

UNISDR 2012/28
4 September 2012

UN-HABITAT AND UNISDR SIGN MOU TO MARK CLOSER TIES FOR BUILDING RESILIENT CITIES

World Urban Forum, NAPLES, 4 September, 2012 – The Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), Dr. Joan Clos, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, and chief of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), Margareta Wahlström, signed a Statement of Cooperation today, strengthening collaboration between the two agencies' efforts to promote disaster resilient cities.

The *Making Cities Resilient* campaign of UNISDR is a global campaign launched in May 2010 to address issues of local governance and urban risk for resilient and sustainable urban communities, with over 1,000 registered local governments. Its objective is to ensure that the important principles of the *Hyogo Framework for Action*, adopted by all UN Member States to build resilience of nations and communities, are integrated into the local environment and put into action.

The *Urban Resilience Indexing Programme*, undertaken by UN-Habitat in cooperation with UNISDR and other stakeholders, was launched in June 2012. This new initiative will assist local government resilience building efforts by producing measurable indices and new standards for resilience of cities against disasters that urban managers and experts can target and use, while providing practical tools and guidelines to achieve them.

UN-Habitat and UNISDR have been collaborating for over ten years utilizing the strengths of both Agencies. The renewal of these commitments enables joint inputs to UNISDR's *Making Cities Resilient* campaign, UN-Habitat's World Urban Campaign and *Urban Resilience Indexing Programme* among other operational and policy-making goals. In all joint initiatives, UN-Habitat will develop modular training packages, guidance and tools to assist urban and local governments in ensuring resilience towards disasters, and assisting cities to achieve the goals of the campaigns.

“Improving the resilience of our urban areas is a key focus area for UN-Habitat given the increasing number of people in towns and cities who are vulnerable to disasters, both natural and man-made”, said Dr Clos. “We are pleased that through this agreement we strengthen the working partnership between UNISDR and UN-Habitat and commit to growing the positive joint work already taking place around the world to enhance urban resilience.”

Margareta Wahlstrom said: “Closer collaboration between UN-Habitat and UNISDR is a sure sign that urban resilience and disaster risk reduction have gained critical momentum with the support of both agencies. We can sharpen the focus even more on what needs to be done through this new working partnership.”

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About UNISDR: UNISDR is the UN office dedicated to disaster risk reduction. It is led by the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction and supports implementation of the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* which seeks “the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries.”

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