



AIT
Asian Institute of Technology



CONCEPT NOTE

Regional Training Workshop on Building Cities and Local Governments' Resilience to Climate and Disaster Risks

17-21 September 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand

I. Background

Over the past 20 years disasters have affected 4.4 billion people, caused USD 2 trillion of damage and killed 1.3 million people. Natural disasters affected people living in developing countries and the most vulnerable communities within those countries. Over 95 percent of people killed by natural disasters are from developing countries. Current and future challenges of mainstreaming climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in development planning demand new approaches, mechanisms, sets of skills and competencies that need to be identified and strengthened in order to form the basis of increasing public demand and political commitment to local actions and budget allocations. Lack of appropriate knowledge on the subject, lack of government commitment and the absence of mainstreaming in current organizational and government strategy are key existing challenges.

Unprecedented urbanization is transforming the planet and the way we live: for the first time in history, more people live in cities than in rural areas. 90 percent of this urban expansion takes place in developing countries, and much of it occurs near natural hazards, rivers and coastlines, and through informal and unplanned settlements. As urban areas expand and disaster risk rises, cities are increasingly interested in integrating resilience into their development plans. Cities and local governments are seeing prioritisation and expansion of their efforts to advance urban resilience as a critical element of sustainable development. By helping cities avoid losses and citizens avoid sliding into poverty, improved urban resilience can safeguard development gains for future generations.

Lack of adequate infrastructure, land use planning and building codes exacerbate the risks to which urban dwellers are exposed. The greater concentration of people and assets means that the impact of natural disasters and a changing climate can be devastating, both in terms of human lives lost and economic livelihoods destroyed. The poorer segments of the population are particularly vulnerable, since they tend to live in more hazardous settlements and lack the necessary safety nets to recover from economic or environmental shocks. Preparing cities for disaster and climate risks and strengthening urban resilience are thus critical to all development and poverty reduction efforts.

Current and future challenges of mainstreaming climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction into national and local development planning demand new approaches, mechanisms, sets of skills and competencies that need to be identified and strengthened in order to form the basis of increasing public demand and political commitment to local actions and budget allocations. Lack of appropriate knowledge on the subject, lack of government commitment and the absence of mainstreaming in current organizational and government strategy and plans are key existing challenges.

This training workshop is designed with an aim to assist city governments in building greater resilience to climate and disaster risks through integrating climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction into wider city development plans and strategies.

II. Workshop Objectives and Expected Outcomes

This capacity building workshop, while promoting the importance of effective climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, will provide:

- an opportunity for cities and local governments to enhance capacities of different stakeholders for developing and implementing city resilience action plans;
- a platform for in-depth learning, knowledge sharing and exchange of good practices among participants;
- a space for city-to-city and multi-stakeholder cooperation for building resilience in cities by integrating climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction principles into cities wider development strategies, policies, plans and programmes.

Objectives:

Overall, the training workshop will provide an opportunity to disaster prone developing countries to:

- Contribute to mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into local planning and policy development processes, using the Making Cities Resilient (MCR) global campaign methodology, tools and templates based on [UNISDR's 10 Essentials for Resilience](#), an operational framework of the Sendai Framework at local level.
- Increase political commitment and social demand for disaster resilient development, adapted for climate change, aiming for sustainable development.
- Link the process of cities and local governments resilience baseline data compilation, resilience assessment reports, countries cases studies preparation, and monitoring and evaluation reporting with [Asia-Pacific Adaptation Information Platform \(AP-PLAT\)](#) to ensure open data and tools provision.

Expected Outcomes

By the end of the training, each participant city/local government will count with:

- a group of trained cadres on the topics of disaster risk reduction and city resilience action planning;
- a draft City Resilience Assessment Report;
- a draft Safe and Resilient City Action Plan;
- a draft Strategy Paper/Roadmap on how to finalize, ensure endorsement and effectively implement their Safe and Resilient City Action Plan;
- the necessary know-how to use Asia-Pacific Adaptation Information Platform (AP-PLAT) website for hosting and storing training materials, case studies, tools, draft assessment reports and action plans (subject of agreement with country) to ensure open project data and tools sharing to all countries in the Asia and the Pacific region.

III. Target Audience

The training programme will be limited to **four cities** and teams of **six participants** for each city. To the extent possible, city teams will include stakeholders from different sectors (authorities and experts from National and local/city governments agencies, academic and climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction training institutions, technical experts, civil society organizations, community organizations, experts) in order to ensure that the voices and needs of different populations are considered during group sessions, foster collective effort, and strengthen the knowledge and capacities of different stakeholders so that they all can positively contribute towards risk reduction.

IV. Additional Details

This course is organized by the [Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific](#) at the Asian Institute of Technology and the [United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction](#), with support of [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#), [United Nations Human Settlements Programme](#), [United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia](#), and the [Gorakhpur Environmental Action Group](#). Financing for this event has been provided by the [Ministry of Environment of Japan](#).