- d) resilience paths: who is doing what to realize the vision.

The expected result is a concept note outlining the proposed intervention, to be verified and detailed through participatory community-based program design activities.

Both people in vulnerable communities and the people who provide, design, maintain and enforce policies about access to

services and resources have key perspectives on community and city vulnerability. Only by enabling dialogue with and between people from both groups can you really begin to identify opportunities for action that will build city-wide resilience. The other three core components of a City Risk Assessment are:

- Using systems thinking to analyze risk and vulnerability;
- Applying systems thinking at multiple scales so that you understand not just the issues within a given vulnerable community, but also the causes and implications of that vulnerability at the city and possibly national scale;
- Using mapping and secondary sources to support your assessments and communicate to other stakeholders the importance of your findings and inform your advocacy efforts.

SAMPLE WORKSHOP OUTLINE

There is a variety of resources and techniques that can be applied in order to carry out a City Risk Assessment. Here is a suggested outline for a 3-day workshop, based on the document [Engaging Stakeholders in a Preliminary Urban Assessment: Workshop Facilitation Materials and Background Reading on Using Stakeholder Engagement and The Resilience Approach to Identify Entry Points for Building Urban Resilience](#).

DAY 1

- Introductions, review meeting objectives and agenda
- Introduce the resilience approach
- Developing a shared vision
- Discussion of vision

DAY 2

- Morning field visit (to existing project, vulnerable community, or other relevant area)
- Discussion of values
- Identify a place to start (community and/or issue)

DAY 3

- Stakeholder identification
- Geographic mapping
- Identify next steps
- Action planning

SAMPLE CITY RISK ASSESSMENT

HA TINH CITY, VIETNAM

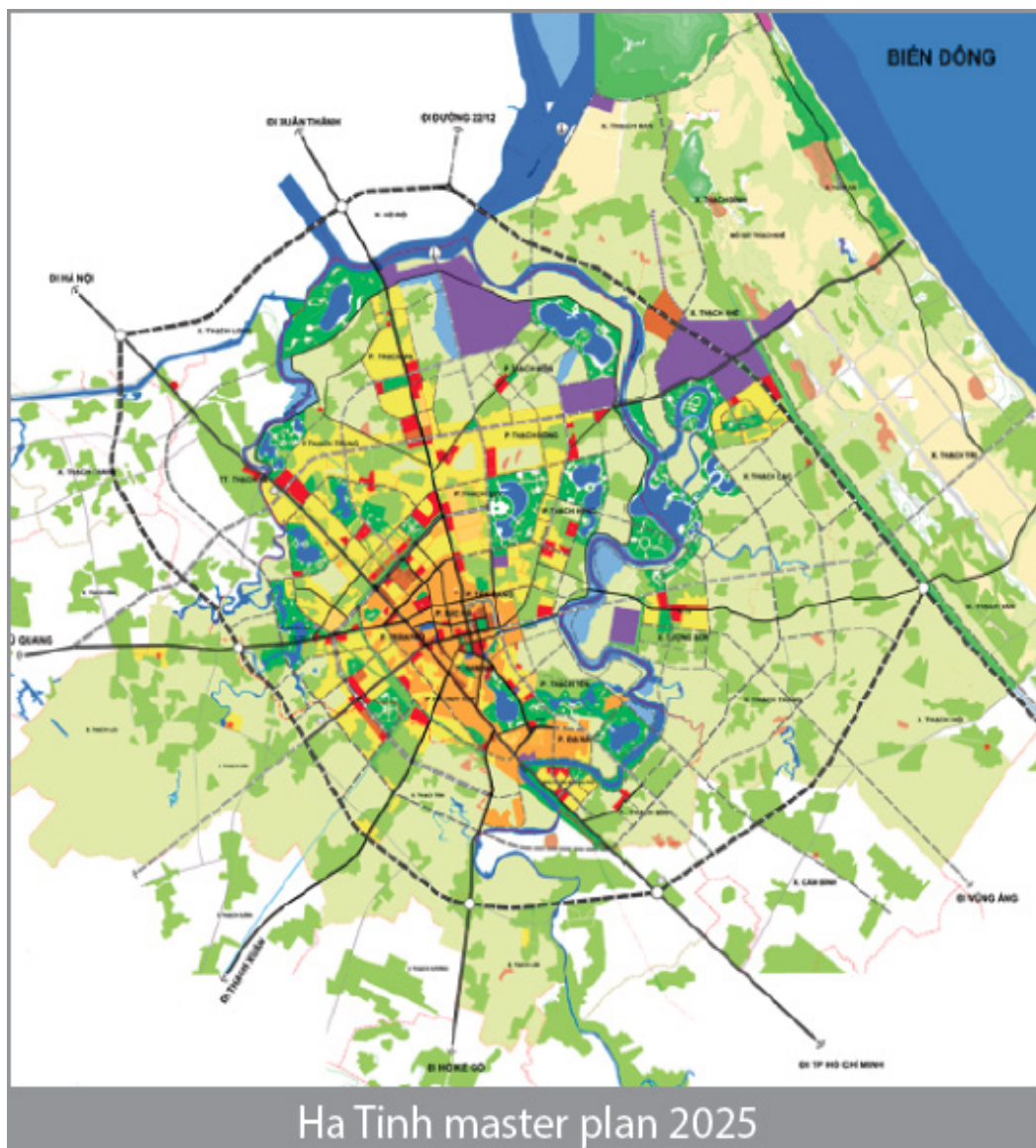
City vision and strategy

Ha Tinh City is an example of whose political aspiration for urban planning dominate, due to the administrative function of the city. A huge area is foreseen for urban development, all in low areas that will require massive landfill. Therefore, considerable environmental shifts and changes will be expected, with unpredictable consequences.

Specifically, now development in the suburbs south of the river will involve significant cost at least in the coming decades. This proposed development includes the hard embarkment of the river on both sides. The expansion north of the river is the

most risky part, because the land here is lowest and subject to tidal and local flooding. All this proposed development is problematic, since the economic strategy of Ha Tinh province is to concentrate in the Vung Ang industrial zone. When Vung Ang develops its own administration and services center, the importance of Ha Tinh City could potentially be reduced.

For the next decade it is reasonable to consider focus of the urban resilience work in the city center and the immediate surrounding areas. However, the effect of major infrastructure in the larger planned area could be of importance.



COMPONENT D

COALITION SUSTAINABILITY

One of the primary goals, but at the same time challenges of a coalition, is maintaining its sustainability. Working as a coalition often requires a profound transformation of the way in which governmental and non-governmental organisations, private sector corporations and academia, grassroots associations and international institutions interact and address community needs together.

While the sustainability of the coalition will ultimately depend on stakeholder engagement, political will and commitment of each one of its members, there are a few steps the lead organisation can take in order to promote the sustainability of the initiative.

NAME A FOCAL POINT

This person can be a volunteer or a representative of any of the organisations involved in the coalition, but should be formally tasked as a focal point with clear responsibilities.

SCHEDULE REGULAR COALITION MEETINGS

For example, the coalition can hold general quarterly meetings, as well as meetings on specific topics and actions on an as-needed basis.

ENSURE MEMBERS ARE INFORMED

This is largely facilitated through technology, especially social media networks, such as Facebook or Whatsapp

MAINTAIN DIALOGUE

The first three steps should help ensure that dialogue between coalition members continues, however it is also important to continuously review the shared vision and goals in order for the coalition to be organic and relevant.

ADVOCATE AND INTEGRATE WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In the longer term, if the government takes on the leadership for the coalition and/or includes it within its programming, sustainability is more likely.

COMPONENT E

COMMUNITY WORK

The ultimate goal when forming a City Coalition for Community Resilience is to strengthen the ability of communities to bounce back in the face of disasters, natural or otherwise. This means that the Coalition will need to work directly with communities to identify and implement strategies for local resilience building. This is why, as part of this series on implementing the One Billion Coalition initiative, we have developed the Resilient Communities Handbook, which will help guide the implementation of programs at the community level.

Another tool that can help stakeholders and communities interact is the One Billion Coalition Community Resilience Marketplace. The Marketplace is an online platform that helps connect community needs and provide stakeholders with the opportunity to collaborate on and contribute to grassroots projects.

For example, if a community identifies that they need water filters to have

Summary of steps to follow when implementing an initiative for community resilience



access to cleaner water and prevent health issues, they can create a post on the platform and share the need with potential local partners. And vice versa, if there is a company that would like to make an in-kind contribution of water filters as part of the Corporate Social Responsibility program, the company can post this on the platform or reach out to the community that needs them.

The Community Resilience Marketplace then will help match communities with service and product providers, creating a local network for enhancing resilience.



[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE MARKETPLACE](#)

COMPONENT F

ADVOCACY AT NATIONAL LEVEL

No single organisation - or even coalition - can help all local groups become more resilient, due to other priorities or limited resources. However, by focusing on the networks and linkages between the individual, household, neighborhood, city and national levels, multiple committed partners can identify their common interests and resources to address local needs jointly.

The goal of building City Coalitions for Community Resilience as part of the One Billion Coalition is to strengthen resilience on the local level, but also to advocate for a stronger resilience on a national and even global level. The City Coalition for Community Resilience should therefore look for opportunities to participate in the dialogue on resilience at the National, and even Global levels.

The coalition members can support a community in an advocacy campaign on a topic of particular importance, for instance approaching local or national political leaders with a formal request to address the need for an improved access road to the community. Advocacy is a series of planned activities (not a unique event), based on the construction of relations with allies (actual or potential) and decision makers, focusing on a very specific issue and limited goal. It is a fluid process, evolving according to the reaction of the target audience, and does not need to be confrontational.

ANNEXES



ANNEX I

MODELS OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT*

In cities, solving problems often means drawing in organisations with skills and abilities in different areas beyond those of any single organisation. The lead organisation has an important role in resilience building in acting as a convener and activating networks. One of the key principles of resilience is about building relationships and expanding external networks. One of the best practices organisations who are successful in working in urban areas is that they are good at building and using networks. Network building is the essential foundation from which partnerships with other organisations (including government) are built.

Engaging with Networks

At the most basic level, the project leadership team must know who its potential partners are, understand the mandates and spheres of influence of different governmental and non-governmental organisations, and share information with them regarding areas of common interest (informing the Ministry of Health of community health concerns; sharing Community Disaster Plans with the National Disaster Management Agency, etc.) Networks may be formal or informal, and a community or the organisation may lead or follow. The important thing is to find out where important decisions are made that affect the community and to make sure community voices are included in those decisions.

Convening/Deliberation

While we often think of networks as large collections of diverse organisations, often what is needed is simply to get the right people talking to each other and finding common ground. Sometimes, just gathering two to three people in a room for conversation can do this on a small scale. For example, local university staff may have technical knowledge that community members or the organisation staff can use to better understand the situation and what is likely to help. Or, it may only be necessary for organisation staff to put the university professor together with decision makers from the local authority to get the community what it wants.

Partnership development

When the project leadership team identifies challenges for which it has neither the capacity nor the resources, building partnerships with organisations sharing common goals or priorities is often the most efficient and effective solution (e.g. sharing security concerns with the police, discussing domestic violence with the corresponding non-governmental organisations, etc.). The interventions of the organization should aim to build the community's ability to connect with external actors who are able to provide support and/or services when needed.

*Source: Source: American Red Cross, GDPC, ISET, Background Notes for Facilitators: Core Concepts for Leading Stakeholder Engagement

ANNEX II

CHECKLIST FOR SESSION WITH AUTHORITIES

Participants:

Municipality:

- ◊ City Mayor (or his/her representative)
- ◊ Municipal Chief Resilience Officer (or equivalent)
- ◊ Other Municipal personnel, as relevant

Lead Organization:

- ◊ National Director/President (or his/her representative)
- ◊ City Representative (or his/her representative)
- ◊ Other personnel, as relevant
- ◊ Representatives from other countries (as observers, where relevant)

Objectives of the session

1. Confirmation of the objectives of the Resilience Coalition:

Proposed goal for the coalition:

Example: build household-level resilience through:

- The mapping of actors working on community safety and resilience;
- Increased understanding of household concerns and community priorities;
- The identification of synergies among existing initiatives;
- The more effective allocation of municipal and organizational resources to reduce vulnerabilities.

2. Formal endorsement of the Coalition process by the Municipal Authorities.

3. Clarification of roles and responsibilities:

Example:

- Stakeholder mapping and invitations to the Urban Resilience Initiative Workshop: joint Municipality & Lead Organization responsibility.
- Logistics for the Workshop: Municipality
- Introduction to the Workshop: Municipality
- Facilitation of the Urban Resilience Initiative Workshop: Lead Organization

4. Adoption of the timeline for the Workshop and Coalition launch.

5. Adoption of the Proposed Agenda.



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