TOWARDS A CONCEPT AND FRAMEWORK FOR GOVERNING COMPLEX EMERGENCIES

Emergency Governance for Cities and Regions
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UCLG United Cities and Local Governments | metropolis | LSE Cities | LSE The London School of Economics and Political Science

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POLICY BRIEF

THE INITIATIVE

This Policy Brief is part of the Emergency Governance Initiative (EGI) led by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the World Association of the Major Metropolises (Metropolis) and LSE Cities at the London School of Economics and Political Science. This Initiative investigates the institutional dimensions of rapid and radical action in response to complex global emergencies. The EGI aims to provide city and regional governments with actionable information and appropriate frameworks, knowledge and resources to navigate the new demands of leading responses to complex emergencies.

POLICY BRIEF #02

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This is the second in a series of quarterly publications that complement the more data driven Analytics Notes. Policy Briefs focus on forward-looking propositions, reform agendas, governance innovation and critical perspectives.

This policy brief 'Towards a Concept and Framework for Governing Complex Emergencies' is a living document and the presented governance framework a preliminary version. It intends to generate discussion, critical review and feedback over the coming 12 months up to November 2021. **A final version of an Emergency Governance Framework will be published as part of the EGI Special Report in 2022. In order to facilitate feedback during that period, the following site has been established:** PB #02 Comments and Feedback.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Emergencies have become an increasingly prominent concern for societies and governments around the world. Not only have the last decades seen a considerable frequency of natural and man-made disasters, but there is also an increasing impact of individual extreme events. Current assessments predict that both the frequency and level of impact of these disasters are likely to increase over the coming years.

At the same time, a new category of emergencies is emerging, and this is the focus of the EGI. These are complex emergencies which until recently were primarily framed as grand challenges such as climate change, global health and social justice concerns. Whilst they are either truly global or at least deeply embedded in current socio-economic systems, these emergencies are not triggered by disasters that have already happened but rather require rapid and radical action to avoid future disaster or catastrophe.

Over the last few years, city and regional governments have begun to play an increasingly critical role in confronting complex emergencies, assisting with defining, deliberating, decision making and ultimately responding to them. Rapidly accelerating urban characteristics of human settlements and the urbanisation of civil societies in part explain this role, as well as local government advantages such as cross-sectoral and multiscale perspectives, strong community relations, and socio-spatial and territorial understandings which are key for governing complex emergencies. The global agendas, the 2015 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the 2016 New Urban Agenda centrally acknowledge the broader role of cities and regions alongside the critical importance of linking local with global action.

Complex emergencies are inherently political and require substantially different governance approaches compared to routine emergencies, extreme events, and disaster responses. However, as with other emergencies, they share the need for rapid and radical intervention, which can lead to considerable tensions with democratic legitimacy, participatory practices, and good governance principles. Governing complex emergencies has the additional challenge of fully embedding social justice and equity dimensions. In addressing these concerns, city and regional governments are well positioned and can make an essential contribution to better and more flexible responses to complex emergencies.

The main objective of this policy brief is to introduce a preliminary concept and framework for governing complex emergencies, tailored to the needs of cities and regional governments. First, the document provides a definition of complex emergencies, along with a broader taxonomy of emergencies. It then considers examples of grand challenges that have been reframed as emergencies and presents insights from specific cases. The final section introduces a provisional framework for emergency governance which covers relevant governance principles, structures, processes and domains.

2 COMPLEX EMERGENCIES

2.1 DEFINITIONS

The definition of emergency varies. The most common definitions at the UN level include “a sudden and usually unforeseen event that calls for immediate measures to minimize its adverse consequences” [1]. The World Health Organisation (WHO) notes that, conceptually, emergency relates best to response, establishing an inherent connection between incident and follow-up action [2].

Thus, an emergency describes a state that should include urgent (re-)action to prevent the worsening of the situation. Maximizing resources and re-directing attention to address the emergency is part of this response [3]. Recognising a ‘state of emergency’ requires that it be declared or imposed by somebody in authority who, at a given time, can also then lift it. Thus, it is usually defined in time and space, it requires threshold values to be recognised, and it implies rules of engagement and an exit strategy.

Within the broader context of emergencies, the following key terminology requires further clarification: crisis (threatening high priority values) [4], extreme events (dynamic occurrences threatening the functioning of a system), disaster (a serious disruption to the functioning of society), and catastrophe (disaster of special magnitude).

For the purposes of the EGI, the following broad definition of emergency has been adopted: “a situation that poses an immediate and significant risk to health, life, property, or the environment” [3]. As part of this definition ‘immediate’ is defined as ‘at present’ while ‘significant’ considers key thresholds. Both are contested characteristics. The WHO’s emergency threshold, measured in terms of mortality, is usually a rate of 1 per 10,000 per day, or an under-five mortality rate of 2 per 10,000 per day [5].

The complex emergencies addressed by the Emergency Governance Initiative are those that can erode the cultural, civil, political and economic stability of societies. They are long emergencies which are political in nature and mostly beyond social memory. They are also characterised by a high degree of uncertainty, unknown feedback loops and are difficult to define. Furthermore, they share the following:

– perceived trade-offs between ‘lives and livelihoods’

– considerable political challenges

– delayed disasters and delayed effects of actions

– opposition due to strong vested interests

– no, or low-level trigger moment

– existence of emergency response paradox

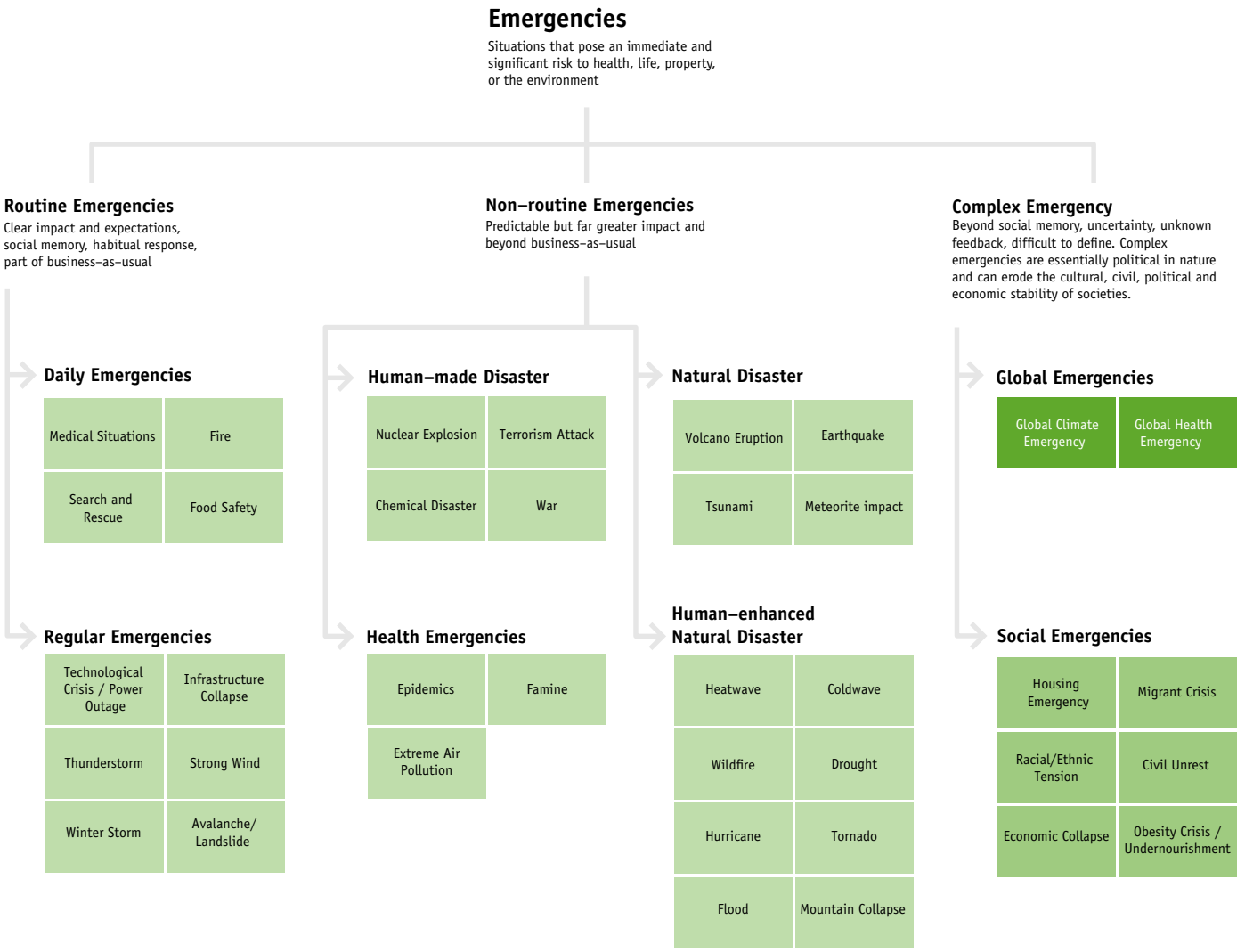
– limited experience-ablity of emergency

2.2 A BASIC TAXONOMY

To illustrate the focus of the EGI and its focus on complex emergencies, Figure 1 presents a taxonomy of emergencies that positions both complex emergencies and their two sub-categories. On the one hand, they include global emergencies - such as the climate or health emergencies which are both multi-scale and extend from the global to the local with extreme local variations. On the other, there are a range of social emergencies which have been declared in particular contexts. These may be more regional or local in scale, but nevertheless share the key characteristics discussed in the previous section.

The climate and social emergencies differ from most other emergencies in that they provide considerable opportunities for societal innovation, improving livelihoods and quality of life. These emergencies have considerable employment potential and can unlock more successful and inclusive economic development.

Figure 1: Taxonomy of Emergencies



3 FROM GRAND CHALLENGES TO COMPLEX EMERGENCIES

Three complex emergencies are currently receiving considerable attention and have, to varying degrees, resulted in declarations of a state of emergency. First, the health emergency linked to COVID-19, second, the global climate emergency, and finally, social emergencies, of which housing emergencies are a prominent example.

These emergencies are all primarily considered grand challenges (in that they are extremely hard to resolve, and thus represent priorities for governments and researchers) and form central parts of the Sustainable Development Goals. While they were not - until recently - considered complex emergencies as defined above, it is now increasingly recognised that these challenges have potentially extremely high escalation rates and are often caused by protracted and chronic conditions.

In the case of complex emergencies, governments depend on public acceptance and citizen mobilisation often at the point when global challenges become emergencies. Psychological and sociological perspectives further suggest that these emergencies require 'social proof', which is generated through education and effective communication of scientific information, rather than direct experience of the emergency's impacts.

The re-framing of grand challenges as emergencies shifts the focus of governance away from gradual progresses and longer transitions; the broad preparedness lens of disaster risk management is replaced by rapid and radical action of emergency responses, with a focus on implementation. The trigger points – the point at which grand challenges are reframed as emergencies – are diverse and fluid. Moving from a challenge to a complex emergency requires considerable justification and usually builds on clearly identifiable moments of a 'worsening' situation. In many countries, there are legal definitions of what constitutes an emergency, which may not directly apply to complex emergencies.

The figures below illustrate the increasing recognition of health, climate and social emergencies as part of general Google searches and news searches in the English language. In addition, Table 1 summarises the basic differences between the three emergencies for some of the fundamental characteristics and descriptors.

Figure 2: Comparing complex emergencies 2010-2020

Source: Google Trends

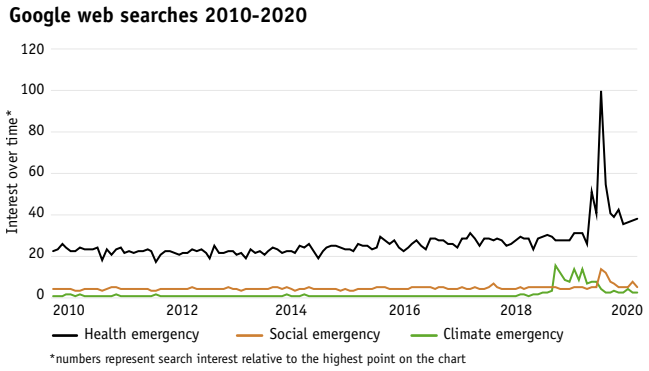


Figure 3: Comparing complex emergencies 2017-2020

Source: Google Trends

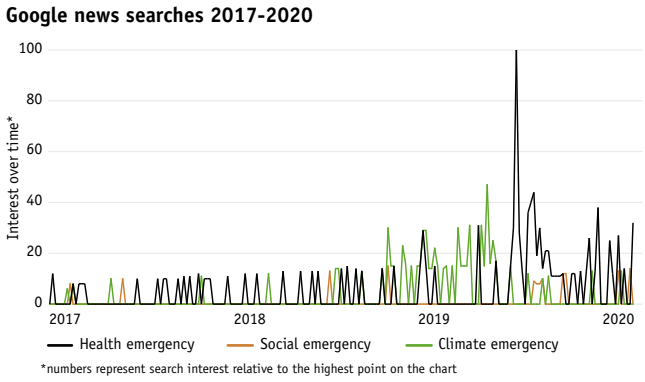


Table 1: Characteristics of complex emergencies

Source: Authors

	SOCIAL PROOF AT PRESENT	FUTURE DISASTER TO BE AVOIDED	DECLARATION TRIGGER	LOCAL CONTROL OVER DISASTER AVOIDANCE	THRESHOLDS	TIMESCALE	RECOVERY
HEALTH EMERGENCY (COVID-19)	Infections, illness, death, hospital admissions	Excess deaths, collapse of health systems	Updated modelling	Some, particularly with mobility restrictions	e.g. infection rate, hospitalisation, R rate	Weeks/Months	Yes
CLIMATE EMERGENCY	Human enhanced natural disasters, noticeable climate/ temperature change	Locally: increasing risk and frequencies of human-enhanced natural disasters, social unrest Globally: Hothouse earth, mass migration, starvation, ecosystem collapse, extinction	Updated carbon accounting and public awareness	Very limited for climate change mitigation (some more for climate change adaption not considered here)	e.g. CO2 PPM, degrees Celsius warming, tipping points	Years/Decades	No return to business-as-usual
SOCIAL EMERGENCY (HOUSING)	Shelter crisis, slums, homelessness, insecure tenure, evictions	Health crisis (physical and mental), moral crisis, social unrest, populism, extremism	Public awareness	Considerable control	No established thresholds	No established timescales, some within 2030 Agenda	No return to business-as-usual

3.1 THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY

Emergency action by both national and subnational governments largely followed the spread of the COVID-19 virus. In January, the central government of China imposed a lockdown on Wuhan, followed by other cities in Hubei Province - where the virus first emerged. As the virus began to appear outside China, quarantines, isolation mandates, contact tracing and border controls became the most common emergency responses. In late February, in response to growing clusters of infection in Northern Italy, a series of municipalities were put under a strict lockdown. This was extended to the whole region of Lombardy, and then to the country as a whole. By early April, nearly half of the world's population was living under some sort of confinement order [6].

3.1.1 Pandemic emergency response by local governments

In most countries, strict emergency response measures were directly imposed by national governments, although in some cases, cities and regions acted first to impose their own emergency measures. The region of Northern Tigray was the first in Ethiopia to declare a state of emergency and impose lockdown measures. Almost a fortnight later, the national government followed suit and declared a nationwide state of emergency [7].

Even where centrally imposed containment measures and emergency declarations have already been in place, cities and regions have been responsible for the emergency response at a local level. To respond to the various situations in their jurisdictions, some cities have used pre-existing legal frameworks to declare their own state of emergency or disaster. The Canadian city of Vancouver declared a state of emergency which enabled them to impose infection control measures without requiring approval from the provincial government [8]. Similarly, the city of São Paulo declared a state of calamity in March, which permitted them to bypass fiscal spending restrictions and also allowed for a faster procurement process [9, 10].

3.1.2 Pandemic response frameworks by local governments

Some local and regional governments have co-ordinated their emergency responses in accordance with pre-established emergency or disaster frameworks, set at the national level. South Africa's Disaster Management Act sets out the organisational requirements for provincial and municipal governments in a situation where a disaster has been declared [11]. In March, after the national government had declared a disaster in relation to COVID-19, the provinces and municipalities were required to coordinate their response effort through pre-established Disaster Management Centres.

Other governments moved rapidly to establish new institutional and organisational structures that were more appropriate for the emergency response. For example, Izmir, Turkey's third largest city, adopted a "Crisis Municipalism" directive, introducing new processes for the coordination and distribution of municipal tasks [12]. The city established three new institutional bodies: The Crisis Management Supreme Board, the Crisis Management Executive Board, the Science Board. The directive also established a format for cooperation with the 30 district municipalities in the region, alongside business and civil society. Municipal units are encouraged to establish their own task forces in order to develop innovative solutions to manage COVID-19 and its economic impacts.

It is worth noting that responses to the pandemic by local governments have been extremely varied and dependent on factors such as the local impact of the virus; the issue of subnational autonomy; financial capabilities; and whether there are pre-existing frameworks in place for emergency response, either at the national or subnational level.

3.1.3 Challenges

There have been many instances of division between national and subnational governments over emergency declarations and measures, which can often simply be attributed to the lack of a clear framework of multilevel authority and coordination in an emergency.

For example, in India, the division of authority during a pandemic emergency is not straightforward. The Epidemic Diseases Act allocates to states legislative and executive powers over public health, whilst reserving central government powers for the prevention of the spread of diseases from one state to another [13]. At the outbreak of COVID-19, several states invoked this legislation to introduce infection control measures. At the end of March, however, the national government used the Disaster Management Act to impose a nationwide lockdown, bypassing the authority of states [14].

In the UK, tensions between central government and various metropolitan mayors in the north of England came to a head as the mayors refused to impose strict lockdown measures without guarantees of adequate financial support. Central government eventually overruled the mayors and directly imposed the measures [15].

In Spain, Madrid's highest regional court annulled a lockdown imposed by the central government, ruling that the central government did not have the jurisdiction to limit fundamental rights and freedom of movement in the region [16]. In response, the central government imposed a state of emergency in order to push the lockdown measures through [17].

3.2 THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

There are many parallels between the climate emergency and the COVID-19 emergency. While speed (the infection rate of coronavirus is much faster than the rate of global temperature increase) and scale (the threat posed by the climate emergency is significantly graver than that of COVID-19) represent the primary distinctions, both situations demand radical interventions by governments; and this requires considerable levels of public trust and support.

3.2.1 Climate Emergency declarations by local governments

Cities and local governments have become the leaders in climate emergency declarations. Not only have they often been among the first public institutions to declare emergencies, but they have done so in very large numbers. Over the last few years, close to 1,800 governments have declared emergencies, most of them local governments [18].

Smaller cities were the first to make emergency declarations, such as Darebin in Australia in 2016, Hoboken in the US in 2017, Bristol in the UK in 2018 and Konstanz in Germany in 2019. These city declarations typically recognise that accelerating climate action is a top priority, and that current efforts and planning will not limit warming to 1.5°C [19].

A significant push by the world's most influential cities to embrace the climate emergency happened at the 2019 C40 Summit in Copenhagen. C40 cities have recognised the climate emergency as one of the four principles of a Global Green New Deal [20] and the network has emphatically added its support for such a global response as advocated by the UN in September 2019 [21]. Related statements by C40 Mayors included [22]

- "We are entering a make-or-break decade for the preservation of our planet and environmental justice for every community." - Mayor of Los Angeles, Eric Garcetti
- "Climate emergency is an agenda that must be recognized for all and cities have a great role to play in fighting climate change." - Mayor of São Paulo, Bruno Covas
- "The stark reality is we are running out of time to stop the worst impacts of Climate Change. Cities around the world are united in our frustration over a lack of global government action." - Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan

The range of climate emergency action varies from a simple acceleration of established climate action to radical intervention. Across the board, new and more ambitious net-zero targets have become commonplace. The main question is whether they will be enacted by law, which would make emissions (or at least those that are not offset) illegal after a certain year.

No city or regional government to date, or indeed any other tier of government, that has declared an emergency has translated such statements into rapid and radical action on the ground that would be noticeable to the public in the same way that other emergency responses typically are (e.g. COVID-19, rioting, terrorism or natural disasters).

3.2.2 Emerging local government frameworks for Climate Emergencies

Some city emergency declarations include new governance components. In the UK, Bristol is creating a new City Office Environmental Sustainability Board and an Advisory Committee on Climate Change [23]. Los Angeles operates a Climate Emergency Commission [24] and the German city of Konstanz included a commitment to evaluate the climate impacts of every decision taken by the city on a simple negative, neutral or positive scale [19]. Permanent monitoring and six-month reviews of progress on climate action were also part of the city's declaration. References to wartime mobilisation are also included, for example, New York's declaration [25] and in Los Angeles, City Council unanimously voted to establish a dedicated Climate Emergency Mobilization Department [24].

Multilevel governance and city partnership have also become a common feature of climate emergency declarations, directing other tiers of government to respond, and, above all, national government [26], as well as other cities and local authorities [19, 23]. Sydney has called for a federal "just transition authority" to mitigate the social impact on redundant carbon industries [27]. In many instances, cities clearly communicate the framework conditions that need to be put in place by other tiers of government to allow for effective urban climate action.

3.2.3 Local government challenges

The particular challenges which local governments are facing as part of their climate emergency response have been clearly documented as part of Darebin's efforts – the first city globally to declare a climate emergency [28]:

- the scale and speed required is not the pace government administrations usually move at
- moving 'beyond business as usual' when this is not yet reflected across society or at state or federal levels
- not having control of all the levers or mechanisms necessary to implement the required changes, and needing policy change at state and federal levels
- re-prioritising budgets and resources to address the climate emergency, whilst still needing to deliver essential services and maintaining community support
- gaining the community mandate and understanding for a massive prevention programme before climate catastrophe is fully felt
- embedding the response across the administration, which will take time, education and resources
- working in unchartered territory where there is as yet no set plan for how to undertake an effective climate emergency response

3.3 THE HOUSING EMERGENCY

The language of emergency, crisis and disaster has also been increasingly applied to broader social concerns, primarily the issue of housing. However, formal emergency declarations related to housing have largely been a North American phenomenon, owing in part to enabling legal frameworks in the region. These largely focus on homelessness rather than broader issues of equitable housing, the right to housing and secure tenure which are increasingly acknowledged as the most fundamental concerns of a global housing crisis.[11]

3.3.1 Housing emergency response by local governments

In 2015 San Diego declared a Shelter Crisis in response to a critical shortage of affordable housing that was overwhelming local response systems [29]. This was followed by Shelter Crisis and State of Emergency declarations by several other west coast cities including Portland, Seattle and Los Angeles [30]. The state of Hawaii, which has one of the largest per capita homeless rates in the US, has also issued multiple emergency declarations, most recently in 2019 [31]. Outside the US, Ottawa became the first Canadian city to declare a housing and homelessness emergency in January 2020 [8].

In some jurisdictions these emergency declarations have enabled city officials to bypass legal restrictions that were preventing them from responding rapidly to meet the challenges of the homelessness situation. In Portland, for example, the State of Emergency enabled the relaxation of zoning and occupancy requirements in order to build homeless shelters [32].

Emergency or crisis declarations have also allowed officials in some instances to redirect funds and resources previously designated for other government services to address the homelessness situation [33].

3.3.2 Housing emergency response frameworks by local governments

Some common threads have underpinned many of these emergency declarations. First is a recognition that homelessness has reached a tipping point in the jurisdiction. Second, these declarations typically note that measures have been taken to improve the homelessness situation, but that more needs to be done to provide sufficient relief [30]. A supplementary emergency proclamation made by the Governor of Hawaii in 2015 committed to undertaking "all efforts necessary to respond to the current homeless emergency in the state of Hawaii" [31].

The declarations have largely been used to signal the government's commitment to urgently address homelessness, and as a legal tool to remove some of the bureaucratic barriers to taking the rapid action required to do so.

According to a spokesperson for the office of homeless services in Portland, the State of Emergency enabled shelters to be established in weeks rather than months or longer, whilst the local homelessness budget doubled to reach over $70 million over 5 years [34].

In Hawaii, the successive emergency declarations have enabled the state to bypass building restrictions which would otherwise have prolonged the development of homeless shelters by one or two years, according to the governor's coordinator on homelessness [35].

However, these declarations have had a limited institutional impact. In 2016, the US-based National Health Care for the Homeless Council examined nine of these state of emergency declarations and found that whilst the declarations committed to taking on temporary short-term relief measures, they often lacked long-term solutions to the homelessness situation [30]. Longer-term measures, such as rent and land use regulations and innovations such as community housing models, are critical to sustained reductions in homelessness.

3.3.3 Challenges

Irrespective of emergency declarations, cities and regions are often constrained in their ability to combat social justice issues such as homelessness by financial limitations, lack of autonomy and the pressures of other legal obligations. Despite this, there are often actions subnational governments can take at the structural level to reduce homelessness and promote social inclusion.

In the North American cases, the act of declaring an emergency in relation to homelessness did not lead to radical, transformative action to address the structural problems of homelessness, but rather an acceleration of temporary measures to alleviate the effects of unequal housing opportunities, social exclusion and poverty.

To date, there have been no emergency responses to social justice issues comparable to the government responses to health or other non-routine emergencies.

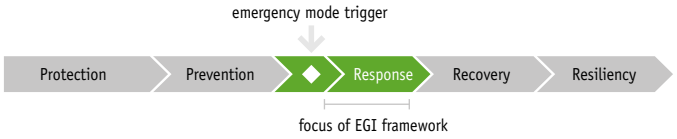
3.4 COUPLING COMPLEX EMERGENCY

Beyond the above empirical perspectives on how individual complex emergencies can be addressed by city and local governments, there is little understanding of the intersections and sequencing of multiple complex emergencies. In turn, the coupling of complex emergency responses will require considerable attention moving forward alongside critical insights on emergency governance fatigue.

4 A FRAMEWORK FOR GOVERNING COMPLEX EMERGENCIES

The provisional suggestions for a governance framework for complex emergencies that are presented below focus on arrangements as part of emergency responses or incident operations rather than conventional prevention, preparedness or recovery (see Figure 4). A helpful proxy for this particular focus is the governance requirement following the formal declaration of an emergency. Whilst complex emergency responses can be understood as a form of disaster or catastrophe risk reduction governed under a state of emergency they are no longer part of conventional and gradual ex-ante risk management.

Figure 4: Emergency Governance Spectrum



Declaring a 'state of emergency' allows the implementation of a set of temporary policies and restrictions that serve to prevent, mitigate and aid recovery - once an exceptional situation has been identified. The state of emergency and response measures are legitimised by the (potential) impact on society if immediate and drastic action is not taken. The particularities of governance under emergency mode are best understood by comparing it with normal mode governance (see Appendix, Table 2).

Emergency modes are problematic, as they assign unusual levels of power to governments, which in turn can restrict personal freedoms. If the design of emergency governance arrangements does not recognise this problem, it can lead to considerable risks to democracy and social cohesion.

4.1 EMERGENCY GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

The following ten principles for governing complex emergencies are particularly relevant for city and regional governments:

1. Emergency governance requires **government to be in the driving seat** as convener in chief. Emergency responses require the leadership of trusted governments: "emergency management is the quintessential governmental role" [36].

2. Rapid and radical responses to complex emergencies can increase power imbalances and can potentially result in regressive policies and/or discriminatory practices. **Human rights and social justice** require the utmost attention as part of emergency governance alongside an open acknowledgement of the related risks.

3. Governing complex emergencies requires **new forms of democratic legitimacy,** which routine and non-routine emergencies may not have to rely on. This requires experimentation with innovative forms of government such as emergency assemblies and juries.

4. Conventional 'command and control' structures of emergency governance are not capable of addressing the socio-political nature of complex emergencies. Instead, a '**governance by empathy**' is required to ensure collaboration, co-creation and caring are part of emergency responses while building on ideas of a more human government [37].

5. Utilising existing trust and trusted institutions, critical **truth-telling and acknowledging the scale of problem** plays a key role in governing complex emergencies. Complex emergencies have a particular need for 'social proof' and are exposed to a 'response paradox'. Continuous communication and education based on scientific evidence is needed, in order to emphasise the extreme time pressures that make gradual policies insufficient.

6. Emergency governance needs to **embrace a systems approach** rather than adopting sectoral perspectives. This translates to cluster and nexus approaches which guide and direct sectoral responses that are then re-aggregated as part of an integrated response by the coordinating institutions.

7. Emergency governance requires **hybridity, combining hierarchical and network governance**. Clear roles and responsibilities should be defined, while intensive communication and collaboration from all key stakeholders as part of super-networked governance is critical at the point of transitioning into an emergency mode.

8. **Multilevel emergency governance** requires particular attention. It can build on, but needs to go beyond, normal mode multilevel governance. Multilevel involvement replaces single lead roles with multiple lead organisations, which coordinate resource allocation and decision making [38]. Emergency leaders at all levels need to be held accountable.

9. **Differentiating planning and implementation roles** are a helpful starting point for structuring emergency governance systems. Avoiding a simple assignment of strategic, tactical and operational modes by governance scale (whereby national equals strategic, and local equals operational) and instead mixing modes and scales leads to more flexible emergency governance.

10. The choice of an emergency governance framework depends on the need for alignment with existing governance structures, the attributes of key network actors and the context of the emergency. There is **no 'one size fits all' approach** to suit all local circumstances and contexts. The governance of complex emergencies must not be standardised.

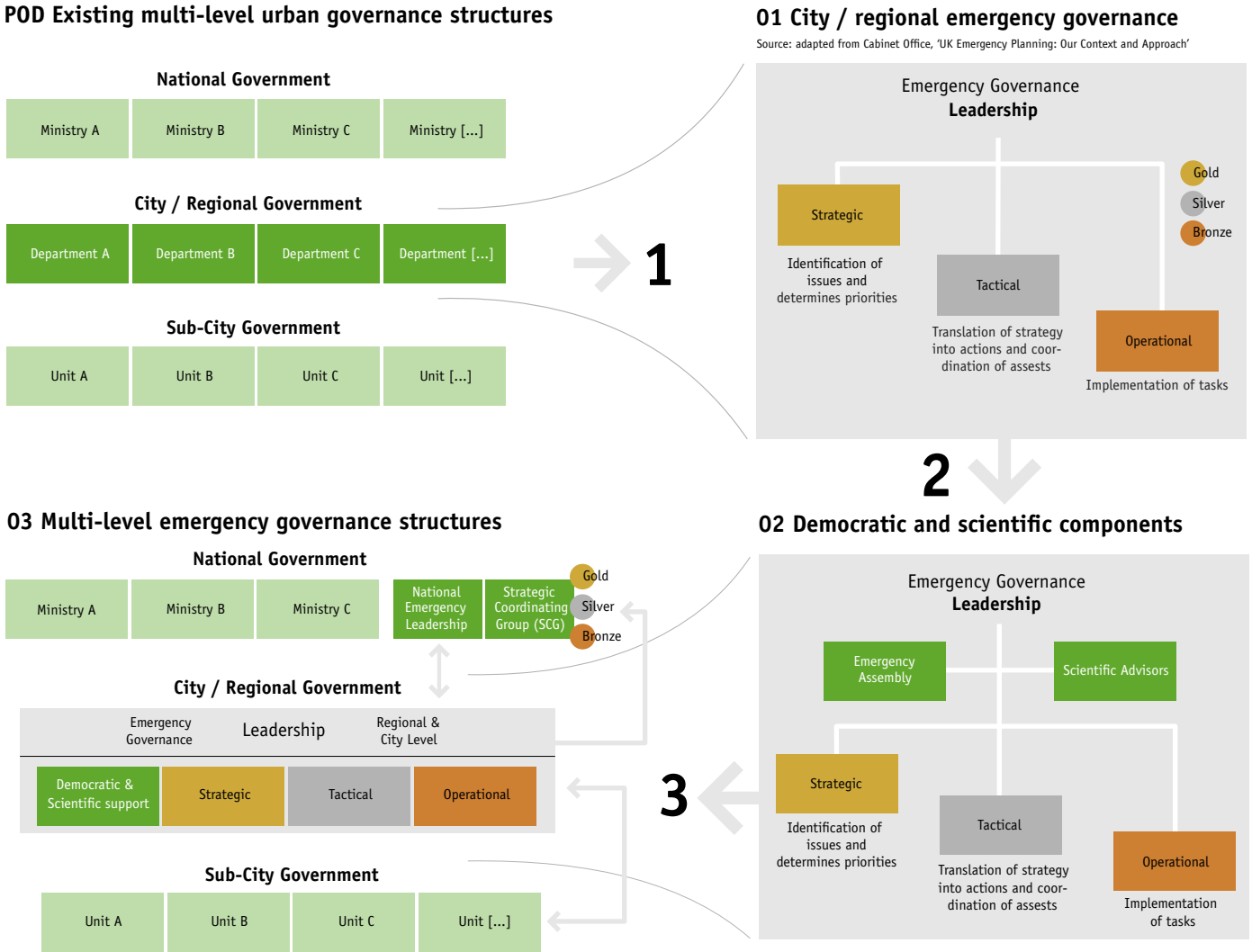
4.2 A PATHWAY FOR ESTABLISHING EMERGENCY GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Any governance structure capable of assisting the response to complex emergencies will have to recognise existing governance arrangements, lines of reporting and regional political cultures alongside many other contextual factors. While generic templates for emergency responses exist, they offer only an initial reference point and should not be applied too rigidly as part of tailored approaches in any given city or region.

The illustration in Figure 5 below builds on a variety of existing templates and introduces a potential and provisional pathway for establishing a city/region-specific emergency governance structure. Using an existing urban governance structure as point of departure (POD), the following three steps are proposed following the declaration of a complex emergency:

1. **Establish a basic emergency governance structure at city/region level:** Following the logic of generic emergency governance structures (e.g. the Incident Command System or Gold-Silver-Bronze Emergency Governance Structure), this structure establishes a single emergency governance leader (typically the political leader of a city or region). This role is supported by emergency leadership staff (to assist with public information, safety, liaison, etc.). Three extraordinary clusters reporting directly to the leadership: a strategic cluster (planning and policy), a tactical cluster and an operational cluster (logistics and administration).
2. **Introduce additional democratic and scientific functions:** Acknowledging the political nature of complex emergencies, the leadership is supported by an advisory 'emergency assembly' (building on the concept of a citizen assembly or town hall meetings) and a group of scientific advisers. These complement existing democratic oversight and accountability functions (legislative and judiciary).
3. **Embed city/regional level emergency governance as part of multi-level emergency governance:** While most cities and regions will not have direct control over defining their roles as part of multi-level emergency governance, advocating for clear lines of communication across different tiers of government can be critical. Besides establishing engagement and feedback opportunities, incorporating the voice of city and regional governments as part of a strategic coordination group at the national level may be particularly helpful.

Figure 5: Emergency Governance Structures



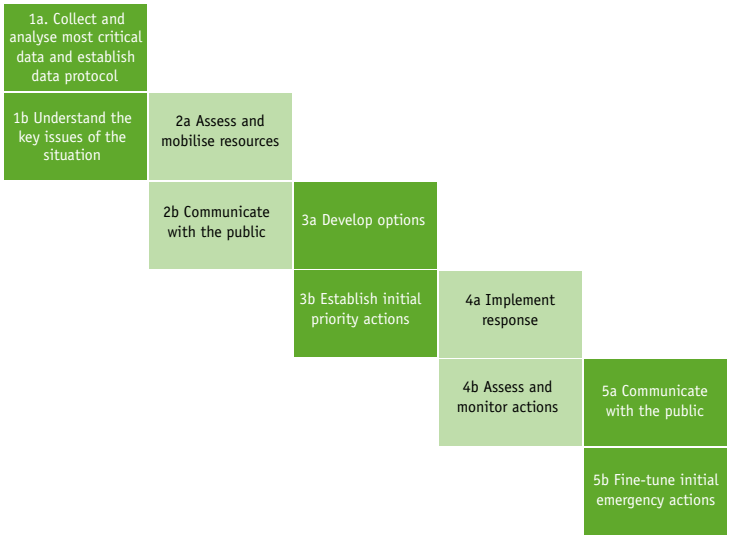
4.3 KEY COMPONENTS FOR EMERGENCY GOVERNANCE PROCESSES

While recognising the same caveats regarding the generalisability and limitations of generic templates, Figure 7 below identifies four potential components as part of governance processes to address complex emergencies as part of a post-denial phase. Whilst initially these components may be considered sequentially, they may have to be integrated as part of an iterative process for longer complex emergencies, particularly in the case of addressing the climate crisis.

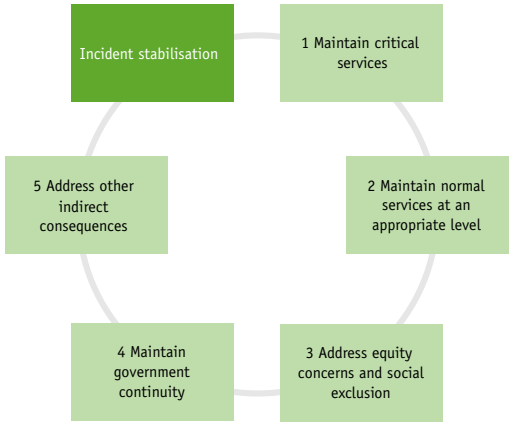
1. **Component 1: Direct incident stabilisation** follows an iterative process, from establishing the information base for intervention and an 'emergency narrative', to implementing responses, whilst at the same time being in constant communication with the public. Stabilisation as part of complex emergencies may span over a long period of time.
2. **Component 2: Addressing indirect consequences** prioritises and sequences actions which manage the side effects resulting from the initial emergency response. With a focus on maintaining critical services and addressing critical equity and social exclusion concerns, this component includes different indirect consequences, with priorities highly context dependent.
3. **Component 3: Deliberation and enabling a wider response** might initially be a third priority following the first two components but would then be fully integrated as part of an iterative emergency response. This component could include the establishment of emergency assemblies for better emergency response, deliberation and advice. This would also help to address information asymmetries, and the difficulty of communicating risks and scientific underpinnings of emergencies. In addition, it creates the enabling conditions to allow businesses, communities and individuals to contribute to the broadening of emergency actions.
4. **Component 4: Long-term transformation** establishes potential pathways beyond the emergency (when emergency thresholds have been undercut), the coupling of different emergencies or transitioning from one emergency to the next.

Figure 6: Emergency governance processes

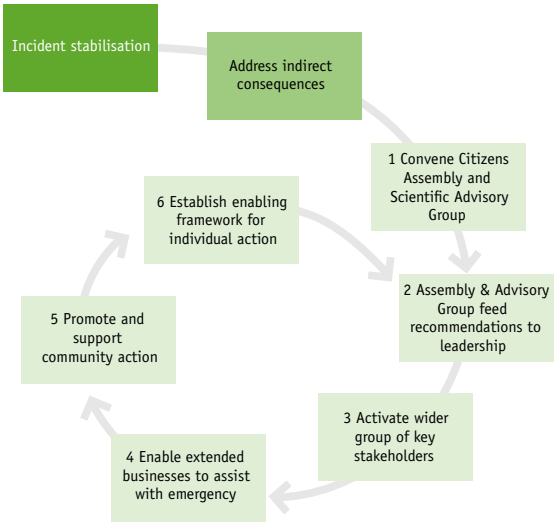
Component 1: Direct incident stabilisation



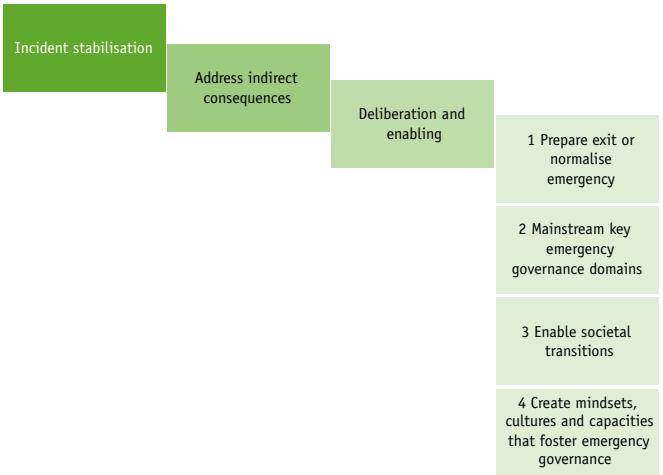
Component 2: Addressing indirect consequences



Component 3: Deliberation and enabling wider response



Consideration 4: Long-term transformation



4.4 EMERGENCY GOVERNANCE DOMAINS

Beyond structures and processes, the following domains of emergency governance highlight broad and cross-cutting concerns that are helpful to consider as part of a response to a complex emergency. Figure 7 on the next page plots these domains in relation to respective knowledge needs by local governments and their prominence as part of scholarly publications.

Democracy and representation

Successful integration of the principles of democracy and public representation throughout the emergency response. Concrete measures may include establishing emergency assemblies (see Appendix 3) and citizen juries.

Public participation and inclusion

Use of innovative techniques of public participation to involve citizens in designing the emergency response, and to ensure that the emergency response is inclusive and responsive to the needs of all sections of society. This could include setting up neighbourhood response committees and the broader promotion of mindsets, cultures and capabilities that facilitate an emergency response.

Transparency, accountability and integrity

Integration of new mechanisms to ensure that the governance of the emergency is transparent, that emergency powers are accountable and subject to regular review, and that the public interest is protected at all times. Concrete measures may include the establishment of an independent citizens review board to monitor the emergency measures and ensure that they are necessary, proportionate and temporary.

Authority and leadership

Establishing empowered leadership and authority at the forefront of the emergency response, and providing assurance to citizens, stakeholders and other tiers of government. Of critical importance to the effectiveness of emergency networks is 'mobilising' and 'synthesising' the behavior of leaders [39]. Concrete measures may include consolidating control of resources (funds, personal, facilities and equipment) and communication, setting up a clear chain of command and supervision, management by objectives and educating leaders via 'governance exchanges.'

Enforcement of laws and rules

Changing the way laws and rules are enforced within the city/region. Concrete measures may include the adoption of rules to varying degrees of strictness, and/or involving local stakeholders in the follow-up.

Local response and strategic direction

Establishing new approaches that strike a balance between effective provision of a cohesive and unified strategic direction at the city or regional level, whilst also enabling local decision-makers to manage the situation in their areas with context-specific policies and strategies. Concrete measures may include systematic planning processes and establishing a centralised strategic emergency response committee with representatives of local areas, whilst also leaving room for the implementation of locally developed emergency responses.

Communication and consultation

Frequent and transparent communication with citizens and key stakeholders, establishing common terminology and directly addressing misinformation. This may involve the use of new and diverse channels of communication and consultation with citizens and stakeholders. Concrete measures may include detailed communication planning and the transfer of information, and the regular use of online citizen engagement and surveys.

Gender and governance

Mainstreaming gender perspectives in the emergency response and establishing a new governance by empathy. A gender sensitive response involves the recognition that women often experience emergencies and response measures differently from the mainstream and may require policies to ensure that they are not disproportionately impacted. It also requires the recognition and integration of caring functions, which are often provided by women, and which are integral to any emergency response. Concrete measures may include the establishment of a task force dedicated to ensuring gender sensitivity in the response.

Coordination and integration across government units (vertical and horizontal)

Introduction of effective measures to coordinate and integrate emergency measures across different tiers of government (national, state-level, municipal, etc.) and different departments (health, housing, social security, etc.). Concrete measures may include establishing a joint body with other subnational governments to support national government with its strategic emergency response. For horizontal integration, cross-sectoral managers and administrators could be established as 'boundary spanners' [38] while situation rooms, crisis centres, nexus and cluster approaches could overcome sectoral siloes.

Cooperation and collaboration across key stakeholders (cutting across government, private and civil society organisations)

Introduction of effective measures for cooperation and collaboration between key stakeholders from the public, private, and third sectors. Concrete measures may include a joint task force dealing with key nexus concerns, multi-agency emergency coordination based on a Multi-Agency Coordination System (MACS) [40] and building on pre-existing trust for network governance beyond hierarchies.

Administrative capacity and organisational resilience

Changes to government structures (precise designation of responsibilities, tasks, functions, etc.), human resources (skill, recruitment, training, wellbeing, etc.), and/or systems and tools (checklists, ICT tools, manuals, etc.) that increase the capability of the city government to deal with and sustain its functioning during an emergency. Concrete measures may include offering staff wellbeing and support services, scaling capabilities and the ability to adjust to changing

developments, and advancing a flexible, cluster-based, modular organization [41].

Monitoring and evaluation

Comprehensive monitoring of the emergency and evaluation of the emergency response in order to measure its effectiveness and identify areas where change is needed. Concreate measures may include establishing a data protocol and urban analytics to measure the context-specific impacts of emergency measures.

Finance and resources

Innovative and flexible sourcing of additional resources (financial, facilities, personnel, etc.), and/or applying innovative techniques to budget efficiently for these resources to ensure an effective emergency response. Concrete measures may include comprehensive resource management (categorising, ordering, dispatching, tracking and recovering); revising the share of national resources between different levels of government (transfers, special funds and packages); establishing clear resource status (assigned, available, out-of-service); and negotiating with local factories to retool their production lines and switch to manufacturing emergency-related equipment.

Legal frameworks and constitutional arrangements

Addition of new emergency amendments to city or regional level legal frameworks to enable an effective response to emergency situations. Concrete measures may include new legal mandates for emergencies, amendments to the city charter to enable rapid reallocation of budget resources during an emergency, or permanent changes to emergency planning acts to establish a framework for managing concurrent emergencies, should they occur.

Information technology and data management

Innovative use of data and information assisted by digital technology to carry out an effective, proportional and targeted emergency response. Concrete measures may include the use of open-source data management to share key information across response clusters.

Procedures and guidelines

Development of new, clear and effective guidelines to help different institutions, sectors and citizens respond appropriately to the emergency. Concrete measures may include translation of guidelines into all spoken languages in the city/region so that all sectors of society, and particularly indigenous people, migrant and refugee populations, are informed.

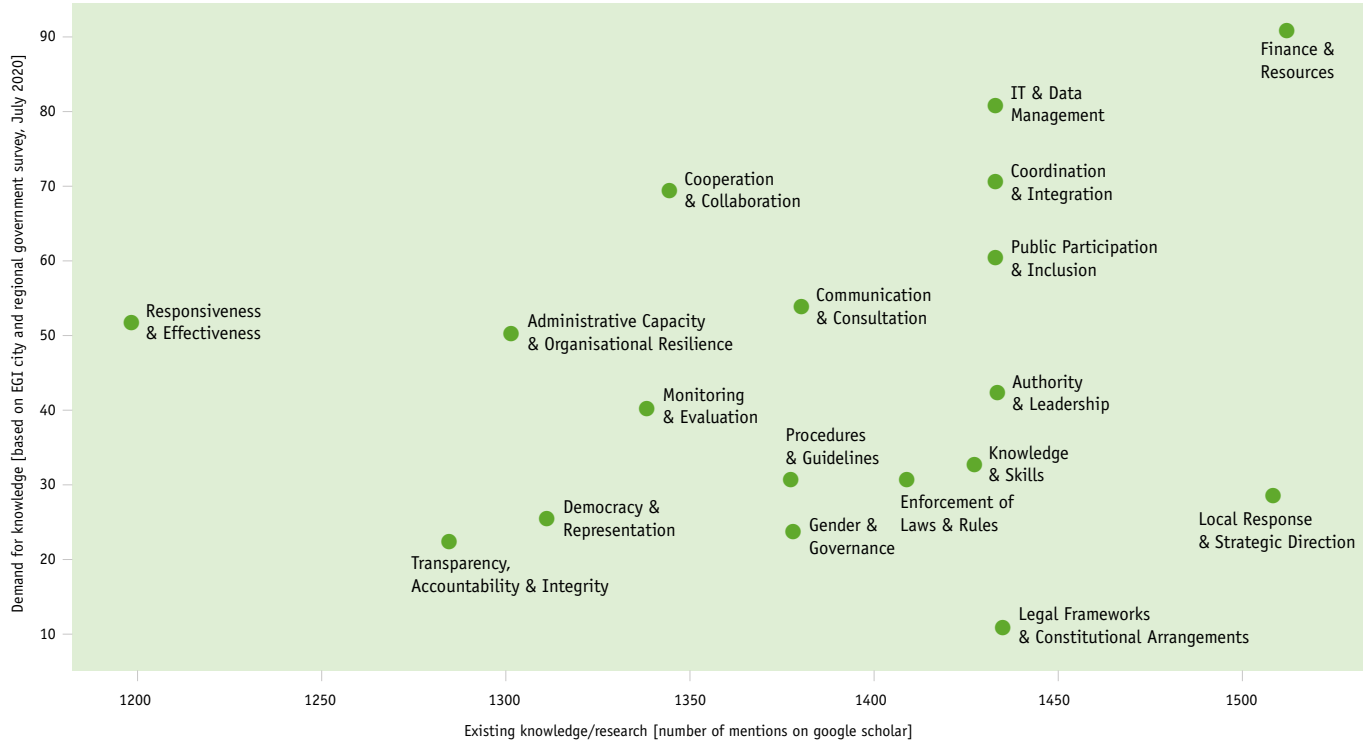
Knowledge and skills

Innovative sourcing and use of new knowledge and skills to inform the emergency response. Concrete measures may include the establishment of scientific advisory groups, incorporating local stakeholder knowledge and skills, ad hoc virtual capacity building programmes and mentoring schemes between experienced emergency response staff and colleagues with limited knowledge and previous experience as well as building a shared understanding of key terminology.

Responsiveness and effectiveness

Changes that ensure the effective, flexible and timely response of the city government to the emergency, both at the outset and as the situation develops. Concrete measures may include the temporary adaptation of procurement procedures to ensure that resources can be deployed in the emergency response.

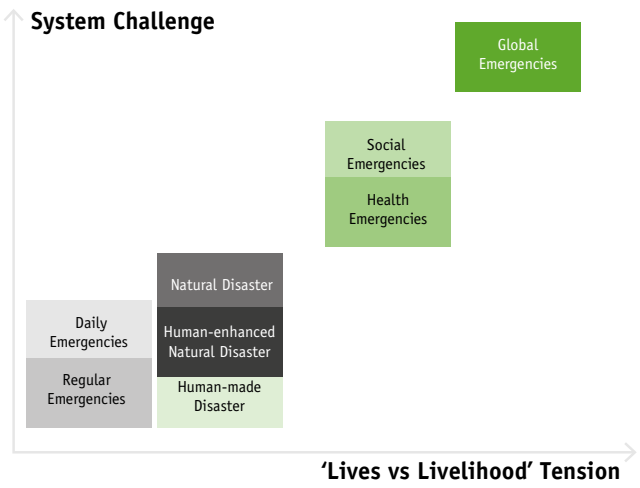
Figure 7: Emergency governance domains: demands vs knowledge

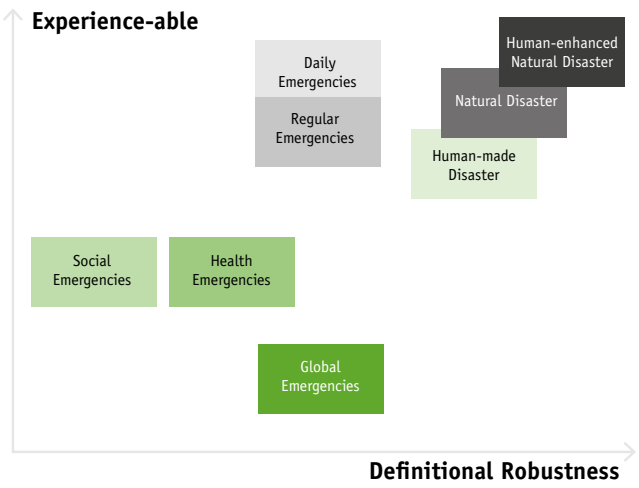


APPENDIX 1 – POSITIONING COMPLEX EMERGENCIES

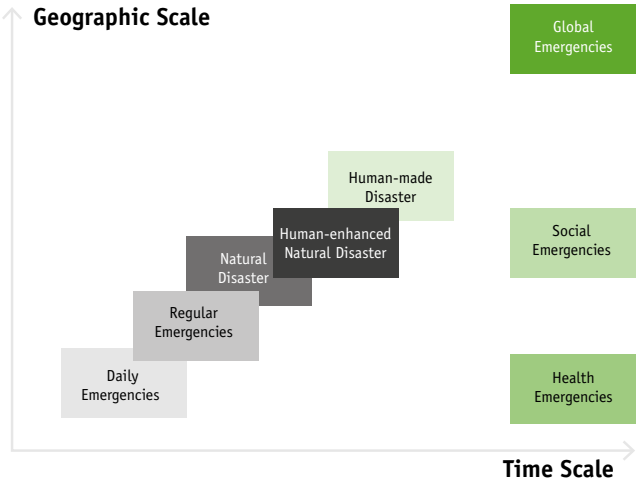
This overview explores important characteristics of complex emergencies by mapping these alongside other emergencies across different combinations of emergency features. Complex emergencies are presented here as either global emergencies (COVID-19 and Climate Change) or social emergencies.

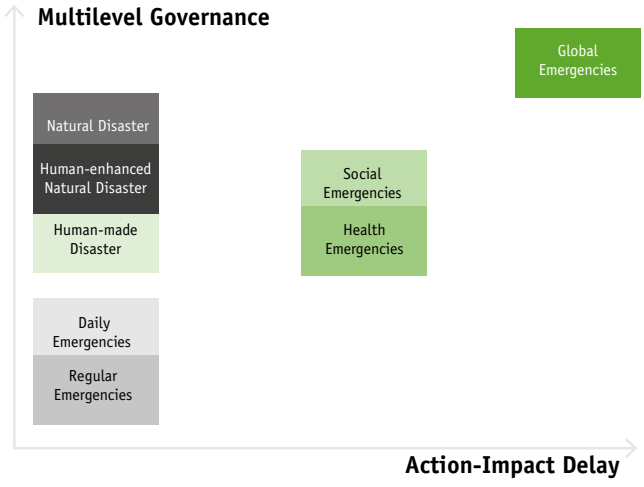
Main characteristics



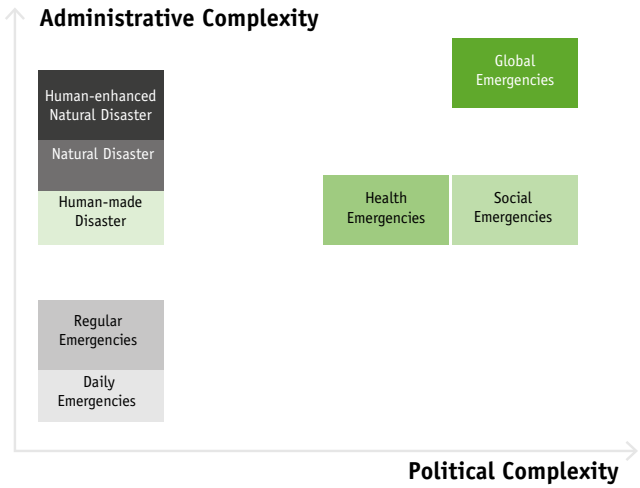


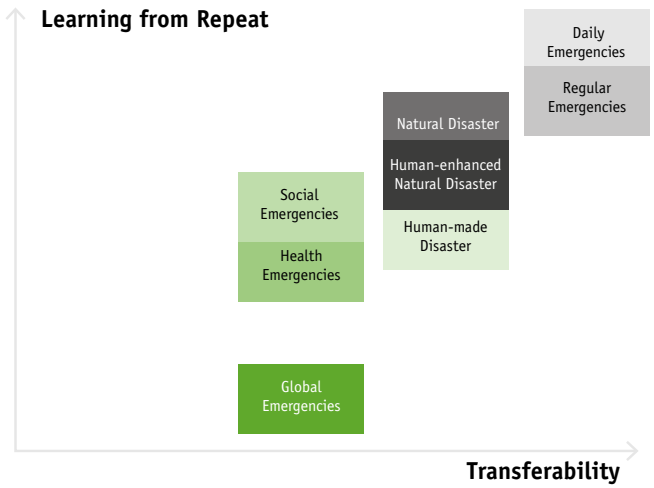
Spatial and temporal scales





Complexity, learning and transferability





APPENDIX 2 – NORMAL AND EMERGENCY MODE

Table 2: Normal vs emergency mode in the context of climate change

Source: based on Spratt and Sutton [42]

NORMAL MODE	EMERGENCY MODE
Crises are constrained within business as usual mode	Society engages productively with crises, but not in panic mode
Spin, denial and 'politics as usual' are employed	The situation is assessed with brutal honesty
No urgent threat is perceived	Immediate, or looming, threat to life, health, property, or environment is perceived
Problem is not yet serious	High probability of escalation beyond control if immediate action is not taken
Time of response is not important	Speed of response is crucial
The crisis is one of many issues	The crisis is of the highest priority
A labour market is in place	Emergency project teams are developed, and labour planning is instituted
Budgetary 'restraint' is shown	All available/necessary resources are devoted to the emergency and, if necessary, governments borrow heavily
Community and markets function as usual	Non-essential functions and consumption may be curtailed or rationed
A slow rate of change occurs because of systemic inertia	Rapid transition and scaling up occurs
Market needs dominate response choices and thinking	Planning, fostering innovation and research take place
Targets and goals are determined by political trade offs	Critical targets and goals are not compromised
There is a culture of compromise	Failure is not an option
There is a lack of national leadership and politics is adversarial and incremental	Bipartisanship and effective leadership are the norm

APPENDIX 3 – EMERGENCY ASSEMBLIES

In an emergency when urgent action is required, local and regional governments will often be forced to make difficult decisions and accept considerable trade-offs. The impacts of these decisions are likely to far outlast the immediate emergency, and when made by closed groups of politicians, they risk overlooking adverse impacts on marginalised and under-represented populations. A decision-making approach that centres the communities that will ultimately face the effects of these decisions increases political legitimacy and ensures that measures will be responsive to local needs.[43]

The idea for an emergency assembly is drawn from the citizens' assembly approach, a form of deliberative democracy that has increased in popularity in recent years. A citizens' assembly is made up of a representatively sampled group of people, brought together to discuss a political issue and establish a strategy or set of policy recommendations to address it.

Citizens' assemblies came to renewed prominence in 2016 when the model was adopted in Ireland to address a number of significant political and constitutional questions, most notably the state's restrictive abortion laws [44]. After five sessions on the topic, the assembly decided that the constitutional amendment outlawing abortion was unfit for purpose and should not be retained in full. Following this vote, the Irish Parliament held a general referendum on the question and the amendment was consequently repealed in full in 2017.

Following the success of the Irish citizens' assembly in coming to a decision on an issue that had been a political sticking point for decades, the citizens' assembly gained traction as a model for overcoming highly controversial political issues and revitalising democratic participation. In 2019, in response to months of protests over economic injustice and calls for more citizen engagement in decision-making, a national Citizens' Climate Convention was established in France with the objective of designing a strategy to achieve a 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions against 1990 levels by 2030 [45].

Citizens' assemblies have also been employed by successive urban and regional governments to help design an inclusive and socially just response to the climate emergency. In July 2019, a Citizens assembly was convened in the London Borough of Camden and the concluding recommendations formed the basis of the borough's net zero action plan [46]. The UK cities of Oxford, Cambridge and Leeds followed suit in hosting their own climate assemblies or juries [47-49]. Although the nature of climate breakdown as a 'long emergency' lends itself particularly well to these processes which can sometimes be drawn out over weeks or more, forms of deliberative decision-making have also been employed in the case of fast emerging emergencies such as the current pandemic.

In May, the Scottish Government launched an online consultative platform on approaches and principles for decision-making related to COVID-19 and the easing of lockdown restrictions. In less than a week, the platform had generated over 4,000 ideas and almost 18,000 comments [50]. The French city of Bordeaux similarly launched a public consultation inviting residents to put forward ideas for existing lockdown [51].

In an effort to engage young people in emergency decision-making, the Municipality of Lima hosted a COVID-19 Virtual Youth Assembly, together with the Commission of Teenage Woman Leaders of Metropolitan Lima. More than 500 teenagers participated in the dialogue, which centred around the impact of the virus on young women and girls. Participants were invited to put forward policy proposals at the conclusion of the session [52].

Bogotá City Hall and external partner organisations launched a three-day hackathon with the objective of crowdsourcing innovative mobility solutions aimed at reducing COVID-19 transmissions in the transport network. The winning team developed an online platform that routes transport journeys based on user-demand and travel from their homes to hospitals [53].

As cities and regions look towards the COVID-19 recovery; some are giving citizens the power to design these strategies. In the UK, Bristol City Council is holding a citizens' assembly to design a COVID-19 recovery plan for the city. As part of the city's attempt to ensure an inclusive and diverse participation, a mass survey has been launched amongst residents to inform the aims and themes of the Assembly [54]. An independent citizens' assembly was also hosted by NGOs in Oregon during the months of July and August to develop recommendations for a fair and equitable post-pandemic recovery [55].

ENDNOTES

[1] [broadest definition] "an event... that causes, or threatens to cause - (a) the death of, or injury or other damage to the health of, any person; or (b) the destruction of, or damage to, any property; or (c) a disruption to essential services or to services usually enjoyed by the community; or (d) harm to the environment, or to flora or fauna" [27].

[2] The term crisis is used to describe a situation which '(1) threatens high-priority values of the organization, (2) presents a restricted amount of time in which a response can be made, and (3) is unexpected or unanticipated by the organization' [4].

[3] Extreme events are most commonly referred to in the context of unusual weather phenomena, which have increased in frequency in recent years due to climate change [57]. However, the term extreme event has also been applied to non-weather-related occurrences such as terrorism [58] and power outages [59]. Brosaka et al define an extreme event as "a dynamic occurrence within a limited timeframe that impedes the functioning of a system or systems". Their definition of extreme events thus takes into account both the initial occurrence or trigger and its impacts [60].

[4] The WHO defines a disaster as: 1. "A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources (ISDR). 2. Situation or event, which overwhelms local capacity, necessitating a request to national or international level for external assistance (CRED). 3. A term describing an event that can be defined spatially and geographically, but that demands observation to produce evidence. It implies the interaction of an external stressor with a human community and it carries the implicit concept of non-manageability. The term is used in the entire range of risk-reduction activities, but it is possibly the least appropriate for response" [2].

[5] The WHO define catastrophes as "disasters of special magnitude (although there has been no known attempt to quantification, yet). It has a "narrative", descriptive value and, mostly, an advocacy purpose. Conceptually, it relates best to reconstruction activities" [2].

[6] Thresholds can be problematic for interdisciplinary communication and classification of different types of events. They can also be seen to be arbitrary in some cases [60].

[7] Unlike non-routine emergencies such as natural disasters or acts of terrorism, complex emergencies lack many of the triggers to which humans immediately and reflexively respond to. Thus, they require a shifting lens from ex-post (response to existing disaster) to ex-ante (response to anticipated disaster or catastrophe) emergency response [57].

[8] Grand challenges most commonly refer to complex issues are questions that have been identified as priorities for research, philanthropy or government. They are questions or problems which are (1) extremely hard to answer or solve, yet offer hope of being solvable; (2) global in scale, or produce outcomes which affect millions of people; (3) require work across disciplines and subdisciplines; (4) well defined with established metrics so that it can be established if and when the challenge has been overcome; (5) intelligible to the extent that they capture popular imagination and political support [61].

[9] The frequent references to net-zero require further clarification, particularly when applying them to city targets. Generally, net-zero means that the total sum of carbon emissions are balanced by the same level of carbon removal. Future carbon emissions that are unavoidable therefore need to be offset by extracting the equal amount of carbon from the atmosphere. Offsetting will be costly, so it is not a viable way to keep emissions at existing levels. There is also a question of the extent to which carbon removal needs to take place within the territory of a government targeting net-zero, or whether others located elsewhere could be paid to do so. The climate emergency narrative is quite clear that net-zero targets should not preclude efforts to achieve true zero emissions [62].

[10] Many climate emergency advocates aim for net-zero targets for developed countries as soon as 2030 or even 2025, with longer timelines for developing nations. Interestingly, the most ambitious target date is precisely what the Copenhagen City Council had already decided in 2009: a carbon neutral city by 2025 [22].

[11] This is demonstrated for instance by the "Cities for Adequate Housing" declaration of local and regional governments for the Right to Housing and the Right to the City [63]. The declaration was brought before the 2018 U.N. High Level Political Forum and has since been endorsed 41 cities and metropolitan entities from around the world. Building on the New Urban Agenda of Habitat III and the momentum of "The Shift" [64], a global initiative on the right to housing advanced by the former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, the signatories of the declaration seek to address the global housing challenge through five lines of action. These include: 1) demanding enhanced legal and fiscal powers to regulate the housing market; 2) seeking more funds to improve public housing stocks; 3) developing tools to produce alternative housing models; 4) An urban planning that combines adequate housing with quality, inclusive and sustainable neighborhoods; and 5) enhanced cooperation and solidarity within city networks that defend affordable housing.

[12] Besides the risk of losing the required focus and commitment emergency governance requires, there is also the risk that if too many challenges are defined as emergencies, nothing will end up being treated as a top priority concern requiring rapid and radical responses.

[13] Given country, region and city-specific contextual factors, this framework does not cover questions of who ultimately defines roles and responsibilities for emergency governance (at the regional and local level).

[14] While an incident response is relatively clear in the case of a pandemic (response to a virus already spreading globally), the definition of an emergency incidence is less clear for climate change. This briefing positions a climate emergency as a response to an existing crisis (even though there may not be an incident in a conventional sense) motivated by the prevention of future human-enhanced natural disasters (climate change mitigation). Concerns about preparedness to unavoidable future climate risks (conventional climate change adaptation) are a second order concern for the type of climate emergency responses addressed here.

[15] A state of emergency is typically declared when key thresholds guaranteeing the safety are being surpassed. In turn, emergency governance should end when key thresholds are once again guaranteed.

[16] It is also important to note that the case of a climate emergency is a one-off emergency. Preparing for repeat is less important than a one-off framework adoptable for different contexts. In other words, there is little opportunity for empirical learning based on recurrences in one location, but considerable learning based on transferability from one to another regional/city context.

[17] The response paradox describes a situation where radical action avoids disaster leaving the emergency invisible. This can present a challenge for governments as it may reinforce views among citizens that the emergency never existed in the first place.

[18] The Emergency Governance Initiative conducted a survey of 57 local and regional government officials to understand the demand for knowledge and information in relation to each of these emergency governance domains. Finance and resources emerged as the key area where information was most needed. The prominence of academic resources which address these emergency governance domains was derived from a scan of resources from the Google Scholar database across the period 2000-2020. Keyword searches included the emergency governance domain names, combined with "emergency governance" or "crisis governance". Notably, the domain of finance and resources returned the most search results, indicating that considerable levels of academic attention are dedicated to this issue as well.

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