Making cities resilient: for sustainable and resilient communities

Venue: Meeting Room F, 1st floor UNCC
Date: Thursday, 29 March 2018
Time: 12:00 – 13:30
Organizers: UNISDR, UN-Habitat, and Local Authorities from selected cities in South and South-East Asia

Background

Making cities more resilient: everyone has a role to play

What makes a city resilient to disasters is a combination of resilience accumulated through the process of urbanization and planning on one hand, and the result of specific actions to reduce disaster risk by various actors on the other. National governments, local government associations, international/regional/non-governmental organizations, community associations, donors, private sector, academia and citizens all can be engaged in the process of urban disaster risk reduction, where specific actions are taken to identify, manage and lessen the influences of natural and human-induced hazards.

What is the “Making Cities Resilient Campaign”? 

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and its partners are working towards sustainable urbanization by taking proactive actions. The Making Cities Resilient Campaign (MCR) - launched in May 2010 - addresses issues of local governance and urban risk. The Campaign is led by the UNISDR but is self-motivating, partnership and city-driven with an aim to raise the profile of resilience and disaster risk reduction among local governments and urban communities worldwide.

UNISDR and UNHABITAT are implementing a joint initiative, with support from the European Commission, to improve understanding of, and capacity to, address disaster risks at the local level, including in crisis-prone cities, to support national and local disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies. Lessons from this initiative will also be shared by the local authorities and partner organizations.
Scope

The global population will grow to nearly 10 billion by the middle of this century. More than half of the world’s population now lives in towns and cities, and by 2030 this number will swell to about 5 billion. Such a rapid urbanization presents opportunities and challenges especially to the local governments.

Urbanization mirrors economic growth as urban centres attract huge investments in infrastructure and investments. Some 60 per cent of the area expected to be urbanized by 2030 remains to be built and trillions of US Dollars are expected to be invested in new infrastructure annually (Cancun High-Level Communiqué¹). At the same time a rapid urbanization puts heavy pressure on existing services, which when gets exacerbated by unplanned growth and climate change can lead to unprecedented crises, as currently being witnessed in the Cape Town urban drought. These challenges point to the need for development that is sustainable and resilient, both in terms of reducing risk and preventing future losses.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 provides a global blueprint to ensure risk-sensitive development – a development process that takes risk into account and does not create risks for the future. This concept and practice runs across multiple SDGs².

The proposed side event focuses on the Asia-Pacific region based on work and experiences from the city level. The event seeks to promote a comprehensive understanding of the SDG 11 and Sendai Framework and their implementation at the local level, providing a platform for sharing good practices and lessons. The session is aimed to promote inclusiveness through enhanced dialogue among local governments and stakeholders and recommend actions.

This side event will bring together Local Government representatives from selected cities, implementing partners and UN experts to share lessons from the grassroots level. The scope of this event is to share experiences from the point of view of the different stakeholders and identify critical steps needed in making cities sustainable and resilient.

Key Questions

1) How does coherence across multiple international frameworks work at the local level?
2) What are the city experiences in using tools, to establish baselines and gather profiles of risk and resilience building data and information? How do these inform the development of local strategies (Sendai Target E, and SDG Target 11.b.2)?
3) What are the essential steps needed to successfully engage multi stakeholders for the implementation of SDG 11 and Sendai Framework at the local level in Asia and the Pacific?

Key messages that will be embedded in the side event discussions:

- Proper strategies are vital to ensure that the benefits of urbanization are maximized, and negative effects are minimized.

¹ Adopted at the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction that focused on ‘Ensuring the resilience of infrastructure and housing’ (http://unisdr.org/gp2017).
² https://www.preventionweb.net/drr-framework/sdg/target Selected targets and indicators of the SDGs 1, 11 and 13 are being monitored through the Sendai Framework Monitoring process.
• The importance to amplify dedicated action, focused on tackling underlying disaster risk drivers such as the consequences of poverty and inequality, climate change and variability, unplanned and rapid urbanization.

• Empowerment of local authorities and local communities to reduce disaster risk, including through resources, incentives and decision-making responsibilities, as appropriate; and, for strengthening the capacity of local authorities to evacuate persons living in disaster-prone areas.

Panellists/discussants

1) Opening Remarks: Regional Director, UN-Habitat ROAP
2) Deputy Director, BNPB Indonesia
3) Ms. Violeta Seva, MCR Advocate, The Philippines
4) Mr. Kinlay Dorjee, Mayor of Thimphu (TBC)
5) Ms. Wanun Permpibul, Director, Climate Watch Thailand (TBC)
6) Ms. Sri Sofjan, Senior Program Administrator & Strategist, Huairou Commission (TBC)

Moderator

Ms Loretta Hieber-Girardet, Regional Director, UNISDR-ROAP

Proposed Programme

This side event will be a moderated discussion where each panellist will be given 12-15 minutes to deliver a presentation addressing the three key questions, in their local context. This will be followed by discussions and a question and answer session. The moderator will then wrap the session and provide concluding remarks.

For more details and information contact:

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