

Measuring Urban Capacity for Humanitarian Crisis: Piloting an Urban Health Response System Assessment Tool

Johns Hopkins University has partnered with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and three academic institutions around the world, the APPNA Institute of Public Health (Pakistan), University of Port Harcourt (Nigeria), and Hospital Escuela Universitario (Honduras), to develop a tool for promoting urban health system response to mass casualty events.

Increasing urbanization around the globe highlights growing disaster risk for many cities and the need for disaster risk reduction. Robust urban emergency health response systems planning, testing and validation is required.



Our goal is to empower urban governments by creating a novel tool that provides valid and reliable measurement and scoring of the readiness of an emergency health response system. The City Emergency Health Response Capability Assessment Tool (CEHRC) will be piloted in order to better understand the overall emergency response capacity of selected cities.

This project utilizes a collaborative process for implementing and validating CEHRC through scenario-based mass casualty exercises conducted collaboratively with academic partners and city leadership. Initial focus is on three cities with significantly elevated risk of violence and conflict: Karachi (Pakistan), Tegucigalpa (Honduras), and Port Harcourt (Nigeria). The tool incorporates the environmental, political, economic and social factors in urban areas to uncover ways to improve resilience of the cities in response to mass casualty events.

The project outcomes will center on:

1. Development of the first valid and reliable tool to measure and score capacity of an urban emergency health care response system
2. Emergency response assessment of three selected cities that face increased disaster risk
3. Capacity development of partners – academic institutions and city governments
4. Enhancing international partnerships in global disaster risk reduction

By strengthening urban disaster response to mass casualty events, the project ultimately aims to guide leaders and policy makers in benchmarking their city's emergency response capacity and performance in comparison with other cities around the world and foster a proactive stance on future preparedness efforts.

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