
NOMINATION FOR SASAKAWA AWARDS 2011

**DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
IN SANTA FE: FOR A SAFER,
MORE SUSTAINABLE CITY**

Detailed information and documentation



INTRODUCTION

Santa Fe de la Vera Cruz City is in the middle – east of Argentina, in the geographic region called Pampeana Plain, which is inserted into the Coast Zone. Pampeana Plain presents a very important disponibility of natural resources, that allows it a strong integration in the economic and productive process of the country, and Paraná River has an important influence in the zone giving the climate certain mediterranean characteristics.

The municipality boundaries are mostly rivers: in the east Paraná River, in the west Salado River, in the North Recreo City and in the South includes the land between Santa Fe River – and its confluence with Salado River – and closer islands up to Paraná River.

Territorial jurisdiction of the Municipality includes 26.800 hs, of which more than 70% are rivers, gaps and swamplands.

According to the numbers of the National Census of 2001, Santa Fe City has 369.589 inhabitants at that moment. During 2010 a new National Census have been made, and even when the official figures are not available yet, is believed that there could be 390.000 inhabitants at this moment.

Because of the characteristics of the city, and the disaster or emergency past experiences, the City Government have strongly worked for Disaster Risk Reduction (D.R.R) and initiated a long process for guiding the development of the city with a safer sustainability criteria.

Principal disaster risks

The principal disaster risks are mostly related to floods caused by hydroclimatic hazards, like river floods, high or medium intensity rains, or both factors.

Being placed on the middle of the flood plain and surrounded by two rivers –Paraná and Salado– the City experimented emergency situations and disasters in many different occasions.

Past floods were mostly related to the swelling of Paraná River. However, the most significant past disasters –that still remain in the memories– happened because of the swelling of Salado River as well as extraordinary stormwater.

The first disaster occurred in April 2003 when Salado River overflowed and got into the city by one of the unfinished flood protection embankment. The water reached out two and even three meters in lower zones. The lack of prevention, information to the inhabitants and organizations mechanisms for an adequate joint response, had the worst consequences.

According to the official version, there were 24 fatal victims and more than 130.000 evacuated persons. The capacity to help affected people was exceeded and the recovery process still continues.

The other event happened as a consequence of the extraordinary rains of March 2007, which revealed the lack of disaster preparedness of the City for effective response at all levels. Many of the affected neighborhoods - placed at the west of the City - were the same that had already been affected in previous floods, and this fact generated many politic and social conflicts.

About 28.000 persons should leave their homes during some days, there was a deficient response for damages; important routes and city access were interrupted and the City was complete and temporarily isolated.

As a consequence of this, the most serious hazard is related to hydroclimatic events that affect the population, the infrastructure and the services. The vulnerability for coping this hazard is different for each neighborhood; but one of the most important factors is the permanent physical exposition of the people to these kind of events and their urban impacts.

Most of the neighborhoods are placed on flood plains - swamplands, lagoons and sandy grounds - of the surrounding rivers of Santa Fe. Another fact to be added is that the quality of life in these communities is precarious. In many cases these informal settlements have exceeded, with their own dynamics, all urban, territorial and environment planning.

The construction of defense works against floods have given more safety conditions to different neighborhoods, but at the same time they became a barrier and difficult the natural stormwater draining, specially in the west side of the City. This condition and the fact that water drains slowly in low water stress gradient, affects big neighborhoods, specially in extraordinary storm seasons.

The floods in 2003 and 2007 were caused by different phenomena but both of them impacted severely in the city and its development, as it is shown in UNDP reports (see the attached documents as Background in Part V - BIS).

These events have highlighted a historical lack of urban planning based in disaster risk reduction as well as a weak preparedness to face the recurrent events of the region. The background mentioned before and the possible intensification of phenomena as a result of climate change (see recommendations of de 2nd Argentine Communication on Climate Change), demonstrate the need to focus the greatest effort on reducing disaster risk and increasing resilience, thus contributing to the sustainable development of Santa Fe community.

INFORMATION ABOUT INSTITUTIONAL CANDIDATE (PART II)

– **Nombre y dirección:**

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– **Creation Date of The Municipality:**

Some history topics can be considered in the creation of the Municipality of Santa Fe City, and they began in 1.815. In that moment Santa Fe obtained its independence from Buenos Aires, and as a consequence of this, it was necessary to create the Municipality as an Institution in 1861.

In 1.874 the Municipality enacted the law for setting the jurisdiction boundaries as they are known today.

In 1.921 the enactment of the provincial constitution recognizing the City's autonomy and consolidating the government during 1.933 Santa Fe City approved its Municipal Charter, but then it was replaced by the Municipal Organic Law of Santa Fe Province.

According to the present characteristics of this Institution, municipal authorities assumed in December 2007, with the organic structure written in the following paragraph.

– **Principal activity scopes:**

The Municipality is the government of the City, and it is its duty to attend all social, economic and cultural needs of the inhabitants. The actual government turns its action according to a Development Plan that involves a collective construction of the city profile for the future, and an intelligent government management to develop it.

Under the concepts of Local Strategic Planning, Santa Fe's Development Plan is an integrator and global plan that includes the basic guidelines for local policy, as well as the programs and actions for the different areas of the Municipality.

The Plan includes five points: 1 – State and Local Government; 2 – Urban Environment Planning (this point includes integrated Risk Management as a Public Policy); 3 – Production, Employment and Economic Growth; 4 –

Education, Science and Culture; 5 – Social inclusion.

In this context the City Government have created, from 2008, what it's called Municipal System for Risk Management as a participative way for introducing a disaster risk reduction process for a sustainable development.

Size and structure

The City Government is conformed by an Executive Department, a City Council and some self and independent authorities.

The Executive Department is commanded by the City Mayor; who is elected by people for a four year period. This Department includes Secretaries, Sub-secretaries and Directions. The City Council is the City Legislature and it is conformed by thirteen councilors, elected by people for a four year period, and the half of them are removed each two years..

Organic Structure of the Executive Department.

The Executive Department is organized into eight Secretaries: Government; Finance and Economics; Urban Planning; Public Works and Water Resources; Culture; Production; Control; and Social Development according to the Municipal Ordinance No. 11.437. Each Secretary includes Sub-secretaries, Directions, Departments and Programs, and Institutional Projects.

Mayor

- Government Secretary
- Finance and Economics Secretary
- Urban Planning Secretary
- Public Works and Water Resources Secretary
- Culture Secretary
- Production Secretary
- Control Secretary
- Social Development Secretary
- Communication Direction
- Risk Management Direction
- Municipal Magistrates Court
- Public Relations and Ceremonial
- Municipal Magistrates Court

- General Municipal Comptroller
- Sindicatura General Municipal

The Ordinance sets that the City Attorney, General Municipal Comptroller as well as four Directions – Communication Direction, Risk Management, Municipal Magistrates Court, and Public Relations and Ceremonial – report directly to the Mayor.

All Secretaries, Communication Director, Risk Management Director, Municipal Syndic and Municipal Fiscal, form the Municipal Cabinet, and it is its function to assist the Mayor in all matters.

There are 4.500 employees in the Municipality, including functionaries, permanent and transitory employees, people working by contracts, passants and trainees.

Annual budget and sources of income

Annual Budget 2010: \$ 659.438.127,00 (US\$ 164,859,532)

Social Development Secretary (32,83%) and Public Works and Water Resources Secretary (19,57%), takes more than 52% from the Municipal Annual Budget 2010. Also, the proyect estimates a total amount of \$ 80.213.820 for public work, formed by: Municipal resources (\$ 33.317.000), National Financial Resources (\$18.300.000), Provincial Financial Resources – for 2009 and 2010 – (\$ 10.356.820), PROMEBA (\$ 16.000.000), and other financial resources (\$ 2.240.000). In this way, the 41,25% from the budget for Public Works and Water Resources Secretary is funded with Municipal Resources, and \$ 28.011.979 is destined to those works related to disaster risk reduction, that are representing the 34,92%.

Name of Head of Institution ombre del director de la institución:

Mario D. Barletta

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS (PART III)

1. Sustainable implementation of disaster risk reduction at a community level.

- *Sustainable change and impact on a community.*
- *Integrated partnerships with government and civil society, including the private sector and non-governmental or community-based organizations.*
- *Integration of and contribution to Hyogo Framework priorities.*

The current government began its management in December 2007, creating a Development Planning based in different popular opinions. This Plan includes the development of the risk reduction plan and presents the necessity of incorporating the disaster risk management as a public policy, and at the same time into every urban planning, promoting the construction of a disaster risk prevention culture.¹

Creation of the Risk Management Direction and Risk Communication Program:

An specific area was created within the Development Plan: the Risk Management Direction, with a particular view of the disaster risk management, through the integrated and coordinated work of the different city government areas involved into this process. As it has been said, this Direction reports directly to the Mayor and it is part of the City Cabinet; it also coordinates and commands different actions between the government and civil society. At the same time, the Risk Communication Program was also created with aim of contribute to rise awareness about community risks and to enhance the disaster risk management process, attempting to change attitudes and habits to incorporate prevention in the cultures and identities that coexist in the city.

Municipal System for Risk Management:

The Ordinance No. 11.512 –which creates the Municipal System for Risk Management– was written and approved during the beginning of 2008. It replaced the previous normative –mostly focused in disasters and emergencies response– and promoted some participative activities to specify several aspects of risk management. The Ordinance was finally regulated by Municipal Decree No. 1.708/10.

Risk Reduction on Urban Planning:

¹ The Development Plan is able to be downloaded in the official web site of local government: http://www.santafeciudad.gov.ar/gobierno/plan_desarrollo (in Spanish).

Risk Reduction is also included into the City's Urban Plan which divides the city into zones. The planning process and its proposals were agreed by the different social sectors and they promote an urban development of the city toward safety and resilience, considering the restriction implied in those risky or inappropriate zones.

Agreements with institutions and organizations related to Risk Management and Development:

Different agreements for partnership between many institutions have been made in order to obtain a sustainable implementation of Disaster Risk Reduction. They involve technical and scientist institutions (Water National Institute, National University of Litoral, National Technological University, Pontifical Catholic University of Santa Fe), social assistance organizations (Argentine Red Cross, Argentine Caritas, International Rotary Club, University Federation of Litoral) as well as international cooperation institutions like Cooperazione Italiana allo Sviluppo; provincial organisms (Water Ministry, Public Services and Environment Ministry) national organisms (White Helmet Commission), bordering cities and subregions (Metropolitan Area of Santa Fe and Paraná watershed in Argentina), community – based organizations and civil societies – cultural, sporty and unions.

The partnership with National University of Litoral is particularly important because of the development of collaboration programs for researching, projects and investigations as well as training on Disaster Risk Reduction.

Regularization of social and community-based organizations:

Municipal Government has an specific area that helps and assists social and community based organizations, regularizing their situation in order to obtain legal capacity and consolidate their managements and activities, specially between neighborhood and non governmental organizations.

Preparedness planning and institutionalization of procedures at municipal level:

With the collaboration of municipal areas which are involved in preparedness activities, protocols and priority actions have been defined in the Contingency Plan for urban floods. Internal mechanisms and articulation forms with stakeholders are included in order to enhance immediate and effective response, and to clarify everyone's roles and responsibilities for attending the needs of the affected population at all levels.

Community participation in preparedness planning for integrated Disaster Risk Management

Through different thematic meetings with community groups, basic agreements

have been achieved for contributing to improve the people preparation, specially in those neighborhoods that are frequently affected by floods. These agreements included warning systems, safe routes and meeting points for preventive evacuation. Meetings and workshops also include the comprehension of local territory and of risk, and the significance of reducing it collectively.

Support to initiatives and activities related to Risk Management:

Initiatives related to education training for local communities, disaster risk reduction and resilience building, are implemented by different institutions and organizations from the City. They are supported and assisted by Municipality of Santa Fe.

Risk Management within a "Possible Development":

Risk Reduction has been included into this project, trying to set different inter-institutional integration and international cooperation, based in education and communication for development.

Territorial and Decentralization Program Implementation:

Decentralization process in Municipal Management included the adequacy of the normative and institutional framework, the field activities to strengthen municipal organization, the decentralized public attention through municipal centers opened and district coordinators designated. Based in this process, the Municipality integrates different social and community networks created to solve common difficulties.

Within this process, four experiences of Participative Budget for neighborhoods have been implemented during last two years, and there are at least four more experiences to be done in 2011, which means there will be done one project for each district or city zones.

Inter-institutional articulation for invest in infrastructure for flood prevention:

Through different instruments, agreements and community work, some important and priority achievements for flood prevention has been established, such as the adequacy of flood drainage system, maintenance of flood protection embankments, increase power in pumping station's. Furthermore, the Municipality created an Internal Coordination and Inter-Institutional Articulation Program, that reports to the Risk Management Direction, to give assessment to the general coordination for common work, particularly governmental organisms.

Litoral Municipalities' Network for Disaster Risk Reduction:

As a consequence of the First Mayors' Meeting of Paraná Basin in Litoral Region, municipal authorities signed an Documet for procedure agreement

trying to conform this Local Government's Network, adopting the priorities suggested in Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) as competent guidelines for risk reduction process with common perspective and criteria.

These achievements are strongly linked to Hyogo Framework for Action, specially considering the consolidation of an institutional basement to implement an integrated risk reduction process in the city, within the context of sustainable and safe development. Municipal System for Risk Reduction opens a wide space for joining efforts and actors' common work to deal with different aspects of the problem. Likewise, the System allows to rise knowledge about the risks and their factors, and put in place policies addressed to reduce risks and improve City's resilience.

2. Distinguish Services for Disaster Risk Reduction in the fields of science, technology and engineering, which includes the use of empirical knowledge and social processes.

- *Sustained change and impact on best practice, from innovation to adoption.*
- *How achievements contribute to the Hyogo Framework priorities.*

Agreement with Water National Institute for developing the Master Plan for stormwater drainages:

Considering risks related to extraordinary rains, an Executive Project for this Plan, with the technical assistance of the Water National Institute, was created to reduce the great damages that these disasters have always made. This Plan demands more than U\$S30,000,000 and it was written for making the drainage works safer because they are not enough when have to drain extraordinary stormwater.

Community meetings about priority interventions for making the draining system better:

Due to several difficulties with extraordinary rains over the city, the meetings with different community-based organizations gave an important information about the specific needs of each neighborhood. As a consequence of this, different joint tasks and works were agreed and have been made, including the cleaning of drainage system, the enlargement of stormwater reservoirs, the adaptation of conduits through new crossing, among others.

Communitarian construction of components for urban drainage:

A joint initiative of international cooperation and a local organization (CISP and CANOA) implemented the Integral Rehabilitation and Development Project for four neighborhoods of Santa Fe. By this project, the neighbors of Santa Rosa de Lima built a precast concrete factory, for making stormwater precast conduits for the open drainage. Nowadays there are 11 persons working on it.

Installation of a new sanitary landfill and creation of work cooperatives:

The initiative to create a new sanitary landfill and to separate solid waste incorporates the knowledge of many informal garbage collectors, who are involved in classification of solid urban waste for its reusing, commercialization or recycling.

According to Hyogo Framework for Action, these initiatives contributes to increase the capacities and risk reduction and to make the community more resilient, gathering empirical and technical knowledge with the informal ones.

3. Consistent, sustained advocacy for the cause of disaster risk reduction at a global or regional level. Candidates can include journalists or media institutions, scientific and professional communities, educators and general advocates. Evidence must be provided of:

- *The achievement of a higher profile for disaster risk reduction as a result of advocacy, or*
- *Increased institutional commitment to disaster risk reduction as a result of advocacy.*
- *How achievements contributed to the Hyogo Framework priorities.*

Participation of Santa Fe in the World campaign 2010 – 2011 “Making Cities Resilient – My City is Getting Ready”:

The Municipality joined to this campaign in May 2010 and Argentina did the same in October 2010. This campaign looks for sharing its experience with local governments, including achievements and challenges, as well as past experiences in disaster management.

Participation of Santa Fe City in the Thematic Urban Risk Platform for Latin America and The Caribbean:

This Institute looks for the generation of risk management capacities in local

actors, through the association between universities and organisms from Europe and Latin America.

Invitation to support the creation of the Euro-Latin American Risk Science Institute:

This Institute looks for the generation of risk management capacities in local actors, through the association between universities and organisms from Europe and Latin America.

Training to journalists, communicators and social workers:

In order to increase education about risks and its management, many training activities have been held for different local actors like, for example, communication media. Through this strategies people were informed about the risk situation of the city and the different disaster risk reduction planning, including the contents of Hyogo Framework for Action. Also, the Municipal System for Risk Management includes the creation of the Communication and Information Commission for dealing with these topics.

Promotion of Education Programs and training on disaster risk reduction:

Municipality have published a web site about municipal risk management, where many interesting material can be downloaded from any place in the world.

These achievements contribute to make the process stronger, setting fundamental conditions for a sustainable risk reduction plan and development of the city. Under this vision, Santa Fe gives – at a regional and world level – a concrete experience in the implementation of the risk management process, adopting global guidelines – as the ones written in Hyogo Framework for Action – for the orientation of local practice.

4. Significant achievements and impact through other activities recognized as essential in promotion disaster risk reduction, and which contribute to strategic achievements and priority actions of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

Cadastral Domain's Regularization Plan:

The actual Municipal Management initiated the implementation of this plan and in the last two years about 3000 families have regularized their situation by certificates of occupancy, debt cancellation certificates, writings and sale contracts. Nowadays another 3.500 cases are regularizing their situation.

Relocation of physical and social vulnerable families:

Beside promoting the relocation of families who live in high risk flood zones, this action includes training and employment promotion, offices and micro productive projects. Nowadays the relocation process involves 250 families who live in those risky areas that are out of the flood protection embankments or in stormwater reservoirs.

This process have already begun and about 70 families were relocated.

Differenced waste recollection (wet and dry waste) and education campaign for its implementation:

Within the framework of the "Green Change Program", the first part of differential recollection of solid waste have begun, projecting the participation of the community for making the system sustainable. "Clean Points" have been created for the informal trash collectors who can put garbage into a closed place, in order to keep the neighborhoods cleaned. Communitarian garbage baskets have been placed all around the city and those persons called "cirujas"² are encouraged to become communitarian agents, increasing their capacities by training activities in many different works so they can transform and improve their livelihoods.

Higher Education: social work and risk management:

By an agreement between the Municipality and the Social Service School, students from this institution made their field work related to the topic "Habitat and Risk Management". Between 2008 and 2010, 36 students have developed different activities related to this topic, all of them coordinated by Risk Management Direction.

Protection by law of about 30.000 has (October 2010) by the creation of the new National Park "Santa Fe's Islands"

This is the first National Park in the province. Its principal purpose is the protection of the ecosystem, a big island area, full of lagoons and swamplands that formed the most important wet region of the country, and one of the most important biodiversity region too (Paraná-Paraguay's hydric system and the Delta and Parana Islands). With this law not only an important culture and tourist region is protected but also a huge natural buffer is preserved to mitigate floods.

Hydric scientific studies for reactivating navegability of Santa Fe Creek:

These studies are destined to provide alternatives for reactivating waterways in

² The term "cirujas" names the persons who recollect informally urban garbage for classification and commercialization. Frequently, this activity involves all or most of the family members and it constitutes their livelihood.

Santa Fe Creek, which is considered a wide buffering area that alleviates floods of the Paraná River. It is also an important resource that presents a great opportunity for the development of the city and the subregion.

Installation of modern equipment for making better the actual warning systems.

Ten rain gauges have been installed all around the city in order to obtain information about raining, specially convective storms and climate variability. At the same time and through different agreements with provincial and national organisms, a new weather radar was installed in the zone, in order to improve precision in available information about possible rains, considering their variability and intensity.

Hydrological early warning systems

The hydrological early warning systems of both Paraná and Salado rivers are administrated by the Water National Institute and by the Government of the Province of Santa Fe respectively. This Province took control of the operation and monitoring of Salado River during 2008. It is important to emphasize that information interchange with these organisms is permanent and this fact contributed to enhance preparatives framed in Contingency Planning.

Implementation of a complete VHF Communication System:

For the first time the city has got a wide communication system connected to other similar ones, approved by the National Communication Commission. It assures the permanent communication during an emergency of any kind and magnitude.

Specific training for authorities and municipal employees:

In order to attend all needs of the affected people in case of disasters, as well as the own personal protection (hygiene and environmental security, fire prevention and labor accidents), many training activities were held. The activities included training for authorities in charge of shelters during emergencies, and psychological first aid training for phone operators -who receive, write down and derive complaints and claims. The local government organized these training activities with the collaboration of the White Helmets Commission, the Red Cross and other local organizations for social and psychological support.

Participative elaboration of indications and recommendations in case of emergency framed in Contingency Planning:

Public annual campaigns for risky neighborhoods are accomplished to raise awareness and remember people the indications of the evacuation plans, specially during previous rainy periods. This action includes based-community

organizations and neighborhood schools in each zone.

First edition of the education course called "Flooding in Santa Fe: toward disaster risk management":

The course took place in 2008, with the finance of CISP/CANOA. It was dictated by a team of professors from National University of Litoral and destined to 15 teachers and community representatives. After the course, the participants organized diverse risk reduction activities in their own schools and neighborhoods. By this education program an educative material about prevention and disaster risk reduction was elaborated and published.

Creation of a Project called "Preparedness from schools: more prevention and less disaster risks":

This project was approved by Educative Region IV and it includes different strategies to incorporate risk management and prevention topics into the schools of Santa Fe, focusing in urban floods. Mostly, the Project focus on preparedness for flood emergencies, disseminating the contents of Contingency Plan. By this year, 30 schools are already participating in this Project.

Elaboration of issue No. 5 "The city and the river" of the City Classroom serie of publications.

Through this educational material, several contents aimed at promoting understanding of the risks associated with the river are developed in order to approach the subject in educational institutions at different levels. The material suggests various activities, including guided tours highlighting the components of protection systems and urban drainage, the presentation of the play "Aguacuentos" (water-tales) and the analysis of contingency plan for urban floods.

Commemoration of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction:

From October 2008, different commemorative activities have been held for this memorable day, and year by year there are more interested people. In 2010 the Municipality of Santa Fe made a public presentation about achievements and challenges of the City for risk reduction. Also, local government organized a meeting and showcase of primary schools which are incorporating risk themes into their educative activities and the event was called "Prevention and preparedness at Schools: initiatives and actions for risk management".

In April 2009, the Municipality also started the Program called "Solidarity Santa Fe" for the memorial act that remembered flood disaster that happened in 2003. This initiative was proposed in order to value the collective memory with a prevention approach and to raise awareness about the importance of being prepared to face emergencies, by socializing the projects and programs of

Municipal System. The Program has integrated several organizations dedicated to religion as well as solidarity and humanitarian aids and continues its work through diverse campaigns for social awareness and prevention.

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Strategies for rehabilitation and community reconstruction after disaster situations

Different interventions to basic sanitation and urban drainage have been and are made in effect, in areas affected by disasters in 2003 and 2007, framed in the Neighborhood Improvement Program (PROMEBA) in Santa Rosa de Lima neighbourhood. In addition, this and other neighborhoods are the beneficiaries of the Project for Rehabilitation and Integrated Development of Outcasted Neighborhoods in the City of Santa Fe, with a perspective of community-based participation". It has been implemented based on an agreement for International Cooperation Technical Assistance between the City of Santa Fe, Sviluppo dei Popoli CISP and Civil Partnership CANOA.

Increased control of infractions and crimes against flood defense public works:

Incremento en el control de infracciones y delitos sobre las obras de protección ante inundaciones. Se han establecido puestos de vigilancia y diversos controles para evitar o disminuir las situaciones de infracción, delito y vandalismo que se efectuaban sobre los diferentes componentes de las obras de protección y drenaje (volcado de residuos en desagües y reservorios, robo de equipamiento en estaciones de bombeo, tránsito por el coronamiento de terraplenes, extracción de su material constitutivo, acumulación y quema de basura en la cubierta vegetal).

All these achievements contribute to consolidate different priorities within the Hyogo Framework for Action, trying to reduce underlying risk factors and increasing the conscience of the city to reduce them. At the same time, there are many actions for enhancing the early emergency warning systems, to make the preparedness of the city stronger for facing an emergency or

disaster, and to learn from past experiences for a better recovery action.

PROPOSAL FOR THE USE OF AWARD MONEY (PART IV)

The award money will be used for new educational and awareness material for formal and informal education systems. Particularly, a learning game will be made, with similar characteristics than "Riskland". It will be an innovative gameplay, because it will include different territory references and users will be able to add questions and to draw its own board with the priority hazards of their institutions, districts or neighborhoods.