


NRC Guidance on Solutions from the Start toolkit

for NRC's preparedness and emergency response planning



Solutions from the Start (Sfs)

Solutions from the Start means designing emergency responses from the outset in a manner that enables displaced people to regain agency, access local systems and be independent from humanitarian assistance as soon as possible, while providing life-saving support. From the start, NRC designs programming, partnerships, advocacy, and coordination to meet immediate needs while laying the foundation for self-reliance, and eventually, solutions to displacement.



Self-Reliance and Solutions | Global Programme

Diagram: Global Programme /NRC

This Guidance is part of a short, practical Toolkit on Solutions from the Start, for NRC staff conducting emergency response planning and preparedness planning.

The Toolkit includes:

Tool 1: Guidance on Solutions from the Start

Tool 2: Situation Analysis 'MiniTool'

Tool 3: Assessment and Information Collection Tips, per NRC Core Competency

Tool 4: Activities Examples, per NRC Core Competency

Tool 5: Compendium of Programme Examples

Annex 1: What this can look like in practice

Annex 2: Checklist for NRC SfS emergency preparedness and response planning

Annex 3: Using Market Systems interventions

Annex 4: Acting as an Enabler for local actors and systems

Thank you

This Guidance was developed by NRC to operationalise a 'Solutions from the Start' approach. The process was led and owned by Lena von Naso (NRC Global Lead for Self-Reliance and Durable Solutions). Thank you to Kate Holland who did the bulk of work developing this toolkit and to the many colleagues who reviewed it and provided input, especially our Emergency Response Section colleagues. Special thanks also to IOM for sharing their experience of creating a SfS tool for CCCM.

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Using this Toolkit

The ‘Solutions from the Start’ Toolkit is designed to be used by **any NRC colleague undertaking emergency preparedness or emergency response planning**. Particularly: Emergency Response Section teams, Country Office Country Management Group and Emergency focal points, Core Competency Specialists, and Advocacy, Coordination, and Partnerships focal points.

Guidance on taking a ‘Solutions from the Start’ approach is also integrated in core NRC tools and processes that are used for emergency preparedness and response design.¹ This Toolkit can be **used to complement these**, or can be used **to enhance other emergency planning processes** being undertaken by NRC. Tools can be used individually, depending on the interest of the user.

External use

This Guidance was developed by NRC to operationalise a ‘Solutions from the Start’ approach internally, and is therefore built on, and references, NRC’s processes and systems.

It may, however, also be a useful resource for other organisations. NRC has previously already circulated a policy note on the same matter.

¹ Including integration into the Emergency response training package for CMGs, planned integration into Emergency Response plan template in the Crisis Activation System package, bReady, ‘One Response Design in Emergencies’ package, and CC FLR Guidance Notes.

1 A Solutions from the Start approach

'Solutions from the Start': in brief



'Solutions from the Start' integrates a longer-term perspective into emergency responses. Designed to be implemented in areas with high displacement and high needs, and that are hard to reach, **the approach guides NRC to design programming, partnerships, and advocacy to not only meet basic needs but also lay a path toward self-reliance (and eventual solutions) for displaced people from the start of a response.**

The approach connects meeting immediate basic needs with sustainable approaches by asking not only *what* people need, but *why* and how this is best 'addressed'— and then **tackling barriers for displaced people to access services, goods, protection, and rights in the most sustainable way feasible at this point.** It prioritises that community preferences and intentions inform planning, supporting community capacities, enabling local systems, and market- and systems-based interventions, while maintaining humanitarian principles and protection standards.

It should be applied by NRC emergency responders to fit their context² – whether through local systems and in an enabling role from the start or using direct delivery as a stepping stone to a more sustainable approach. It pushes design of clear exit strategies to avoid dependency on humanitarian assistance.

Why is this important for NRC?³

A Solutions from the Start approach encourages quality programming: choosing modalities and partnerships to make responses more sustainable and help displaced people better in the longer-term, while still delivering life-saving assistance.

It aims toward independence from assistance sooner, linking emergency and longer-term approaches and supporting local systems to provide goods and services instead of direct delivery where possible – in line with NRC’s Global Strategy and Response Policy commitments to working toward self-reliance and solutions to displacement. It also aims to improve cost efficiency in the medium to long term.⁴

Solutions from the Start in emergency design⁵

Taking a ‘Solutions from the Start’ approach doesn’t mean a reinvention of NRC’s way of working. Instead, it is about taking existing NRC thinking and technical expertise, bringing them together during preparedness planning and applying them as early in an emergency response as possible.

It encourages teams to understand the *whole* context in which NRC is responding, not just immediate basic needs, and to plan NRC’s response accordingly.

Elements of ‘Solutions from the Start’

At its core, Solutions from the Start means designing emergency responses to **enable people to regain agency, access systems, and avoid long-term dependency** wherever feasible, rather than creating parallel, short-term fixes. At a minimum this means to:

- Avoid accidentally creating future obstacles to self-reliance.
- Design responses with a clear pathway beyond emergency assistance.
- Aim to reduce repeated cycles of short-term assistance.

² In startup situations, crisis activation, start of an emergency response in a new area within an existing Country Office presence, or scale-up an existing emergency presence.

³ NRC, ‘Solutions from the Start policy note: Maintaining humanitarian action on solutions to displacement after the funding crisis’, September 2025; NRC, ‘Framing Paper: Self-Reliance and Durable Solutions in NRC’, 2023; NRC, *Global Strategy 2022-2025*, 2022; NRC, *Response Policy*, 2022.

⁴ For more information on NRC’s Solution work beyond emergencies, please refer to the NRC [internal Sharepoint Page](#) on Solutions or reach out to the Global Lead for Self-Reliance and Solutions.

⁵ NRC, ‘Framing Paper: Self-Reliance and Durable Solutions in NRC’, 2023; NRC, ‘*Global Strategy 2022-2025: SO5. Roadmap – self-reliance and durable solutions for displaced people*’, 2022; IASC, *Guidance on Solutions to Internal Displacement*, February 2025

- Understand local actors' capacity to respond and how we can support it if aligned with humanitarian principles.
- Work in an integrated way across Core Competencies, advocacy, coordination, and partnerships.

This requires NRC to: (see also [Annex 2: Checklist for NRC emergency preparedness and response planning](#))

1. Start from people's intentions and preferences, not only their needs.

- Actively consult affected communities on their preferences as to how to meet their needs.⁶ Understand how markets, local authorities, and other systems interact with the people we work with.
- Listen to displaced people's intentions and preferences for their own futures and insure they can make informed and voluntary choices about their futures.

2. Map and build on existing local capacities, plans and self-organisation.

- Understand what capacities already exist within the local government and displaced and host communities – *for civilian self-protection, positive coping mechanisms, community first response and mutual aid, existing (diverse) community groups, leadership structures, etc.* – and how they are already responding.
- Identify how NRC can support or work to boost these capacities and community responses and coping capacities, practise and structures, instead of replacing them.
- Start identifying what legislation and policies guide inclusion of displaced people early on, how this is implemented, which local actors could be supported in providing services, and what structural barriers would need to be removed for people to access basic services this way. Link to and support local and national plans, rather than replacing them.

3. Use market- and cash-based approaches where possible. ([Annex 3: Using Market Systems interventions](#))

- Where goods or market-provided services are needed, consider using market support interventions (*e.g., facilitation, vendor cash grants, potentially household cash response*).
- Identify what market capacities and functionality are, or what would be needed to restore functionality – and how NRC can support these.
- Use cash-based assistance modalities where feasible, instead of defaulting to in-kind delivery.

⁶ While considering Do No Harm. See: NRC, *Policy on Community Engagement and Accountability*, 2024

4. Address barriers to local systems for displaced people to access existing services, systems, and rights.

- Understand any barriers that displaced people face in accessing local systems and services, including where removing one barrier may unlock access to other services (e.g., *providing civil documentation*).
- Work to remove these barriers.

5. Act as an Enabler, not a parallel service provider, where feasible.

- **Support and strengthen local systems**⁷
 - Identify what local systems and infrastructure are functioning (e.g., *education, housing, legal*), and if they are safe for affected communities to use.
 - Identify options to rehabilitate and support these instead of creating parallel ones.
- **Work with local actors in partnership and collaboration.**⁸ ([Annex 4: Acting as an Enabler for local actors and systems](#))
 - Understand capacities of local actors to provide services. Engage with (as possible):
 - Government authorities and local service providers. *Even when engaging with political bodies might compromise humanitarian principles, it may still be possible to engage service providers, e.g. local water directorates or cadastres.*
 - Local non-government actors – civil society or private sector.
 - Identify how NRC can work as an enabler – in partnership with or in support of local actors.
- **Move away from NRC direct delivery, where possible.**
 - Identify who the best actor is to deliver goods or services – immediately and longer-term, keeping in mind sustainability and cost-effectiveness. Can NRC support a local actor?
 - *If NRC direct delivery is the best option for providing lifesaving assistance or is a deliberate choice as a path to including people in local systems:* Identify what NRC can do in parallel to facilitate a shift away from this as early as possible (e.g., *rehabilitate or boost capacity of local systems; advocacy with local authorities*).

6. Design for sustainability, transition and exit from day one.

- **Integrate environmental and climatic considerations from the start**

⁷ See NRC Global Strategy, on working as an enabler and SO4 on local actors and systems thinking.

⁸ Conducting a **stakeholder mapping** can be a useful starting point, identifying which actors in the area NRC could collaborate with, and their capacities. A **local authority engagement plan** can be a good complement to emergency response activities, aiming to move toward locally-led processes.

- Understand environmental and climate risks and how these might impact response locations, exacerbate barriers to accessing services, or hinder sustainability of NRC's interventions and displaced people's progress towards self-reliance – to inform design of response modalities.
- **Connect NRC's advocacy and policy work to programmatic aims.**
- **NRC staff holding interagency coordination and leadership positions** (e.g. *Cluster Coordinators or HCT members*) should proactively contribute to laying a pathway to solutions as part of their work.
- **Link to government emergency or solutions/recovery plans, where they exist.**⁹
- **Plan early for realistic transitions and exit pathways.**

7. Design an integrated response

- **Design your response across Core Competencies, along with program, advocacy, coordination and partnership aspects, layering interventions for greater benefit of displaced people.**

Humanitarian principles

A 'Solutions from the Start' approach must – of course – be underpinned by humanitarian principles. In many contexts in which NRC works, principles must be considered when, deciding if or how to engage with national and local (political) authorities, or specific civil society actors. This will influence the types of activity NRC can implement. Even if it is not possible to engage or work with some local actors, it does not mean that other elements of a 'Solutions from the Start' approach listed above cannot be undertaken.

Protection

As for all NRC responses, a robust protection analysis should underpin decision-making on response design, activities, and actors to engage with. Attention to protection concerns must be ensured across the response plan and delivery.

⁹ Where this will not compromise humanitarian principles or Do No Harm or increase protection risks.

Crisis scenarios: what is possible when?

Different crisis dynamics allow for a different extent of ‘Solutions from the Start’ work. *Within an emergency context there are often different displacement scenarios or phases (e.g. new displacement into an active conflict or non-conflict areas).*

In some contexts, NRC will only be able to work on some elements outlined above. In others, more comprehensive activities might be possible, accelerating the shift to transitional approaches.

The following scenarios are illustrative of the types of contexts that NRC works in, and the types of Solutions from the Start elements that may be applicable and appropriate within them.

Context scenario	Potential Solutions from the Start elements
<p><i>Volatile context with active conflict, high severity of needs among displaced people, and high likelihood of new displacement or secondary displacement.</i></p> <p><i>Limited or no local authority service provision.</i></p> <p><i>Engaging government political authorities may compromise humanitarian principles.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure community preferences and intentions inform NRC programme design. • Identify (and support) community capacities for self-protection, self-organisation, positive coping mechanisms. • Use local markets for delivery of assistance. • Identify the capacities of local civil society actors and how NRC could work as an enabler for their response. • If NRC direct delivery is the best immediate response modality, identify potential options for exit. • Integrate environment and climatic considerations in CC activities design.
<p><i>Conflict situation.</i></p> <p><i>Government is party to the conflict, making it difficult to engage at national level (or at local level with political authorities) while respecting humanitarian principles.</i></p> <p><i>Local authorities continue to provide some services.</i></p>	<p><i>The above plus...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify what local authority services exist, if they are safe for affected communities to use, and if/how NRC can engage and support resumption of services without compromising humanitarian principles. • Identify any barriers to inclusion of displaced people services. Work to address these. • Question if NRC direct delivery is the best response, rather than acting as an enabler.
<p><i>More stable context.</i></p> <p><i>Immediate basic needs are high, and government is not yet willing or capable to engage in solutions processes.</i></p>	<p><i>The above two sets of Solutions from the Start elements plus...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider options for NRC early shift to transitional approaches. • Tie in NRC advocacy/policy work at national and local level with programme objectives. <i>E.g. on inclusion in government systems.</i>

2 Process and tools

When and by who?

Taking a ‘Solutions from the Start’ approach should be done **within the existing NRC processes** for emergency response and preparedness planning.¹⁰

NRC teams should take a ‘Solutions from the Start’ approach when:

- Undertaking **preparedness planning**.
- Developing **emergency response plans**.
- **Adjusting** emergency response plans.
- **Developing proposals** for emergency programming.

This would be the responsibility of:

- **Emergency Response Section (ERS) teams** during start-ups or in support to Country Offices, during scale-ups.
- **Country Office Country Management Group (CMG)**¹¹ and **Emergency focal points** doing preparedness planning or developing or updating emergency response plans at country- or area-level.
- **CC Specialists** and **CC Programme Managers** developing or updating sector emergency response activities.
- **Advocacy Managers, Coordination focal points, and Partnerships focal points** to ensure strategies are aligned and integrated.

¹⁰ Guidance on taking a ‘Solutions from the Start’ approach is also integrated in core NRC tools and processes that are used for emergency preparedness and response design. Including, at the time of writing, planned integration into the ‘One Response Design in Emergencies’ package, bReady, Emergency Response Plan template in the Crisis Activation System package, and CC FLR Guidance Notes. This Toolkit can be used to supplement content in those.

¹¹ NRC’s country senior leadership team

Response planning process and using the Toolkit

These tools provide examples and tips to help guide NRC teams to design a ‘Solutions from the Start’ approach. They are fully compatible with (and should be used with) existing NRC tools and processes.

Overall guidance [this document]

Guidance on the approach and processes

Tool 1: Guidance on Solutions from the Start

Analysis and assessment

Conduct situational analysis that includes questions designed to identify which Solutions from the Start elements are appropriate.

Sources might include:

- *Secondary data, e.g. existing assessments.*
- *Local knowledge of NRC staff.*
- *Key informant community leaders / diverse group representatives, or local actors (civil society, local authorities, private sector)*

Tool 2: Situation Analysis MiniTool

For ERS, CMG, and Emergency focal points. Can be used by itself, or with an existing analysis tool.

NB: this is an extract from NRC’s One Response Design package.

If assessments are needed, these should go beyond basic needs, and include questions that allow CCs to analyse options for Solutions from the Start.

Rapid Needs or sector assessments, if NRC primary data collection is needed.

Tool 3: Assessment and Information Collection Tips, per CC

For CC Specialists & PMs to use to design questions to add to existing assessment tools.

Response analysis and design

Analyse options and design response for:

- **Programmes** – with integrated response, selecting appropriate Solutions from the Start options for the context.
- **Partnership & coordination** – formal and informal, focused on NRC as an enabler not only on implementing partnerships.
- **Advocacy/policy** – as a core part of a ‘Solutions from the Start’ approach, complementing programme aims.

Tool 4: Activities Examples, per CC

Tool 5: Compendium of Programme Examples

For ERS, CMG, Emergency focal points, CCs to use in complement to CC FLR Guidance. They are examples to help teams think about options.

Operationalisation

Tools can be used as needed, to inform adjustments to NRC’s emergency response.

Annexes

Annex 1: What this can look like in practice

Across all sectors and functions, NRC's starting point is to consider what change is needed for displaced people to rely less on humanitarian assistance and access services, rights, and opportunities on a sustainable basis. In emergencies, this means keeping future pathways open while meeting urgent needs. These examples illustrate how this can shape design and implementation decisions across NRC's work.

Example 1: Shelter & WASH - from emergency provision to sustainable access

Intended change: Displaced people can access safe shelter and WASH services without long-term reliance on parallel humanitarian systems.

At design stage: In emergencies, NRC designs shelter and WASH responses to meet immediate, life-saving needs while anticipating that displacement may last longer than expected. Early decisions consider whether interventions can immediately or later connect to or strengthen existing infrastructure and service providers. This includes choices about settlement locations, construction standards, materials, environmental impact, and whether to prioritise – or how to sequence – temporary substitution or repair and rehabilitation of existing systems.

During implementation: As conditions evolve, teams regularly assess whether any direct delivery modalities being implemented remain appropriate, and if, how, and when it would be feasible to shift from repeated distributions or water trucking towards repairing shelters, rehabilitating water points, improving sanitation facilities, and supporting local service providers. These adjustments aim to reduce parallel systems over time and enable displaced people to access services through more sustainable arrangements.

Example 2: Education - from temporary learning to recognised pathways

Intended change: Displaced children and youth can access recognised education pathways and are not locked into temporary learning arrangements.

At design stage: Early education responses are designed so that temporary or non-formal learning can link to recognised national education systems. Teams identify likely barriers from the outset, such as documentation, certification, language, or age-related gaps, and consider how these could be addressed through coordination with authorities and complementary services.

During implementation: Teams work with education authorities and communities to support enrolment, retention, and transition into formal systems where possible. Learning modalities are adapted as contexts evolve, and documentation or legal barriers are addressed in coordination with ICLA, so that emergency education does not become a long-term parallel system.

Example 3: Cash and market systems – from coping assistance to inclusion

Intended change: Displaced people can meet their essential needs in a sustainable way and rely less on humanitarian assistance over time.

At design stage: When designing any responses, NRC assesses how assistance will interact with local markets, labour systems, and existing coping mechanisms. Decisions on modalities, targeting, and transfer values are made with awareness of whether they support longer-term self-reliance or risk reinforcing dependency.

During implementation: Market conditions and household outcomes are monitored, and programmes are adjusted accordingly. Support may shift from short-term coping assistance to market-based activities where conditions allow, recognising that progress may be uneven and reversible depending on context.

Example 4: Protection from Violence & ICLA - safety, dignity and rights as foundations for solutions

Intended change: Displaced people can live in safety and dignity, exercise their rights, and access services and opportunities without exposure to violence, abuse, or exploitation, reducing long-term protection risks linked to displacement.

At design stage: From the outset, NRC identifies protection risks related to violence, abuse, exploitation, and exclusion that may affect displaced people in a given context. This includes risks linked to movement, housing, access to services, site conditions, community tensions, and interactions with authorities or armed actors. Protection considerations are integrated across programme design, with early attention to how activities may reduce or exacerbate risks, how communities can be supported to strengthen their own protective capacities, and how access to rights and services could progressively be enabled through existing national or local systems rather than parallel arrangements.

During implementation: As activities unfold, protection teams monitor risks and adjust programming if delivery unintentionally increases exposure to harm. This may include adapting shelter layouts, improving lighting, supporting community safety initiatives, or engaging in humanitarian mediation to reduce violence and tensions. ICLA teams support individuals to obtain documentation, resolve housing, land and property issues, and understand their legal options, enabling safer access to services, livelihoods, and assistance. Through protection monitoring, coordination, and advocacy, NRC uses evidence from implementation to influence other actors and systems, promote inclusive policies and practices, and ensure that protection outcomes are strengthened over time as displacement situations evolve.

Example 5: Programme management - enabling adaptation and transition

Intended change: Programmes remain relevant as contexts change and do not default to indefinite emergency delivery.

At design stage: Programmes are designed with flexibility, avoiding rigid assumptions about duration or stability. This includes sequencing activities with potential transitions in mind and building in options for adaptation during the emergency phase, handover, and exit.

During implementation: Programme teams regularly reassess priorities, modalities, and geographic focus. Decisions are taken to adapt activities.

Example 6: Procurement, finance, and HR - shaping sustainable solutions

Intended change: Operational systems enable, rather than constrain, shifts towards more sustainable and locally anchored responses.

At design stage: Support functions plan systems that allow for adaptation over time. Procurement strategies consider local sourcing and maintainability, budgets allow for revisions and transitions, and staffing structures balance surge capacity with longer-term continuity.

During implementation: As contexts evolve, procurement may shift towards local suppliers, finance teams support budget adjustments to enable transitions, and HR adapts staffing profiles as NRC's role changes. These decisions directly affect whether programmes can move beyond short-term delivery.

Example 7: Partnerships, advocacy, and systems engagement – NRC as an enabler

Intended change: Displaced people are included in national and local systems through collective and institutional change.

At design stage: From the start, NRC identifies key partners, authorities, and systems that NRC could work in complement to, or work with as an Enabler. Programmes are designed to complement and strengthen these actors, recognising that NRC alone cannot deliver sustainable outcomes.

During implementation: As programmes progress, NRC may shift responsibilities to partners, support authorities to take on greater roles, and use operational evidence to advocate for policy or practice changes. This Enabler role, including working through systems, institutions, and other actors is central to keeping pathways to self-reliance open, even beyond NRC's direct activities.

Annex 2: Checklist for NRC SfS emergency preparedness and response planning

Checklist for NRC emergency preparedness and response planning

1. Start from people's intentions and preferences, not only their needs.

- ✓ Do we fully understand the context, and local actor and community capacities?
- ✓ Is NRC's response informed by, and will support, communities' preferences and intentions?

2. Build on existing community capacities and self-organisation

- ✓ How does NRC plan to support existing community capacities for self-protection, self-organisation, positive coping mechanisms, and existing community response?

3. Use market-based approaches and cash wherever possible

- ✓ Is a market-based modality possible? Can NRC support markets to provide the needed goods and services? Can NRC ensure individuals can access these markets?
- ✓ Is a cash-based modality possible? If in-kind is planned, why will this deliver better results?

4. Address barriers for displaced people to access existing services, systems, and rights

- ✓ Do we understand the barriers displaced people face to accessing local systems and services (e.g., legal, access, policy, safety, protection barriers), and how these could be addressed?

5. Act as an Enabler, not a parallel service provider, where feasible

- ✓ What local systems and services are functioning? Are they safe for affected communities to use? Can NRC support resumption of needed goods and services, or overcome barriers for people to access them, without compromising humanitarian principles?
- ✓ Do we know who the key local actors are and their response capacities (government authorities, local authority service providers, private sector, civil society actors)? How can we complement support these (partnerships or otherwise) as an Enabler, to be more sustainable?¹²
- ✓ Is NRC direct delivery necessary, or are there more sustainable and cost-effective alternatives? (e.g. supporting delivery by local actors or systems). What are the options for exit?

6. Design for sustainability and exit from day one

- ✓ Are there any environment and climatic considerations to ensure longer-term intervention sustainability?
- ✓ Are actions being designed to reduce dependency over time, rather than reinforce it?
- ✓ Is NRC's response integrated between CCs, and advocacy, coordination, and partnerships?
- ✓ Have we identified what issues may require advocacy or coordination engagement?

¹² It may be necessary to consider **humanitarian principles** and **protection considerations** when deciding if or how to engage with local (political) authorities, or specific civil society actors. This will influence the types of activity NRC can undertake but does not mean that a 'Solutions from the Start' approach cannot be taken.

Annex 3: Using Market Systems interventions

Working with and through market actors is a pragmatic way to help people access local goods, services, and economic opportunities, even in emergencies. It shifts NRC's role beyond that of direct service provider, to be an empowering, facilitating agent. By working at systems rather than household-level, Market Support interventions can have longer-term outcomes for market sustainability, inclusion, and productivity – locally supporting self-reliance for many more people with the same or less money.

Systems interventions focus on achieving the same target outcomes (within CC Theories of Change (ToCs)) for displaced people but through indirect delivery modalities. They focus on supporting market actors and removing barriers that prevent existing market systems from serving people in need.

Market systems programming does not require complex analysis or programming; it focuses on engaging with the systems (*food markets, water service providers, housing cooperatives, schools, etc.*) that we are already aware of and interact with. Start with target outcomes (in the existing ToCs), identify the barrier or problem, and then understand who has the capacity, will, and skill to engage.

See: [Market Systems Intervention project planning](#) (NRC internal)

And: [First-Line Response Guidance: Market Support Interventions](#) (NRC internal)

Annex 4: Acting as an Enabler for local actors and systems

Consider how NRC can act as an enabler for local actors in emergency response and preparedness to address displaced people's needs and lay the foundation for their self-reliance, by:

- Rapidly channelling flexible resources (e.g., mini-grants, cash) to local actors to provide immediate assistance and as a pathway to self-reliance.
- Strengthening local responders' safety and access capacities through emergency trainings, protective equipment, and digital information-sharing.
- Leveraging existing systems with NRC's surge technical expertise while avoiding duplication.
- Facilitating cash and market-based approaches to help communities withstand shocks.
- Investing in (locally-led) anticipatory action mechanisms that allow early release of funds to local actors before a shock hits.
- Supporting community preparedness efforts (and therefore community-led response). *E.g., community-based action plans, utilising civilian self-protection.*
- Advocating with donors to recognise and fund local actors as first responders, to adopt simplified compliance requirements in crises and more flexibility to work on solutions from the start.
- Strengthening the role of local authorities in fulfilling their responsibilities by supporting planning, coordination, and technical capacities (e.g. *contingency planning, information management, inclusion of displaced populations*), while maintaining NRC's principled, non-substitutive role.
- Facilitating networking, coordination, and peer learning among local actors, where appropriate, by acting as a connector, convenor, and information broker to strengthen collective response, reduce fragmentation, and amplify local leadership.

See: [NRC as Enabler: Working with Local Actors and Systems, Guidance Note](#) (NRC internal)

And: resources on [Partnerships in Emergencies](#) (NRC internal)