

WUF11 SESSION CONCEPT NOTE

URBAN RECOVERY FRAMEWORKS

Advancing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in urban crisis settings

1. List of Partners Contributing to the Session:

- World Bank
- European Commission

2. Key Words:

Urban resilience, urban recovery, humanitarian-development-peace nexus, post-conflict, urban crises

3. Objectives of the Session:

- To advocate for the need for tailored approaches to urban recovery
- To identify key components of a framework for urban recovery and its relationship with nationally- led efforts, building on different experiences over the last years
- To stress the importance of focusing both on areas damaged due to the man-made or natural disaster and urban areas hosting the displaced
- To explore areas that need further discussion such as institutional arrangements and multi-level governance, management of urban displacement, financing instruments, the architecture to support local governments, urban economy, and the role of culture and identity
- To reflect on key elements of urban recovery in Ukraine

4. Summary:

In an urbanizing world, the impact of climate change, natural disasters, pandemics, conflict and war is increasingly urban. Urban crises result in the destruction of neighbourhoods, infrastructure and urban economies, which goes hand in hand with massive displacement of populations both within cities, across territories and national boundaries.

The earthquake in Haiti in 2010, with most of the damage concentrated in the capital Port-au-Prince, revealed fundamental shortcomings in national recovery strategies. It pointed to the importance of fully understanding the complexity of cities and the impact the crisis had down to the neighbourhood level as a basis to shape the response. Since then, the critical role of local governments and the need to ensure whole-of-society mobilization has been acknowledged. We have come a long way, learning from urban recovery approaches in increasingly complex and protracted crises in places such as Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and Mozambique.

Urban recovery requires not just a focus on the places with physical damage but also on places hosting the displaced. Work at different scales is needed from the neighbourhood, to city-level and sub-regions.

A framework for urban recovery requires clarity on institutional arrangements (who is responsible for what), policy guidance (what does building back better mean), financing instruments and an architecture that ensures coordination and direct support to local governments. Further work is needed on ensuring 1) a more holistic understanding of impact; 2) appropriate multi-level governance mechanisms; 3) financing instruments tailored for urban recovery; 4) local ownership and culture; and 5) urban economy at different scales.

The session will draw on practices from a wide range of countries and reflect on what will be key elements to urban recovery in Ukraine, in complement to the national level reconstruction plan.

5. Guiding Questions for Discussions:

- Why is a focus on the urban dimensions of crises so important? What had we learnt from Haiti and other crises?
- What are key components in a framework for urban recovery and how does this relate to nationally led recovery and reconstruction plans.
- What kind of analysis is needed to shape urban recovery?
- What financing instruments do we need to support interventions at the city level?
- What does a people-centered approach entail?
- How can local governments be empowered and supported to drive urban recovery?
- What is the role of culture and identities in urban crisis response and recovery?
- How can urban recovery frameworks help to align humanitarian, development and peace focused outcomes?
- What does this mean in the context of urban crisis response and recovery in Ukraine?

6. Expected Outcomes and Impact:

The session will promote dedicated frameworks for urban recovery as an essential tool to tailor nationally led recovery and reconstruction efforts to urban contexts. It will feed into a roadmap to further explore elements that are not robust yet, such as appropriate financing mechanisms.

7. Session Format:

Moderated panel with keynote speakers.