



INTER AGENCY COMMON FEEDBACK PROJECT

October 2015

ISSUE IN FOCUS

*COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS IN
RURAL AND URBAN SETTINGS*

ALL DATA FROM PERCEPTION SURVEYS AVAILABLE AT
OPENNEPAL.NET

THIS ISSUE IN FOCUS BASED ON FEEDBACK COLLECTED IN AUGUST
CFP REPORT FOUND [HERE](#)

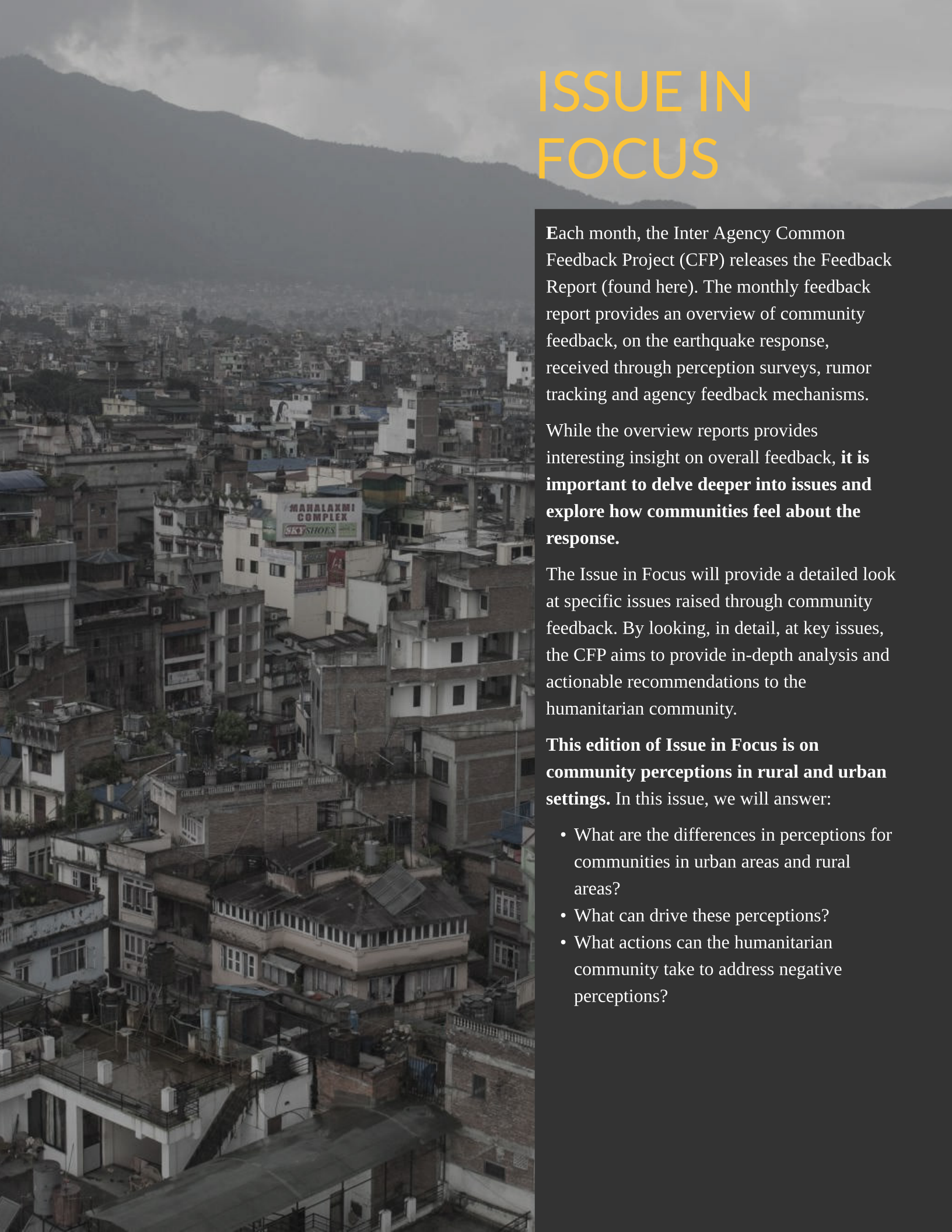
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An aerial photograph of a densely populated urban area, likely Kathmandu, Nepal, showing a mix of multi-story brick and concrete buildings. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a cloudy sky. The text 'ISSUE IN FOCUS' is overlaid in large, bold, orange letters in the upper right corner.

ISSUE IN FOCUS

Each month, the Inter Agency Common Feedback Project (CFP) releases the Feedback Report (found [here](#)). The monthly feedback report provides an overview of community feedback, on the earthquake response, received through perception surveys, rumor tracking and agency feedback mechanisms.

While the overview reports provides interesting insight on overall feedback, **it is important to delve deeper into issues and explore how communities feel about the response.**

The Issue in Focus will provide a detailed look at specific issues raised through community feedback. By looking, in detail, at key issues, the CFP aims to provide in-depth analysis and actionable recommendations to the humanitarian community.

This edition of Issue in Focus is on community perceptions in rural and urban settings. In this issue, we will answer:

- What are the differences in perceptions for communities in urban areas and rural areas?
- What can drive these perceptions?
- What actions can the humanitarian community take to address negative perceptions?



Community Perceptions: By Numbers

Rural vs Urban

RURAL

1014 surveys conducted

Are main problems addressed?

74%

of respondents believe their main needs are not being addressed. The top identified needs are:



Shelter



Financial Support

Satisfaction with Government

58%

28%

58 percent of respondents are not satisfied with the government response while 28 percent are satisfied. Main needs from government are:



Building Materials



Cash for Work

Is relief effort making progress?

43%

32%

43 percent of respondents believe there has not been progress made in the relief while 32 percent believe progress has been made

URBAN

384 surveys conducted

Are main problems addressed?

82%

of respondents believe their main needs are not being addressed. The top identified needs are:



Shelter



Financial Support

Satisfaction with Government

74%

15%

74 percent of respondents are not satisfied with the government response while 15 percent are satisfied. Main needs from government are:



Building Materials



Cash for Work

Is relief effort making progress?

69%

12%

69 percent of respondents believe there has not been progress made in the relief while 12 percent believe progress has been made



PERCEPTIONS IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

The 25 April 2015 earthquake in Nepal (and subsequent after shocks) caused significant damage across more than 25 districts, of which 14 have been identified as most heavily affected. Within these priority districts, there are important differences between communities that need to be considered for an effective emergency response. An important difference lies between rural and urban communities.

Perception surveys, collected and analyzed under the Common Feedback Project, highlight significant differences in how communities in rural areas perceive the response versus communities in urban areas. In the August round of surveys, urban communities consistently demonstrated more negative perceptions of the emergency response.

In particular, urban communities were significantly more negative on the following issues:

- Needs being addressed
- Satisfaction with government in the response
- Fairness of aid distribution
- Feeling heard
- Overall progress in the response

The relatively more negative perceptions from urban communities may be a reflection of the complex

nature of emergency response in urban settings and the lack of experienced approaches in operating in an emergency response.

According to an ALNAP lessons paper, disasters in urban settings differ from those in rural settings in the following ways:

- Scale
- Density
- Economic systems and livelihood strategies
- Governance and public expectations
- Large informal settlements
- Likelihood for compound and complex disasters
- Potential for secondary impacts

Of the above characteristics, governance and expectations seems to be most relevant for community perceptions in Nepal. Another factor that may drive perceptions is the experience of humanitarian agencies in rural vs. urban settings.

Governance & Expectations

Urban communities generally have more complex governance arrangements with a multitude of stakeholders across different levels of government. In addition, urban communities are more fluid and heterogeneous, which makes needs assessments,

The complex nature of urban response may be a driving factor in negative perceptions on response efforts by urban communities

targeting and outreach more difficult. In contrast, governance structures in homogeneous rural communities in Nepal is more linear with fewer stakeholders to coordinate with and more direct approaches to reaching and addressing needs of communities.

The complexities of urban response is reflected in the perception surveys where urban communities are significantly more negative in relation to satisfaction with government and overall progress in the response. Given the complex governance structures in the urban context, communities may feel more disconnected from local and national government. This may

have been exacerbated by the municipal restructuring that occurred in Nepal six months prior to the earthquake.

In addition, increased access to information sources may raise or confuse expectations about response efforts.

Experience

Another factor that may influence these perceptions is the experience and expertise of humanitarian organizations operating in rural and urban settings.

Humanitarian organizations are more comfortable and have tested tools and approaches for rural settings. There is less expertise, comfort, and best practice in

managing a response in urban settings.

Generally, humanitarian agencies find it more difficult to assess needs, engage with a multitude of stakeholders and target groups in urban settings. As a result, response approaches in urban areas may not be as effective as the more practiced and experienced approaches used in rural settings.

Overall

Given the complexities in urban response efforts, relatively higher negative response rates from communities is expected. But how can humanitarian organizations address this issue?



An aerial photograph of a densely populated urban area, likely in Nepal, showing a vast expanse of multi-story buildings packed closely together. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a cloudy sky. The word "RECOMMENDATIONS" is overlaid in large, bold, yellow capital letters across the middle of the image.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Feedback data shows that urban communities have more negative perceptions about response efforts and whether their needs are being addressed.

Given this analysis, the CFP recommends that the humanitarian community:

- **Strengthen urban community outreach and dialogue to ensure urban communities understand response efforts and what they can reasonably expect. It is critical that urban communities are informed of efforts and know who and how to engage with government and humanitarian agencies.**
- **Further investigate needs of urban communities and the tools and approaches used by humanitarian organizations to identify how to best address concerns and needs of communities in urban settings.**

