



PREPARING FOR SHOCK IS PREPAREDNESS THE NEW FRONTIER?

Is investment in preparedness a good use of humanitarian funding? What are the best approaches to funding and programme design to ensure sustainable solutions and community leadership in preparedness programming? How can we inform future programming to ensure we have the right people with the right skills at the right place and time to prepare for and respond to disasters in the most appropriate way?

An independent review into how the UK responds to humanitarian emergencies highlighted the need for greater investment in preparedness. This led the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to launch the three year Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme (DEPP) in 2014, collectively managed by DFID, the Start Network and the CDAC Network. The programme aimed to significantly improve the quality and speed of humanitarian response in countries at risk of natural disasters or conflict related emergencies through strengthening the capacity of national humanitarian staff, governments, preparedness systems and early warning systems.

The programme has generated significant experiences, lessons and evidence that can help inform key debates and issues facing the humanitarian preparedness sector. **The 'Preparing for Shock: Is Preparedness the New Frontier?' global conference** is being organised to provide a platform for the sector to collectively discuss key issues in disaster preparedness programming and help set the future direction for preparedness investments.

PURPOSE AND THEMATIC FOCUS

The purpose of the conference is to provide a platform for stakeholders working with or as part of the disasters and emergencies preparedness sector to debate key issues affecting the sector in order to inform future policy, practice, programming and funding strategies. Join donors, NGOs and networks, government representatives, private sector, academic institutions, community representatives and practitioners to explore lessons, experiences and evidence around four thematic areas and inform the way forward for preparedness.

Thematic Area 1: Return on investment in disaster preparedness.

Investment in disaster preparedness is increasingly gaining impetus but is it worth the effort and what does evidence tell us about the return on this investment?

Under this thematic umbrella we will explore what we mean when we speak about ‘return on investment’ (ROI) in humanitarian preparedness. Does investment in preparedness actually lead to reduced costs and quicker responses of higher quality, and are there particular types of investment we should prioritise over others? We will be discussing the extent to which we are using evidence and tools to inform donors of ROI as part of an effort to improve decision making on investing in preparedness initiatives, and what other approaches can be used.

Thematic Area 2: Communities are by nature resilient.

How do we step back from supporting external leadership to enabling community leadership and involvement in preparedness and subsequent response?

We know that communities working together are powerful leaders and implementers, but we still struggle to balance our desire to enforce what we perceive as ‘strong leadership’ with standing back to enable the power of communities to come to the fore. Drawing on research, real-life experiences and programme examples we will look at how international agencies can better plan for community leadership. In what ways are we ensuring the participation and inclusion of underrepresented groups such as women, the elderly and people with disabilities in response? What are the challenges and possible solutions?

Thematic Area 3: Sustainability of preparedness investments.

How can improved engagement between humanitarian and development actors support solutions to achieve the sustainability of preparedness investments?

To ensure disaster-affected populations’ long-term resilience agencies, governments and donors need to safeguard preparedness investments by making them sustainable. The focus is increasingly moving towards strengthening the capacity of local actors by involving individuals, governments, organisations and systems in the preparedness and response process. Looking at concrete examples and debates we will explore different approaches to localisation at the international level and country levels. Are these approaches aligned across the different levels, are they appropriate to achieve the desired aim, and what does this mean for global policy and the design of preparedness programming going forward?

Thematic Area 4: Smart Thinking, Smart Programming, Smart Funding for preparedness.

Finding the right approach for 2030.

What are the best ways to design, fund and implement preparedness programmes to ensure they are cost effective and delivering the best result with the most impact? We will discuss different financing models and approaches, looking at examples of portfolio approaches, multi-year programming and collective ways of working for effective programming and increased funding reach.