

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PREPAREDNESS IN ASIA-PACIFIC

40%

of all natural disasters

84%

of people affected by natural disasters

Asia-Pacific is home to 40 per cent of all natural disasters and 84 per cent of people affected by natural disasters worldwide. Responding to sudden and slow-onset natural disasters, such as typhoons, floods, droughts, earthquakes and tsunamis, is a regular requirement for communities, governments and humanitarian partners. Responding effectively to natural disasters however requires taking an approach which emphasizes the international community's role in **increasing the speed, volume and quality of life-saving assistance** provided in the initial phase of a response by augmenting nationally-led efforts.

Experience of responding to disasters in Asia-Pacific, as well as key outcomes from the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), have resulted in OCHA's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) adapting the global humanitarian programme cycle, including the Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP) guidance, to suit the specific needs of the region.

The resounding call from the WHS in May 2016 was for more resources and support for localized humanitarian action, recognizing that local stakeholders are often best placed to respond. It also called for a 'participation revolution', placing **communities at the centre of disaster risk reduction, preparedness and response planning**. The emergency response preparedness approach for Asia-Pacific adopted by OCHA ROAP no longer starts by asking who the responders are and what they can do, but instead begins with communities and their needs.

The Asia-Pacific adaptation of the global humanitarian programme cycle guidance is made up of four stages that are mirrored in preparedness and response, ensuring continuity between these. The approach is flexible enough to be scaled according to specific contexts. The four stages are: 1. Disaster Impact Modelling, 2. Needs Analysis, 3. Response Capacity Analysis, and 4. Planning and Advocacy.

1.

DISASTER IMPACT MODELLING

2.

NEEDS ANALYSIS

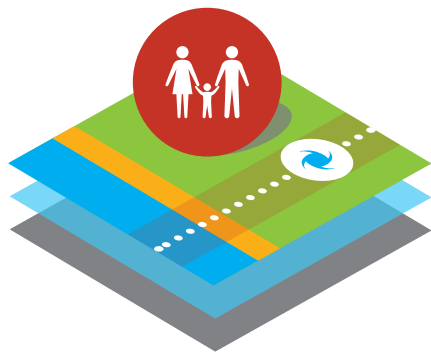
3.

RESPONSE CAPACITY ANALYSIS

4.

PLANNING AND ADVOCACY

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DISASTER IMPACT MODEL

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN NEED AND LOCATION

Experience of conducting preparedness and response in Asia-Pacific has shown that **secondary data can be effectively utilized to build an accurate picture of vulnerabilities**, even before a disaster occurs.

Using data such as shake maps, typhoon tracks and wave patterns, alongside population and housing data, disaster impact models can be created during the preparedness phase that can be updated when a disaster occurs. These **models assist governments and the humanitarian community to calculate estimates of the number of people affected by a specific disaster**, as well as how many would most likely require humanitarian assistance, as a means of informing more accurate initial response planning.



NEEDS ANALYSIS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY IMMEDIATE NEEDS

Once a disaster impact model has been created, a **Needs Analysis process is undertaken to understand and prioritize humanitarian needs**. Using secondary data analysis, sector expertise and most importantly community feedback, it is possible to understand what different communities' needs will most likely be in the aftermath of a disaster and how the government, local actors, international community and others should aim to meet these.

As well as understanding what affected communities' needs will be, it is also important to **understand the phasing required to meet them**. The Key Immediate Needs, those which should be addressed in the immediate phase of the response in order to save as many lives as possible, are therefore agreed upon by all stakeholders in the preparedness phase.

An understanding of the full requirement of needs, and the Key Immediate Needs that will be delivered in the first four to six weeks, ensures that the government and humanitarian community can develop a contingency plan during the preparedness phase. Crucially this means that **a response can start before and while assessments are being conducted**, reducing the time it takes for people to receive assistance.

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RESPONSE CAPACITY ANALYSIS

A capacity analysis allows for a more accurate understanding of **how identified needs will be met and by whom**. In Asia-Pacific, local communities, governments and militaries are the first responders, and it is important to understand the specific roles they play and how the international community can best augment their efforts. **Community engagement should be employed to understand preferences** for how populations would like assistance to be provided to them, as cash, in-kind or through other services.

Once there is an understanding of local, national and regional response capacities and desired response modalities, the international community can ascertain what additional, external resources will be required to support.

At this stage, decisions about the most appropriate coordination structure to allow the delivery of the response plan can be taken. It is important to note that in this approach, **a flexible and tailored use of the coordination structure is key to maximizing efficiency**, with clusters for example, only established when they are needed and phased out when they are not, and with cash working groups and other mechanisms likely to play an increasingly important role.



PLANNING AND ADVOCACY

RESPONSE PLAN MONITORING & REPORTING FRAMEWORKS

Based on the disaster impact model, the needs analysis and a good understanding of the responders' capacity to deliver essential relief goods and services, the Planning and Advocacy phase provides strategic coherence to the response. The **more work that is done in preparedness and locked into a contingency plan, the quicker the international response strategy can be launched** by turning the contingency plan into a flash appeal, accompanied by advocacy and fundraising in the first hours and days after a disaster occurs.