LESSONS FROM BAGHDAD
A shift in approach to urban shelter response

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NRC NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL

UKaid
from the British people

PREFACE

Scope and rationale

This document builds on existing research and guidance on response and recovery in urban crises and aims to contribute to moving the urban conversation forward.

This document challenges the role and current approaches of humanitarian agencies working in urban settings to increase consideration of how humanitarian agencies can best address the complexity of urban crises. This document does not go into detail on land tenure institutions or the many disciplinary perspectives and methods for understanding a context but refers the reader to further information where possible.

In this document there is a strong focus on how a change of approach can be achieved. Through drawing out lessons from the Norwegian Refugee Council's (NRC's) urban programmes in Baghdad this document demonstrates how a different approach was taken in the context of Baghdad and outlines how elements of this can be transferred to response and recovery in other urban settings.

A shift in strategic approach was apparent in NRC's programme in Baghdad. The Baghdad case is an example of how a humanitarian agency has taken a step outside of the more traditional role of service provider to support sheltering processes in both the immediate and longer-term. It pushes the boundaries of how humanitarian agencies define and conceive shelter interventions in urban areas, and challenges shelter actors to look at not simply adapting shelter methodologies to urban settings, but to question how humanitarian agencies can more fundamentally adapt their approach to maximise their added value in the recovery process. The shift in approach – and the process of shifting – highlighted NRC's programme in Baghdad as a case study from which lessons could be drawn.

Audience

This document is aimed at:

Policy makers and decision makers: the document draws out lessons and advice on carrying out analysis and making strategic decisions. It takes a strategic look at how the approach taken by humanitarian agencies influences their ability to add value and have an impact at scale.

Programme managers: the document gives practical advice and examples on the implementation of programmes and how to get things done. It also provides examples of tools that can be used in analysis.

<u>Evaluation or research teams</u>: the document sets up a methodology for programme analysis that could be repeated for other contexts.

Structure

This document is divided into four main chapters:
- Positioning: how to think about things differently
- Analysing: how to understand the context and consider impact
- Strategising: how to make strategic decisions
- Implementing: how to get things done

Through analysis of the Norwegian Refugee Council's (NRC's) urban programmes in Baghdad, the structure of this document provides:
- Practical advice and key lessons on urban programming that are relevant to the general questions posed by humanitarian agencies about urban contexts
- In-depth examples of how these analytical and strategic processes were demonstrated in the Baghdad context

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LESSONS FROM BAGHDAD
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POSITIONING
NRC learned to reposition their approach to urban areas by:
- recognising the influence of, and need to address, problems across multiple institutional, systemic and geographic scales: household, neighbourhood, district, city, regional and national levels
- addressing how interventions could be carried out at different scales and how the different scales connected and interacted with each other: this required not just a change of implementing methodology, but a shift in analysis and strategy

ANALYSING
NRC learned that the process of context analysis was vital in identifying where and how NRC could add value by:
- carrying out and responding to analysis throughout the programme
- using context analysis as the basis for advocacy on the greatest needs and most effective assistance
- carrying out stakeholder, power and interest mapping
- developing an understanding of institutional and legal frameworks
- mapping connections between people and institutions with an interest in or influence over shelter and housing to determine possible entry points

STRATEGISING
NRC learned that a strategic approach involved:
- considering the scope, scale and methods of intervention, including alternatives or indirect approaches
- tackling problems from multiple entry points to increase the likelihood of change
- working at different institutional, systemic and geographic scales and recognising that this requires different skills and decisions about organisational mandate, motivation, funding and capacity
- recognising that scaling up is not only about an increase in beneficiary numbers but can also be acheived through a bigger range of activities; by focusing on acheiving policy or institutional change or building organisational capacity

- using partnerships not only to increase coverage but to work at different scales
- being willing to make strategic trade-offs between different objectives in order to achieve NRC's overall goal
- thinking about how limited resources can have knock-on effects and how short-term interventions may facilitate sustained changes or relationship-building

IMPLEMENTING
NRC's team learned to link their analysis and strategic thinking to programme design by:
- being clear about what NRC was trying to achieve and what investment in analysis and programming would be required to accomplish this
- building a team that could analyse, discuss and explain the pathways of change associated with different programme activities
- building relationships with government while still retaining independence and impartiality
- recognising and persuading internal and external decision-makers in the humanitarian sector that building relationships required dedicated time, funding and skilled people
- acting as a facilitator to establish or reinforce relationships between communities and government which could continue after NRC's initial programmes closed

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance
BPC	Baghdad Provincial Council
BRC	British Red Cross
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management
CCLSR	Civil Centre for Studies and Legal Reform
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CMSC	Community Mobilisation and Service Coordination
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
DC	District Council
DCCM	District Council Coordination Meeting
DEC	Disasters Emergency Committee
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DPU	Development Planning Unit at University College London
ECB	Emergency Capacity Building Project
ELHRA	Enhancing Learning & Research for Humanitarian Assistance
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery
GSC	Global Shelter Cluster
GSDRC	Governance, Social Development Resource Centre
HLP	Housing Land and Property Rights
HPG	Humanitarian Policy Group
IASC	Inter-agency Standing Committee
ICE	Institute for Civil Engineering
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally displaced persons
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
INGO	International non-Governmental Organisation
LC	Local Council
MoMD	Ministry of Migration and Displacement
NCCI	National Coordination Committee of Iraq
NFI	Non Food Item
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PSO	Private Security Organisation
RICC	Returnee Integration Community Centre
SAG	Strategic Advisory Group
SR	Settlement Representatives
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
URD	(Groupe) Urgence, Réhabilitation, Développement
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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GLOSSARY

Adding value
In this document, 'value' in humanitarian intervention is understood in terms of the DAC criteria where valuable interventions use resources in ways that are:
- effective i.e. achieve their stated objective
- efficient i.e. achieve objectives without waste, at optimal or commensurate cost
- relevant and appropriate in the context
- connected i.e. link to and do not undermine longer term objectives
- coherent across sectors
- have an impact on "the lives and livelihoods of aid recipients" (Proudlock, Ramalingam, and Sandison, 2009) and on the wider "social, economic, technical, environmental" context or "on individuals, gender- and age-groups, communities and institutions" (ALNAP, 2006)

'Adding' value thus means ensuring that a humanitarian agency is contributing by:
- intervening because no other agency is able or willing to operate or
- operating in ways that are more valuable (effective, connected etc.) than the alternatives.

Context analysis (strategic analysis)
Context analysis that is able to inform a theory of change is a process of:
- identifying and engaging stakeholders
- discussing the problems and opportunities with stakeholders
- analysing stakeholders' interest in or influence on change
- sharing and documenting assumptions about how change happens

The context analysis in this document is based on (retrospectively) applying the Web of Institutionalisation (see Box 8.) to information gathered through research and interviews. The 'web' is one tool for describing the powerful groups of institutions and people in a context, how these groups are connected together and how change might happen. This approach also captures some of the demographic, historic, economic, social, societal, environmental and political dimensions that characterise the urban context (Groupe URD, 2011a).

Entry points

Entry points are opportunities thought likely to be:

- viable because they are most likely to work (i.e. a humanitarian agency is already active and has pre-existing relationships in place for an activity to start)
- valuable because they are thought more likely to lead to change (i.e. steps on a change pathway) or likely to lead to significant change (i.e. might be scaled up).

In this documents, entry points can be located in the 'web of institutionalisation'.

Humanitarian agencies

The international humanitarian sector comprises non-governmental humanitarian and development organisations, refugee councils, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, faith groups and other organisations.

This document uses the term 'humanitarian agencies' to refer to international organisations with an invitation, mandate or contract to respond to urban crises, while recognising that some of the approaches and activities described may not fall within a traditional humanitarian mandate.

Humanitarian mandates

"Humanitarian agencies are diverse, with differing operating and structural models, mandates and founding principles according to their history" (ELRHA).

Mandates are often defined by an over-arching mission or set of objectives such as saving lives, preventing suffering, fighting poverty or injustice, addressing the rights of vulnerable groups or delivering services. These may also be aligned with humanitarian principles (Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement).

Intervention
Interventions are the activities, projects or programmes that humanitarian agencies undertake to bring about change in a particular context and in line with their mandate, motivation, funding and capacity. Interventions are based on the assumption that a set of actions will cause a change, known as a theory of change.

Broadly interventions can be considered in terms of:
• the **scope** of an intervention, defining whether a humanitarian agency is aiming to provide direct assistance or aiming to enable or influence change (or aiming for a combination of both). Humanitarian agencies may opt for an enabling scope because they recognise that

a) they cannot add value through direct assistance. For example, where multi-storey housing construction is needed, humanitarian agencies are unlikely to be the most effective or appropriate organisations to deliver this; or

b) they can add more value by focusing on enabling people to access housing (Turner, 1988). For example, where the main obstacles to improving living conditions are political or regulatory, humanitarian organisations may be in a unique position between communities, government, and civil society to open dialogue about these obstacles
• a variety of **scales** that might be geographic (settlements, neighbourhoods or cities), systemic (infrastructure systems, supply chains or markets) or institutional (households, communities, ministries or a policy processes)
• **methods** ranging from material distribution for households or directly implementing or contracting construction projects to cash or market-based interventions, participatory planning, training or advocacy (Shelter Centre, 2010).

Precedents
Precedents are similar to pilot projects but where a pilot project tests the practical details of implementation, a precedent establishes a pattern or sets an example of a position or policy shift.

Scale

In this document, scale is geographic (settlements, neighbourhoods or cities), systemic (infrastructure systems, supply chains or markets) or institutional (households, communities, ministries or a policy processes). When the term 'scale' is used in this document it will always be described in terms of whether it is geographic, systemic or institutional.

This document does not use the term scale to refer to the extent or coverage of damage or needs.

Scaling up

Scaling up refers to increasing the remit of a programme and is understood in terms of:

• Quantitative scaling up: an increase of the number of people involved through replication of activities, projects, and initiatives (increase to the citizen sphere)

• Functional scaling up: an increase in the range of projects and programmes into other areas of activity (increase to the delivery sphere)

• Political scaling up: an increase in the focus of projects and programmes to beyond service delivery towards effecting structural, institutional and policy change (increase to the policy sphere)

• Organisational scaling up: an increase in the effectiveness and efficiency of organisations to allow for growth and sustainability, through e.g., increase of funding, networking, increasing capacity, improvement of systems, training (increase to the organisational sphere)

> UN-HABITAT, 2010, Count me in: Surveying for Tenure Security and Urban Land Management, p133

Strategic intervention

In this document, strategic intervention means implementing via:

• multiple entry points at different scales so that programmes add value by taking a multi-pronged approach in response to the interconnected problems and solutions identified by context analysis

• setting precedents so that programmes add value by demonstrating policy ideas at a viable scale

• communicating assumptions and trade-offs so that programme teams can learn and iterate even where context analysis and theories of change are still developing

Theory of Change

Theories of change are developed by analysing the context, defining problems and identifying changes that address the problems. A theory of change has a hypothesis of change (supported by evidence) and assumptions about how a set of activities will lead to change. The hypothesis assumes that there are causal links between action and change: pathways of change.

A theory of change is the basis of a logical framework. In a logical framework the hypothesis is that a set of inputs will lead to outcomes and that these outcomes will lead to an overall impact.

Theories of change have to be developed by stakeholders: people who understand the context, experience the problems or have an interest in or influence on bringing about change. Evidence supports the process of developing a theory of change.

Humanitarian agencies often have to propose a logical framework in a rapidly changing or complex context. This means that the desired impact may have to be defined before the pathways of change and most viable and valuable interventions can be understood. Under these circumstances, context analysis has to be part of an ongoing process of engagement with stakeholders and finding entry points is a useful way to learn about how change really happens.

Trade-offs

Trade-offs are a way of making decisions when not all objectives can be achieved at the same time or when decisions have to be made quickly and on the basis of limited context analysis. Trade-offs involve compromises and do not necessarily result in a perfect or optimal solution but if organisations can account for trade-offs, this can be a useful way of sharing or explaining a decision and learning about the decision-making process once the consequences of a decision have become clear.

There are trade-offs involved in selecting the entry points, precedents and interventions that are viable (most likely to work) or valuable (would make the most difference). Humanitarian agencies also face trade-offs in balancing their mandates, motivations, funding and capacities.

BRIEF HISTORY OF BAGHDAD

Baghdad is the capital city of Iraq, with a population of approximately 7.26m in 2011 (UN-HABITAT, 2012). It lies within the governorate of the same name, which is the smallest but most densely populated in Iraq and constitutes 24% of Iraq's overall population. The city covers an area of 596km2 with a population density of 9,250 per km2 (NCCI, 2010). As the capital it is the economic, political and cultural centre of Iraq, and has played an important role in both ancient and more recent times. The city contains the majority of Iraq's industries, such as oil refining, the making of carpets, leather, textiles, cement, tobacco products and arrack (a type of liquor) as well as military industries. Baghdad contains several buildings and archaeological sites from the Abbasid and Ottoman eras, as well as several museums and three universities, and is the seat of the national government in Iraq (CIA, 2013).

Following WWII Baghdad experienced rapid economic and population growth, peaking in 1970 and maintaining a steady growth rate of about 2% per annum since then (UN-HABITAT, 2012). Growing revenues from the country's oil reserves funded large housing and infrastructure projects through the 1960s and 70s. However, the onset of

Fig. 1. Neighbourhood layout in Al-Bustan informal settlement
Photo credit: Hussein Mujbil © NRC 2013

the Iran-Iraq war in 1980 and then the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and subsequent Gulf War in 1990 stagnated economic development, affecting large portions of the city's infrastructure and industrial capacity as heavy air attacks inflicted damage on housing, electrical power, and water services. Subsequent international sanctions prevented large amounts of investment in reconstruction, and as in-migration continued living conditions deteriorated and housing informality increased, as shown in Fig. 1-3. Following the US-led invasion in 2003, Baghdad has experienced sectarian fighting which has scarred the city, causing displacement to and within the city. Violence peaked in 2006-2007, and although since then there have been decreased levels of violence allowing some of the population to return to their place of origin, sectarian divisions in the city remain pronounced and security continues to be precarious (UNHCR, 2012).

Since 2010 there has been a concerted effort by the government of Iraq to rebuild Baghdad, improve services and increase the available housing stock. The government of Iraq's 2011 Comprehensive Plan to End Displacement is predominantly focused on the return of the displaced population to their place of origin.

Fig. 2. Incremental construction in Al-Hamidiya informal settlement
Photo credit: Hussein Mujbil © NRC 2013

Fig. 3. Interior of a home in Al-Ramadiniya informal settlement
Photo credit: Hussein Mujbil © NRC 2013

1. POSITIONING
How to think about things differently

> **POSITIONING**
> **NRC learned to reposition their approach to urban areas by:**
> - recognising the influence of, and need to address, problems across multiple institutional, systemic and geographic scales: household, neighbourhood, district, city, regional and national levels
> - addressing how interventions could be carried out at different scales and how the different scales connected and interacted with each other: this required not just a change of implementing methodology, but a shift in analysis and strategy

"The need to respond to more urban disasters is now inevitable. The question is, how? Two broad ways of seeing this are: either to carry out emergency response in an urban context; or, to carry out urban planning and redevelopment in an emergency context"
> DEC, 2011, Humanitarian Emergency Response Review, p6

The first section of this chapter summarises the challenges, opportunities, lessons and changes that are emerging from the international humanitarian sector's urban conversation. The second section highlights four key questions for thinking about urban intervention that have come from NRC's experience in Baghdad.

This document does not repeat the guidance covered in other publications but rather aims to build upon it and keep the conversation moving forwards. Further information on the challenges and opportunities of urban contexts is referred to throughout the text.

> **Humanitarian agencies**
> The international humanitarian sector comprises non-governmental humanitarian and development organisations, refugee councils, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, faith groups and other organisations.
>
> This document uses the term 'humanitarian agencies' to refer to international organisations with an invitation, mandate or contract to respond to an urban disaster, while recognising that some of the approaches and activities described may not fall within a traditional humanitarian mandate.

> **Humanitarian mandates**
>
> "Humanitarian agencies are diverse, with differing operating and structural models, mandates and founding principles according to their history" (ELRHA website).
>
> Mandates are often defined by an over-arching mission or set of objectives such as saving lives, preventing suffering, fighting poverty or injustice, addressing the rights of vulnerable groups or delivering services. These may also be aligned with humanitarian principles (Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement).

1.1   Urban conversation

1.1.1   Challenges and Opportunities

The urban conversation within the humanitarian sector has received considerable attention in recent years.

Humanitarian action in urban areas is expected to increase as more refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and vulnerable populations require assistance in urban settings.
> > IFRC, 2010, World Disasters Report 2010: Focus on Urban Risk
> > GFDRR, 2010, Natural Hazards, Unnatural Disasters Chapter 6 Coming Game-Changers? Burgeoning Cities, Climate Change, and Climate-Induced Catastrophes
> > Dodman et al., 2013, Understanding the nature and scale of urban risk in low- and middle-income countries and its implications for humanitarian preparedness planning and response.

Urban areas are acknowledged by the international humanitarian sector to be more complex programmatic environments than rural settings due to their density of population, complex development processes and stakeholder relationships, interconnected systems and intricate social and institutional networks.

These factors pose strategic and operational challenges to humanitarian agencies, particularly regarding community engagement, holistic interventions, scaling up, working with political stakeholders and mobilising teams with appropriate capacity and experience. Urban contexts also present opportunities to improve humanitarian response because they may offer access to a larger pool of skilled people, more developed and diverse markets, greater scrutiny by urban dwellers and the press and proximity to institutions and decision makers.

1.1.2 Lessons

Learning from history
Humanitarian agencies are increasingly recognising that historical research is important not just for understanding the longer term impacts of humanitarian assistance but for understanding and analysing the institutions and decision processes of the humanitarian system. The humanitarian sector continues to look at historical examples of urban crises, recovery and development and at cases where governments have not invited the international community to provide support. Humanitarian agencies are also looking to learn from the development sector where there is a longer institutional history of interventions in urban settings.

> UN Habitat, 2010, Count me in: Surveying for Tenure Security and Urban Land Management
> HPG Working Paper 2013, A history of the humanitarian system: Western origins and foundations
> Groupe URD 2011, Humanitarian aid in urban settings: Current practice, future challenges
> Killing, 2011, Towards a wider process of sheltering: the role of urban design in humanitarian response

Learning from recent responses
While there are many general tools and handbooks available to support humanitarian response and recovery, it has been suggested that more guidance and tools tailored to the urban environment are needed.

> UN-HABITAT, 2011, Meeting Humanitarian Challenges in Urban Areas: Review of Urban Humanitarian Challenges in Port-au-Prince, Manila, Nairobi, Eldoret.
> IASC, 2010, IASC Strategy: Meeting Humanitarian Challenges in Urban Areas

Humanitarian agencies are now learning from evaluations of the urban programmes they have implemented to produce new urban guidelines and tools including:

- CRS, 2012, Learning from the urban transitional shelter response in Haiti.
- BRC, 2012, Learning from the City: British Red Cross Urban Learning Project Scoping Study
- ALNAP, 2012, Responding to urban disasters: Learning from previous relief and recovery operations
- HPG/IDMC/IRC, 2013, Sanctuary in the city?
- Groupe URD, 2011, Humanitarian Aid on the Move: Cities and Crises
- IFRC/SKAT, 2012, Sustainable Reconstruction in Urban Areas: A Handbook

Learning in the humanitarian shelter sector

There is broad acceptance of the concept of sheltering as a process: that the provision of humanitarian aid may contribute, fit within or act as part of the means, but is not the end of wider processes of housing. To this end and for at least a decade, guidelines in the international humanitarian shelter sector have sought to broaden the scope, scale and methods of shelter interventions from material or kit distributions to other shelter-related support or enabling approaches. These methods of assistance are aimed at households or at the geographic scale of a settlement.

> IFRC, 2013, "How we do shelter"
> Shelter Centre, 2010, Shelter after Disaster: strategies for transitional settlement and reconstruction
> UNDRO, 1978, Shelter after Disaster

NRC's Urban Shelter Guidelines (2010) promoted a livelihoods approach to broaden the scale of shelter interventions to include the systems (infrastructure and services) and institutions (policies, institutions and processes) surrounding households.

> NRC/Shelter Centre, 2010, Urban Shelter Guidelines

1.1.3   Changes

This learning process has focused attention on neighbourhoods, cash, integrated projects and land issues, in particular:

- Scales of intervention: consideration of the community or neighbourhood scale as opposed to solely focusing on households. This is seen for example in an increase in discussions and documentation on integrated neighbourhood approaches and an increased focus on settlement planning.
- Methods of intervention: recognition that urban environments are cash economies. This can be seen for example in literature and policy on delivering shelter support through cash-based approaches or market interventions such as rental subsidies.
- Organisational set up: anecdotal evidence that humanitarian agencies are restructuring their field teams in order to allow for more holistic and less 'siloed' programming at neighbourhood level (often in line with integrated neighbourhood approaches). New roles such as government liaison officers or urban specialists in coordination teams are also increasingly considered in order to better engage with the complexity of stakeholders and existing policies and systems.
  > BRC, 2012, Learning from the City: British Red Cross Urban Learning Project Scoping Study
- Housing, land and property rights (HLP): consideration of housing, land and property rights as a more central concern. The Global Shelter Cluster highlighted HLP as a Thematic Priority and the Regulatory Barriers working group has developed a one day HLP and Shelter Training (forthcoming) to

increase the capacity of humanitarian agencies to address HLP within their shelter programming.

> Global Shelter Cluster, 2013, Thematic Priorities
> NRC/IFRC, 2014, Tenure security, land rights and the provision of humanitarian shelter

1.2 Positioning humanitarian response

1.2.1 Applying lessons to specific contexts

Lessons and guidelines have described the general characteristics of urban areas; identified the challenges and opportunities for humanitarian agencies involved in response and recovery after urban crises; and broadened ideas of humanitarian intervention.

These broader ideas of humanitarian intervention consider:

- the scope for humanitarian agencies to intervene not only to provide direct assistance but also to enable or influence other change processes
- interventions at a variety of scales that might be geographic (settlement, neighbourhood or city), systemic (infrastructure system, supply chain or market) or institutional (household, community, ministerial or a policy process)
- moving from methods based on material distribution or directly implementing or contracting construction projects to cash or market-based interventions, participatory planning, training or advocacy.

This document builds on this learning by showing how NRC in Iraq addressed the four key questions for thinking about urban intervention that have come from their experience in Baghdad.

1. How to position humanitarian assistance to add value given the context and the humanitarian agency's unique position in terms of mandate, motivation, funding and capacities
2. How to analyse the context, make decisions and account for decisions about which scales, scopes and methods of intervention are likely to be viable and valuable
3. How to intervene strategically when programmes must simultaneously follow a logical theory of change and adapt or iterate as more is learnt about the context or as other things change
4. How to implement with the teams on the ground given the context, mandate, motivation, funding and capacities

Adding value

In this document, 'value' in humanitarian intervention is understood in terms of the DAC criteria where valuable interventions use resources in ways that are:

- effective i.e. achieve their stated objective
- efficient i.e. achieve objectives without waste, at optimal or commensurate cost
- relevant and appropriate in the context
- connected i.e. link to and do not undermine longer term objectives
- coherent across sectors
- have an impact on "the lives and livelihoods of aid recipients" (Proudlock, Ramalingam, and Sandison 2009) and on the wider "social, economic, technical, environmental" context or "on individuals, gender- and age-groups, communities and institutions" (ALNAP 2006)

'Adding' value thus means ensuring that a humanitarian agency is contributing by:

- intervening because no other agency is able or willing to operate or
- operating in ways that are more valuable (effective, connected etc.) than the alternatives.

Fig. 4. A family make their home in Al-Hamidiya informal settlement
Photo credit: Hussein Mujbil © NRC 2013

1.2.2   Positioning in NRC

BOX 1. NRC's position in Iraq: Adding value through humanitarian assistance programmes in Baghdad

NRC's Humanitarian Mandate

"NRC is an independent humanitarian non-governmental organisation. NRC is dedicated to providing assistance and protection to refugees and internally displaced persons through humanitarian interventions, and by facilitating durable solutions to forced displacement."

NRC started programme activities in Iraq in 2010. This was in line with its mandate - to provide assistance and protection to IDPs and facilitate durable solutions to forced displacement - and in response to data showing that:
- 1 million Iraqis had been internally displaced since 2006-2007 (USIP, 2009)
- 50% of the registered IDPs resided in informal settlements, illegally occupying government land and public buildings (UNHCR, 2012)
- >200,000 IDPs, in addition to urban dwellers and other impoverished persons, were living in 125 (registered) informal settlements in Baghdad (UNHCR, 2012)
- Displaced families continued to endure sub-standard living conditions with little to no access to basic services (NRC Assessment Report, 2010)

Analysis of the context also showed that:
- the majority of the IDPs were not willing or able to return to their places of habitual residence before displacement
- the government indicated greater openness for relocation of these populations rather than integration into Baghdad - an alternative durable solution
- IDPs were in a vulnerable situation because multiple legal and administrative barriers limit their access to services, rights and entitlements such as education, healthcare and food rations
- these barriers and associated vulnerabilities were not unique to the displaced population: other people in the city were facing similar challenges

NRC was in a unique position because the organisation had experience of rights-based interventions - requiring engagement with governments - and of taking a facilitating role in supporting IDPs to achieve durable solutions. NRC is also committed to principles of humanity, neutrality, independence, and impartiality.

NRC recognised:

- that these principles did not preclude efforts to understand the position and motivations of government
- that government decision-makers and ministries were key institutions with influence over and interests in the living conditions of different population groups
- that dialogue was necessary to address holistically the plight of different vulnerable groups
- that meaningful dialogue, mindful of NRC's principles, would depend on careful relationship building with government stakeholders.

NRC was then able to add value in this context by mobilising IDP communities in the informal settlements of Baghdad while promoting greater willingness on the part of local authorities to engage with IDP representatives and seek practical solutions to improve access to services, rights and entitlements in line with those enjoyed by other Baghdad residents and towards the fulfilment of the right to adequate housing.

From January 2011 – December 2013 NRC carried out capacity building for IDP representatives as well as district and provincial authorities and established a coordination mechanism, chaired by the district councils, that on a monthly basis brings together district council members and settlement representatives to discuss problems and find solutions. Thus, the project increased IDP access to administrative and political decision makers while increasing the government's understanding of the situation of IDPs and the government's willingness to assist. IDPs.

NRC also provided direct assistance to a number of families by upgrading shelter and WASH facilities. This activity was prioritised for households for whom the limited access to services was having a particularly acute impact (i.e. family members also had specific, individual vulnerabilities).

In partnership with UN-HABITAT, from November 2011 – December 2013 NRC also implemented pilot projects in three informal settlements to trial land sharing, relocation and in situ upgrading. Based on these pilot projects, NRC was able to engage with national and provincial levels of government and promote acceptance and support for a range of alternatives for IDPs unable to return to their original homes. In order to support this, a communication and advocacy programme aimed at national level ministries was also implemented from September 2012 which continued into 2014.

2. ANALYSING
How to understand the context and develop a theory of change

> **ANALYSING**
> **NRC learned that the process of context analysis was vital in identifying where and how NRC could add value by:**
> - carrying out and responding to analysis throughout the programme
> - carrying out stakeholder, power and interest mapping
> - developing an understanding of institutional and legal frameworks
> - researching the historical and cultural context of urbanisation and housing in Baghdad
> - mapping connections between people and institutions with an interest in or influence over shelter and housing to determine possible entry points
> - using context analysis as the basis for advocacy on the greatest needs and most effective assistance

This chapter looks at context analysis and why it is important that the humanitarian system resource this process. Using examples from NRC's Baghdad programmes, the following sections explain NRC's process of context analysis, why it is important, when and how to apply analysis tools, and what to do with the insights gained.

Covering the many methods for analysing context is beyond the scope of this document: the aim here is to show that with the right resources, a level of context analysis can be carried out rapidly and can set in motion a process for understanding the positions of stakeholders, including humanitarian agencies; the influences of humanitarian interventions in the context and vice versa; and the day to day operational environment.

Stakeholders and institutions exist in their historical and cultural context. Describing institutions in terms of their mandates, motivations, funding and capacities is a useful first step but history and culture - and their importance in understanding not just what is happening but why - are complex and hard to reduce to simple indicators. It is also important for context analysis to be sensitive to the legacy of past events and different historical narratives and perspectives.

2.1 Context analysis

2.1.1 What is context analysis?

Humanitarian agencies recognise the need to adapt to the specific context and to engage with stakeholders involved in a given response. Context analysis is an opportunity to draw out and be aware of political and legal frameworks, environmental, social and

economic factors, cultural norms and historical legacies as well as various institutions and population groups that may need to be considered in planning, implementing and evaluating humanitarian interventions.

Constraints on context analysis may be a lack of time or resources, the need for swift action or the difficulty of finding and accessing relevant and reliable information or of building the necessary relationships with stakeholders.

Context analysis is not a needs assessment: the emphasis is on understanding what the data means rather than collecting data about the extent of the crisis. Additional information should be sought on needs, damage and the capacities of households and communities to respond.

2.1.2   Why is context analysis important?

Context analysis is important because it helps humanitarian agencies:
- Avoid unintentional violation of the 'do no harm' principle
- Identify stakeholders in terms of their capacity, interest in and influence over humanitarian response
- Understand the relationships between stakeholders and where partnership, coordination and advocacy could add value
- Appreciate the existing frameworks, institutions, norms, systems and power structures that will affect humanitarian action and vice versa
- Develop a logical framework (see Glossary: Theory of change) based on analysis of the entry points and activities that will be most valuable in addressing humanitarian needs (see Glossary: Entry points)
- Share and corroborate the programme assumptions, risks and trade-offs (see Glossary: Trade-offs) involved in planning implementing programmes
- Communicate by informing situation reports, funding proposals and advocacy to humanitarian donors

Returning to early context analysis after an intervention also helps agencies to learn not just what activities succeeded or failed but why i.e. did the context analysis lead to good decisions? Do the lessons learned apply to any context or just to the particular pre-conditions of this case?

Theory of Change

Theories of change are developed by analysing the context, defining problems and identifying changes that address the problems. A theory of change has a hypothesis of change (supported by evidence) and assumptions about how a set of activities will lead to change. The hypothesis assumes that there are causal links between action and change: pathways of change.

A theory of change is the basis of a logical framework. In a logical framework the hypothesis is that a set of inputs will lead to outcomes and that these outcomes will lead to an overall impact.

Theories of change have to be developed by stakeholders: people who understand the context, experience the problems or have an interest in or influence on bringing about change. Evidence supports the process of developing a theory of change.

Humanitarian agencies often have to propose a logical framework in a rapidly changing or complex context. This means that the desired impact may have to be defined before the pathways of change and most viable and valuable interventions can be understood. Under these circumstances, context analysis has to be part of an ongoing process of engagement with stakeholders and finding entry points is a useful way to learn about how change really happens.

Context analysis (strategic analysis)

Context analysis that is able to inform a theory of change is a process of:
- identifying and engaging stakeholders,
- discussing the problems and opportunities with stakeholders
- analysing stakeholders' interest in or influence on change
- sharing and documenting assumptions about how change happens.

The context analysis in this document is based on (retrospectively) applying the Web of Institutionalisation (see Box 8.) to information gathered through research and interviews. The 'web' is one tool for describing the powerful groups of institutions and people in a context, how these groups are connected together and how change might happen. This approach also captures some of the demographic, historic, economic, social, societal, environmental and political dimensions that characterise the urban context (Groupe URD, 2011a).

2.1.3   When should context analysis be carried out?

Context analysis is a process of building a shared understanding and has to be part of ongoing engagement with stakeholders. Rapid context analysis will inform early decisions, support the assumptions in a logical framework (theory of change) and can be revisited with stakeholders and as more information becomes available.

Periodic reviews need to be built into:
- project and risk management e.g. by allocating time and resources to analysis; by including periodic review of programme assumptions and risks in meeting agendas and minutes; or by using decision-trackers to account for and share decisions;
- monitoring, evaluation and learning systems e.g. communicating and setting realistic milestones and targets and including opportunities to discuss and document analysis in mid-term and after action reviews;
- team building e.g. by including opportunities to discuss and document analysis in staff inductions, briefings and handovers.

BOX 2. Engaging teams in context analysis

NRC brought in a Communications and Advocacy Advisor to support the Community Mobilisation and Service Coordination (CMSC) programme towards the end of 2012. On her arrival, she brought NRC staff together for a problem analysis workshop. Problem trees and context analysis tools were used to identify the root causes behind living conditions in the informal settlements. This was important for her, as a new team member, and for the project team because it allowed the team to reflect on programme activities so far, gain a shared understanding of the context and decide how and where to focus future activities.

Initial capacity building activities in the informal settlements and engagement with local authorities revealed that IDPs were living in substandard housing and had limited access to services that were available to other residents, such as access to food subsidies, healthcare and education. Although sub-district and district councils increasingly recognised the challenges faced by IDPs, their mandate prohibited them from delivery services to informal settlements and their limited funding meant that However, despite increased willingness in local authorities, the progress made was often ad hoc and on a case-by-case basis.

The analysis revealed:
- Neighbourhood councils recognised the problems and had a growing interest in addressing them but did not have the mandate or funding to

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influence the situation

- IDPs lack of official status and negative perceptions of IDPs among the wider population created a lack of political will to address the problem at a national level and was influencing the national government's preference for relocation rather than integration of IDPs
- Ongoing sectarian divisions and the associated population movements impacted the political demographic of an area
- Legal barriers existed which prevented the provision of permanent infrastructure to informal settlements which could not be overcome without suuport from higher levels of government

On the basis of this analysis, NRC decided to put greater emphasis on influencing the willingness of national and provincial levels of government to engage in addressing the living conditions of IDPs. NRC subsequently negotiated an agreement with UNHCR to include a specific awareness-raising component aimed at building relationships with interested stakeholders in the Provincial Council and National Ministries in order to increase political will. As a result, NRC increased advocacy aimed at higher levels of government in 2013 and this was continued into 2014.

This process of context analysis was used to justify and advocate clearly for the need for specific interventions. The arrival of a new staff member provided a useful marker in time for analysing the situation and assessing the changes that had occurred, as well as providing a valuable induction for the newly arrived team member.

2.1.4   Where can humanitarian agencies get information?

Context analysis depends on a process of gathering and interpreting information. Ahead of time or in the early period of response, there is often a lack of information and stakeholder relationships are limited or disrupted. As a response evolves, the problem becomes one of sifting through vast amounts of information and understanding what is relevant, important and reliable.

Information on the pre-crisis context is crucial and sources include: national government ministries and national census or statistics bureaux; humanitarian cluster websites; major donor websites (e.g. USAID host a Land Tenure and Property Rights Portal); sites such as the online libraries and archives of the World Bank and UN-HABITAT which hold information on specific cities; open access academic articles; and the work of local and specialist research institutions.

BOX 3. Valuing people in the process of context analysis

NRC acknowledged and valued the insights, knowledge and experience of experienced staff and stakeholders by taking the time to discuss not only the context but also specific interactions and meetings.

Existing Staff
Existing, experienced staff members were better able to decode the environment and relationships between different stakeholders. Some staff had been employed by other stakeholders in the past and were thus able to provide insights on organisational mandates and capacities as well as the decision-making power and political will of individual officials. For example, one key informant interviewed for this post-programme analysis gave an example of how a national staff member gave advice on how to approach a discussion with a senior civil servant. in order to engage sensitively and begin to build rapport.

This allowed interactions to be tailored to the needs or preferences of individual stakeholders and increase the likelihood of achieving the desired outcome.

Partnership
Key informants interviewed for this post-programme analysis acknowledged that NRC's understanding of the detail on government policies and intentions was lacking until the partnership with UN-HABITAT was established. The additional knowledge and relationships gained through UN-HABITAT showed where further programme activities could be focussed and connections that could be developed or built upon.

Valuing the knowledge, experience and networks of staff members in context analysis, while at the same time recognising gaps in this knowledge, enabled NRC to set useful precedents and to identify the most viable and valuable entry points for changing the living conditions of IDPs.

Before and during a crisis it may be possible to resource research and analysis via partnerships with local universities, research centres or Community Based Organisations. This can also be a way of sharing information from a broader range of sources or in languages that are otherwise not directly accessible to international humanitarian agencies.

During humanitarian response, it is important to share and corroborate context analysis with stakeholders through:
- Briefings by longstanding staff and interviews with new team members experienced in the context
- Meetings with representatives of government, communities, civil society, professional associations and academic institutions
- Interviews or workshops with people who have worked on similar issues in the same context

Each of these sources has strengths and weaknesses. Information needs to be triangulated or cross-referenced and critically analysed to discuss potential biases or limitations with consideration given to who has produced the information, for what purpose and at what level of disaggregation and detail.

For a breakdown of potential sources where relevant information can be found, see Section 4.1.

2.2   Analysing: Stakeholders and power/influence

2.2.1   What is stakeholder analysis?

Stakeholder analysis in the humanitarian sector identifies the different people and institutions with interest in and influence over humanitarian response. Comprehensive stakeholder analysis can avoid the unintentional exclusion of particular groups and help to build a shared understanding of the context, problems, assumptions and objectives of intervention. Stakeholder analysis also helps to show where partnership, coordination and advocacy could add value, particularly where analysis illustrates the relationships between stakeholders and the opportunities and constraints associated with their mandates, motivations, funding and capacities.

2.2.2   What tools are available for stakeholder analysis?

Stakeholder analysis is a process of identifying people and institutions, their relationships and their power to influence. The following tools illustrate steps in this process.

Disaggregated lists: listing individual and institutional stakeholders by sector or level of government is a simple way of:
- starting to discuss and document the context in a format that can be checked and re-checked
- identifying key contacts
- requesting and planning preliminary meetings
- showing gaps in information

BOX 4. Stakeholder list model

A disaggregated list of stakeholders with an interest in or influence over the living conditions of urban IDPs in Iraq shows key institutions and gaps in information, such as in the Private/National box below (produced in post-programme analysis).

Level	Governmental	Private Sector	Civil Society
National	Ministry of Construction and Housing Ministry of Planning Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works Ministry of Displacement and Migration Ministry of Finance Ministry of Justice Prime Minister's Office Council of Ministers		
Provincial	Baghdad Provincial Council General Directorate of MoMPW		
District	Baghdad Municipality District Councils	Utility Providers	
Local	Neighbourhood councils	Local contractors	Informal settlement residents Host communities Religious groups
International	Coalition forces	Private Security Organisations	Humanitarian agencies International Organisations Donors

Stakeholder relationships diagram: drawing the different groups and the relationships between them can be useful for:

- indicating or reiterating the roles or reporting hierarchies of stakeholders in meetings or workshops
- showing the relationships between stakeholders and analysing with programme teams and other stakeholders whether these relationships are relevant and/or strong/weak

BOX 5. Stakeholder relationship model

A stakeholder relationship model for Baghdad can be used to show the many institutions and groups involved in shelter, housing and urbanisation and to highlight disconnected or excluded groups (produced in post-programme analysis).
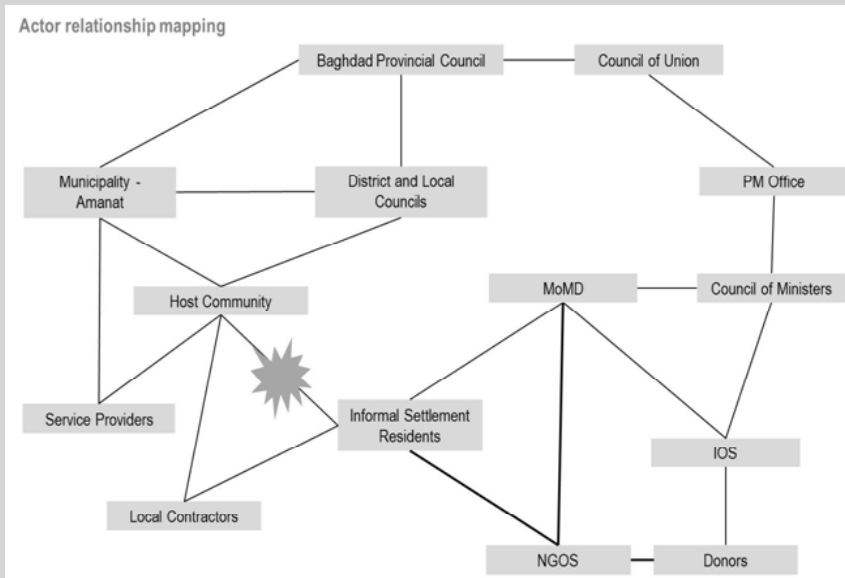
Power/interest model: mapping the individuals and institutions in terms of their perceived power to influence the situation and their interest in making changes can be useful for:
- identifying which stakeholders it would be most valuable to engage with
- deciding what sort of engagement is likely to be valuable e.g. raising awareness of a problem for those with influence but no interest; building capacity of those with an interest but no power to influence the situation; or creating opportunities for the least powerful to get their voices heard

BOX 6. Power/interest model

A power/interest model for Iraq can show that the groups with the greatest interest in shelter and housing conditions may have the least power to influence them (produced in post-programme analysis).

POWER

Prime Ministers Office

Council of Ministers

BPC

Ministries in Housing & Construction

MoMD

Donors

INTEREST

Municipality   DC & LCs

UN & IOs

Service providers

INGOs

Local contractors

Host communities

PSOs

Coalition forces

Informal settlement residents

Goal: durable shelter solutions for IDPs
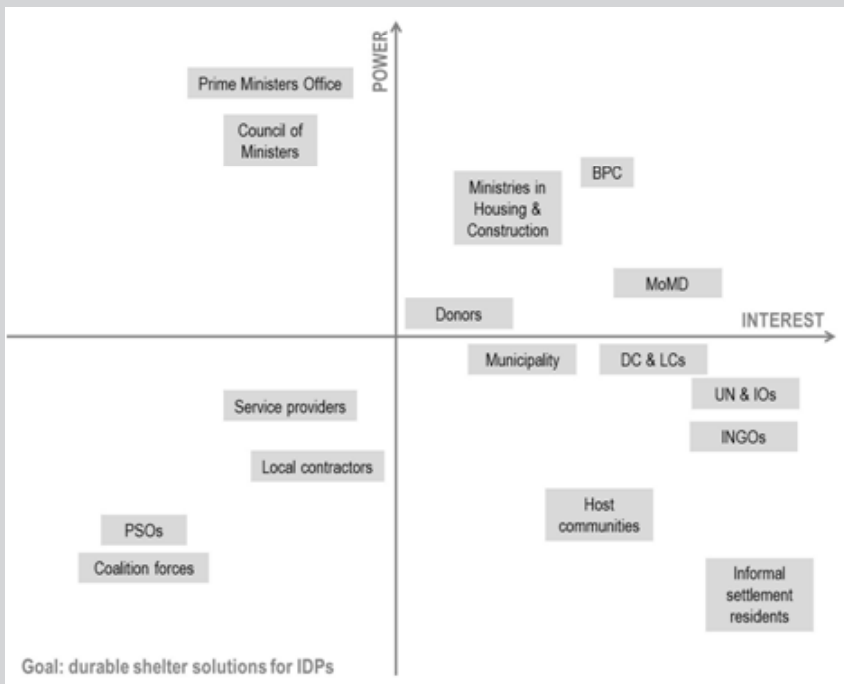
2.3   Analysing: Institutional and legal frameworks

2.3.1   What is institutional analysis?

Institutional analysis builds on stakeholder analysis and early stakeholder engagement. Analysis of the institutional context prior to and in light of international humanitarian intervention seeks to understand:
- the respective roles and responsibilities of key institutions
- the policies, plans and constitutional and customary legal frameworks relating to shelter, housing and urbanisation
- the entitlements of different population groups and the obligations or mandate of government to provide support to these groups
- the systems through which people access help or through which government delivers support
- potential regulatory barriers, for example, in providing support or services to people who do not own the land they live on
- the ways in which housing has typically been provided or accessed and the prevalent tenure arrangements, building typologies, construction methods and services available

Institutional analysis uses information on laws and constitutions, regulatory frameworks at national, regional and local level, policy documents, customary laws and leadership structures. Laws and customs may vary considerably within the same country and formal regulations may not reflect the day to day reality. Analysis of specific frameworks or programmes that exist to facilitate access to land and housing may be required alongside gaining insights gained from staff, partners and stakeholders.

2.3.2   What tools are available for institutional analysis?

Institutional analysis is a process and the following tools illustrate steps in this process.

Roles and responsibilities tables: listing stakeholders against their areas of responsibility is useful for:
- indicating or reiterating the roles and responsibilities
- revealing gaps or overlaps in responsibility
- showing potential involvement of different stakeholders in preparedness, response and longer term recovery.
    > BRC, 2012, Learning from the City: British Red Cross Urban Learning Project Scoping Study, p42

BOX 7. Roles and responsibilities mapping

A table showing areas of responsibility in Iraq (produced in post-programme analysis) suggests, for example, that the ministry of public works has a key role in infrastructure and the built environment; that more than one ministry may be involved in land use and zoning decisions; and that national ministries and provincial councils are responsible for aspects of health and education.

	Built Environment	Displacement	Cadastre	Land Transfer	Land Use/Zoning	Building Codes	**Infrastructure**	Tax	Sewage	Electricity	Roads	Drainage	Water	**Services**	Social Welfare	Transport	Healthcare	Schools	Rubbish	Fire
Ministry of Migration and Displacement		X																		
Ministry of Construction and Housing						X														
Ministry of Planning					X															
Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works										X	X	X	X							
Ministry of Finance				X				X												
Ministry of Justice			X																	
Prime Ministers Office		X	X																	
Council of Ministers		X	X																	
Baghdad Provincial Council								X									X	X		
District Councils																				
Local Councils																				
Municipality of Baghdad																		X	X	X
Ministry of Electricity										X										
Ministry of Education																		X		
Ministry of Health																	X			
Ministry of Social and Labour Affairs															X					

Land tenure institutions: illustrating land management systems and the formal and informal institutional and legal frameworks that surround them enables better understanding of different forms of tenure, and how land is managed and transferred. This is beyond the scope of this document but more information can be found in:
- IFRC/SKAT, 2010, Sustainable Reconstruction in Urban Areas: A Handbook, p29.
- FAO, 2011, Assessing and Responding to Land Tenure Issues in Disaster Risk Management, Module 4
- Global Shelter Cluster, 2013, Land Rights and Shelter: The Due Diligence Standard
- UN-HABITAT, 2010, Count me in
- Global Land Tool Network [online resource]
- Global Protection Cluster, 2013, Top Ten Resources for Shelter Actors
- Malany, 2014, Addressing the Land Issue: Tackling land issues in shelter programming after disasters

2.4 Analysing: institutions, relationships, power and change in context

The humanitarian sector has a variety of tools for linking context and institutional analysis to programme design. This includes tools and guidance on:

- Identifying issues that interact with relief, rehabilitation and recovery programming but that cannot be addressed by humanitarian agencies
    > IFRC, 2003, Better Programming Initiative, p11
- Identifying root causes in conflict analysis
    > Oxfam, 2012, The Disaster Crunch Model, p6
- Identifying the potential for political economy analysis in humanitarian contexts
    > British Red Cross, 2012, Learning from the City, p44
    > DFID, 2009, Political Economy Analysis How To Note
    > GSDRC, 2013, Tools for political economy analysis

This document draws together stakeholder and institutional analysis by (retrospectively) applying the 'Web of Institutionalisation' to information gathered through research and interviews on NRC's programmes in the context of Baghdad. The 'web' is one tool for organising context analysis and describing the powerful groups of institutions and people in a context, how these groups interact and how change might happen and be sustained. This approach also captures some of the demographic, historic, economic, social, societal, environmental and political dimensions that characterise the urban context.

2.4.1 What is the Web of Institutionalisation?

The web is a framework for gathering and analysing information and can be used as a diagnostic tool, to determine potential entry points within the context, and as a strategy development tool, to consider how interventions may affect the wider situation or highlight the limitations of a particular intervention in eliciting change.

> Levy, 1996. The 'Web of Institutionalisation' was developed by Caren Levy of the Development Planning Unit at University College London as a tool within the field of Gender and Policy Planning. Since then, it has been widely used as a diagnostic and strategy development tool to understand the opportunities and constraints in a variety of contexts and to determine how programmes should address specific issues or target identified entry points. In particular, it has been applied by UN-HABITAT (see UN-HABITAT, 2006) and Architecture sans Frontieres in their Change by Design workshops (ASF, 2012).

The 'Web' is organised into four 'spheres': the Citizen Sphere, the Policy Sphere, the Organisational Sphere, and the Delivery Sphere. Within these spheres sit 13 elements known as 'sites of power'. These are regarded as critical for understanding the interactions between stakeholders and the process of change in any given context.

For a description of the various 'sites of power' and how to use the model see the Resources section at the back of this book.

2.4.2   Why is the 'web' useful?

For humanitarian agencies primarily working with vulnerable individuals and communities (the 'Citizen Sphere' in the web) the 'web' supports consideration of:
- the effect of other spheres on the theories of change and programme assumptions that humanitarian agencies develop for humanitarian responses in urban areas
- the elements involved in creating and sustaining change and what these mean for intervention
- opportunities and constraints of humanitarian action presented by the context and the mandates, motivation, funding and capacities of humanitarian agencies
- entry points for intervention
- opportunities and constraints for scaling up humanitarian interventions through partnership, coordination or advocacy

BOX 8. Post-programme analysis through the Web of Institutionalisation

During this post-programme analysis of the Baghdad case study, the web of institutionalisation was used to (retrospectively) understand the context as it was when NRC arrived in Baghdad in 2010. This proved a useful tool for navigating and prioritising a large amounts of information.

The 'web of institutionalisation' was used to understand the landscape in which programme decisions were made and to explore why particular strategies, entry points and interventions were or were not able to elicit change. The web provided a framework for organising desktop research and primary data from key informant interviews and for traingulating and prioritising the most relevant material.

The four spheres as they related to durable housing for IDPs in Baghdad were:
- The citizen sphere – elements which relate primarily to how IDPs express and exercise their rights as citizens
- The policy sphere – elements which relate primarily to policy guidance, leadership and commitment to addressing the issues faced by a specific, pre-defined group, in this case the IDP population
- The organisational sphere – elements relating to the structures, responsibilities and mechanisms within the government relevant to supporting and promoting durable solutions for IDPs

- The delivery sphere – i.e. elements relating to the development of programmes and projects, which are formulated and implemented to meet the needs and interests of all stakeholders, and the ideologies, knowledge, and approaches that underpin these programmes and projects.

The process of analysis involved:
- Categorising the data gathered under the different sites of power or connections between them
- Discussing, comparing and triangulating the different sources of information under the category headings
- Deciding whether the information described a positive opportunity or represented a negative constraint on achieving the desired outcome

Figure A (following page) illustrates the web and shows how the different sites of power connect with each other. The strengths and weaknesses that existed in or between the different elements at the end of 2010 are indicated through the green (strengths/opportunities) and red (weaknesses/constraints) boxes.

The analysis showed that there were potential entry points in the citizen sphere, between:
- the experience of IDPs (limited access to services) and the pressure IDPs exerted as a political constituency (their ability to influence decision makers)
- the experience of IDPs and representative political structures (structures existed but attitudes towards IDPs by officials were negative)
- the delivery of projects (direct improvements to substandard shelters or WASH infrastructure)

NRC demonstrated an understanding of the context, as they had used these entry points by:
- increasing the pressure of IDPs as a political constituency by building IDPs knowledge of, individual ability and institutional opportunities to advocate for their rights
- working with representative political structures to influence local attitudes and willingness to address living conditions in the informal settlements
- providing assistance directly to a limited number of households through WASH and NFI distributions, and later carrying out three pilot projects

A further step in the post-programme analysis used the web to map out what entry points were used, where interventions took place, and how interventions had knock on effects in other areas (see Box 9. Entry points)

Resources
- Centralised funding
- Focus on MoMD by international actors

Mainstreaming Location of Responsibility

Organisational Sphere

Policy Sphere

- Lack of predictability in funding to local levels
- Surplus budget
- Opportunity to capitalise on self-build culture
- MoMD not executive
- Policy responsibility split across ministries
- Confusion over substantive mandates and responsibilities

Political Commitment
- Increasing recognition of need to address IDP issue at national level
- Opportunity to engage
- Lack of accurate information allows avoidance of issues
- Ad hoc responses foster tensions

Policy/Planning
- Existence of MoMD
- Strong history of work with UN-HABAITAT
- Focus of policies limited to return
- Lack of knowledge on new procedures

Procedures

- Lack of ability to present needs/requirements to LC/DC
- Relationship with camps influenced by ethnic/sectarian alignment
- Highly centralised system
- Structures exist for decentralisation
- Lack of capacity to implement policies
- No clear procedures, system in flux
- UN-HABITAT experience and mandate to build capacity
- Opportunity to increase grassroots participation

- Political divisions between ministries
- Lack of trust and communication

Pressure of Political Constituencies
- Opportunity for NGOs to build civil society

Representative Political Structures
- Some specific policies but limited coverage
- Relatively well functioning land transfer systems

Staff Development

- Some representatives lack legitimacy with settlement population
- Legal preventions to delivery of services to informal settlements
- Lack of NGO understanding of development strategies

- Some representative structures exist
- Strong desire to improve living conditions
- Poor relationships between DC/LC//host communities & IDP settlements
  - Lack of understanding of conditions
  - Perceived as opportunists
  - Ethnic tensions
  - Distrust and disengagement
- Restrictive definition of IDP
- Issue highly politicised
- DCs/LCs can assist with access to food rations, ID cards etc.
- DCs/LCs have limited authority and resources
- Assistance variable and can be a political tool
- Competent staff
- Reluctance about participation
- Clear justification for decisions required

Women and Men's Experience and Interpretation of their Reality
- Lack of access to basic services
- Poor conditions for IDP and host communities
- Legacy of state land allocation

Delivery of Programmes and Projects
- No legacy of informal settlement upgrading
- Land allocation and housing through ministries
- Inappropriate lending mechanisms
- Security disruptions
- UN-HABITAT precedents and experience

Methodology

Citizen Sphere

- UNHCR and IOM collect data on IDP settlements
- Rapidly changing environment
- UN-HABITAT learning from previous work with GoI
- UN HABITAT housing market studies and housing policy development
- Ongoing workshops and increased discussion

Legend	
🟩	Core strengths
🟥	Core weaknesses

Research
- Precedents in engagement with GoI i.e. Polservice

Theory Building
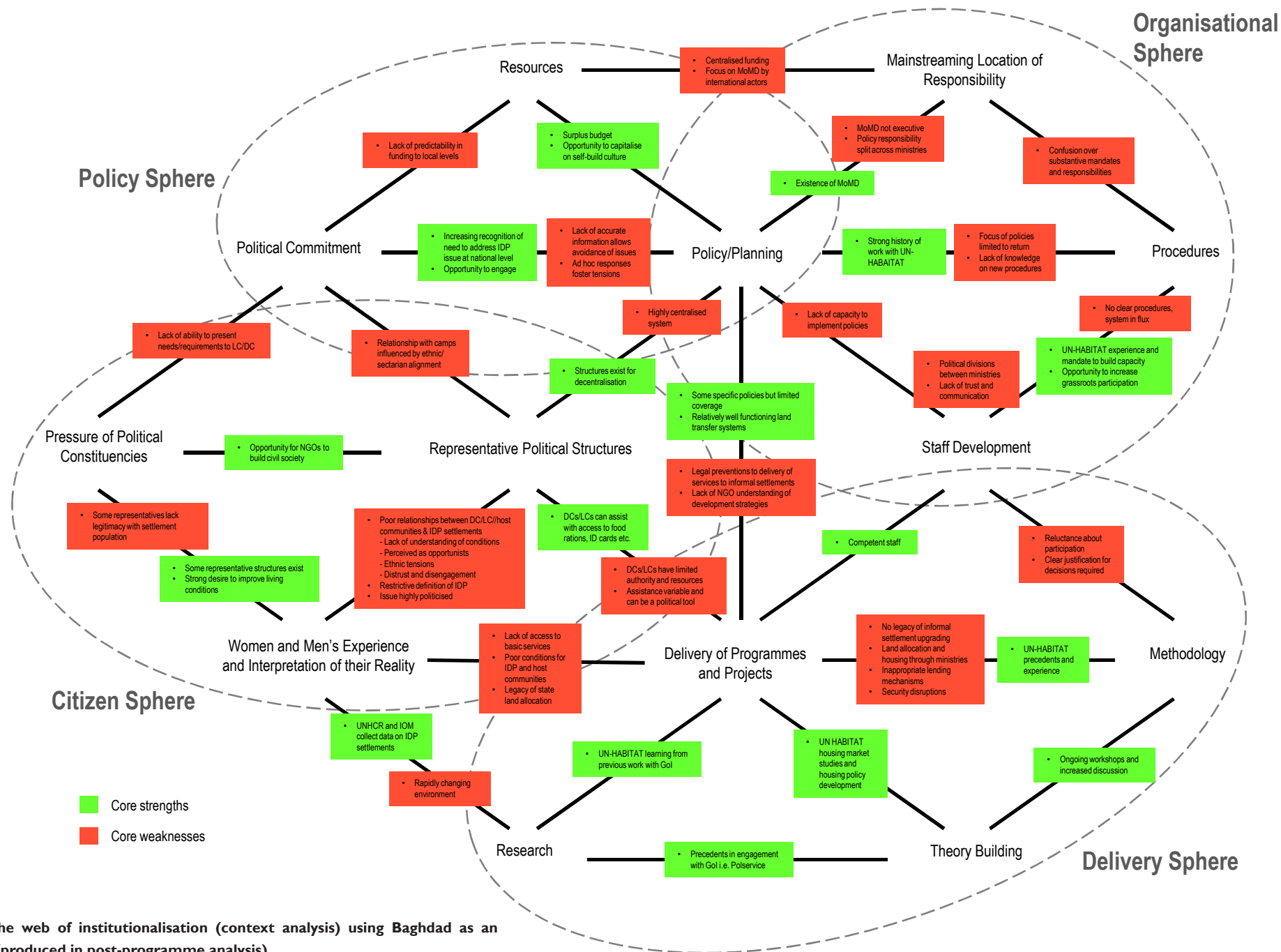
Delivery Sphere

Fig. 5. The web of institutionalisation (context analysis) using Baghdad as an example (produced in post-programme analysis)

Summary
- Context analysis is vital and must be resourced as a high priority, particularly in urban response
- Analysis captures a point in time and the process of context analysis shoudl continue through regular reviews with stakeholders
- Documentation of analysis means insights gained are not lost in handover
- A level of context analysis can be carried out rapidly with the right resources and tools
- A commitment to understanding the context allows humanitarian agencies to evaluate where they should focus and how they can add value

Fig. 6. A boy reads beside open drainage in Al-Bustan informal settlement
Photo credit: Hussein Mujbil © NRC 2013

3. STRATEGISING
How to make strategic decisions

STRATEGISING
NRC learned that a strategic approach involved:
- considering the scope, scale and methods of intervention, including alternatives or indirect approaches
- tackling problems from multiple entry points to increase the likelihood of change
- working at different institutional, systemic and geographic scales and recognising that this requires different skills and decisions about organisational mandate, motivation, funding and capacity
- recognising that scaling up is not only about an increase in beneficiary numbers but can also be acheived through a bigger range of activities; by focusing on acheiving policy or institutional change or building organisational capacity
- using partnerships not only to increase coverage but to work at different scales
- being willing to make strategic trade-offs between different objectives in order to achieve NRC's overall goal
- thinking about how limited resources can have knock-on effects and how short-term interventions may facilitate sustained changes or relationship-building

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This chapter looks at strategic decision-making in terms of selecting entry points for interventions at different scales, setting precedents and the trade-offs involved in designing interventions.

Strategic Intervention
In this document, strategic intervention means implementing via:
- multiple entry points at different scales so that programmes add value by taking a multi-pronged approach in response to the interconnected problems and solutions identified by context analysis
- setting precedents so that programmes add value by demonstrating policy ideas at a viable scale
- communicating assumptions and trade-offs so that programme teams can learn and iterate even where context analysis and theories of change are still developing

3.1   Strategic Entry Points

Context analysis helps to identify entry points and interventions that are likely to be viable and valuable.

> **Entry points**
> Entry points are activities thought likely to be:
> - viable because they are most likely to work (ie a humanitarian agency is already active and has pre-existing relationships in place for an activity to start)
> - valuable because they are thought more likely to lead to change (i.e. steps on a change pathway) or likely to lead to significant change (ie might be scaled up).
>
> Entry points can be located in the 'web of institutionalisation'.

Entry points can be used strategically
A programme objective to improve shelter conditions may require humanitarian agencies to adopt scope, scales and methods of intervention that do not involve direct provision of shelter materials to households.

A multi-pronged approach may be required
Programmes may need more than one entry point where problems are complex and interconnected or where the objective is to facilitate durable solutions over a longer period or wider group of people.

Entry points may be across different scales
Programmes may need to work at a range of geographic, institutional and systemic scales of intervention where planning and policy decisions are identified as key factors influencing the shelter situation of vulnerable groups.

> **BOX 9. Entry points**
>
> The initial aim of the Baghdad programme was to improve the living conditions of IDPs. Rather than providing services directly, NRC saw their role as enabling the IDP population to access their rights and considered the government as primary duty bearer to protect and provide for its citizens.
>
> NRC used their understanding of the context to identify potential entry points and activities. These were chosen because they were:
> - viable due to NRC's potential to access communities through the relationship with UNHCR and core skills working with communities

- seen as the first step in a change pathway
- having the potential to be replicated in other settlements in Baghdad

Entry point: the experience of IDPs and the pressure of political constituencies
NRC started capacity building activities in informal settlements. This involved activities which were designed to increase IDP's knowledge of their rights and entitlements and their ability to advocate to and influence decision makers, including:
- Training for settlement representatives in how to gather information on their settlements
- Awareness-raising sessions and information campaigns for IDPs on their rights
- NFI distributions to improve the worst circumstances and practice organisational skills

Entry point: the experience of IDPs and representative political structures
NRC started to build relationships between people living in informal settlements and local authorities by:
- Providing training on the obligations of the government under international humanitarian law
- Sharing information on conditions in the settlements and the reasons that IDPs were settling in these areas
- Encouraging officials to make improvements by discussing mutual benefits

Entry point: the pressure of political constituencies and representative political structures
NRC brought settlement representatives and local authorities together by:
- Establishing a forum where IDPs from the informal settlements could advocate for themselves directly to district councils
- Bringing in service providers in order to identify potential solutions together with IDPs and district councils
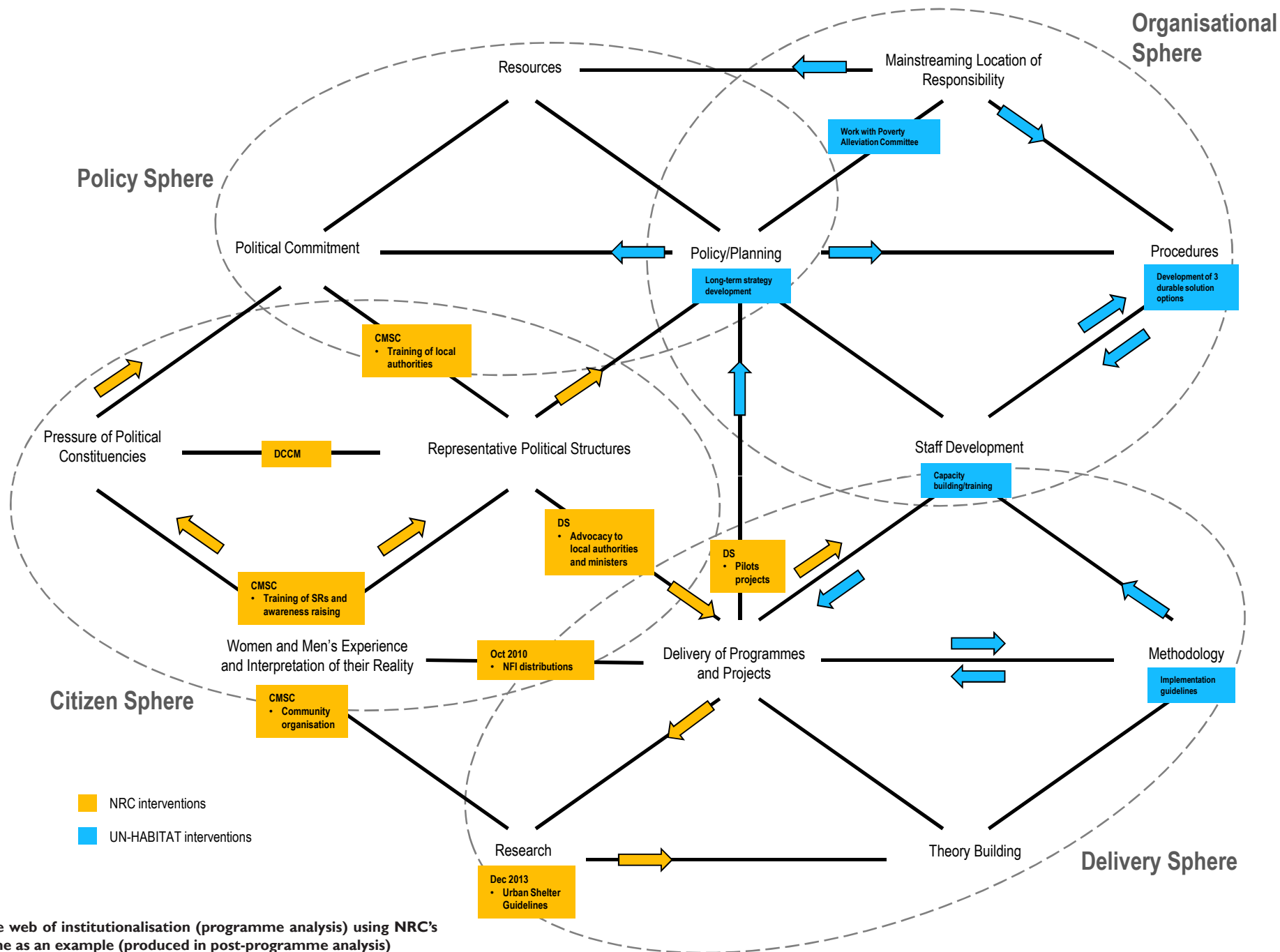
Fig. 7. The web of institutionalisation (programme analysis) using NRC's programme as an example (produced in post-programme analysis)

Organisational Sphere

Resources

Mainstreaming Location of Responsibility

Work with Poverty Alleviation Committee

Policy Sphere

Political Commitment

Policy/Planning

Procedures

Long-term strategy development

Development of 3 durable solution options

CMSC
• Training of local authorities

Pressure of Political Constituencies

DCCM

Representative Political Structures

Staff Development

Capacity building/training

CMSC
• Training of SRs and awareness raising

DS
• Advocacy to local authorities and ministers

DS
• Pilots projects

Women and Men's Experience and Interpretation of their Reality

Oct 2010
• NFI distributions

Delivery of Programmes and Projects

Methodology

Implementation guidelines

CMSC
• Community organisation

Citizen Sphere

NRC interventions

UN-HABITAT interventions

Research

Theory Building

Delivery Sphere

Dec 2013
• Urban Shelter Guidelines

Partnership in order to act at different entry points

In order to increase the likelihood of improved living conditions for IDPs, NRC and UN-HABITAT formed a partnership to work with the national government on developing options for durable housing solutions. This partnership was key in achieving change through additional entry points at different scales since it involved UN-HABITAT working in parallel on:

- <u>Policy planning</u> – supporting the development and endorsement of the government's *National Strategy: Longer-Term Shelter Solutions for People Affected by Displacement*
- <u>Procedures</u> – district and city-wide strategy development on how to select settlements
- <u>Political commitment</u> – Technical Committee and high level conference
- <u>Methodology</u> – implementation guidelines based on the pilot projects
- <u>Staff development</u> – capacity building programme within government ministries

Through analysis workshops, staff briefings, following the advice of experienced staff and building a partnership with UN-HABITAT, the NRC team was able to identify at what level key decisions needed to be made, some of the root causes of the housing situation of those living in informal settlements and the entry points, relationships and pathways by which interventions could better link together and influence one another (see also Box 2. Engaging teams in context analysis and Box 3. Valuing people in the process of context analysis).

This meant that NRC could address the institutional scales – settlement representatives, local councils and national ministries – as well as individuals within these institutions that had the most influence over or interest in making changes to IDP living conditions.

Figure B (previous page) illustrates the 'Web of Institutionalisation' analysis of the Baghdad programme in order to show where this strategic, multipronged approach was likely to create knock on effects on other institutional elements.

The value of strategic partnerships is described further in Box 12. Organisational scaling up through strategic partnerships.

Scale
In this document, scale is geographic (settlements, neighbourhoods or cities), systemic (infrastructure systems, supply chains or markets) or institutional (households, communities, ministries or a policy processes). When the term 'scale' is used, this document will always be described in terms of whether it is geographic, systemic or institutional.

This document does not use the term scale to refer to the extent or coverage of damage or needs.

Scaling up
Scaling up refers to increasing the remit of a programme and is understood in terms of:
- Quantitative scaling up: an increase of the number of people involved through replication of activities, projects, and initiatives (increase to the citizen sphere)
- Functional scaling up: an increase in the range of projects and programmes into other areas of activity (increase to the delivery sphere)
- Political scaling up: an increase in the focus of projects and programmes to beyond service delivery towards effecting structural, institutional and policy change (increase to the policy sphere)
- Organisational scaling up: an increase in the effectiveness and efficiency of organisations to allow for growth and sustainability, through e.g., increase of funding, networking, increasing capacity, improvement of systems, training (increase to the organisational sphere)
  > UN-HABITAT, 2010, Count me in: Surveying for Tenure Security and Urban Land Management, p133

BOX 10. Working across multiple scales

NRC and UN-HABITAT aimed to improve the living conditions of IDPs in the immediate term and to promote a change in national policy in the longer term. In order to do this, they worked at a variety of scales:
- *Geographic:* 3 pilots at neighbourhood scale that tested different options for durable solutions - upgrading, land sharing and relocation
- *Systemic:* advocating to and coordinating with service providers to deliver services to informal settlements
- *Institutional:* direct provision of NFIs to individual households; awareness raising in settlement committees; advocacy and linking authorities with communities in district councils; advocacy and training activities at provincial council; capacity building and policy development activities in national ministries.

The need to work across multiple scales was recognised only as the programme evolved and the context analysis developed. For example, NRC initially assumed that the pathway for changing the conditions in informal settlements would start through building relationships with district councils. Once the programme was underway, it became clear that the district councils had limited decision making power: despite district councils willingness to address the problem, they were prohibited by law to extend services to informal settlements. This meant trying a new entry point and shifting programme resources to advocacy and capacity building at the provincial and national levels.

BOX 11. The process of scaling up

NRC recognised the limits of its programme in the context of the city as a whole but had to examine how, if at all, its programme could be scaled up given the sheer number of IDPs living in informal settlements, the extent of these settlements and the fact that other groups, not classified as IDPs, were also facing similar living conditions.

In Baghdad, NRC's process of scaling up included:
- Quantitative scaling up through increasing the number of communities worked in and District Council Coordination Meetings (DCCM)
- Functional scaling up through adapting the programme over time to take on a stronger advocacy and community mobilisation role
- Political scaling up through expanding to focus on the development of policy and procedures
- Organisational scaling up by improving systems and capacity building of staff through pilots and building relationships within the government

The value of strategic partnerships in this process is described further in Box 12. Organisational scaling up through strategic partnership.

NRC was able to think about scaling up the process of improving living conditions not just in terms of reaching or counting more households but in terms of adapting their own programme to concentrate on activities that were working; acknowledging that some of the root causes of the problem could only be addressed through policy change; and investing in the people and relationships that would make and sustain change.

BOX 12. Organisational scaling up through strategic partnership

NRC and UN-HABITAT formed a partnership in 2011. This partnership allowed for a more comprehensive programme to be carried out, as the strengths of the two organisations and thus the parts of the programme that they each took responsibility for complimented each other well and enabled the use of multiple entry points (see Box 9. Entry points).

The strategic partnership was a result of good timing, complimentary skills and experience and prior relationships with communities on the ground. This partnership enabled UN-HABITAT and NRC to work to their strengths and build on existing relationships. The two organisations took on different responsibilities within this programme, with UN-HABITAT working at the policy and national government level, while NRC focused on working at the community and local government level. Having different but complimentary mandates, capacities and strengths enabled the two agencies to tackle the same problem at different scales.

UN-HABITAT already had relationships - established over many years - with higher levels of government. Without these strong prior relationships, UN-HABITAT's reputation and the trust that its team had built with ministers and officials, NRC would not have had the context analysis or strategic options to work across different entry points or institutional scales.

Through this partnership it was possible to work towards addressing the question of durable housing solutions through supporting the development of policies related to housing and planning, advocating to and building capacity within different levels of government, using precedents to increase political will, and identifying new procedures to increase the likelihood of durable solutions being adopted.

Partnerships can increase the scope and range of interventions at a variety of different scales.

3.2   Strategic Precedents

Precedents
Precedents are similar to pilot projects but where a pilot project tests the practical details of implementation, a precedent establishes a pattern or sets an example of a position or policy shift.

Setting precedents can add value by demonstrating activities and policies that can address root causes or have knock-on effects or an on-going impact after the project has ended.

BOX 13. Precedent setting

In Baghdad, a key part of the strategic approach at programme level involved setting precedents, and using these to drive change and develop support among stakeholders. This approach was important as it demonstrated how strategic project implementation can be used not only as an end in itself but as a means towards a larger goal.

District Council Coordination Meetings (DCCMs)
When NRC set-up the DCCMs, initially some councils were more receptive than others to engaging in these activities, so NRC started by working in settlements where the relationship with the surrounding community and district councils was less contentious.

As progress was made and changes could be seen in neighbouring areas, more reluctant councils began to show increased willingness to participate. Over time this meant that the programme was scaled up from one district initially to five of the nine districts in Baghdad, as security allowed.

This meant that even districts which were sceptical at first or less willing to address the issue were able to see the benefits and in due course more IDPs were able to present their needs and develop relationships with the district council.

Pilots
Within the Durable Solutions programme, precedents were also set in order to build support for alternatives to relocation for residents of informal settlements.

The pilots aimed to show that alternatives to relocation were possible by demonstrating that in situ upgrading or land sharing in informal settlements could facilitate those who preferred to settle and integrate in Baghdad. They also demonstrated the role that the inhabitants could play as active participants in the future of their community.

The use of pilot projects as a showcase for future discussions built support for their inclusion in policy and procedures. The pilots demonstrated processes for:
• community enumeration
• identification of which option was likely to be most feasible in each distinct settlement
• determining how such approaches might work at the city-scale by creating concrete examples that could be discussed in meetings with the relevant District Councils.

The pilot projects were also used to build practical skills, develop institutional capacity and foster political will to increase the likelihood of the options being adopted.

Through these processes it was possible to lay out a clear methodology and show that alternative durable solutions and approaches to informal settlements could work in the context of Iraw.

Setting precedents is useful for:
• Opening up new possibilities
• Establishing a pattern or way of working
• Giving an example of concrete benefits
• Creating learning for future improvements

3.3   Strategic Trade-offs

Trade-offs

Trade-offs are a way of making decisions when not all objectives can be achieved at the same time or when decisions have to be made quickly and on the basis of limited context analysis. Trade-offs involve compromises and do not necessarily result in a perfect or optimal solution but if organisations can account for trade-offs, this can be a useful way of sharing or explaining a decision and learning about the decision-making process once the consequences of a decision have become clear.

There are trade-offs involved in selecting the entry points, precedents and interventions that are viable (most likely to work) or valuable (would make the most difference). Humanitarian agencies also face trade-offs in balancing their mandates, motivations, funding and capacities.

3.3.1 Organisational Trade-offs

- Mandate: The mandate of a humanitarian agency frames the role and objectives it will take and can influence decision-making processes e.g. with regard to what sector of the population they may focus on (refugees, IDPs etc.), and/or with regard to specific sectors. Humanitarian agencies do on occasion push or expand their mandate where, for example, other teams from the same agency are expecting to be involved in longer-term recovery or development programmes or where the agency is in a process of organisational change in response to changing motivations, funding and capacities.
- Motivation: motivation recognises that in addition to mandates there are other factors which may encourage or discourage agencies to engage in a response, for example, an organisational objective to grow in size or expand into new geographic areas or the perception that an area or approach presents a prohibitively high risk.
- Funding: in situations where funding is constrained, there is increased scope for adopting enabling approaches or focusing on more viable or valuable interventions. Context analysis and precedent setting can provide supporting evidence in applications for further funding.
- Capacity: the competencies and skills of international humanitarian teams and other stakeholders will influence decisions about the scope, scale and methods of intervention that are viable in the context.

BOX 14. Trade-offs

NRC's programme in Baghdad was focussed on IDP populations (see Box below) and the urban poor within informal settlements rather than with dispersed urban IDPs or those living in host families or renting. This is significant because of the decision-making processes involved in choosing to work with this population.

Durable Solutions for IDPs in Iraq
Iraq is faced with a multi layered displacement crisis that has led to a highly politicised debate regarding the scope and definition of IDP. A major restriction is a limitation of the time period of displacement from between January 1, 2006, and January 1, 2008 in order to be officially registered and recognised as a refugee or IDP.

However, 1.2 million Iraqis were displaced in the period between March 2003 and January 2006, and the period after January 2008 has been marked by the flight of Iraq's small minorities. As a result, a large number of IDPs are not officially recognised as such and are not able to access assistance.

Even those who are eligible for assistance struggle to access it due to various obligations that are laid on them regarding their registration. These include:
• a letter from the MoDM branch office in their place of displacement confirming their IDP registration
• multiple letters confirming their displacement and departure from the place of displacement and their return

Returning refugees are required to provide evidence of legal travel documents that bear exit and entry stamps to prove that they were outside Iraq for the needed period of time. In practice, however, many Iraqis left either without documents or with false passports and failed to register with the authorities in neighbouring countries. In addition, many only became aware of these requirements after they had returned from abroad.
> USIP, 2009, Land, Property, and the Challenge of Return for Iraq's Displaced

Location/ease of access vs mandate, capacity and access to funding
Only 20% of the IDP population lived in informal settlements. However, the lack of accurate information about the extent of displacement and exact numbers of IDPs outside of the informal settlements meant that in order to work outside of this population, additional time and resources would be required to find and map the IDP population. This was beyond the budget, access and capacity of NRC at that time.

Needs assessments and context analysis carried out by UN bodies and international humanitarian agencies showed that the IDPs living in informal settlements were housed in sub-standard accommodation and lacked many basic amenities. Providing them with humanitarian assistance fell under NRCs humanitarian mandate. In addition, NRC had a close relationship with UNHCR who had funding for IDPs in informal settlements and who were able to provide lists and information on recognised informal settlements.

Due to the availability of funding and information from UNHCR it made sense to subsequently focus on IDPs in the geographically-bounded areas of informal settlements. The choice to focus on specific locations rather than population groups was balanced with their mandate, capacity and availability of funding. However, their strategic approach recognised this as a trade-off that allowed them to work in the informal settlements, where they could use this access as a platform to initiate change.

Understanding, negotiating access and building relationships vs direct provision of services
With the information and access they gained through UNHCR, NRC were able to build relationships in the informal settlements. The decision to focus on building capacity in the informal settlements and working to improve conditions by building relationships with local authorities and change attitudes and perceptions of informal settlement residents to improve access to services was influenced by their mandate to work with communities. In addition, there were legal restrictions and limited funding for carrying out large infrastructure projects which were considered to be the responsibility of the government.

These factors were traded off against the potential larger impact of working through communities by accepting that the pathway to change was less direct and would require a longer period of engagement. In this way they were able to have an impact beyond the geographical location of their intervention but within their capacity and humanitarian mandate.

Most vulnerable groups vs pilots most likely to succeed and precipitate change

The term 'lower hanging fruit' was used by multiple interviewees when describing how initial settlements for working in were selected. Considerations such as the strength of the existing relationship in the community and the attitude and support of the community was carefully considered when selecting the neighbourhood for pilot projects, in order to increase the chances of successful implementation. NRC balanced their mandate to focus on the most vulnerable by recognising a trade-off which allowed them to work in the communities that were safer or easier to work in, in order to set a precedent of what could be achieved and use this to demonstrate to communities in more difficult working areas what the process looked like. (See also Box 13. Precedent setting).

The transparent deliberation and account of decisions and trade-offs can reconcile organisation or humanitarian mandates to target specific or vulnerable groups while maintaining impartiality. Making trade-offs allows limitations on capacity or funding to be balanced against the opportunities that can be gained through accepting a less than ideal situation or decision.

3.2.3 Short and Longer-term trade-offs

Programme timeframes depend on mandates, motivation, funding and capacity; changing needs; and the security situation. There are many aspects of working in complex contexts such as urban areas for which longer timeframes of commitment would be beneficial:

- Longer-term perspectives can be useful in understanding how short-term interventions might enable or undermine durable solutions or longer-term recovery
- Longer timeframes can be beneficial where the most viable and valuable interventions are likely to require sustained engagement, for example, capacity or relationship building
- Short-term interventions can facilitate longer term engagement, for example, NFI distributions or quick impact projects that mobilise stakeholders or build trust
- Short-term interventions that demonstrate pilots or precedents can have knock-on effects or on-going impacts, for example, raising awareness of IDP rights and bringing together interested and influential stakeholders

BOX 15 Longer term impacts

Through the Community Mobilisation and Service Coordination (CMSC) programme, NRC was able to act as a facilitator to bring inhabitants of the informal settlements and district councils together, which was facilitated through establishing District Council Coordination Meetings (DCCMs) as a platform for this dialogue. This allowed relationships to be established that would continue even after NRCs programme had finished.

While this programme required an investment from NRC in the early stages in order to carry out training and capacity building and build relationships between the different groups, this allowed relationships to be established that would continue even after NRC's programme had finished. However, in order to ensure the continuation and promote wider adoption of the DCCMs, NRC sought specific funding to carry out a phasing out project to hand over future facilitation to Baghdad Provincial Council.

The aim of the handover process was to ensure that systems or decisions were far enough advanced to ensure the institutional handover actually achieved its aims. This included:
• Describing how NRC had been involved and the role they played as a facilitator
• Establishing where and when meetings would take place
• Determining any financial investment and where this would come from

Rather than focussing on increasing coverage or the number of settlements they were working in, NRC have focussed on scaling up by concentrating on a comprehensive handover to a higher institutional body.

By taking an enabling approach which focussed on fostering dialogue between informal communities and government authorities and supporting ongoing change at an institutional scale, NRC was able to add value by increasing the impact of their involvement beyond the timeframe of their intervention.

In addition, NRC was able to add value by using a relatively small amount of funding (when compared to the cost of road or drainage infrastructure for example) to leverage much larger amounts of money through the DCCM structure to be invested in ways that benefitted IDP communities.

This approach demonstrates how value could be added by NRC in the short term, while contributing to larger impacts in the long-term, by reaching a point where communities and government bodies could carry things forward.

Summary
- Entry points may be across different scales and a multi-pronged approach will increase the likelihood of success
- Scaling up is not just a matter of numbers; it may be also be functional, political or organisational
- Partnerships can open up relationships with different stakeholders and increase the ability to work at multiple scales and from multiple directions
- Pilots or precedent setting can open up new possibilities, test or establish a new way of working, demonstrate real benefits and help learn about what might work in the future
- Trade-offs depend on organisational mandates, motivations, funding and capacities; programme objectives, timeframes and assumptions about change and risks
- Interventions in urban areas tend to involve longer timeframes in terms of understanding what will add the most value and in terms of the processes by which viable and valuable change is acheived strategic programmes can have a longer-term impact even through short-term timeframes

Fig. 8. IDP-constructed shelters in Al Batool informal settlement
Photo credit: Hussein Mujbil © NRC 2013

4. IMPLEMENTING

How to get things done

> **NRC's team learned to link their analysis and strategic thinking to programme design by:**
> - being clear about what NRC was trying to achieve and what investment and programming would be required to accomplish this
> - building a team that could analyse, discuss and explain the pathways of change associated with different programme activities
> - building relationships with government while still retaining independence and impartiality
> - recognising and persuading internal and external decision-makers in the humanitarian sector that building relationships required dedicated time, funding and skilled people
> - acting as a facilitator to establish or reinforce relationships between communities and government which could continue after NRC's initial programmes closed

This chapter offers some practical advice on how to carry out some of the activities mentioned in earlier chapters. It looks at how NRC staff accessed information for context analysis, how they built a team and external relationships, and how they ran capacity building activities.

4.1   Accessing information

"NRC commits to participative needs assessments, monitoring and evaluation – as well as post implementation follow up, in order to assess the context, determine needs and register changing needs over time and across different groups within affected populations."

> Norwegian Refugee Council Programme Policy, NRC 2012

4.1.1   Knowing where to look: desk-based searches

NRC staff in interviews pointed to a variety of sources, including information, research and policy documents that had been produced during the programmes.

Sources of information

Source	Examples of Information
National government ministries, statistics and/or census bureaux and libraries	**Public policy:** legislation, policies, plans and budgets; **Data and mapping:** population, land and housing surveys; aerial images and maps (e.g. online reports, data sets and maps and paper-only historical maps, archives and plans)
National and local press	Public announcements and press releases, debate, comment and/or promotion of a particular position or interests
Research, development and financial institutions (both local and international)	Reports on or analysis of political, economic or development landscape (e.g. IDMC, Centre for Global Development, ODI, Groupe URD) Regional, city or project reports by multi- and bi-lateral donor agencies with an interest in urban policy and investment(e.g. the World Bank, UN-HABITAT, UNDP, USAID, DfID) Commissioned research (e.g. NRC in Baghdad's research partnership with Iraqi NGOs Civil Centre for Studies and Legal Reform (CCSLR) and Madarik Centre for Studying the Mechanisms of Conceptual Promotion)
Open access academic journals and research	**Critical analysis:** discussion of context, trends, political and historical picture, different perspectives and interests in cities and regions **Detailed case studies:** descriptions and/or analysis of urban life or previous urban interventions or particular hazards (e.g. Environment and Urbanization, Forced Migration Review, DPU Working Papers, ICE Proceedings)
Humanitarian assessments	**Situation reports/analysis:** overall headline figures; position statements; funding targets/appeals **Response plans and needs analysis:** population movements and/or needs in terms of numbers of people, assistance required by sector, area and cost **Needs assessments:** detailed or disaggregated data on different groups or areas (e.g. IASC cluster system, International Financial Institutions, IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix)

4.1.2   Knowing whom to ask: interviews, workshops, focus groups and networking

NRC staff acknowledged in interviews that building relationships is essential to learning about the context. This took time, integrity and skill. In practice it was difficult to know which relationships were important, how to build trust and what external and internal factors would have an impact on working relationships.

BOX 16. Gathering information

Interviews with staff involved in the NRC programmes in Iraq suggested a number of activities that were used or that would have been useful during the programme:

- Staff: conducting one-on-one interviews with senior staff on arrival; convening team workshops with longstanding and new staff; contriving regular briefings and management meetings for sharing and updating information and testing assumptions
- Leaders: requesting personal introductions/meetings with national and municipal officials and city leaders (key utility and service providers); seeking permission to participate in government consultations, meetings and coordination processes; proposing and/or resourcing meetings/workshops for national and municipal authorities and local or community leadership where information flow and context analysis might be improved through coordination and communication
- International organisations: attending coordination meetings (formal networking and information sharing); organising informal networking and "study visits" to other organisations or to similar projects
- Population: encouraging teams to introduce themselves via existing meetings, gatherings and events where it is possible and safe to do so; mixing surveys and participatory techniques with formal NFI distributions and informal chats, walks and visits; sustaining community engagement and mobilisation but with sensitivity to the limitations of these approaches and assessment fatigue (see Example 4.4.3 Engaging with communities); asking colleagues about their stories and testing assumptions together.

4.2   Building a team

NRC staff in interviews often attributed project success to the personal qualities of the people involved. NRC's own guidelines recognise that supporting good people also depended on having an appropriate and feasible management structure where roles and responsibilities are clear.

> Chapter 2 of the Camp Management Toolkit, NRC 2008

Building a team in Baghdad required scrutiny of the management structures; job descriptions and terms of reference; leadership styles and an openness to seeking extra support.

BOX 17. Building a team

Programme Teams
NRC's team in Iraq needed to be able to work together to read a dynamic context; build relationships; and sustain dialogue and partnerships. People involved in the programme reported that key factors for the team were:

Structure: neighbourhoods not sectors
"NRC's approach in Baghdad was to be a 'one-department' office, with no 'silo-ing' of programmes into separate sectors... this sort of holistic approach appears to be emerging from other 'neighbourhoods' approaches"   *Key Informant Interview*

NRC policy is to ensure coordination and coherence across 5 core programme competencies.
> Education, Food Security, ICLA (information, counselling and legal assistance), Shelter, WASH. Core competences have been developed in line with NRC's policy to save lives, alleviate suffering, uphold the needs and rights of displaced persons and assist them to seek and reach durable solutions. Norwegian Refugee Council Programme Policy, NRC 2012.

NRC's team in Iraq chose to integrate these core competencies into a holistic structure based on multi-sector or multi-competency, area-based teams with ad-hoc support from sector-specific specialists at various points during the project.

Terms of Reference: roles, responsibilities and relationships
"Generally, in NRC the different programme departments report to the programme director. At times, the NRC Iraq programme director was having necessarily to take on a much wider and constant role in not only the planning, but also the day-to-day implementation of the projects."   *Key Informant Interview*

The Terms of Reference (ToR) of team members are a fundamental part of any management toolkit because they derive directly from the project aims: what needs to be done? what combination of people will be needed to do this? how will these people work best together? The answers to these questions can change as the project develops.

NRC implemented a project that worked at a variety of entry points and scales and some team members had vast experience of NRC as an organisation but

were new to Iraq while others had a vast knowledge of Iraq but were new to NRC. This meant that at times the Programme Director, Programme Managers and other team members all needed both a detailed grasp of the overall picture and an understanding of the day-to-day constraints and developments so hierarchies and reporting lines had to be adapted to the evolving context.

Knowing when to get help: bringing specific expertise to multi-sectoral projects at the right time
"The PD had to be aware of sector-specific expertise and was supported by sector specialists in July 2012 - just before the mid-point of the project - to develop a set of 'have you thought of this' questions with 'yes' or 'no' answers and suggested steps to take in decision-making. This was used for setting up and revising an ongoing project and would alert project managers to the possible need to change the project, and importantly, to call in other expertise where necessary."   *Key Informant Interview*

Managing teams and projects is not just about checking progress but also about checking decisions and assumptions. A mechanism used by NRC was to provide additional but occasional support to mentor and advise Programme Directors and Project Managers specifically to identify the need to change direction or get specialist advice.

Fig. 9. Children playing in the street in Al-Batool informal settlement
Photo credit: Hussein Mujbil © NRC 2013

Leadership: experience, qualifications, skills and personal qualities

"much of the forward motion of the programme was due to there being a Programme Director with a lot of experience, and a huge amount of personal drive"

Key Informant Interview

Most organisations have Codes of Conduct and values that apply in any context while job descriptions are specific to the context. NRC described the qualifications and skills needed by their Programme Director as follows:

Qualifications
• Minimum 4 year experience from working as a senior manager in a humanitarian/recovery context • Experience from working in complex/crisis contexts • Documented results related to the position's responsibilities • Knowledge about own leadership skills/profile • Relevant university degree or higher education, preferably in international relations and/or development, social sciences or management

Essential Skills
• Strategic thinking • Initiating action and change • Handling insecure environments, including political and cultural context awareness • Leadership and management skills • Formulation of programme/project proposals, budgets and reports • Communication, interpersonal and negotiation skills

Desirable Skills
• Knowledge of the political situation in Iraq and the wider Middle East region • Knowledge of Arabic and/or Kurdish languages

Personal Qualities
• All employees of the Norwegian Refugee Council should be able to adhere to our Code of Conduct and the four organizational values: Dedicated, innovative, inclusive and accountable • Flexible and creative, think unconventionally, be creative – and inspire others • Open in processes. Involved across levels and organizational units based on mutual respect • Consist and showing integrity in all information and all decision-making processes • Ability to work under pressure and with limited supervision • Ability to cope with a constrained living and working environment, willingness to be mobile • Diplomatic and communicates openly and with respect • Ability to handle a large workload, work under pressure, independently and with limited supervision

> Programme Director Job Description NRC Iraq 2013

BOX 18. Structuring a team

Team Size and Scale of Implementation: numbers of staff, people and entry points

NRC's Community Mobilisation and Service Coordination (CMSC) Programme ran for 38 months (October 2010-December 2013) and targeted 25 informal settlements in 6 districts where 8,500 families (or 46,000 individuals) were living, 30% of which were registered IDPs.

CMSC was implemented with just:
- 1 Project Coordinator
- 15 community mobilisers, reduced to 5 for final 12 months

CMSC Pilot
24 months (October 2010-September 2012)

Empowerment and capacity-building	District Council Coordination Meetings
• Training of IDPs: 7 trainings, 162 people; • Training of GoI officials: 5 trainings; 77 people • Awareness raising sessions: 46 IDP settlements, 369 people	• monthly district council coordination meetings from June 2011 in 5 districts

Awareness raising scale up
14 months (September 2012-December 2013)

Research phase: 3 surveys via 2 partnerships with Iraqi NGOs	Pilot in 1 informal settlement:	Consultations and advocacy:
• 2 studies by Civil Centre for Studies and Legal Reform (CCSLR) • 1 study by Madarik Centre for Studying the Mechanisms of Conceptual Promotion	• 40 children in drawing competition 2,040 children distributed school kits • 20 people photography exercise, • 5 Focus Group Discussions, • theatre performance to an audience of 500 people	• bilateral meetings, • one-off INGO meeting, • regular partner meetings, • 1 day high-level conference, • 1 day training 10 non-NRC people • 1 day partnerships workshop for 25 non-NRC

4.3   Building relationships with government

4.3.1   Positioning

Humanitarian agencies in complex crises often have to examine their engagement with government in light of their mandates and principles but are often obliged to interact with sovereign governments in order to:
- have consent to operate from the sovereign authority
- be a better informed and effective advocate for the vulnerable by understanding the position and motivations of government
- put in context the policy or project initiatives likely to be accepted or adopted

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BOX 19. Dialogue with Government

NRC is committed to principles of humanity, neutrality, independence, and impartiality. NRC's team in Iraq recognised:
- that these principles did not preclude efforts to understand the position and motivations of government
- that government decision-makers and ministries were key institutions with influence over and interests in the living conditions of different population groups
- that dialogue was necessary to address holistically the plight of vulnerable groups
- that meaningful dialogue, mindful of NRC's principles, would depend on careful relationship building.

The approval and ratification of strategies such as the Iraq National Strategy: Longer-Term Shelter Solutions for People Affected by Displacement (2012) by national government Ministries relied on dialogue with government which was vital in developing further buy-in for subsequent programmes.

The process of dialogue was key to:
- bringing IDPs to the attention of the government at different levels
- giving future NRC and other INGO programmes more legitimacy as it enables them to cite these strategies
- doing this publicly, i.e. at the conference in December 2012 created political commitment that could then be used as an advocacy tool

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Keeping IDPs in focus at the level of provincial and national government required considerable effort, especially as they lacked direct exposure to and understanding of the conditions facing IDPs that district and neighbourhood councils had. Making the effort to contact, meet and maintain relationships with government representatives was therefore important to gather as much momentum as possible, although any progress was still subject to the individual interests and abilities of specific people.

While consensus was acheived between different national level government officials to develop and ratify policies and strategies, NRC faced challenges when it came to who was responsible for funding, leading and monitoring activities particularly due to power plays that occurred between different ministries and lack of follow through. Such challenges highlight the difficult task of working with governments and the recognition that humanitarian agencies are limited in their ability to influence. UN-HABITAT are continuing to work on these processes and it is seen as an achievement that the three options for durable solutions for IDPs (land sharing, upgrading, and relocation) are still on the table.

Fig. 10. Settlements such as Al-Batool vary in levels of infrastructure
Photo credit: Hussein Mujbil © NRC 2013

4.3.2 Analysing

NRC's stakeholder and institutional analysis helped to identify the key structures and people within government with an interest in or influence over shelter, housing and urbanisation.

BOX 20. Identifying key stakeholders

Through a process of information gathering and analysis, NRC determined who to build relationships with. Existing systems for finding out the most relevant office/individual to approach on a certain issue also existed, for example, the MoMD was the focal point for displaced persons.

NRC relied on existing connections and knowledge gained through informal networks to compliment existing systems and to try and reduce wasting limited staff time and energy. They therefore used their knowledge in order to identify the most beneficial people on which to focus advocacy or capacity building efforts.

Through this experience NRC learned that at all levels 'the government' is not a homogenous group, but rather:
- individuals can be identified due their specific role or relationship to certain issues by virtue of position, such as the Chairman of the Human Rights Committee, or due to a political or general interest
- political constraints to cooperation as well as political motivations need to be taken into account
- approaches need to be tailored to the individual, for example, it might be better to phone an official than email them if this increases the likelihood of obtaining a more accurate or timely response

It also showed it is important to consider how this knowledge is captured and retained.

As a result, NRC were able to make the most of their time and resources and focus on the people who were more likely to be able to take the issue forwards.

In new contexts, institutional analysis through existing tools can help separate people or groups with a level of knowledge and/or interest in the problem, those who have identified the problem but are limited to respond to it, and those who can do something but did not recognise the problem. As described in Chapter 2, there are a variety of tools that can be used to analyse this in order to design and tailor programmes accordingly.

4.3.3 Strategising

NRC staff reported in interviews that the viability and value of building relationships with government depended on external and pre-existing factors such as reputations and security restrictions, as well as approaches to forming clear communication, building trust, and being consistent in approach.

External or pre-existing factors
Many external or pre-existing factors influence how relationships can be formed. Historic and current reputation is one of these factors as humanitarian agencies may have a certain reputation which they may or may not be aware of. This can either be a good or a bad thing and it could be based on truth or on rumour. Either way it is important to know how your agency is viewed externally in order to know best how to approach relationship building.

> **BOX 21. External or pre-existing factors**
>
> For NRC in Baghdad, external or pre-existing factors impacted on relationship building. This included the ability to meet face to face due to restrictive security conditions as well as the reputation and connections of staff within UN-HABITAT. These had both positive and negatives influences on building relationships.
>
> The lack of ability to meet regularly in person or limitations on the possibility of being able to drop into an office spontaneously or bump into someone informally put more pressure on official meetings and made it more difficult to build rapport.
>
> However, UN-HABITAT was able to draw on its existing strong reputation which was formed from having undertaken large infrastructure projects between 1997 and 2003. Their previous relationships and reputation provided connections that were able to be built upon during the Durable Solutions programme.
>
> These situations revealed how external factors can be easily overlooked but can have tangible impacts on the ability to achieve programme goals.

Pre-existing contacts, entry points and knowledge

Building on existing contacts, relationships and knowledge can be key to forming relationships and can save time when establishing programmes in a new location. Making use of stakeholder and context analysis in this will also help to contextualise these relationships and better understand the dynamics at play.

BOX 22. Pre-existing contacts, entry points and knowledge

NRC found that being able to leverage existing contacts was extremely beneficial in building relationships.

Staff who had previous knowledge, experience and connections within the Baghdad context were recruited to support NRC's operations. This included a 'fixer' who helped identify a suitable office property and establish the NRC base as well as providing connections to key stakeholders.

Hiring people with experience of the context avoided having to start relationship building from scratch.

Clear communication

Honesty and clear explanation is vital to access information and build relationships. It is important to have clarity in explaining what is being planned, the expected outcomes and how specific actions will have specific outcomes.

Building trust

Sufficient time must be allowed for building trust and building relationships. There is no quick fix and this should be understood from the beginning. Personal interaction is also important and it is important to meet with government counterparts frequently, even if for quick meetings. If a meeting can no longer be attended, contact should be made to keep the relationship going. Security regulations can cause particular challenges in this regard, making it very difficult to sustain regular contact.

BOX 23 Clear communication and building trust

NRC experienced reticence from some district councils when establishing the District Council Coordination Meetings (DCCM). However, they identified that the reasons were not always lack of desire to engage with the process, but that district council members were averse to travelling across the city for meetings because of road blocks and insecurity. As a result, NRC arranged meetings to be held in the district council offices.

In such situations, NRC were able to identify quick wins that could be accomplished in order to establish a reputation and consolidate relationships through:
• approaching district councils and trying to identify what their needs and desires were
• understanding the constraints on them and taking steps to address them
• involving authorities in the decision-making processes related to the design and implementation of projects increased their ownership and buy-in
This increased the likelihood of cooperation from district councils that NRC required.

Building support for the activities that NRC was carrying out required initial buy-in from beighbourhood and district councils as well as acceptance in the longer-term.

Different processes were identified as being successful with different people, including a range of methods such as:
• demonstrating a recognition of the importance of their involvement
• clearly explaining expected outcomes and plans
• explaining how these actions were in line with policies and strategies that had been ratified by the government
• identifying their needs and taking steps to address them
• explaining international legal instruments, rights and obligations to officials
• presenting good evidence and assessment data
• showing examples/results where approaches worked
• meeting face to face regularly
• increasing interaction to build trust and shared understanding

The importance of consistency

Turnover in staff can also pose challenges to continuing and building relationships with government members. To mitigate this, it is important to have clear handovers and introductions, and to be conscious of the key role of national staff in relationship building.

BOX 24. Consistency

The Durable Solutions programme faced challenges due to a change in the Governor of Baghdad and the need to reinitiate discussions with the new Governor. The backing of the Governor was required in order to move forward with any future adoption of in-situ upgrading or land sharing as potential durable solutions. NRC and UN-HABITAT worked together to prepare a robust argument to present to him, including the rationale for allocating a specific individual as their focal point who could be worked with on each step.

Changes in staff, both in humanitarian agencies and other stakeholders, can have an effect on relationships and may result in lost time and momentum. Despite international staff turnover within NRC, the smooth running of the programme was facilitated by dedicated and consistent national staff that were able to establish and consolidate relationships with key stakeholders.

Maintaining meaningful dialogue without compromising principles

It is important to understand the position, motivations and priorities of government and to have a strategy in place for the moments when this might lead to compromise or perceived compromise of humanitarian principles. Strategies might include communication and training about these principles addressed to the relevant authorities, staff, partners and project participants.

4.3.4   *Implementing*

NRC staff and people involved in the programme reported in interviews that capacity building interventions:

- required time to identify, assemble and select groups of participants based on their interest and potential rather than their having been nominated or forced to attend
- depended on good relationships with mid-level staff of ministries as these individuals know what their departments are lacking so it is easier for them to identify needs for their department
- worked when they focused on building the capacity of key technical advisors as they advised key decision makers and tended to understand issues from a more technical and less political perspective.

BOX 25. Capacity building in government

Certain individuals and national government ministries were targeted for capacity building, training and advocacy, relating to their capacity, resources, decision-making power and agency to act. Based on their previous experience, UN-HABITAT targeted the technical level of staff within the government who were seen as under less political pressure, but who were able to contribute to future decisions.

A year-long enhancement programme undertaken by UN-HABITAT involved training and workshops which aimed to cultivate trust with ministries and the Baghdad Governorate. In the Baghdad context, capacity building was not only about skills development, but also about facilitating interaction to allow for relationships and trust to be built between different Ministries and stakeholders, which the legacy of three decades of conflict had eroded. Allowing enough time for this to happen was incredibly important.

Although the conditions at the time were not entirely suitable for land sharing to be discussed, building capacity to implement the required procedures was identified in itself as a vehicle to build governance. Discussions, trainings and capacity building on this potential approach therefore took early action and initial steps towards outworking land sharing projects later on.

4.4   Building relationships with communities

How to build relationships with communities and how to work with a participatory approach has been previously written about and it continues to warrant attention. For more detail see for example:
- IFRC, 2011, PASSA Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness
- IFRC/SKAT, 2010, Sustainable Reconstruction in Urban Areas: A Handbook
- Mitchell, 2014, Engagement of crisis-affected people in humanitarian action

4.4.1   Positioning

NRC staff reported that building relationships with communities was important for a number of reasons, including:
- to develop programmes collaboratively and therefore in a way that will be most likely to be effective
- to ensure that communities are agents of change as opposed to passive recipients
- to build trust and acceptance

4.4.2 Analysing

NRC's stakeholder and institutional analysis helped to identify community representatives and groups that had only weak relationships with the stakeholders as well as groups that were not well represented, for example women and minority or marginalised groups.

4.4.3 Strategising

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BOX 26. Identifying different groups

The Community Mobilisation and Service Coordination (CMSC) programme established a general committee as well as a women's committee in each settlement. 3 Settlement Representatives (SR) were identified for each informal settlement – a chairman, a deputy and a women's committee chair – taking into account existing leadership structures where necessary and supplementing them to ensure legitimacy. Awareness-raising of IDPs rights and government's duties was then conducted through training for both the Settlement and Women's committees as well as through a wider communication campaign. Trainings were adapted from the global CCCM Toolkit, which NRC has considerable experience in developing and implementing as Camp Management is a long standing core activity in NRC. These were adapted to the Baghdad context, taking local examples from one community into the training of others.

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NRC staff reported in interviews that the viability and value of building relationships with communities depended on many external or pre-existing factors that influenced how relationships could be formed. These included:

- The impact of security restrictions: Security restrictions impact where in a city humanitarian agencies can travel to, how often they can visit and within what times of day. This can have a big impact on how relationships can be built as this makes it very difficult to have regular meetings, and may create a 'them and us' attitude where people perceive that humanitarian agencies consider the safety of their staff to be more important than the safety of the people who live in a community every day.
- Reputations and rumours: humanitarian agencies may not always be aware of how they are perceived but efforts to communicate and operate transparently may counter negative impacts on relationship building.
- Building trust: Building trust takes time and relies on frequent meetings and interaction. As such, and especially when security restrictions impact how programmes are undertaken, the role of national staff and interlocutors able to speak local languages is key in building strong relationships at community level.

- Clear communication: Being clear and honest is vital to build relationships with communities. Care should be taken that things are not misunderstood, and that expectations are not raised unnecessarily. Communication needs to be in both directions as it is important that communities know how to contact humanitarian agencies and that accountability measures are integrated into programmes. For further information on accountability in shelter programmes see:
  - ECB, 2013, Shelter Accountability Resources: A guide to improving accountability to disaster-affected populations during the implementation of humanitarian shelter programmes
- Setting precedents: As described in Box 13. Precedent setting, the demonstration of a successful intervention can spur wider acceptance amongst community residents thus supporting relationship building. Setting precedents can also demonstrate the benefits of a certain approach to other communities and can encourage them to engage.
- Quick impact projects and relief items: in programmes that rely on sustained community engagement and dialogue, it is useful to be able to respond when progress appears slow. Working on multiple fronts can sometimes mean important activities are not visible to all stakeholders or depend on other formal processes - like policy ratification - and it may be necessary to use a variety of short term interventions to maintain momentum and acceptance at with communities.

Fig. 11. Inhabitants build with whatever materials are available in Al-Hamidiya settlement
Photo credit: Hussein Mujbil © NRC 2013

BOX 27. Engaging with communities

NRC had to start from the beginning to build acceptance with communities.

NRC initiated relationships with the informal settlements through:
- accessing UNHCR's knowledge and relationship with communities
- using a UNHCR list of identified IDP settlements and with the support of the MoMD contacting them through the Returnee Integration Community Centre (RICC) teams
- using district and provincial councils to identify local representatives who became focal points for NRCs activities

NRC's focus on community mobilisation activities faced challenges from the communities because:
- residents in the informal settlements were initially sceptical as it was very different from the types of activities being carried out by other humanitarian agencies. In particular the focus on capacity building and advocacy was less direct than the support that had been provided by some other humanitarian agencies
- at certain points in the project staff began to report that settlement committees were expressing frustration with their frequent visits but limited physical or tangible contribution

In order to overcome this, NRC:
- focussed initially on communities that were more accepting and used the results from these areas to increase interest and buy-in with more reticent communities
- took an inclusive approach – while IDPs were the primary persons of concern, the similarity of living conditions shared by all residents in the informal settlements and limitations on the registration window for IDPs meant that support for all the residents in the settlements reduced tensions and increased acceptance of NRC's approach
- responded with NFI distributions in some cases to address particular vulnerabilities

This suggests that while sustained community engagement and mobilisation is critical, this approach may have limits and other complementary, visible activities may be necessary to address both immediate and longer term needs.

Through the Community Mobilisation and Service Coordination (CMSC) programme, NRC had existing relationships in many communities by the time the UN-HABITAT programme began, which was key to being able to establish which settlements would be appropriate to undertake pilots within.

4.4.4 Implementing

NRC staff and other key informants involved in the programmes reported that building the capacity of community members enabled community representatives to be better able to communicate with other stakeholders such as local government and service providers, in order to be able to advocate for and negotiate the needs of their community.

It was important to identify the skills and strengths existing in a community as well as the gaps in capacity in order to ensure that capacity building activities such as trainings are focused on the right aspect and at the right level.

BOX 28. Capacity building in communities

NRC used a variety of methods to build capacity in the informal settlements. This included:
- training on how to establish and run committees
- practical coaching sessions on how to advocate for their rights
- awareness raising through distributing posters and leaflets on the rights of IDPs

NRC also used activities not only to accomplish direct goals, but to have secondary impacts. NFI distributions in informal settlements were carried out in such a way that:
- committees and community members were provided with an opportunity to self-organise and practice organisational and management skills by playing a key role in the distribution
- they were able to build trust with informal settlement communities

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4.5   *Connecting government and communities*

Humanitarian and development agencies can play a key role in strengthening the relationships between government and communities through acting as a facilitator.

If it has been identified that the relationship between communities and government needs strengthening then it is important to understand that relationship in more depth.
- Which levels and entities of government are relevant to specific community demands (local council, district council etc.).
- Neither communities nor governments are homogenous, so which specific individuals or groups hold the strongest and weakest relationships and what are the reasons for and potential implications of these power dynamics

Identifying root causes of the lack of a strong relationship
The root causes of the barriers to a stronger relationship need to be identified. This could be for example based on general unfavourable attitudes towards IDPs or due to a lack of awareness of alternative housing options.

Identifying potential factors in encouraging relationship building
Identifying potential motivations for both group to want to strengthen relationships is important in order to keep in mind certain activities or outcomes that are mutually beneficial to both parties.

BOX 29. Facilitating relationship building between communities and government

Key informants interviewees for this post-programme analysis stated that the relationship between the government and IDPs (and others in informal settlements) was poor. It was explained that officials in district, provincial and national levels of government didn't understand the conditions in the settlements and viewed the occupants as criminal. The Community Mobilisation and Service Coordination (CMSC) programme looked to address this through creating platforms for dialogue between IDPs and district authorities to increase understanding and change attitudes as well as improve conditions.

Trainings and workshops
Initially, NRC used trainings and workshops with all levels of government to explain the reality of conditions in the informal settlements and the reasons why people settle in them. NRC aimed to change the viewpoint of authorities towards IDPs, so that they were regarded as vulnerable citizens with rights and entitlements rather than trespassers or criminal, and to build willingness to address the living conditions of those living in informal settlements.

Forum for discussion

Through the DCCM, NRC created a forum where the different stakeholders (settlement representatives, district council members, service providers, etc.) could come together, and were successful in creating dialogue which improved access to services for some settlements. NRC's activities to build the knowledge and capacity of the settlement representatives enabled them to be able to engage professionally with district council members and advocate for their needs to represented authorities and service providers. Through the combination of explanation, dialogue and exposure, it was noted that there was a change in attitude towards people living in informal settlements, which was an important step. However, the degree of success in facilitating change was dependent on the particular area and dynamics within the district council.

Building on the active agency of the informal settlement inhabitants themselves and facilitating relationships between communities and government resulted in an increased awareness of and interaction with IDPs. This improved attitudes and perceptions of authorities towards IDPs and increased their willingness to find practical solutions, despite legal barriers.

In addition, many government employees were initially against participatory approaches, due to a combination of perceived duty and status (i.e. it was the role of the state to provide, and it was up to them as decision makers to decide, not the community). The pilot projects provided concrete examples of how communities could determine their own needs and identify ways to meet them which has increased the likelihood of community participation in the future. Bringing communities and government together has created connections that can continue and hold the potential to lead to longer lasting change.

Summary
- Information can be gathered through desk-based research as well as interviews, workshops, focus groups and networking
- Building a good team depends on having an appropriate and feasible management structure where roles and responsibilities are clear
- Commitment to humanitarian principles does not preclude efforts to understand the position and motivations of government
- Short term interventions can be used to maintain momentum and acceptance with communities
- Humanitarian and development agencies can play a key role in strengthening the relationships between government and communities
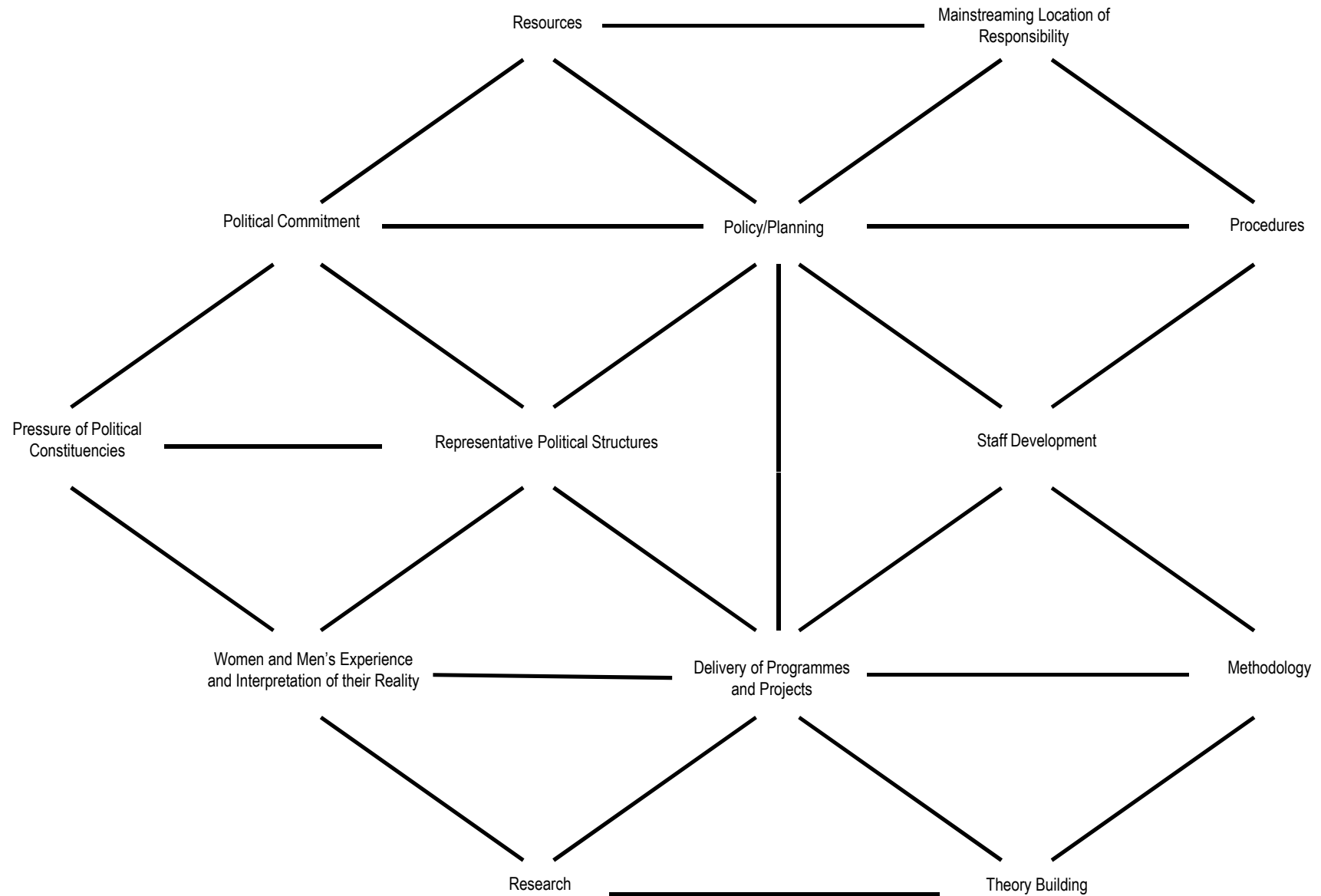
RESOURCES

Resources

Mainstreaming Location of Responsibility

Political Commitment

Policy/Planning

Procedures

Pressure of Political Constituencies

Representative Political Structures

Staff Development

Women and Men's Experience and Interpretation of their Reality

Delivery of Programmes and Projects

Methodology

Research

Theory Building

Fig. 12. Blank web of institutionalisation layout

THE WEB OF INSTITUTIONALISATION

A blank outline of the web of institutionalisation is included (previous page) to be used as a basis for investigating the current policies, delivery and organisational mechanisms, and modes of citizen representation. The following descriptions provide an explanation of the 13 'sites of power' as they relate to urban shelter response. This information has been adapted from

> Levy (1996), The Process of Institutionalisation, Available at: www.discovery. ucl.ac.uk/34/1/wp74.pdf

When using the web, a decision needs to be made at what level the analysis is being carried out. Does it relate to an organisation and the relevant groups within it? Is it at sector level, city level, or country level? Each level represents a possible layer of the web, with different groups performing in a range of possible ways with respect to each element.

The extent to which each element exists may differ from context to context. However, in every context, a set of questions relating to each element can be asked in order to assess the barriers and opportunities that exist relating to the desired goal and to determine possible entry points and sphere of influence.

Sites of Power

Citizen sphere
The group of elements which relate primarily to how the persons of concern express and exercise their rights as citizens.

Women's and Men's experience and interpretation of reality
Refers to the people of concern's own interpretation of their lives and the extent to which they are able to meet their needs.

Pressure of political constituencies
Refers to collective groups that are formed by citizens and action or advocacy that is taken to promote a particular interest.

Representative political structures
Refers to how women and men elect and/or actively engage with representative political structures within the formal political system so that that their interests do not remain outside of formal politics.

Policy sphere

The group of elements which relate primarily to policy guidance, leadership and commitment to addressing the desired goal.

Political commitment
The public articulation of a political intent or stand, potentially gained through influence exerted by political constituencies and representative political structures. This is tested through allocation of Resources and Policy/Planning.

Resources
Allocation of (primarily financial) resources in budgets and workplans.

Policy/planning
Policies that exist relating to the desired goal, both in content and the process of making and implementing them.

Organisational sphere

The group of elements related to the structures, responsibilities and mechanisms within an organisation (humanitarian agency, government or community) which support and promote the desired goal.

Mainstreaming political commitment
The extent to which the desired goal has been recognised and integrated in the activities of all Ministries rather than marginalised from mainstream development, for example, through the creation of a separate institution as if the issue were not related to other Ministries. A key element in successful institutionalisation is the clarification that any issue can not only be the responsibility of only one Ministry or Department.

Procedures
Procedures are the `routinised' daily activities associated with different points of the programme/project cycle of an organisation or the rules governing actions within or between organisations and individuals. Clarity of responsibility to make and implement policy needs to be re-inforced by procedures.

Staff development
Staff development refers to training in policy and planning skills and implementation procedures to go beyond awareness and impart skills which can translate the awareness into concrete practice. However, without these other elements training will be forgotten, therefore policy, procedures and the training dimension of staff development reinforce each other.

Delivery sphere

Those elements relating to the development of programmes and projects, which are formulated and implemented to meet the needs and interests of all stakeholders, and the ideologies, knowledge, and approaches that underpin these programmes and projects.

Methodology
Methodology refers to a clear rationale for the desired goal and tools for operationalising this in the work of practitioners.

Delivery of projects/programmes
The actual delivery of projects and programmes requires the involvement of a number of other different elements. In particular, groups involved in the `delivery' of programmes and projects must include not only professionals and practitioners, but also women and men from communities.

Research
Applied research can be used to respond to the dynamic reality of women and men's experience and interpretation of that changing reality as well as act as a monitoring and feedback mechanism for the better delivery of programmes and projects in the future.

Theory building
The accumulation of knowledge about the integration of the desired goal in practice contributes to new theory building in development policy and planning which can revise or refine new methodologies.

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