How can cities harness their immense resources to cope with crises?

The program applies a broad definition of human security based on United Nations’ models of peace-building, development, community sustainability and resilience. The program conducts research on conditions which contribute to community vulnerability to conflict, crisis and natural disasters and also conducts research on emergency management, recovery and community resilience. Focusing on both local and international sites, these studies are designed to contribute to:

- Public and scholarly discussion on human security and disasters;
- Public policy;
- The effectiveness of agencies who work in disaster and human security in both the government and non-government sectors;
- Communities’ own capabilities, governance, peace-building, recovery and resilience.

Following the United Nations Human Security Initiative and recent scholarship on human security, the program’s primary objective is to contribute to communities’ resilience and capacity to prevent, manage and recover from crises.

The program focuses on pathways for recovering from conflict, building resilience and reducing disaster vulnerability. This can be achieved by understanding and building on the strengths of cities and working to reduce the forces promoting violence and vulnerability to disaster. For many cities in our region, and throughout the world, this is a key factor in any hope of sustainability.

www.global-cities.info
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Key Research Projects

Human Security and Natural Disasters
This project examines the synergy between concepts such as resilience and security, vulnerability and insecurity in order to better facilitate better civilian, government and military interaction after disaster or conflict. It seeks to build-on the insight from within disaster management that disasters are primarily human events and reconcile this with approaches to security that prioritize human relations. This will allow disaster risk reduction and the alleviation of social inequality to be more effectively coordinated.

The NGO-Military Interface in Post-Conflict and Post-Disaster Contexts
This project examines the interaction, cooperation and coordination between the Australian military and NGOs. It develops a more complex understanding of the nature of the relationship and the barriers, attitudes and practices that underpin it. It will compare civil-military relations between the same group of actors across three settings: post-conflict Timor-Leste; ongoing conflict in Afghanistan; and a post-natural disaster site.

After the Apocalypse: The Mediasphere, Global Crisis and Violent Ecologies
This project investigates the evolution of a crisis consciousness and the implication human desires in the cultural politics of violence. It examines the ways in which the media shapes our thinking and practices around crisis. Focussing particularly on Australia’s participation in post-9/11 conflicts.

Global Reconciliation
This project supports an Australian-initiated network of people and organisations around the world seeking to promote communication and dialogue across national, cultural, religious and racial differences. Global Reconciliation is an ambitious and innovative partnership that draws together the vast resources of communities in Australia and elsewhere to establish specific, outcome focused collaborative projects around the world, particularly in the areas of health, education, sport, the arts, spirituality, livelihoods and money, justice and ethics, and environment.

Socialising Security: Making Space for People in Global Politics
This project highlights the implication of people as subjects of security then locates this shaped subjectivity as the site for conceptualising ethics and constructing a productive, more human security. The innovation of this approach is its twofold intent; critical and normative. Critically, Socialising Security seeks to problematize unreflexive and violent security practices through close analytic attention to how security is incorporated into the identity, ethics, and operative paradigms of invested states and individuals. Normatively, this project will move from the problems and contradictions thrown up by this process to develop workable models for security’s re-socialisation.

A complete list of projects and current researchers can be found on the website www.global-cities.info/content/program/human-security