



WHAT PRACTICES ARE USED TO IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE VULNERABLE POPULATIONS AFFECTED BY URBAN HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES?

About this systematic review

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Series editors

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View of Kathmandu in February 2016. Kieran Doherty/Oxfam.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster
CHW	Community health worker
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DEC	Disaster Emergency Committee
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EMMA	Emergency Market Mapping Analysis
GBV	Gender-based violence
GNI	Gross national income
HC	Humanitarian Coalition
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally displaced person
IRT	Item response theory
JIPS	Joint IDP Profiling Service
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NGO	Non-government organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This systematic review, commissioned by the Humanitarian Evidence Programme (HEP) and carried out by a team from Stanford University, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and University of New South Wales, represents the first ever attempt to systematically search, sort and synthesize existing evidence on targeting the most vulnerable in urban humanitarian crises in low and middle-income countries.¹ More specifically, the research aims to consolidate findings on the practices (tools, methods and metrics) used to identify and prioritize vulnerable people, households and communities in humanitarian emergencies, including those displaced within and to urban areas. Targeting is difficult to design given that vulnerability is a complex attribute to measure; it is both dynamic and relative, and depends on programme objectives. The review investigates vulnerability assessment as a means of identifying target beneficiaries of humanitarian aid programmes in both disasters caused by natural hazards and complex emergency settings since 1985.

The research team:

- mapped and documented existing research
- identified gaps in existing research and knowledge
- synthesized the evidence in response to a considered research question.

Definitions

This review encompasses a broad definition of '**urban environments**', which may be determined by: 'administrative criteria or political boundaries (e.g. area within the jurisdiction of a municipality or town committee); a threshold population size (where the minimum for an urban settlement is typically in the region of 2,000 people, although this varies globally between 200 and 50,000); population density (typically 400 per square kilometre); economic function (e.g. where a significant majority of the population is not primarily engaged in agriculture, or where there is surplus employment); or the presence of urban characteristics (e.g. paved streets, electric lighting, sewerage)' (UNICEF, 2012, p. 10). This definition allows for the inclusion of towns and cities, as well as peri-urban settlements with non-agriculture-based economies and informal spaces that lack official recognition.

Vulnerable populations can make up the majority of some cities, depending on the definition and metrics used. This review aims to synthesize evidence on practices used to identify vulnerable populations and hence relies a great deal on agencies' own definitions.

In this review, we use the term '**urban humanitarian emergency or crisis**' to refer to any humanitarian action taken within an urban environment, irrespective of where the crisis originated, as long as the intervention was implemented in an urban area. Many urban populations live below Sphere minimum standards, which can result in greater vulnerability when overlapped with other **types of emergencies** (Humanitarian Coalition, 2013).

What practices and methods are used to identify and prioritize vulnerable populations affected by urban humanitarian emergencies?

- The research team identified seven main methods or attributes of identifying and targeting vulnerable people in urban humanitarian contexts for consideration from 19 reports that had evidence meeting the synthesis criteria:
 - targeting by displacement status (i.e. internally displaced person (IDP) or refugee versus host population)
 - using locally derived assessment tools
 - categorical targeting (i.e. targeting by demographic category such as gender, age, ability, ethnicity)
 - using pre-existing administrative data
 - self-targeting
 - community-based targeting
 - using a sampling frame.

¹ HEP is a partnership between Oxfam GB and the Feinstein International Center at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University. It is funded by the United Kingdom (UK) government's Department for International Development (DFID) through the Humanitarian Innovation and Evidence Programme.

Figure 0.1: Summary of findings. Source: The research team

Identification practice type	Number of studies*	Quality of study†	Sectors/themes	Locations
Targeting by displacement status Evidence calls into question the practice of using IDP/refugee versus host population as a targeting delineation in humanitarian programming in urban contexts, where there may be significant underlying vulnerability and poverty among resident populations.	6	High: 1 Medium: 2 Low: 3	Food security Nutrition Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)	Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC); Mogadishu, Somalia; Nairobi, Kenya; Peshawar, Pakistan; urban south-central Somalia
Categorical targeting Evidence shows that, while targeting by category of person using demographics such as gender or age can be useful, it must be context specific. Defining vulnerable groups by demographic identifier must ensure that those classified are truly the most in need of a humanitarian intervention.	4	High: 1 Medium: 1 Low: 2	Food security	Urban Burkina Faso; Damascus, Syria; Darfur, Sudan
Using pre-existing data Use of pre-existing administrative data must consider that it will often be imperfect in its representativeness, how it was collected and how up to date it may be. Given rapidly changing urban environments and disruptions caused by the crisis itself, pre-existing administrative data should be used with caution, bearing in mind the need to determine the supplementary secondary data needed for identifying vulnerable populations.	3	High: - Medium: 2 Low: 1	Food security Livelihoods	Bam, Iran; Darfur; urban Syria
Locally-derived tools Many reports stress the importance of local insight to the process of informing vulnerability assessments whether developing a brand new context-specific scale or adding locally relevant indicators to a pre-existing tool. Evidence from both gender-based violence (GBV) and food security assessments supports developing entirely new scales or adapting scales with local data.	3	High: 3 Medium: - Low: -	Food security GBV	Accra, Ghana; Mocoa, Colombia; Nairobi
Self-targeting Evidence indicates that the self-targeting method is expensive and difficult to maintain long-term or to transition to local authorities. Self-targeting through a physical centre is unlikely to reach the most vulnerable who wish to remain hidden.	2	High: - Medium: 1 Low: 1		Damascus, Mogadishu
Community-based targeting Evidence reveals some success in identifying the most vulnerable through community-based targeting, which leverages local knowledge and contextual understanding – critical to urban response. The evidence also shows that to avoid bias, a nuanced understanding of the community, motivating factors for participation and local power dynamics is required.	2	High: 1 Medium: - Low: 1	Food security, WASH, livelihoods	Gaza, Occupied Palestinian Territory; Nairobi, Port-au-Prince, Haiti; urban south-central Somalia
Sampling frame Evidence indicates that the density and heterogeneity of cities necessitates larger sample sizes, more clusters or smaller geographic units during data collection to ensure pockets of vulnerability and diversity are captured to inform targeting.	1	High: 1 Medium: - Low: -		Grozny (Chechnya)

Notes:

* Total sample size: 19 articles (14 grey literature, 5 academic).

† Quality: the research team developed a quality assessment formula based on: representativeness of urban population described (whether the sample size was large enough and the composition was adequate to draw meaningful conclusions); methods used (whether they were relevant and appropriate for assessing the targeting strategy used and whether those methods could generate reliable data); justified conclusions (whether or not they follow logically from the observations or results of the study); and risk and discussion of bias. The quality assessment scale is included in Appendix C of the full report.

- Six of the nineteen studies eligible for inclusion in this study contain evidence on **targeting by displaced and host populations**. Only one study – a review of NRC’s programming in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where many displaced people rented accommodation with less secure tenure than host populations – indicates there was more vulnerability among displaced populations than resident communities. (Bailey, 2015). The majority of studies argue against targeting by displacement status to identify the most vulnerable populations in urban crises. In addition to missing some of the most vulnerable groups in a city, targeting by displacement status can foster resentment, in some instances further exacerbating the vulnerability of targeted groups (Metcalf and Pavanello, 2011; CRS, 2015).
 - A study in Nairobi, Kenya, found that slum residents faced similar difficulties in accessing healthcare, adequate shelter, water and sanitation and education as IDPs (Metcalf and Pavanello, 2011).
 - A livelihood nutrition assessment conducted in 14 districts of Mogadishu, Somalia, found only minor differences in vulnerability between host and IDP populations, determining that the differences were insufficient to justify excluding host populations from emergency nutritional support (ACF, 2012).
 - A Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster (CCCM) report found that IDP community centres in several Yemeni cities had run into problems distinguishing host and displaced households in situations where host populations were found to be in equally ‘dire need as IDPs’ (CCCM 2014).
 - In the same report, a vulnerability mapping exercise in Lebanon showed the majority of poor Lebanese lived side by side with Syrian refugees within 225 localities that have a combined population of both vulnerable Lebanese and registered refugees (CCCM, 2014). Additionally, longer-term residents in Peshawar, Pakistan, pointed out that refugees and IDPs are straining basic services and infrastructure within the city, suggesting that funding should be provided for strengthening services in host communities that display similar vulnerability (Mosel and Jackson, 2013).
- Four of the included studies incorporate **categorical targeting methods** (i.e. targeting by demographic categories such as gender, age, disability and ethnicity). The outward transparency of this approach is stated as a benefit by one study because those meeting criteria for inclusion are often easily distinguishable (Fortin et al., 2015); the 2015 evaluation of NRC’s urban assistance in Goma found that both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries estimated inclusion error for the categorical targeting programme to be minor (Bailey, 2015). However, nuanced analysis and contextual understanding are essential to ensure against oversight and mitigate the risk of overlooking certain types of vulnerability in particular situations.
 - In Syria, unaccompanied Iraqi men, who were not initially included as a vulnerable category were not considered for resettlement though they were particularly isolated due to their lack of family networks within Damascus (Haysom and Pavanello, 2011).
 - A DRC report focused on Syrian refugees in Turkey found female-headed households and male-headed households had similar levels of vulnerability on a majority of socioeconomic and protection indicators (Armstrong and Jacobsen, 2015).
- **Using pre-existing data** can be valuable in the design of targeting approaches – an example is following the 2003 Bam earthquake in Iran, when relief organizations were able to make use of the existing categorical vulnerability criteria defined by the local Welfare Organization and to rapidly begin targeting resources to people in need (Bagheri et al., 2006). However, two of the three studies referencing the use of pre-existing data underscore the importance of data verification and supplementation.
 - An evaluation of geographic targeting for food aid concluded that pre-existing data or analytical constructs must be supplemented by primary data (Bailey et al., 2005).
 - In Syria, Palestinian refugees were targeted for United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) assistance based on data held with its Relief and Social Service Programme, which effectively identified vulnerable beneficiaries early on in the programme. However, the registry was out of date and no longer sufficient to guarantee ‘effective targeting of [the] abject poor’ (Bucciarelli and Goldman, 2014).

- The research team found an insufficient number of trials to be able to make more evidence-based claims about the effectiveness of **locally derived** and **situation-specific instruments and practices to identify and prioritize vulnerability**. However, the three studies included in this review emphasize the significance of such practice both in terms of developing new context-specific scales and adding locally relevant indicators to pre-existing tools. Evidence comes from both the gender-based violence (GBV) and food security areas of practice.
 - An example of such a tool is a screening tool developed in Ethiopia and validated in Colombia (ASIST-GBV) to rapidly identify female survivors of GBV and appropriately target services. The authors of the study developed a screening tool for the various forms of GBV experienced by Ethiopian refugees through interviews and focus group discussions (Wirtz et al., 2013). The tool was refined and validated by another study of IDPs in hospital sites in Colombia, adding one additional question on forced abortion that specifically applied in the Colombian context. The tool shows high internal reliability and is able to distinguish between levels of GBV across a spectrum in both the Ethiopian and Colombian context. The evidence does not speak to the comparability of GBV levels across countries or outcomes of the interventions applied but it does show internal reliability in identifying affected populations (Vu et al., 2016).
 - One study among slum populations in Nairobi employed item response theory (IRT) models to quickly and effectively measure food insecurity. Researchers in this study narrowed down to only four dichotomous indicator variables to develop a hunger index, which they validated for accuracy against other measures (Faye et al., 2011).
- Both of the eligible studies covering **self-targeting** highlight concerns with the approach in their contexts: one documents the situation of vulnerable Iraqi refugees in Syria in 2006 (Haysom and Pavanello, 2011) and the other experiences of reaching the most vulnerable in Mogadishu (CCCM, 2014). The concerns are that self-targeting is unlikely to reach the most vulnerable who wish to remain hidden and it proved expensive and difficult to maintain long term or to transition to local authorities.
- The two pieces of evidence on **community-based targeting** reveal some success but also highlight the need for awareness of local power dynamics in order to avoid exclusion and bias.
- One study (Grozny, Chechnya) provides guidance on **sampling frames for surveys and focus groups** in urban areas, advising that the density and heterogeneity of cities necessitates large sample sizes, more clusters or smaller geographic units (Drysdale et al., 2000).
- The varied and varying nature of crisis, vulnerability, goals of humanitarian programming, local conditions and quality of available data mean that no single approach will be generically applicable to all contexts.

What evidence was eligible for synthesis?

- Some 29,000 English language documents were identified through database and website searches (of think tanks, consortia working groups and partnerships, UN agencies and international bodies, government agencies, university and institution-based research programmes and operational organizations) as well as through referrals made by experts from both the Urban Community of Practice listserv operated by ALNAP and the Urban Expert Working Group for the World Humanitarian Summit:
 - 304 articles were included in a full text review
 - 19 articles were eventually selected for inclusion in the review; 14 from grey literature and 5 academic articles
 - of the 19 included articles, 11 were qualitative studies, 5 quantitative and 3 mixed methods.²

² The initial database and website searches took place during January and February 2016.

- The search covered all urban populations that have experienced a humanitarian crisis response since 1985 in urban areas – including IDPs, refugees and residents affected by an emergency:
 - all 19 of the included studies were published after 1999; 15 of them were published after 2010 (see the full report, Figure 4.1, for details of included studies for evidence-based findings).
- While the research team is confident in the methodology employed and the search terms and databases included, the state of humanitarian literature – how it is produced, published, catalogued and consolidated – results in some specific limitations.
 - For example, humanitarian literature in the databases searched does not treat urban search and rescue in the same way as the various other types of documentation detailing aid targeting do, and it was therefore not included in this review. In a technical sense, from an engineering and damage perspective, determining which structures should be prioritized for search and evacuation, and thus which occupants should be offered shelter first, can be described as targeting in urban humanitarian emergencies. Yet its treatment in these databases does not consider it as ‘targeting’ in the same manner as the other topics considered here. Additionally, while there is a wide literature base on urban search and rescue, the majority of this likely deals with examples from higher income countries, which are excluded from this review.
 - Expanding the scope to include evidence from various other bodies of literature, such as development and poverty alleviation, as well as work on intimate partner violence or human trafficking, may have identified additional evidence of potential interest to humanitarian practitioners but this was beyond the scope of this review.

What’s the state of the evidence on practices used to identify and prioritize vulnerable populations affected by urban humanitarian emergencies? Where are the gaps?

- A major finding of this systematic review is the striking lack of high quality evidence on targeting vulnerable populations in urban humanitarian emergencies. The research team’s own experience of assessing the strength of the evidence in many papers revealed:
 - minimal information about methods – while some studies (particularly the academic articles) have robust methods sections, many methods sections are sparse and light on detail
 - reports do not always clearly attribute findings to the study results
 - much of the literature informing humanitarian practice does not incorporate experimental design
 - while many papers discuss the number of people enrolled or targeted by a programme, the actual size of the sample used to evaluate the targeting approach and its representativeness is not clear
 - often an observational approach is taken to evaluate targeting but the methods of observation are not always clearly described
 - descriptions of limitations and risks of bias are nearly always absent in the grey literature reports, which tend to focus more on the effectiveness of a specific intervention for pre-determined outputs, than on formally seeking to evaluate the targeting approach
 - the academic papers have more direct focus on evaluating a targeting approach as the main purpose of the research and tend to compare targeting approaches to one another or to an accepted standard, or to perform validity tests; the academic literature scored higher in this review’s quality rubric because it mandates a methodology section, requires presentation of data and discussion of limitations (allowing clear evaluation of validity) and has a peer review filter for publication that some grey literature does not.
- Specific areas that would benefit from better disaggregated data and focused research include:
 - war, conflict and violence – while these may be some of the most difficult situations in which to perform quality research, the dearth of evidence highlights a glaring gap in environments that require effort and funding as populations become increasingly exposed to conflict

- age, gender and (dis)ability – future evaluations could specifically aim to investigate and report on the experience of these groups with regard to specific targeting approaches
- urban shelter – outside the literature base on urban search and rescue, and on engineering assessments, there is a lack of evidence to guide targeting
- user and beneficiary generated data – data obtained through crowdsourcing platforms and social media is often presented as a potentially valuable way of incorporating community perspectives and local knowledge in targeting; however, we found no evidence on these methods in our searches
- evidence is lacking on how targeting during a humanitarian emergency can emerge from disaster risk reduction efforts, or be folded back into social protection programmes post-crisis as an exit strategy
- absorptive capacity – urban humanitarian response that is moving towards understanding how cities, communities and households can enable the aid response will necessitate better assessments of local absorptive capacity; this includes, for example, the capacity to shelter or host IDPs, or to upgrade the existing healthcare infrastructure.

Research team reflections

- These identified gaps speak to the lack of outcome-based research in the humanitarian sector, where process indicators are preferentially collected and reported. Without true outcomes, the risks and benefits of selected approaches cannot be validated. The humanitarian sector should move towards outcome indicators based on potential risks and benefits when designing the monitoring and evaluation of programmes – supported by adequate funding to allow the construction of a firm evidence base. This research would likely adopt mixed-methods approaches. The multidimensional nature of vulnerability and complexity of the urban environment will likely require both quantitative and qualitative analysis.
- Our review excludes lessons and forms of practice used in non-acute crisis settings. The nature of rapid urbanization, however, has created many situations of chronic crisis. Lessons for identifying and targeting the most vulnerable from such non-acute crisis situations from a wider body of literature such as development practice would be valuable to inform humanitarian practice in acute crises. The existing evidence on this topic comes from many sources but commonly resides in post-crisis reports of strategies used such as agency evaluations, rather than pre-planned studies.
- When resources are limited and needs are vast, there is some limitation to any targeting approach, whether in numbers of people that can be served or the amount/quality of aid that can be provided. Also, while there may be a preferred targeting approach for a given situation, political and security concerns that restrict operations can be as limiting as budgets and time.
- We believe urban areas are most amenable to targeting based on socioeconomic indicators supplemented by deeper contextual analyses of vulnerability. Sector-based vulnerability analyses and targeting approaches are ill suited to complex urban crises, where needs are interrelated.
- Efforts to improve urban data before a crisis begins are an opportunity to align development and humanitarian priorities. As local governments play a larger role in humanitarian aid operations, and as practice is placed in a broader development and resilience framework, pre-existing and baseline data to inform targeting will become increasingly valuable. This pre-existing data, however, may be out-dated, aggregated or biased, and loses value in rapidly changing situations such as displacement. Protracted crises represent examples of cases in which pre-existing data and existing humanitarian assessments can be combined to inform targeting.

Creating tools to drive sector-specific interventions in urban settings

The NRC and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, along with some NGOs and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) are creating new guidelines for the provision of shelter in urban settings. UNHCR has worked with NGOs to develop a toolkit to identify at-risk urban refugees for resettlement (UNHCR, 2015). Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has developed a vulnerability assessment tool to identify victims of violence and improve targeting to prioritize areas of high need (MSF, 2015). Additionally, Concern Worldwide has received funding from the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance to develop a tool for slow-onset urban emergencies. This would function as an early warning system to alert governments and humanitarian organizations in the case of escalating concern. Many other organizations are also working on tools for targeting vulnerable populations, including but not limited to the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS) and the Feinstein International Center's work on urban profiling (JIPS et al., 2013). These very specific efforts aim to prompt early response to crises, and facilitate the distribution of aid quickly and effectively to those most vulnerable to shocks.

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 AIMS AND RATIONALE FOR REVIEW

International organizations working in humanitarian crises recognize the need to improve urban emergency response and preparedness. This entails devising better methods for assessing vulnerability within urban populations. Currently, the Sphere Handbook of guidelines and best practices for humanitarian response is being adapted to include the urban context (The Sphere Project, 2015). The Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC's) strategy report on meeting humanitarian challenges in urban areas explains the need for targeting and enumerating vulnerable individuals and communities to better direct services (IASC 2010). Similarly, ALNAP (the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action), highlights the need for 'specific efforts [to] be made to identify those groups who have particular need or high levels of need' in urban emergencies (Sanderson et al., 2012).

Additionally, urban violence – which includes traditional war, but increasingly encompasses criminal violence with devastating consequences for the health and well-being of populations – has necessitated new approaches to targeting assistance to the vulnerable in cities (Lucchi, 2013). More prominently and very timely, the first ever World Humanitarian Summit, held in 2016, reviewed current practice and helped inform future humanitarian challenges through global and expert consultations. This process included an Urban Expert Working Group, in which the authors of this review participated. The Global Alliance for Urban Crises charter evolved out of these efforts. The alliance brings together a broad array of stakeholders to recognize the growing and unique challenge of urban crises, promote this agenda beyond the Summit, and work to improve operational practice in urban crises.

Recent crises have further emphasized the need for vulnerability assessment criteria and functional targeting methods. In Nepal, government efforts to equitably distribute resources in the wake of the 2015 earthquake resulted in many organizations being spread too thin and caused concern within humanitarian organizations that the most vulnerable people were being overlooked because they lacked title deeds and/or proper identification. The Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) and the Humanitarian Coalition (HC)'s review of the Nepal earthquake response pushes for improved targeting that considers the proportional impact of a disaster on vulnerable groups (DEC/HC, 2015). Similarly, relief efforts in Port-au-Prince following the 2010 Haiti earthquake highlighted the need for improved resource targeting. A majority of the population lived below Sphere minimum standards before the earthquake, and inadequate targeting of response resulted in uneven resource distribution (ALNAP et al., 2010).

As organizations struggle to identify vulnerable populations in urban areas, they are challenged by the fact that in many rapidly growing and fragile cities, large populations are living in extreme vulnerability even before the onset of an acute crisis. Large urban populations sometimes live well below Sphere minimum standards, as seen in Nairobi slums (Concern Worldwide, 2014). This baseline vulnerability factors directly into risks to health and well-being, and translates back into need for services when an acute crisis strikes (World Health Organization (WHO), 2002). In these environments, practitioners report being overwhelmed by need. This review addresses the increasing demand for guidance in urban crises, where previous practices may not be applicable.

The review findings may also play an important role in preparedness, as the practices used to identify vulnerable populations in urban crises can be complementary to emergency risk reduction practice in the pre-emergency phase of the humanitarian crisis cycle.

1.2 DEFINITIONAL AND CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

Time frame

This review focuses on urban crises between 1985 and 2015, with the recognition that the Mexico City earthquake of 1985 represents a seminal learning event in urban humanitarian response that provoked the development of unique, urban-focused response. In the wake of the Mexico City earthquake, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) published several iterations of policies focused on urban displacement. The 1995 UNHCR report acknowledged a growing concern over ‘the dearth of policy guidelines regarding urban refugees’ (UNHCR, 1995), an acknowledgement that created the foundation for urban-focused humanitarian policies and research (Pantuliano et al., 2012). As a result, a focused look at identifying and targeting vulnerable populations within urban humanitarian crises of the last 30 years allows the review to be inclusive of the resources relevant to its question. Also, by applying a clear boundary – reaching back to the pivotal event of the Mexico City earthquake – the review ensures a large enough time frame to capture pertinent studies that motivated UNHCR’s transition in focus during the early 1990s.

Vulnerability and need

The research question has been altered slightly from the original wording in the call for proposals: from ‘What are the different practices to identify populations in need in humanitarian emergencies in urban settings?’ to ‘What are the practices to identify and prioritize vulnerable populations affected by urban humanitarian emergencies?’ This is to reflect that vulnerable populations can make up nearly the entirety of some cities, depending on the definition and metrics used. In an acute crisis, identifying target beneficiaries is not simply a single-step process of dividing the population into two groups. Vulnerability in many cities is complex, and needs are multi-sectoral, such that, for example, enhancing security for women can improve access to paediatric care for children.

Categorizing vulnerability or segregating vulnerability is theoretically and operationally precarious. That said, humanitarian practice must identify and prioritize target individuals and groups for assistance on a timescale (immediate to delayed) and on a substantive scale (amount and type of aid needed). Identifying vulnerable populations during humanitarian action is a means to identifying potential beneficiaries in need of the goods and services of specific programmes.

This review, then, aims to synthesize evidence on these practices to identify vulnerable populations. This can guide the targeting of assistance to beneficiaries in need of specific outputs of humanitarian programmes. Policy and practice should aim to identify and differentiate these varying degrees or types of vulnerability for effectively targeting needs with limited resources. Thus, we have reframed the question to: **What is the evidence on practices to identify and prioritize vulnerable populations affected by urban humanitarian emergencies?** Additionally, we recognize that many organizations have focused on specific areas of vulnerability, such as food insecurity and child protection; however, this review aims to take a broad approach and synthesize findings across the various areas of practice.

Urban

We recognize that the academic conversation has struggled to find a single, clear definition of ‘urban’ due to the variation of definitions over time and across locations. The United Nations (UN) World Urbanization Prospects 2014 (UN, 2015) stated:

‘Of the 233 countries or areas for which estimates and projections of the urban and rural populations were produced, 125 use administrative criteria to distinguish between urban and rural areas. Sixty-five of these countries use administrative designations as the sole criterion. In 121 cases, the criteria used to characterize urban areas include population size or population density, and in 49 cases such demographic characteristics are the sole criterion. However, the lower limit above

which a settlement is considered urban varies considerably, ranging between 200 and 50,000 inhabitants. Economic characteristics were part of the criteria used to identify urban areas in 32 countries or areas, including all the successor states of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Criteria related to the functional nature of urban areas, such as the existence of paved streets, water supply systems, sewerage systems or electric lighting, were part of the definition of urban in 54 cases, but only in 10 cases were such criteria used alone. Lastly, in seven cases no definition of 'urban' was available and in eight cases the entire population of a country or area was considered to be urban.'

To ensure that we did not exclude relevant urban crises in our review, we employed a broad understanding of urban that falls into one or more of these various administrative, population, economic and functional categories. In this way, we could include urban areas that traditionally fall into the political-jurisdictional category of formally recognized and demarcated towns and cities, including their dense urban centres and suburbs, as well as new informal spaces that exist on the periphery of cities or within them, including urban slums or informal settlements.

A useful concise formulation for these considerations can be found in the UN-Habitat definition of urban spaces as:

'defined by one or more of the following: administrative criteria or political boundaries (e.g. area within the jurisdiction of a municipality or town committee), a threshold population size (where the minimum for an urban settlement is typically in the region of 2,000 people, although this varies globally between 200 and 50,000), population density [typically 400 per square km], economic function (e.g. where a significant majority of the population is not primarily engaged in agriculture, or where there is surplus employment) or the presence of urban characteristics (e.g. paved streets, electric lighting, sewerage)' (UNICEF, 2012, p. 10).

This definition allows for the inclusion of towns and cities, as well as peri-urban settlements with non-agriculture-based economies and informal spaces that lack official recognition. It matches the representation in the 2015 UN document as well.

Humanitarian action

The process of defining humanitarian action or assistance is complex due to the variety of definitions and the constant evolution of the term. However, across practicing organizations there is an understanding that humanitarian assistance must be non-coercive, action-oriented and 'provided solely for the benefit of those we seek to assist' (Davis, 2002). The definition has expanded to include new areas of focus, as humanitarian crises increase and the role of humanitarian assistance adapts to current environments. For the purposes of this study, borrowing from ALNAP, we recognize humanitarian action as 'assistance, protection and advocacy actions undertaken on an impartial basis in response to human needs resulting from complex political emergencies and natural hazards' (ALNAP, 2003, p. 202).

Humanitarian emergency or crisis

For this review, a humanitarian emergency, disaster or crisis is defined as 'an event or series of events that represent a critical threat to the health, safety, security or well-being of a community or other large group of people, usually over a wide area' (Humanitarian Coalition, 2013, p. 1). Humanitarian crises can be categorized based on the type of emergency (e.g. natural or technical disaster, such as a hazardous chemical spill or nuclear accident), conflict-related crisis (complex emergency), or by more ambiguous temporal categorization (e.g. 'sudden onset' for emergencies such as earthquakes, 'slow onset' for droughts or conflict-related emergencies, and 'protracted' for emergencies enduring for many years) (Doocy and Tappis, 2015). However, complex emergencies can include a combination of natural and man-made factors, making categorization difficult. As we acknowledge in this review, many urban populations live below Sphere minimum standards, which can result in greater vulnerability when overlapped with other types of emergencies (Humanitarian Coalition, 2013). Thus, no categorization is excluded from this review and this definition

allows us to remain open to a wide variety of stressors that activate a response by humanitarian aid agencies. Functionally, the search terms drive the discovery of relevant reports that identify a crisis or humanitarian emergency, but the research team applies this broad lens to determine inclusion.

Urban humanitarian emergency or crisis

For this review, we use ‘urban humanitarian emergency or crisis’ to address any humanitarian action taken within an urban environment in response to a humanitarian emergency of the types described in the previous sub-section. Thus, crises that originate both inside and outside an urban area meet this definition, as long as the intervention under study (identifying and prioritizing vulnerable populations) was implemented in an urban area. This urban location of intervention – rather than the location of the original crisis or population under study – reflects the area of focus of the original call for an evidence synthesis on this topic.

Low and middle-income countries

We limit the populations under study to those in low and middle-income countries, and we exclude high-income countries from the scope of the review. We base the determination of low, middle or high-income countries on the World Bank classification by gross national income (GNI) per capita in 2015 (World Bank). This allows the review to remain pertinent to the audience and context defined in the call for proposals. Users of this review in the humanitarian system, including donors, policymakers and operational agencies, are often focused on the applicability of the identification practices in low and middle-income countries. The guidance note that informed the development of this approach also refers to the humanitarian cluster system, which is almost exclusively activated outside of high-income countries. The specific issue of identification practices is also most relevant to cities in low and middle-income countries that experience rapid urbanization. The density and heterogeneity of these environments, alongside the acute or chronic vulnerability that makes humanitarian action in these contexts challenging, renders these likely settings in which the humanitarian system will engage and areas for which evidence-based guidance is needed.

1.3 RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE BACKGROUND

While several organizations are attempting to develop and consolidate tools and guidance for interventions in urban humanitarian emergencies, there is no existing systematic review of the evidence on targeting vulnerable populations in such situations. There are multiple efforts underway by several organizations to create new tools to drive sector-specific interventions in urban areas. For example, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and some non-government organizations (NGOs) are creating new guidelines for the provision of shelter in urban settings. Similarly, the World Food Programme (WFP) has reviewed food distribution practices to improve targeting for urban crises (IASC, 2009). Moreover, UNHCR, in partnership with other organizations, has worked to develop a toolkit to identify at-risk urban refugees for resettlement (UNHCR, 2015). Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has developed a vulnerability assessment tool to identify victims of violence and improve targeting to prioritize areas of high need (MSF, 2015). Additionally, Concern Worldwide has received funding from the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance to develop a tool for slow-onset urban emergencies. This would function as an early warning system to alert governments and humanitarian organizations in the case of escalating concern. Many other organizations are also working on tools for targeting vulnerable populations, including but not limited to, the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS) and the Feinstein International Center’s work on urban profiling (JIPS et al., 2013). The idea behind these very specific efforts is to prompt early response to crises, and facilitate the distribution of aid quickly and effectively to those most vulnerable to shocks.

An illustrative example of practices that we have sought to include in this review are the tools used by Oxfam GB to identify the most vulnerable populations following the 2010 earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, given its wide impact and baseline vulnerability. While the following

examples are not comprehensive on their own, they illustrate how a specific tool can be used to identify specific needs and allocate resources. No single tool may be sufficiently comprehensive, but sector or category-specific practices such as these are clearly valuable and easy to operate. The interagency EMMA (Emergency Market Mapping Analysis), Oxfam's rapid Emergency Food Security and Livelihood (EFSL) assessment, and the Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) provided wealth categories that helped direct Oxfam GB in targeting resources in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake and provided a foundation for the reconstruction planning process. The EMMA allowed for a market approach to resource distribution, which facilitated expansion of livelihoods and economic recuperation, while the specified wealth categories for aid distribution (very poor, poor, middle) helped to ensure that each group's specific, immediate needs were met (Young et al., 2010).

This review provides a necessary analysis of the approaches to target vulnerable populations. Synthesizing and comparing the approaches used within various sectors, it emphasizes the evidence behind these approaches, with the ultimate goal of better informing practice. Although we aimed to summarize findings for each of the listed tools, the review did not find enough evidence from any single tool to draw separate conclusions.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

The aim of our research is to consolidate the evidence on practices (including tools, methods, and metrics) reported by practitioners and academics to identify and prioritize vulnerable people, households or communities in urban populations affected by humanitarian emergencies, including those displaced within and to urban areas.

The consolidation of evidence is intended to serve as a resource for local actors, development organizations, academics, donors and responders working in humanitarian settings. While this review can also be used by development organizations to understand the current state of humanitarian practice and reflect on how the two fields interact, it excludes the wider body of development practice. The authors recognize the important influence that development practice is having on humanitarian practice and vice versa, as well as the difficulty of delineating humanitarian action from development activities. Specific examples of development practice influencing humanitarian practice include new advocacy for area-based approaches in humanitarian practice from the development literature, as well as specific tools such as cash transfers. The evidence, however, is consolidated strictly from humanitarian literature to ensure relevance.

Additionally, this review aims to be inclusive of women, girls and other systematically excluded groups in the analysis. Our review recognizes gender as affecting individuals' experiences of humanitarian crises and, notably, their vulnerability. The research team had intended to analyse sex and age-disaggregated data if it had been available, but there was insufficient data in the included reports to allow for such a disaggregated analysis.

2 METHODS

2.1 USER INVOLVEMENT

This review is aimed at organizations and individuals dedicated to humanitarian response in urban areas, and the findings are directed primarily toward the following groups:

- humanitarian and NGOs (both international humanitarian NGOs and local and regional agencies that respond to crises)
- international agencies, such as the various UN agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- governments (from national, regional and local municipal authorities to sub-city scale bodies such as neighbourhood councils) that have targeted programmes for crisis-affected urban populations
- donors
- academics
- private sector – as private providers are increasingly involved in response through facilitating aid such as cash-based interventions, or directly in providing services (shelter, water, insurance, etc.), the evidence behind this review aims to inform their involvement.

Approach and rationale

The detailed process for searching the literature to identify eligible studies for this review is described in greater detail in Section 2.2. Given that much of the literature informing humanitarian practice does not incorporate experimental designs, our review took a more comprehensive approach to potentially eligible research designs, and thus included a variety of formats that reflect a wide array of evidence.

As a function of this comprehensive approach, our research team reviewed both academic and grey literature, assessing the quality of each study included in this review. This method allowed the team to capture a broad range of relevant studies and to categorize relevant reports, based upon the type and quality of evidence. The comprehensive approach taken by our team is in line with the Humanitarian Evidence Programme's approach to the types of potentially includable evidence, as detailed in its guidance note for evidence synthesis in the humanitarian field (Krystalli and Ott, 2015).

2.2 IDENTIFYING AND DESCRIBING STUDIES

Defining relevant studies: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Our research question is central to both development and humanitarian practice, given that the process and pattern of rapid urbanization, as driven by specific political economies and interests, often creates pre-existing vulnerability to crisis and conflict for large numbers of urban dwellers. Political and economic incentive and disincentive structures drive urbanization and vulnerability. Complex and often poorly understood, these structures influence and shape urban areas. Similarly, specific political and economic interests drive humanitarian response. These pre-existing urban and humanitarian forces intersect during and after a crisis. This review focuses on practices, and remains cognizant of these political and economic forces, but does not address them. While our findings are relevant to development practitioners, our focus is on humanitarian practice. As such, the development literature and lessons from development practice, while still relevant, are not included in this systematic review.

The lines between humanitarian and development practice are blurring, and the two fields have much to learn from each other. Both fields would benefit greatly from a more integrated approach that ranges from emergency preparedness to post-crisis reconstruction and

addresses pre-existing vulnerability. Still, the development component remains beyond the scope of this review, which excludes lessons and forms of practice used in non-crisis settings. The existing evidence on this topic comes from many sources, but commonly resides in post-crisis reports of strategies used, rather than pre-planned studies, such as the evaluations of agencies and collated lessons papers produced by ALNAP.

PICO framework

This strategy encompasses the PICO (population, intervention, comparison and outcome) approach, which states more succinctly:

Population: All urban populations that have experienced a humanitarian crisis response since 1985 in urban areas. This population, by definition, focuses on vulnerable people in urban populations when looking at identification practices. This will be inclusive of pre-existing urban residents affected by an emergency, as well as those displaced into urban areas.

Intervention: The review identifies practices for targeting vulnerable populations (the identification and prioritization of the most vulnerable people). Any practice that performs this step to inform aid delivery is considered here. For example, practices may include a profiling method whereby individuals or households are identified by meeting a set of criteria that define targeting or are used to decide targeting. Another example is a registry of a specific type of person or household, such as a refugee registration system or registry of households under a certain poverty line. Yet another is a score to measure vulnerability such as the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (Coates et al., 2007). The interventions of interest do not include any operational modes of aid delivery.

Context: Urban humanitarian practice in urban contexts between 1985 and 2015 within low and middle-income countries.

Outcomes: A needs/vulnerability assessment described in the study. Studies/reports must have some form of needs/vulnerability assessment or target population/beneficiary identification process.

Literature reviewed includes both quantitative and qualitative studies that met the inclusion criteria listed below. The following publication types were excluded in the selection phase: editorials, expert opinions without reference to a body of work, evidence or other literature, and brief or cursory reports (or very limited and incomplete descriptions of a practice used in targeting). The review excludes anecdotes and expert opinions that do not reference applied targeting methods. This is because they represent individual, personal reflections that are incomplete accounts of targeting practices, rather than purpose-driven, systematic reporting of practices. Editorials and expert opinions played a role in the initial information-gathering phase to help frame the background and context, but were excluded from the review, as they did not meet the quality standards for data extraction. The choice not to include editorials, expert opinions and anecdotal papers was not intended to exclude qualitative research, which remains very informative and makes up the majority of reports reviewed.

Further, in order to be included in the review, studies or reports had to abide by the following inclusion criteria:

- covering urban populations of any size from any low and middle-income countries as described in the sub-section 'Low and middle-income countries' in Section 1.2
- doing or describing vulnerability, targeting, profiling or needs assessment
- evaluating the outcomes of this targeting practice described.

Studies were excluded based on the following criteria:

- published before 1985.

This date is chosen because relevant methods of identifying vulnerable urban populations can likely be limited to the last 30 years in the context of modern urbanization and modern humanitarian practice, as explained in Section 1.1.

Because the review found very few reports with evidence to synthesize, the criteria for inclusion and exclusion were modified to be two-tiered.

- The first-tier studies included all reports that met both criteria: 1) an application of a targeting method and 2) some evaluation of the method. Our team maintained broad inclusion criteria for what counted as an evaluation of the method, including studies that had rigorous methods for evaluation, as well as studies that simply commented on the effectiveness of the targeting approach used. These were the only studies used to synthesize the evidence-based findings.
- The second-tier studies met other inclusion criteria, but did not include any evaluation of the targeting method described. We used these to identify repeated lessons to inform commentary that will be published as a separate output to this review.

Identification of potential studies: Search strategy

Database searches

Databases searched comprise: EconLit, Embase, PAIS International, PubMed, Sociological Abstracts, and Web of Science. An example of the search terms used in one database is included as Appendix A.

In deciding upon search strings, the team consulted with an information specialist at the Countway Library of Medicine. Additionally, in selecting search strings related to humanitarian crises, we used search terms that were validated in Doocy and Tappis' 2015 systematic review of cash-based programming in emergency settings.

We used the following search term for retrieving studies from the relevant databases:

urban OR peri-urban OR city OR slum OR metropolitan OR megacity OR town OR township OR municipal

AND

identif* OR target OR address OR aim* OR prioritis* OR prioritize* OR locate* OR locating OR determine* OR profil* OR find* OR allocate* OR distribute*

AND

'humanitarian emergencies' OR 'humanitarian emergency' OR 'emergency responses' OR 'emergency response' OR 'emergency relief' OR emergencies OR humanitarian OR disasters OR 'disaster planning' OR 'relief planning' OR 'relief work' OR 'mass casualty' OR 'rescue work' OR earthquakes OR earthquake OR flood* OR tsunami* OR avalanches* OR landslide* OR rockslide* OR mudslide* OR cyclone* OR 'cyclonic storm' OR hurricane* OR tidal wave* OR tidalwaves OR typhoon* OR 'volcanic eruption'* OR drought* OR famine OR famines OR starvation OR 'food insecurity' OR 'food security' OR war OR 'armed intervention' OR 'armed conflict' OR 'conflict affected' OR 'conflict- affected' OR displaced OR displacement OR refugee*

* indicates a word that has been truncated in order to search for variations of the word

Grey literature searches

We used a separate strategy for searching the grey literature. Within small databases, such as Harvard Humanitarian Initiative/Humanitarian Innovation Project /WFP, we searched through publications using only one search term: 'urban'. We did not use further specification if this search returned less than 1,000 results. Otherwise, we used the search strategy for larger grey literature databases.

For larger grey literature databases, we used their search tool to maximum effect if a refined search was permitted. For example, the UNHCR site enables advanced searches, and so we used the word 'urban' combined with ('identify' OR 'target' OR...).

For large grey literature databases with a simple search bar, we first tried searching by a single word: 'urban.' If more than 1,000 results were found, we used multiple specific search terms, while still keeping them broad enough to retrieve the most documents possible. Example search terms include the following:

- urban crisis
- urban disaster
- urban poor
- targeting urban
- identifying urban
- urban vulnerability
- displaced urban population
- urban displacement.

Website searches

We also searched the following websites.

Think tanks

- The Overseas Development Institute (ODI, www.odi.org), including the Humanitarian Practice Network (HPN, www.odihpn.org)
- ALNAP (www.alnap.org)
- Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS, www.acaps.org)
- Groupe URD (Urgence, Réhabilitation, Développement, www.urd.org)
- Center for Global Development (CGD, www.cgdev.org/section/publications)

Consortia, working groups and partnerships

- The Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP, www.cashlearning.org)
- The IASC Reference Group on Meeting Humanitarian Challenges in Urban Areas (www.interagencystandingcommittee.org/meeting-humanitarian-challenges-urban-areas)
- Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities Network (CDAC, www.cdacnetwork.org)
- The Solutions Alliance (www.endingdisplacement.org)
- Asia Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN, <http://www.adrrn.net>)
- Humanitarian Innovation Fund (www.elrha.org/hif/home)
- ELRHA (Enhancing learning and research for humanitarian assistance, www.elrha.org)
- Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC, www.adpc.net/igo)
- JIPS, EMMA, International Institute for Environment and Development's Human Settlements Group (www.jips.org)
- Gender and Disaster Network (GDN, www.gdnonline.org)
- ProVention Consortium (PreventionWeb, www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/publications)
- Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR, www.gfdrr.org/publications)
- Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR, <http://www.gndr.org/learning/resources/gndr-publications>)

Conference proceedings

- Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction (www.gfdrr.org)
- Groupe URD conferences (www.urd.org/Conferences)
- World Urban Forum (<http://wuf7.unhabitat.org>)
- International Conference on Urban Health (www.alnap.org/event/955.aspx)
- COP21 (www.cop21paris.org)

UN agencies and international bodies

- WHO including WHO Kobe Centre (www.who.int/kobe_centre/en)
- UNHCR (www.UNHCR.org)
- UN-Habitat (www.unhabitat.org)
- Cities Alliance (www.citiesalliance.org)
- UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR, www.unisdr.org)
- World Humanitarian Summit (www.worldhumanitariansummit.org)
- Habitat III (www.unhabitat.org/habitat-iii-conference)
- OCHA (www.unocha.org)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM, www.publications.iom.int)

Government agencies

- Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/organization/bureaus/bureau-democracy-conflict-and-humanitarian-assistance/office-us)
- European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO, www.ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en)
- UK Department for International Development (DFID, www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development)
- UN Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium (www.un.org.np/coordinationmechanism/nrrc)
- International Development Research Centre (IDRC, www.idrc.ca/EN/Resources/Publications/Pages/default.aspx)
- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA, www.jica.go.jp/english/publications/index.html)
- Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, www.sida.se/English/publications/Publication_database)

University and institution-based research programmes

- Institute for Development Policy and Management at Manchester University (www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/subjects/idpm)
- University College London (UCL) Centre for Urban Sustainability and Resilience (www.ucl.ac.uk/usar)
- Centre for Development and Emergency Practice at Oxford Brookes University (www.architecture.brookes.ac.uk/research/cendep)
- Centre for Disaster Resilience at the University of Salford (www.salford.ac.uk/built-environment/research/research-centres/disaster-resilience)
- Institute of Development Studies (www.ids.ac.uk)
- International Institute for Environment and Development (www.iied.org)
- King's College Humanitarian Futures Programme (www.humanitarianfutures.org)
- LSE Cities international centre at the London School of Economics and Political Science (www.lsecities.net)
- Global Development Research Center, Japan (www.gdrc.org)
- SSRN (Social Science Research Network, www.ssrn.com)

Private foundations

- Ford Foundation (www.fordfoundation.org/library)
- Rockefeller Foundation (www.rockefellerfoundation.org/our-work/search)
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (www.gatesfoundation.org)

Major humanitarian organizations

- ICRC Resource Centre (www.icrc.org/resource-centre)
- Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF, www.msf.org/resources)
- International Medical Corps (IMC, www.internationalmedicalcorps.org)
- Catholic Relief Services (CRS, www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/research-publications)

- Save the Children International (<http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se>)
- Concern Worldwide (www.concern.net/resources)
- Care (www.care.org)
- World Vision (www.worldvision.org/about-us/publications-resources)
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC, www.ifrc.org/publications-and-reports)
- International Rescue Committee (IRC, www.rescue.org)
- Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC, www.nrc.no/?aid=9137110)
- Action Against Hunger (ACF, www.actionagainsthunger.org/media/publications)

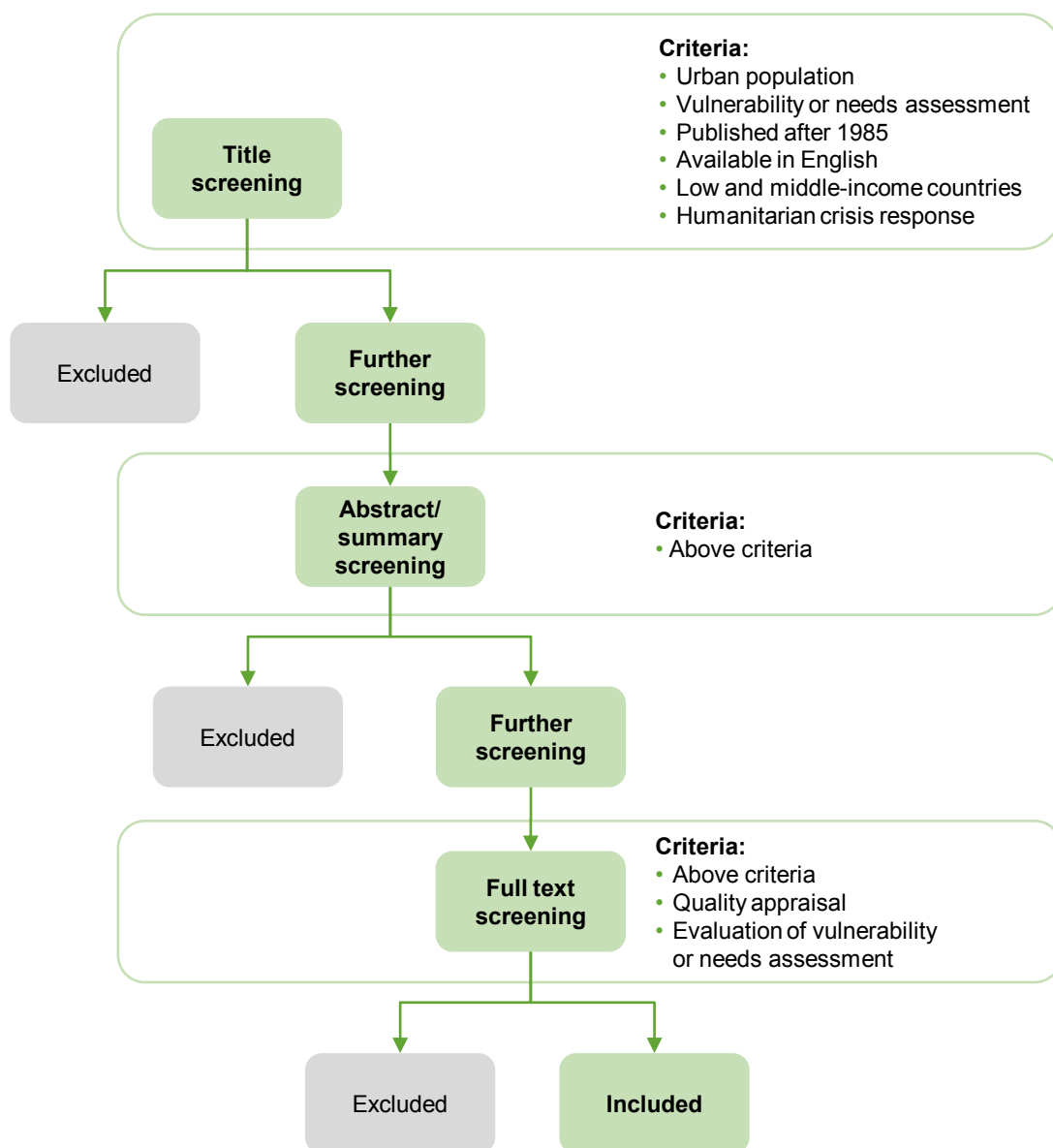
These literature searches also included ongoing pilots, such as the Camp Coordination and Camp Management Urban Displacement and Out of Camps Desk Review (CCCM UDOC) pilots in Lebanon and Gaza, Occupied Palestinian Territory, as well as the unpublished work by Concern Worldwide on the Indicator Development for Surveillance of Urban Emergencies project, and learning from the 2015 earthquake in Nepal. Further, we solicited ongoing and unpublished work by emailing key stakeholders and using the list-serves for ALNAP's Urban Response Community of Practice, and the Urban Expert Working Group for the World Humanitarian Summit.

We also searched both Google and Google Scholar using the search terms listed earlier in this section for large grey literature databases. For both search engines, we followed the same procedure for the search: we continued to review the titles and abstracts for the results until we encountered a sequence of 20 irrelevant articles.

Screening studies: Applying inclusion and exclusion criteria

First, the project research assistant (JK) independently reviewed all titles and abstracts to identify studies for further screening. If the research assistant had any questions or difficulty determining if the article met criteria, she passed it along to the principal investigator (RP) who either made a final determination that it did not meet criteria, or passed the article on to full text review. Next, three members of the team (RP, DS, JK) met to discuss the application of the exclusion/inclusion criteria in the full text review. Then, those team members independently reviewed the full text of the articles selected to determine whether or not they met criteria for inclusion. The principal investigator for the review (RP) performed a random audit of the articles assigned to the other two team members (DS, JK) for full text review and did not find any errors in the articles selected for inclusion.

Figure 2.1. Selection process. Source: The research team



Data extraction for included studies

We collected the following information independently from each study or report:

- 1 document title
- 2 author/name of the organization who commissioned the report
- 3 date of publication
- 4 study type (qualitative, quantitative, mixed method)
- 5 sector/cluster of operation/working group/ operational area addressed
- 6 location(s)
- 7 population
- 8 demographic group (e.g. women, children, elderly, specific geography)
- 9 source (e.g. operational international NGO/NGO, research group, government, global agency)
- 10 web address link (URL) to the full text
- 11 study design (e.g. randomized control trial, observational study)
- 12 quality assessment
- 13 name and source of any specific tool
- 14 targeting or assessment practice reviewed

- 15 lessons learned and how
- 16 reliability and applicability to different urban environments
- 17 limitations of study/report (both author identified and reviewer identified)
- 18 any other comments and cited studies to review.

We used a standardized form for data extraction (included in Appendix B). Given the wide variety of data extracted, this allowed the research team to extract relevant data for evidence-based synthesis in a systematic way. The form also provided space for free text response to allow our team to note relevant information for the report narrative. Some data extraction required transcribing summary points, rather than specific study findings.

Quality appraisal

Our self-developed quality appraisal rubric can be found in Appendix C.

2.3 SYNTHESIS PROCESS

Selection of studies, and identification of outcome data, for synthesis

Studies or reports that met the inclusion criteria and those that fell into the second tier, as detailed in the sub-section 'Defining relevant studies: Inclusion and exclusion criteria' in Section 2.2, were included in the data extraction process. The research team recorded when a study did not meet all criteria. During the data extraction, our team reviewed the included studies individually, and noted the various attributes of each publication as listed in the sub-section 'Data extraction for included studies' in Section 2.2, the key findings and lessons from each paper, and the quality of the study based on the method described in Appendix C.

Before data extraction, a team meeting was held to go through the data extraction form and train every member on its use and standardize the process. In addition, one researcher (RP) audited two data extraction forms from each team member to ensure it was being used appropriately and that the quality assessment was being applied consistently.

Process to combine/synthesize data

We used thematic analysis and our combined expertise to consolidate and qualitatively categorize the relevant findings.

Classifying practices: We had planned to engage the humanitarian clusters, working groups and typical operational categories as a means of classifying practices, such as: water and sanitation, shelter, food security, livelihoods, education, protection (specific vulnerable groups such as women, children and disabled people), health, gender-based violence (GBV), nutrition, environment, age and disability, refugees and the displaced. These categories can be very limiting, given the interrelated nature of many issues (e.g. healthcare access and outcomes as a function of water and sanitation, security as a function of urban planning) and the artificial – and even arbitrary – structure of humanitarian operations such as those coordinated within the cluster system. Despite these limitations, clusters are the most commonly understood way of approaching humanitarian actions and targeting practices may well fall into these categories.

The dearth of evidence, however, did not allow for a breakdown of findings by these operational categories.

Data review: The synthesis process began with a team meeting via Skype after individual review of data extraction forms and personal notes to discuss the overall lessons and recommendations. Two team members (JK and RP) had reviewed all the data extraction forms before this meeting. This discussion led to identification of general patterns and themes in the data.

Review and thematic analysis: Next, two researchers (JK and RP) reviewed all the findings from all the studies independently, picking out patterns, and categorizing the studies by sector and strength of findings. One large document with all the findings and lessons from all the data extraction forms was created to facilitate review of the findings and easily search among them. This process allowed for a thematic analysis into various themes reported in the findings. The two researchers developed their themes independently. The themes that emerged were strikingly similar, covering the various types of targeting, major advantages and disadvantages, and key features of targeting approaches. This is reflected in the organization of findings presented in Section 4.

Assessing findings: The strength of findings was difficult to assess in many papers. The literature base presented three major challenges in this effort: 1) the quality appraisal, while comprehensive, was determined based on sometimes-minimal information about the methods, 2) reports were generally of low quality, and 3) reports did not always clearly attribute findings to the study results.

Deriving conclusions and implications

Another researcher presented the findings according to these themes for a full discussion. The team then voted on which findings to include based on the quality and quantity of evidence. During this process, we also tallied studies by operational sector and determined that publications in all sectors except for food had insufficient studies to warrant sector-specific discussion.

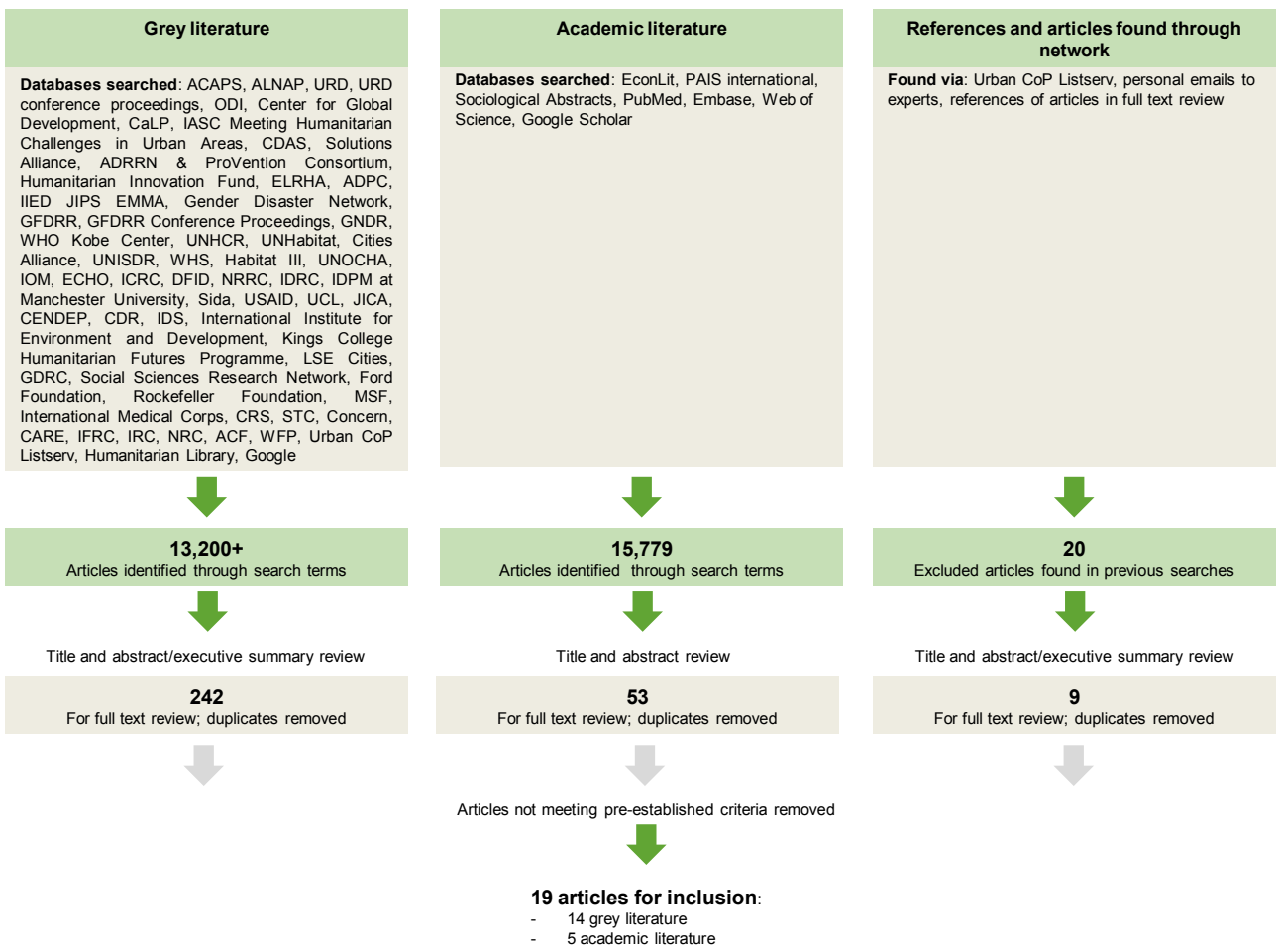
Our team paid special attention to whether the targeting method proposed had been implemented and whether the report included any evaluation of the method (as discussed in the sub-section 'Defining relevant studies: Inclusion and exclusion criteria' in Section 2.2). We identified 19 studies that met full criteria and included an evaluation of how effectively the targeting practice worked. A set of studies did not include an evaluation of the targeting practice, but discussed specific targeting strategies. We feel these studies offered some insights that, while not validated by evidence, reinforce certain lessons we identify as important based on our content expertise. These studies were used to inform a commentary. This commentary is not appropriate for use in an evidence synthesis and will be published by the authors as a separate output.

Given that many of the findings did not result from a rigorous study design and/or were not quantitatively supported, the expertise of the research team was required to judge which findings and conclusions merited reporting.

3 SEARCH RESULTS

Figure 3.1 depicts the process for selecting articles, which include academic and grey literature publications, as well as articles received through referrals from solicitation through the communities of practice identified in the sub-section 'Identification of potential studies: Search strategy' in Section 2.2 and citations in other publications. The search terms and solicitation from urban networks returned nearly 29,000 publications. After reviewing the title and abstract, 304 articles were included in the full text review phase of which 19 were selected for inclusion in the review. Of the articles included in the review, 14 are from grey literature and 5 are academic articles.

Figure 3.1: Article selection flowchart for inclusion in systematic review. Source: The research team



Over 300 studies relevant to the review were identified based on title and abstract, indicating that many studies discuss topics relevant to the review. However, in selecting studies for inclusion, a large majority of the studies were found to not have sufficient discussion or evaluation of the targeting methods used to meet criteria for inclusion. A small number of the studies reviewed included any evidence on effectiveness of the targeting methods. Only 19 studies fully met the criteria and had sufficient evidence from which to draw conclusions.

4 FINDINGS

Targeting is difficult to design given that vulnerability is a complex attribute to measure; it is both dynamic and relative, and depends on the goal of the programme. The findings outlined in the following sections come from diverse and independent efforts at targeting, each with specific goals and contexts that define vulnerability. While a single best-targeting approach does not exist, evidence can help identify appropriate and inappropriate methods for given scenarios.

We report the findings that were supported by any evidence to justify these claims in Section 4.1. These findings often came from just a few studies (sometimes just one or two), limiting the strength of the recommendation. We provide illustrative examples from the source papers for the evidence in bulleted form below the finding.

Given that the lack of sufficient quantity and quality of evidence are the two prominent findings of this review, we analyse the poor quality of the evidence that exists in Section 4.2 and describe specific gaps in evidence in Section 4.3. Later, we make recommendations for improving the evidence base in Section 7

Figure 4.1: Included studies for evidence-based findings

Author, Year	Title	Location	Grey or academic	Targeting methods or topics informed	Study design	Quantitative data collection methods	Qualitative data collection methods	Summary of quality appraisal
Fortin et al., 2015	Targeting vulnerable households in urban Burkina Faso: effectiveness of geographical criteria but not of proxy-means testing	Ouagadougou Burkina Faso	Academic	Geographic targeting	Quantitative	Household surveys	N/A	Peer reviewed journal article by researchers evaluating a food voucher programme using geographic and proxy means testing for targeting against other measures of food security. Methods are clearly described and justified with clear reporting of survey tools and data. Findings are drawn and justified from the data and evidence collected. Clear discussion of potential limitations. Only lost one point on quality appraisal form for not meeting projected sample size required. Quality score 11/12.
Haysom and Pavanello, 2011	Sanctuary in the city? Urban displacement and vulnerability in Damascus: A desk study	Damascus, Syria	Grey	Categorical and self-targeting	Qualitative, case study	N/A	Desk review of literature and interviews	A working paper desk review conducted by researchers at a think tank using a sample of literature and selected interviews. Methodology section present but very briefly describes process without justification and not sourcing literature or interviews systematically. No clear description of how data is analyzed and synthesized. No discussion of potential biases but mentions limitation of lacking field research. Conclusions follow from some findings but without consistent proof of validity. Quality score 3/12.
Armstrong and Jacobsen, 2015	Addressing Vulnerability? Cash Transfer Programming and Protection Outcomes for Out-of-Camp Syrian Refugees	Sanliurfa and Antakya, Turkey	Grey	Categorical and locally derived vulnerability index	Qualitative, case study	N/A	Interviews and focus groups	A report by a research team situated within an NGO to independently analyse the performance of a programme presumptively by direct observation and interviews. While detailed targeting methods are described, the methods of evaluation are mostly missing. Thus, while the conclusions may be true and valid, they cannot be clearly justified or evaluated based on a methodology and no data is presented. Quality score 3/12.
Vu et al., 2016	Psychometric properties and reliability of the Assessment Screen to Identify Survivors Toolkit for Gender Based Violence (ASISTGBV)	Mocoa, Colombia	Academic	Locally developed and contextualized scale	Quantitative	Surveys	Interviews	A peer-reviewed journal article by a research group that developed and validated a GBV screening tool. Detailed methods are presented along with data and analysis to justify the findings. The authors provide a clear discussion of limitations and present evidence for the tool that is validated by the methodology used and evaluation results. Quality score 12/12.
CCCM, 2014	UDOC, urban displacement and outside of camp	Non-specific, but examples from Haiti, Namibia, Somalia and Yemen	Grey	Targeting by displacement status	Qualitative	N/A	Desk review of literature and interviews	A desk review prepared by the CCCM Cluster, that admittedly aims not to be academic but to raise awareness and thus has many gaps according to the quality appraisal rubric. The methods omit the number and types of documents reviewed, the search strategy used or justification of sources for the desk review. Statements are tied to findings but validity is uncertain and there is potential for bias through consultations that is not discussed. Quality score 3/12.

Author, Year	Title	Location	Grey or academic	Targeting methods or topics informed	Study design	Quantitative data collection methods	Qualitative data collection methods	Summary of quality appraisal
CRS, 2015	Expect the unexpected: a case study of impacts of urban food vouchers in Somalia	Kismayo, Baidoa and Mogadishu, Somalia	Grey	Targeting by displacement status	Qualitative	N/A	Interviews and focus groups	An NGO report presenting a case study of the findings of a programme implemented in three urban areas in Somalia. Findings based on key informant interviews and focus groups of those involved in the programme. Research methods section is vague and brief without details on the number of key informants. Conclusions are tied to findings but data collection completeness cannot be determined. Limitations of methods and potential bias not discussed. Quality score 6/12.
Drysdale et al., 2000	The Use of Cluster Sampling to Determine Aid Needs in Grozny, Chechnya in 1995	Grozny, Chechnya	Academic	Cluster sampling	Quantitative	Survey	N/A	A peer-reviewed journal article conducting an analysis of survey data from an NGO based on WHO methods with statistical analysis and presentation of findings and implications for methodological activities. Methods clearly described, data presented and findings based on evidence with a discussion of limitations. Quality score 12/12.
Faye et al., 2011	Hunger and Food Insecurity in Nairobi's Slums: An Assessment Using IRT Models	Nairobi, Kenya	Academic	Locally contextualized score	Quantitative	Survey	N/A	A peer-reviewed journal article analysing household survey data. Clearly written, with detailed methods section and statistical analysis comparing proposed model against standard measures. Clear discussion of limitations, generalizability and validity analysis. Quality score 12/12.
Mosel and Jackson, 2013	Sanctuary in the city? Urban displacement and vulnerability in Peshawar, Pakistan	Peshawar, Pakistan	Grey	Targeting by displacement status	Quantitative and qualitative	Survey	Interviews, surveys, workshops, literature review	A working paper desk review from researchers at a think tank using relevant literature, interviews and focus groups with experts, programme beneficiaries and other key informants. Brief discussion of methodology includes overview of methods, but does not source literature systematically. Methodology for interviews and focus groups is briefly described but there is no clear description of how data is analysed and synthesized. No discussion of potential biases is included. Some conclusions follow from findings, but no evidence of validity is provided. Quality score 3/12.
ACF, 2012	Emergency Nutrition, Health and WASH Intervention for Conflict and Drought-Affected Populations in South-Central Somali	Mogadishu, Somalia	Grey	Targeting by displacement status and community-based targeting	Quantitative and qualitative	Household surveys	Interviews, focus groups	A report by research consultants of a quantitative and qualitative evaluation of emergency nut/health/water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programme impact with a focus on targeting. Evaluation methods are clearly described and justified with clear reporting of survey tools and data. Findings are drawn and justified from the data and evidence collected. Clear discussion of potential limitations. Quality score 12/12.
Bagheri et al., 2006	Cash relief in an urban environment: the BRCS/IRCS programme following the Bam earthquake.	Bam, Iran	Academic	Using pre-existing data	Qualitative	N/A	Observation	A brief report in a magazine on lessons learned from a cash transfer programme in urban areas. Lacks any clear methods section given its short length and magazine scope so unclear on sample size, data collection methods and validity of findings cannot be assessed. Quality score 2/12.

Author, Year	Title	Location	Grey or academic	Targeting methods or topics informed	Study design	Quantitative data collection methods	Qualitative data collection methods	Summary of quality appraisal
Bailey, 2005	Full Report of the Thematic Review of Targeting in WFP Relief Operations	Multiple: Darfur, South Sudan is urban study	Grey	Using pre-existing data	Qualitative	N/A	Case study analysis	A case study included in a report of thematic review of targeting by WFP. The composition of sources is described but not justified. Conclusions are tied to findings described but validity remains uncertain given unclear and potentially inconsistent methods on data collection and data reporting. Biases not discussed. Quality score 6/12.
Bailey et al., 2015	Review of Norwegian Refugee Council Urban Assessment in Goma, DRC	Goma, DRC	Grey	Targeting by displacement status, categorical targeting	Qualitative	Surveys	Focus group/house hold	Report by an independent consultant on behalf of an NGO to review the effectiveness and impact of targeting and programme impact. Methodology describes and justifies sample size well. Data collection methods are described but reliability is uncertain. Conclusions tied to findings but without clear validity. Biases are noted and discussed. Quality score 8/12.
Bucciarelli and Goldman., 2014	Paper Analyzing the Cash Component of the 'Protecting Vulnerable Palestine Refugees in Syria	Syria	Grey	Using pre-existing data	Quantitative and qualitative	Surveys	Interviews	Internal evaluation report by UN agency on the impact of cash transfer/food assistance. Methods state data was triangulated and verified from a variety of sources with quality control but these are not well detailed or justified. Samples are described. There is no reporting of survey tools or data. Findings are drawn from the observations and evidence collected and partially justified. The potential limitations of an internal evaluation are not discussed. Quality score 7/12.
Macauslan with Phelps, 2012	Oxfam GB Emergency Food Security and Livelihoods Urban Programme Evaluation Final Report	Nairobi, Kenya; Port-au-Prince, Haiti; Gaza, Occupied Palestinian Territory	Grey	Community-based targeting	Qualitative	N/A	Desk review, interviews, focus groups	A report by a research team independently assessing emergency food security and livelihoods programmes in Nairobi, Port-au-Prince and Gaza through review of documents, interviews and focus groups with beneficiaries, programme officers and stakeholders. Specific methodology information on the assessment of targeting is missing, with some indication of methodology used but without sourcing literature or interviews systematically. No clear discussion of how data is analysed and synthesized, and only brief reference to potential biases. Difficult to determine if conclusions follow from all findings without further information. Quality score 4/12.
Maxwell et al., 1999	Alternative food-security indicators: revisiting the frequency and severity of 'coping strategies'	Accra, Ghana	Academic	Locally developed score	Quantitative	Locally derived tool	N/A	A peer reviewed journal article by researchers evaluating the effectiveness of alternative food security indicators using contingency tables to compare targeted individuals with benchmark measures for food insecurity. Methods are clearly described and relevant for assessment. Sample size and population composition are clearly explained and justified. The conclusions clearly follow from the findings. Quality score 12/12

Author, Year	Title	Location	Grey or academic	Targeting methods or topics informed	Study design	Quantitative data collection methods	Qualitative data collection methods	Summary of quality appraisal
Metcalfe and Pavanello, 2011	Sanctuary in the city? Urban displacement and vulnerability in Nairobi	Nairobi, Kenya	Grey	Categorical targeting and targeting by displacement status	Qualitative, case study	N/A	Desk review of literature, focus groups, key informant interviews	A working paper desk review from researchers at a think tank using relevant literature, interviews and focus groups with experts, programme beneficiaries and other key informants. Brief discussion of methodology includes overview of methods, but does not source literature systematically. Methodology for interviews and focus groups is briefly described, but there is no clear description of how data is analysed and synthesized. No discussion of potential biases is included. Some conclusions follow from findings, but no evidence of validity is provided. Quality score 3/12.
Metcalfe and Haysom, 2012	Sanctuary in the city? Urban displacement and vulnerability in Kabul	Kabul, Afghanistan	Grey	Categorical targeting	Qualitative, case study	N/A	Desk review of literature, key informant interviews, focus groups	A working paper desk review from researchers at a think tank using relevant literature, interviews and focus groups with experts, programme beneficiaries and other key informants. Brief discussion of methodology includes overview of methods, but does not source literature systematically. Methodology for interviews and focus groups is briefly described and some discussion of sample size is included, but there is no clear description of how data is analysed and synthesized. No discussion of potential biases is included. Some conclusions follow from findings, but no clear evidence of validity is provided. Quality score 4/12.
Pavanello and Haysom, 2012	Sanctuary in the city? Urban displacement and vulnerability in Amman	Amman, Jordan	Grey	Categorical targeting	Qualitative, case study	N/A	Desk review of secondary sources, key informant interviews	A working paper desk review from researchers at a think tank using relevant secondary sources and interviews with experts, researchers and representatives from international organizations and government agencies. Methodology section briefly discusses methods of data collection without justification and secondary sources and interviews are not systematically sourced. Potential biases are not addressed. Conclusions follow from some of the findings, but there is no clear evidentiary link between them. Quality score 3/12.

4.1 EVIDENCE-BASED FINDINGS

Targeting by displacement status (IDP and refugee versus host population)

Six of the nineteen included studies report evidence on targeting by displaced and host populations. Given the broad needs of many poor urban populations even before an acute crisis, targeting only displaced people while excluding the host community does not necessarily target all, or the most, vulnerable people.

- A study in Nairobi, Kenya, found that IDPs are not only very difficult to identify among the population where they settled, but that ‘challenges in accessing basic services in this context are not linked to displacement *per se*.’ The study, instead, found that slum residents all face similar difficulties in accessing healthcare, adequate shelter, water and sanitation, and education (Metcalf and Pavanello, 2011).
- A livelihood nutrition assessment conducted in 14 districts of Mogadishu, Somalia, found only minor differences in vulnerability between host and IDP populations, determining that the difference was insufficient to justify excluding host populations from emergency nutritional support (ACF, 2012).
- A report put together by the CCCM Cluster found that IDP community centres in multiple cities in Yemen have run into problems distinguishing host and displaced households in situations where host populations were found to be in equally ‘dire need as IDPs’ (CCCM, 2014).
- In that same report, a vulnerability mapping exercise in Lebanon showed the majority of poor Lebanese lived side by side with Syrian refugees within 225 localities that have a combined population of both vulnerable Lebanese and registered refugees (CCCM 2014). Additionally, longer-term residents in Peshawar, Pakistan pointed out that refugees and IDPs are straining basic services and infrastructure within the city, suggesting that funding should be provided for strengthening services in host communities that display similar vulnerability (Mosel and Jackson, 2013).

In contrast, one study by NRC showed that displaced persons in other situations may indeed have greater vulnerability than host communities.

- While a review of NRC’s programming in Goma, DRC, showed increased strain on a hosting population (amplified expenses, overcrowding, inundated latrines). It concluded through an urban profiling study that IDPs showed greater vulnerability because they rent at the will of the host population with less secure tenure (Bailey, 2015).

Despite this study from NRC concluding slightly greater vulnerability in the area of shelter for displaced populations, the majority of evidence argues against targeting by displacement status to identify vulnerable populations in urban crises.

Targeting only displaced persons can also engender resentment among non-targeted but still vulnerable groups, which could exacerbate vulnerability for the target group.

- In Nairobi, a study found that beneficiaries felt targeting based on IDP status can lead to increased tension between host and IDP communities (Metcalf and Pavanello, 2011). Additionally, CRS found that while previous programming specifically targeting IDPs had been viewed by the host population as ‘unfair and unbalanced,’ targeting both host and IDP populations with food vouchers in Somalia helped to smooth tensions and led to a ‘renewed sense of solidarity’ between host and IDP beneficiaries (CRS, 2015).

The evidence clearly suggests that targeting only displaced persons to the exclusion of host communities is based on the false assumption that the displaced have greater vulnerability. This approach does not reach all or the most in need of a given humanitarian programme. The approach may also create resentment and misperceptions that fuel greater vulnerability.

Sampling frame

One study provides direct guidance on sampling frames for surveys and focus groups in urban areas used to determine vulnerability measures. While other papers mention the value of appropriate sampling, this study makes the case.

- A study in Grozny, Chechnya found that the density and heterogeneity of cities necessitates large sample sizes, more clusters or smaller geographic units (Drysdale et al., 2000).
- This increased sampling works to ensure that pockets of vulnerability and diversity are captured and able to inform targeting. Surveys used to measure needs over an urban area must apply appropriately robust sampling frames in order to develop accurate estimates.

Categorical targeting

Of the 19 studies that met the full eligibility criteria, 4 incorporated categorical targeting methods. These studies show that vulnerability targeting by demographic categories such as gender, age, disability and ethnicity can be successful; however, the categories must be both appropriate for the context and informed by local insight.

One benefit of categorical targeting cited by these studies is the outward transparency of the approach, because people meeting criteria for inclusion are easily distinguishable (Fortin et al., 2015).

- A 2015 evaluation of NRC's urban assistance in Goma found that both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries estimated inclusion error for the categorical targeting programme to be minor (Bailey, 2015).

However, predetermined generic categories may not capture specifically vulnerable groups in particular contexts.

- In Syria, unaccompanied Iraqi men who were not initially included as a vulnerable category were not considered for resettlement although they were particularly isolated due to their lack of family networks in Damascus (Haysom and Pavanello, 2011).
- Similarly, a DRC report focused on Syrian refugees in Turkey found female-headed households and male-headed households had similar levels of vulnerability on a majority of socioeconomic and protection indicators (Armstrong and Jacobsen, 2015).

Categorical targeting clearly requires that more nuanced analysis and contextual understanding – rather than pre-determined assumptions to ensure vulnerability, as they play out in each specific situation – are captured by the categories used.

Using pre-existing data

Using existing pre-crisis data, where possible, can help inform a targeting approach.

- Relief efforts after the 2003 Bam earthquake in Iran made use of the existing categorical vulnerability criteria defined by the local Welfare Organization and were able to rapidly begin targeting resources to people in need (Bagheri et al., 2006).

Use of such pre-existing data must take into account the fact that it will often be imperfect. The data may be out of date, incomplete, biased and not representative of current conditions. Thus, targeting should not rely solely on pre-existing data.

- An evaluation of geographic targeting for food aid concludes that pre-existing data or analytical constructs must be supplemented by the primary data (Bailey et al., 2005).

Given rapidly changing urban environments, relatively up-to-date administrative data is more valuable.

- In Syria, Palestinian refugees were targeted for UNRWA assistance based on data held by its Relief and Social Service Programme, which effectively identified vulnerable beneficiaries early on in the programme. However, the registry is now out of date and no longer sufficient to guarantee 'effective targeting of [the] abject poor' (Bucciarelli and Goldman, 2014).

Pre-existing data can be valuable to design targeting approaches but it must be verified for validity and representativeness and supplemented, as needed, with primary data.

Locally-derived tools

Vulnerability assessment tools can range from universal scales such as the Household Hunger Score to unique, locally derived and situation-specific instruments. Three of the reports stress the importance of local insights to inform vulnerability assessments at some level, whether developing a brand-new, context-specific scale or adding locally relevant indicators to a pre-existing tool. Evidence to support developing entirely new scales or adapting scales with local data comes from both the GBV and food security sectors.

- An example of one such tool developed in Ethiopia and validated in Colombia is a screening tool (ASIST-GBV) developed to rapidly identify female survivors of GBV and appropriately target services. The authors of the study developed a screening tool for the various forms of GBV experienced by Ethiopian refugees through interviews and focus group discussions (Wirtz et al., 2013). The tool was refined and validated by another study in hospital sites among IDPs in Colombia, adding one additional question on forced abortion that specifically applies in the Colombian context. The tool showed high internal reliability and is able to distinguish between levels of GBV across a spectrum in both the Ethiopian and Colombian contexts. The evidence does not speak to the comparability of GBV levels across countries or outcomes of the interventions applied, but it does show internal reliability in identifying victims within a country (Vu et al., 2016).

From the urban food security literature, one study presents evidence in support of using a simple but locally contextualized measure.

- A study from Accra, Ghana, proved the feasibility and accuracy of a contextualized coping strategy score with good evidence (Maxwell et al., 1999).
- One study among slum populations in Nairobi employed item response theory (IRT) models to quickly and effectively measure food insecurity. The researchers narrowed down to only four dichotomous indicator variables to develop a hunger index, which they validated for accuracy against other measures (Faye et al., 2011).

Unfortunately, there are insufficient trials comparing various methodologies and/or evaluating the targeting practice of specific measures to make more evidence-based claims about their effectiveness. Together, however, these studies make a strong case for developing locally derived tools to measure vulnerability and guide targeting in urban humanitarian crises.

Self-targeting

Two of the 19 studies that met all criteria for inclusion involve self-targeting, by which target beneficiaries self-identify by presenting themselves for aid. These studies indicate this is a poor strategy to find vulnerable populations.

- One study focuses on self-targeting for resources as a means to connect with and identify the needs of vulnerable Iraqi refugees in Syria. Because Syrian authorities placed limits on research activities, international NGOs in the country were not allowed to perform needs assessments in 2006. In order to make contact with beneficiaries, the INGOs and UN agencies operating in Damascus opened several community centres in areas of the

city with high concentrations of Iraqi refugees, offering a range of educational and recreational activities. The centres, while open to both host and refugee populations, allowed for refugees to be identified and interviewed for services. The solution, however, was expensive as well as difficult to maintain long term. Developing exit strategies that transitioned to local actors proved to be difficult given the political restrictions on local NGO operation (Haysom and Pavanello, 2011).

- Targeting displaced persons through a fixed IDP hub in Mogadishu reveals the difficulties of reaching the most vulnerable people as they strive to remain hidden for political and personal reasons. The centre in Mogadishu faced challenges when handed off to local municipal authorities, which threatened the sustainability of the intervention (CCCM, 2014).

This evidence shows that self-targeting is an inferior method for reaching vulnerable populations and, when operationalized poorly, can purposely exclude the most vulnerable populations that wish to remain hidden.

Community-based targeting

Evidence from the review highlights the importance of community-based targeting, as well as the difficulties associated with relying on community members to seek out beneficiaries.

- One study finds that a lack of social cohesion in informal urban environments can increase the likelihood of exclusion error in community-based targeting. An Oxfam programme in Nairobi slums employed a variation on traditional community-based targeting by relying on community health workers (CHWs) to identify beneficiaries (Macauslan and Phelps, 2012). The study notes that ‘the incentives for CHWs to work hard to uncover every vulnerable household in their area were minimal’ as the CHWs did not receive compensation for their help, which could have led to exclusion error. A validation survey that assessed 40 percent of beneficiaries also finds substantial evidence for inclusion error, as the CHWs did not correctly identify the most vulnerable households. The authors of this study note that problems in targeting could have been due to CHWs’ preferences for including their friends or relatives (Macauslan and Phelps, 2012).
- ACF’s nutrition project in Somalia provides a successful example of targeting that relied on CHWs. ACF used community nutrition workers to actively search out children under five and pregnant and lactating women in Mogadishu to test for and intervene in cases of severe acute malnutrition. According to the project’s evaluation, it successfully achieved its goals partly thanks to successful targeting and delivered nutritional support to all children under five with severe acute malnutrition in the study area. Further, the evaluation does not find any evidence of ‘discrimination or bias or corruption in targeting the beneficiaries’ (ACF, 2012).

Community-based targeting holds immense value by incorporating local knowledge and community perspectives into the design of targeting approach. As with categorical targeting, though, nuanced and contextual understanding of the community and local power dynamics is vital.

4.2 THE QUALITY GAP

The major finding of this systematic review is the striking lack of high quality evidence on targeting vulnerable populations in urban humanitarian emergencies. Overall, the level of evidence supporting even the few evidence-based findings described is poor and insufficient to make strong claims at this time. This is either because the specific finding often stems from a single non-replicated study, and/or because the evidence behind the studies supporting the finding is itself low quality.

The quality of the evidence mostly varies according to the type of publication. Academic papers score in the high range, while most grey literature publications score in the low and middle quality ranges. Of the five academic papers, four score 12/12 and the fifth scores 11/12. Among the grey literature publications cited in Figure 4.1, eight score in the low range

(<4), while four score in the middle range (5–8), with only one scoring highly at 12/12. The one grey literature study with a high score is an evaluation and report by an external team of research consultants that adheres to methodology – and moreover to reporting practices – that are similar to academic paper guidelines.

Grey literature: The grey literature falls into the low quality range in the appraisal process mostly due to points deducted for insufficient details on the study methods. Some of the evidence could have been considered high quality if an appropriate methodology had been used and potential biases had been discussed. Unfortunately, most of the grey literature does not provide enough information to assess the evidence along the four parameters described in Appendix C (representativeness, methodology, conclusions drawn from data, and risk of bias). While many papers discuss the numbers of people enrolled in or targeted by a programme, the actual size of the sample used to evaluate the targeting approach and its representativeness are not clear. Often an observational approach is taken to evaluate targeting, but the methods of observation are not clearly described. When findings and conclusions are articulated, they do not always tie back directly to data or observations made when evaluating the targeting approach. Finally, discussion of limitations and risks of bias are nearly absent in grey literature reports. They tend to focus more on the effectiveness of a specific intervention for pre-determined outputs, than on formally seeking to evaluate the targeting approach. The grey literature that met the inclusion criteria for this evidence synthesis often does so by only linking to the review question very peripherally.

Academic papers: The academic papers, on the other hand, have more direct focus on evaluating a targeting approach as the main purpose of the research. The academic papers tend to compare targeting approaches to one another or to an accepted standard, or to perform validity tests. The academic literature scores higher in our quality rubric because it mandates a methodology section (allowing scores to range higher simply by reporting details); requires presentation of data and discussion of limitations (allowing clear evaluation of validity); and has a filter for publication (peer-review) that some grey literature publications do not. This has implications for improving the reporting standards in grey literature.

4.3 EVIDENCE GAPS

This review finds a significant dearth of evidence to guide targeting in urban humanitarian response. One factor affecting the available evidence may be the current state of databases for humanitarian literature and their 'searchability', although many steps were taken to retrieve any and all publications that could meet the inclusion criteria of this evidence synthesis. It could also be argued that urban humanitarian crises are a growing phenomenon and thus, there have not been very many engagements by the humanitarian community to allow study. Given our extensive search, however, this finding does reflect a lack of research on urban humanitarian crises. While there are gaps across the board in evidence to guide targeting during urban humanitarian crises, calling for more research in general, we highlight the following gaps that suggest priority areas of research and require urgent attention.

War and urban violence

There is a lack of evidence on urban humanitarian emergencies that encompass situations of war, or even high levels conflict and violence. The search strategy made no effort to exclude this topic; in fact keywords were included, and while a few reports were found, no significant evidence can be drawn from the literature. While this may be one of the most difficult situations in which to perform quality research, this dearth highlights a glaring gap in an environment that requires focused effort and funding as more populations are exposed to conflict.

Disaggregated data and gender

Our review finds no data to disaggregate by various demographic features such as age, marital status and gender. We sought to specifically consolidate and analyse data on how various targeting methods in urban humanitarian response have a gender dimension. As women and girls commonly represent a particularly vulnerable group, we planned to report

specifically on how gender impacts targeting approaches. Unfortunately, aside from categorical targeting that uses gender as a means of targeting and programmes specifically for GBV, this review did not find any gender-specific analysis. It remains unclear if there is simply no difference by gender or that no such data was collected to make any insights. Future evaluations should specifically investigate and report the impact that gender has – even if there is none – on a specific targeting approach.

Shelter

There is a lack of evidence to guide urban shelter targeting, aside from a literature base on urban search and rescue and engineering assessments of buildings. We designed our search to find evidence on targeting for shelter but, as discussed in Section 6, Limitations, urban search and rescue and engineering assessments of buildings did not make it into the scope of this review. One of the authors (Sanderson) reports in an upcoming paper on the evidence for shelter in urban crises, that among the 266 systematic reviews in the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3iE) database, only one dealt with shelter and this did not apply to low and middle-income countries (Sanderson, forthcoming). ALNAP's portal on evaluation reports found only 128 reports on 'shelter' and screening these for targeting left zero papers for inclusion. Simply put, the shelter sector lacks evidence to consolidate for the purposes of this review question.

User or beneficiary-generated data

We highlight the need to incorporate community perspectives and local knowledge in targeting. Data sourced from potential beneficiaries using crowdsourcing platforms has been promoted as a potentially valuable method, leveraging new technology for humanitarian practice in urban areas. We found no evidence evaluating crowdsourced data on targeting that could be consolidated. Similarly, use of social networks and their technological counterpart (social media data) as a means of targeting was not found among the evidence considered for this review. There has likely been insufficient study of these methods. These technologies are powerful modalities that require further study, given their potential value in urban humanitarian response.

Identifying the most vulnerable populations that wish to remain anonymous

Many vulnerable groups seek the anonymity that the urban space provides. As urban displacement now outpaces other forms of displacement, with over 50 percent of IDPs and refugees residing in urban areas, this growing phenomenon will require new approaches. The lack of any evidence that met eligibility criteria to target those who wish to remain anonymous is alarming. These people can represent the most vulnerable in urban areas and the need for evidence to help guide how to reach them requires urgent attention. Social networks, as just discussed, along with lessons from literature on victims of intimate partner or sexual violence and human trafficking, may also prove useful.

Bridging the humanitarian-development divide

The first World Humanitarian Summit and multiple recent reports on the humanitarian system, including the Urban Crises Charter, emphasize the importance of bringing together the development and humanitarian sectors in programming and funding (UN Habitat, 2016). Many of the issues in urban crises are common to the development sector. As described in the sub-section 'Humanitarian emergency or crisis' in Section 1.2, many urban populations live at or below Sphere minimum standards at baseline and 'non-affected' populations, however defined, can have the same or greater vulnerability as the 'crisis-affected' populations. Evidence on how targeting during a humanitarian emergency can emerge from disaster risk reduction efforts or be folded back into social protection programmes post-crisis as an exit strategy is lacking.

Absorptive capacity

Urban humanitarian response that is moving towards understanding how cities, communities and households can enable the aid response will necessitate better assessments of local absorptive capacity. This includes, for example, the capacity to shelter or host IDPs or upgrade the existing healthcare infrastructure given the level of trained health professionals. While this is a growing area for urban humanitarian response, we found no papers that present evidence on how absorptive capacity fits into targeting vulnerable populations. We do not believe this is a failure of the search strategy. Indeed the term 'absorptive capacity' was not specifically excluded from our search. It simply did not occur together with other search terms. Any targeting or beneficiary identification that addresses absorptive capacity should have been captured by the search methodology.

Of note, the review did not find evidence that neatly fell into the various phases of the crisis response and recovery cycle. Also, the included studies did not consistently identify the targeting methods addressed as belonging to a specific phase of the cycle and thus, we did not organize the findings as such.

5 EDITORIAL COMMENTARY INFORMED BY RECURRENT LESSONS

We identified a number of reports that are relevant to the topic of the review but which fell short of meeting the criteria for inclusion in an evidence-based synthesis that follows the standards and guidelines laid out by the Humanitarian Evidence Programme (Krystalli and Ott, 2015). We believe repeated lessons within them, however, provide valuable insights or represent promising areas of research for further study despite their lack of supporting evidence. An editorial commentary on targeting supplemented by these recurrent lessons, identified through the same thematic analysis, will be published separately from this systematic review. Given the overall lack of research, we argue that the lack of accompanying evidence does not necessarily make these lessons untrue. The absence of evidence is not evidence of absence; rather, it is simply proof of insufficient research. In fact, these insights may eventually be supported by evidence. For these reasons, we will discuss them in a separate editorial output.

6 LIMITATIONS

Search strategy: The search strategy employed in this review was kept very broad to find any papers that addressed targeting in urban humanitarian emergencies. While we have confidence in the methodology, search terms and databases included, the state of humanitarian literature – how it is produced, published, catalogued and consolidated – results in some specific limitations. Additionally, we limited ourselves to English language reports on evaluations of targeting interventions in low and middle-income countries in the setting of a humanitarian emergency.

The way certain topics are collated, reported and categorized with key terms in databases impacts the content of this review. While we did not intend to leave out urban search and rescue, humanitarian literature in the databases searched does not treat it the same way as the various other forms of aid targeting. In a technical sense, from an engineering and damage perspective, determining which structures should be prioritized for search and evacuation, and thus which occupants should be offered shelter first, can be described as targeting in urban humanitarian emergencies. A similar logic applies to triage for emergent medical attention. We believe our review did not find any papers that discussed urban search and rescue, engineering perspectives or medical triage because it is not highlighted or discussed with the same key terms as other forms of identifying vulnerable populations and aid targeting. Additionally, while there is a wide literature base on urban search and rescue, the majority likely comes from higher income countries that were excluded from this review. While this represents a limitation of this review, we believe the topic is treated well elsewhere and does not significantly compromise this review.

Scope: Expanding the scope to include evidence from various other bodies of literature, such as development and poverty alleviation, as well as work on intimate partner violence or human trafficking, may have identified more evidence applicable to humanitarian practice. We excluded this from the scope of this search, as this would be a much wider and extensive search. It would also then require justifying the applicability of the evidence to urban crisis practice, which may be difficult. Still, including these other sources of evidence in future discussions could be very valuable to inform targeting in urban humanitarian crises.

Finally, many of the findings and our commentary itself leave unexplored a deeper discussion of these issues. While we strived to balance the need for some commentary with the narrow focus of reporting just the evidence found, many of the topics here could be the focus of their own editorials.

7

IMPROVING THE EVIDENCE BASE

Given the paucity of findings from this review, effort must be made to strengthen the evidence base on targeting in urban humanitarian emergencies. A few critical steps, also applicable to building knowledge in humanitarian practice in general, can be taken toward this end.

Outcome-based research: The gaps identified speak to the lack of outcome-based research in the humanitarian sector where process indicators are preferentially collected and reported. Without true outcomes, the risks and benefits of selected approaches cannot be validated. The humanitarian sector must move towards collecting outcome indicators based on potential risks and benefits when designing the monitoring and evaluation of programmes. Funding should be appropriately allocated for such an approach to build real evidence.

This research would likely adopt mixed-methods approaches. The multidimensional nature of vulnerability and complexity of the urban environment would likely require both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Strong evidence would be characterized by rigorous and transparent methods along the lines assessed by our quality review criteria in Appendix C. In many cases, grey literature lacked basic reporting of the methods used, including how data was collected, sample sizes, recognition of biases and how these were addressed or how conclusions were drawn from findings. While some findings may have been based on good quality evidence by these standards, it was often impossible to tell. Both adopting and reporting good methods is imperative to building the evidence base.

Grey literature reporting practices: The gap in quality between academic and grey literature may reflect that they are aimed at different audiences to achieve different objectives. This does not mean that grey literature should not be a source of high quality research and evidence. In fact, valid concerns about academic journals as an outlet, including the time delays to publication and open access issues, make grey literature a necessary and valuable option to get relevant evidence into the hands of users quickly. The criteria for high quality evidence, as articulated by our rubric, including research methodologies and reporting formats, are not owned by the academic literature. As grey literature papers aim to inform practice, they should adopt reporting practices similar to academic literature. They should also clearly address gaps in evidence through research reports designed specifically for that purpose, accompanying evaluations of programme interventions.

Development approaches: Finally, those interested in targeting vulnerable populations in urban areas during crisis may have much to learn from social protection, poverty alleviation and development efforts in urban areas. Research on adapting these approaches could be valuable. Including the development literature in this review and using it to guide future research and test interventions and targeting practices could have been very illuminating.

8

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear from the findings that there is no evidence to support one ‘best’ targeting approach, given the varying nature of crises, complexity of vulnerability, and goals of humanitarian programmes. Rather, there are more and less appropriate methods for varying contexts and each confers its own risks and benefits. Perfect targeting approaches are, by nature, not possible in complex environments, but this is not a license to practice indiscriminately. Rather, it is a call for more robust evidence on effectiveness. When resources are limited and needs are vast, there is some limitation to any targeting approach, whether in numbers of people that can be served or the amount/quality of aid that can be provided. Also, while there may be a preferred targeting approach for a given situation, political and security concerns that restrict operations can be as limiting as budgets and time.

Multi-sectoral approach: While the humanitarian community aspires to apply practice informed by evidence, the current architecture and financing of the humanitarian system often incentivizes practices that run counter to the evidence. The next decade will see urban crises grow in number, complexity and possibly severity. We believe urban areas are most amenable to targeting based on socioeconomic indicators supplemented by deeper contextual analyses of vulnerability. Sector-based vulnerability analyses and targeting approaches are ill suited to complex urban crises, where needs are interrelated. A population’s needs for shelter, WASH, health, food security and livelihoods do not exist in isolation from one another. Rather, needs interact to shape vulnerability, and must thus be met with a multi-sectoral approach to guide targeting. Profiling in urban areas is a growing area of practice based on sound reasoning and methods that can be employed before a crisis and – given the right time frame – after one as well, to understand how these factors interact to define vulnerability and guide targeting.

Clear targeting objectives: Many high-risk and rapidly growing urban environments are characterized by widespread need and endemic problems and deficits of development in the absence of any acute crisis. Targeting vulnerable populations in such urban areas affected by crises cannot be an open invitation to permanent missions or demand that all pre-existing needs or deficits of development are met. Clear objectives and exit strategies must be employed.

Pre-existing data: As local governments play a larger role in humanitarian aid operations and practice is placed in a broader development and resilience framework, pre-existing and baseline data to inform targeting will become more valuable. This pre-existing data, however, may be out-dated, aggregated or biased, and loses value in rapidly changing situations such as displacement. Protracted crises represent an example of cases in which pre-existing data and previous humanitarian assessments prove valuable to inform targeting. Efforts to improve urban data before a crisis are an opportunity to align development and humanitarian priorities. Successfully integrating local authorities and organizations involves increasing local capacity as well.

Community-based targeting: Similarly, as urban responses incorporate local actors, and as area-based programming is employed more frequently, further evidence on community-based targeting to guide practice will become even more necessary. Successful community-based targeting depends on the community’s capacity to perform the type of differentiation needed. Categorical targeting is easier for neighbours to perform on one another than is ranking one another’s level of poverty. But community participation can range in format, and integrating community insights – even for complex vulnerability assessments – is critical. Yet, community-based targeting is not a magic bullet and the process is as prone to bias as any other. It may also reinforce pre-existing inequality that causes vulnerability. To avoid bias, the findings summarized in this review call for a nuanced understanding of communities, incentives for participation and local power dynamics.

Locally contextualized tools: Targeting approaches based on tools that can be contextualized should be explored and developed further. Urban areas – and even neighbourhoods – can be microenvironments unto themselves. Evidence suggests locally contextualized tools may represent best practice going forward. Contextualization requires time and resources and may not be suitable – or may even be counterproductive – in the immediate phase of a response. Research and fieldwork should aim towards developing tools that can be rapidly contextualized.

Evidence-based practice and funding: Finally, and again, the strongest finding from this review, namely the paucity of evidence on a fundamental question for humanitarian practice, is telling. This is a function of lack of funding for urban crises in general, and research on humanitarian practice more specifically. The lack of robust evidence exposes the necessity for directed research and funding to evaluate targeting methodologies among other operational approaches to urban crises from the beginning rather than post-hoc assessments. The culture of humanitarian practice and funding must change from one guided by what is most feasible to one that is evidence based.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: EXAMPLE SEARCH STRATEGY FOR PUBMED

Concept 1: Humanitarian crisis

("humanitarian emergencies"[all fields] OR "emergency responses"[tw] OR "emergency response"[tw] OR "emergency relief"[tw] OR "emergencies"[tw] OR "humanitarian"[tw] OR "disasters"[mesh] OR disaster*[tw] OR "disasters"[all fields] OR "Disaster Planning"[Mesh] OR "Relief Planning"[tw] OR "Relief Work"[Mesh] OR "Relief Work"[all fields] OR "Mass Casualty"[tw] OR "rescue work"[mesh] OR "rescue work"[all fields] OR "Earthquakes"[Mesh] OR "Earthquakes"[tw] OR "earthquake"[tw] OR "Floods"[Mesh] OR "flood"[tw] OR "floods"[tw] OR "flooding"[tw] OR "floodings"[tw] OR "tsunami"[tw] OR "Tsunamis"[Mesh] OR "Tsunamis"[tw] OR "Avalanches"[Mesh] OR "Avalanches"[tw] OR "Avalanche"[tw] OR "Landslides"[Mesh] OR "Landslide"[tw] OR "Landslides"[tw] OR "Rockslide"[tw] OR "Rockslides"[tw] OR "Mudslides"[tw] OR "Mudslide"[tw] OR "cyclone"[tw] OR "cyclones"[tw] OR "Cyclonic Storms"[Mesh] OR "Cyclonic Storms"[tw] OR "Cyclonic Storm"[tw] OR "hurricane"[tw] OR "Tidal Waves"[Mesh] OR "Tidal Waves"[tw] OR "Tidal Wave"[tw] OR "Tidalwaves"[tw] OR "typhoon"[tw] OR "typhoons"[tw] OR "Volcanic Eruptions"[Mesh] OR "Volcanic Eruptions"[tw] OR "Volcanic Eruption"[tw] OR "drought"[tw] OR "Droughts"[Mesh] OR "Droughts"[tw] OR "famine"[tw] OR "famines"[tw] OR "Starvation"[Mesh] OR "food insecurity"[tw] OR "war"[tw] OR "armed intervention"[all fields] OR "armed conflict"[tw] OR "conflict affected "[tw] OR "conflict-affected "[tw] OR "displaced"[tw] OR "displacement"[all fields] OR refugee*[tw] OR "Refugees"[mesh])

Concept 2: Targeting/identifying

(identif*[Title/Abstract] OR target[Title/Abstract] OR address[Title/Abstract] OR prioritis*[Title/Abstract] OR prioritize*[Title/Abstract] OR located[Title/Abstract] OR locating[Title/Abstract] OR determine[Title/Abstract] OR determining[Title/Abstract] OR aim*[Title/Abstract] OR find[Title/Abstract] OR finding[Title/Abstract] OR allocat*[Title/Abstract] OR distribut* [Title/Abstract])

Concept 3: Urban

(urban[Title/Abstract]OR peri-urban[Title/Abstract] OR city[Title/Abstract] OR slum[Title/Abstract] OR metropolitan[Title/Abstract] OR town[Title/Abstract] OR municipal[Title/Abstract] OR township[Title/Abstract]

Note: * indicates a word that has been truncated in order to search for variations of the word; tw: text word; Mesh: medical subject headings.

APPENDIX B: DATA EXTRACTION FORM

Field	Field guidance/detail
Document title:	
Author/name of organization:	
Date of publication:	
Study type: <i>Qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods</i>	
Sector/ cluster/working group/operational area addressed: <i>Food, shelter, safety, health, general etc. List multiple if applicable</i>	
Location: <i>City, country. List multiple if applicable</i>	
Population: <i>IDP, refugee, host population, mixed or none/not reported</i>	
Demographic group: <i>Women, children, elderly, ethnicity, specific geography (slum), mixed, any specific demographic group, no specific group</i>	
Source: <i>Operational (international)NGO, research group, government, global agency, mixed</i>	
Link to full text	
Design: <i>Randomized controlled trial</i> <i>Non-randomized controlled trial</i> <i>Observational study</i> <i>Case study</i> <i>Expert opinion</i>	
Quality assessment: <i>Please use and mark the quality below if the article met all criteria for inclusion</i>	Total score:
Name and source of any specific tool	
Targeting or assessment practices reviewed: <i>Free text answer: Profiling or vulnerability survey, or proxy measure from census, demographic, etc.</i>	
Lessons learned and how: <i>Descriptive listing of the lessons learned from this implementation and how the lesson was learned. Any notes, findings or items of interest about the study. Can write in bullet form. Please refer to page number if possible.</i>	
Reliability, applicability to different urban environments	
Limitations of study/report (author identified)	
Limitations of study/report (reviewer identified)	
Comments, quotes, relevant findings or conclusions: <i>Useful info for final report, any particularly informative descriptions, tables, formats or quotes</i>	
Any further references, tools or works cited to look up for review	

APPENDIX C: QUALITY ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Question	0	1	2	3
Was the size and composition of the sample population large and adequate enough to make meaningful conclusions?	Size and composition of the sample are not described	Size and composition of sample are described but not explained/justified	Size and composition of sample are described and justified but inadequate for the types of conclusions made	Size and composition of sample are described, justified and adequate for the types of conclusions made
Are the data collection or observation methods relevant and appropriate to assessing the strategy used and do they generate reliable data?	Methods of data collection or observation are not described	Methods of data collection or observation are described but unreliable or inconsistent	Methods of data collection or observation are described but their reliability and completeness are uncertain	Methods of data collection or observation are relevant and appear to generate reliable and complete data
Are the conclusions sufficiently justified by the observations/results of the study/programme?	Conclusions do not follow from the observations/ results of the study/programme	Conclusions follow from the reported observations/ results of the study/programme but validity is uncertain	Conclusions follow from the observations/ results of the study/programme and there is clear validity	Conclusions follow from the observations/ results of the study/programme and the steps linking them are clearly explained; analysis is transparent about limitations of conclusions and there is a high degree of validity
Is the study free of bias or does the review find no risk of bias?	Bias is evident, without justification	There is potential for bias, and no clear discussion of them	Any potential biases are made clear and discussed	There are no biases, or all potential biases are made clear and explained; how potential biases are managed is explained

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