



Urban risk management and preparedness for response: Lessons from the Kathmandu Valley

Umesh Prasad Dhakal
Executive Director
Nepal Red Cross Society

2013 Urban CBDRR Symposium
3 December, 2013

Background of the study

- The BRC is running Urban Learning Project for contributing to improve the relevance, quality and impact of RC/RC programs in urban through operational learning and innovation.
- This study is part of the process of building a primary evidence base by documenting BRC operational learning through in-depth, field-based case studies.

Background of the study

- The study has mainly focused on assessing:
 - ✓ Nepal's urban disaster management system,
 - ✓ Charting the evolution of disaster management policy and preparedness and response capacity;
 - ✓ Relationship between national and international institutions (including the central role of the NRRC in coordinating multi-stakeholder support to national efforts); and the role of the NRCS therein.

Particular attention was given to urban-specific emergency response capabilities and policy development needs, including the National Emergency Operations Centre, urban search and rescue capacity, building code enforcement and risk-sensitive land use planning, as well as the overarching policy and legislative framework, as represented by the stalled Disaster Management Act.

Purpose of the study

- to enhance the understanding of NRCS, BRC and partners in and outside the Movement about the particular challenges and opportunities of community and National Society engagement in risk management and strengthening preparedness for a large, sudden-onset urban response.
- to support current EPS program, policy and practice within the Kathmandu Valley and embedding, training and learning

Introduction

Initial findings

- > Study focuses on community engagement and local and national action in urban disaster management system
- > Methodology: Desk review; 26 individual and group interviews with Red Cross Movement, government, UN, NGOs and donors in Kathmandu; participatory mapping exercises with staff, volunteers and CDMCs



NRCS and Earthquake Preparedness for Safer Communities

- > Two key streams of activities:
 - Capacity-building of first responders
 - Support for NRCS organisational preparedness
- > Part of NRRC flagships 2 and 4, linked to 1 and 5
- > Entry point for understanding NS role in urban preparedness and multi-stakeholder DM system



Key learning points and implications for policy and practice in the Kathmandu Valley

Understanding urban risk and complexity

1. Understanding urban space, land and the built environment
2. Understanding mobility and its operational implications
3. Raising the awareness of the population

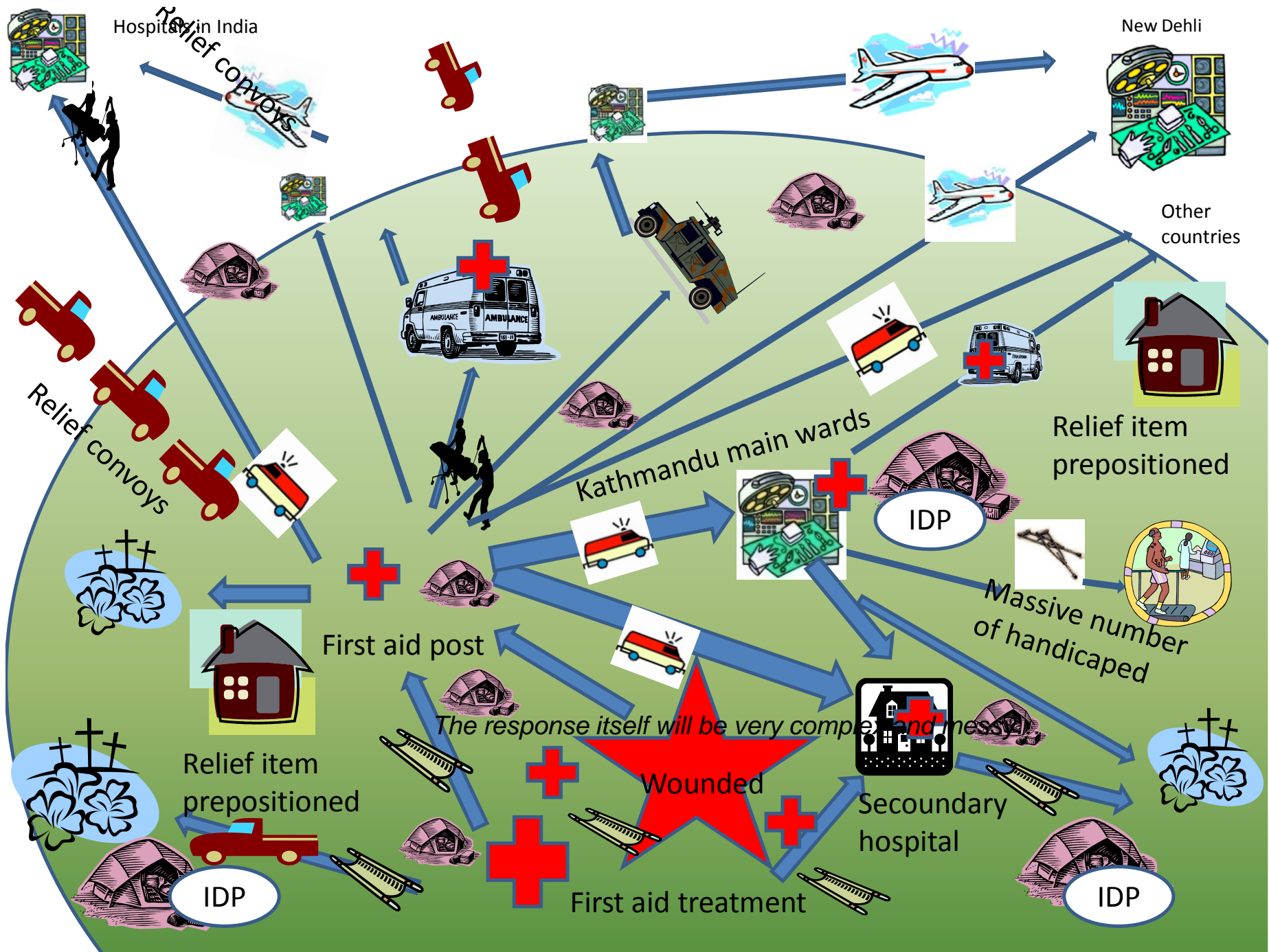
Strengthening preparedness

4. Institutional analysis and the importance of 'connectedness' in a complex urban system
5. Leadership
6. The role of technology
7. Ensuring 'redundancy' – preparing to manage the operation in a 'degraded mode'

Key learning points and implications for policy and practice in the Kathmandu Valley

Managing the response

8. Local leadership in the first phase response
9. 'Domino effects': Dealing with sequential crises
10. Coordination and cooperation in a complex multi-actor response
11. Information and communications management
12. Being alert and agile



Conclusion

- > Still only initial findings, further synthesis and analysis to be completed before study publication
- > However, hopefully illustrates the scale and complexity of the challenge of preparedness in a fast-growing city
- > In developing the study, will draw-up a set of more generalised learning points and implications, linking them to the training and embedding activities we are planning to support across the Red Cross Movement