



**Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction**  
**Fourth Session - Invest Today for a Safer Tomorrow**

Geneva, Switzerland, 19-23 May 2013



**FEATURED EVENT**

**Building Resilience into Urban Planning and Investments**

**Thursday, 23 May**

**11:15-12:45**

**Room 3**

**Concept Note**

<b>Schedule</b>	Thursday, 23 May 11.15 to 12:45 – Room 3
<b>Organizers</b>	UNISDR, UN-Habitat
<b>Focal Points</b>	Tricia Holly, UNISDR (hollydavis@un.org)
<b>Background and Rationale</b>	<p>Defining the resilience of an urban area depends not only on the susceptibility, but also on the exposure of people and assets to different hazards; as the higher concentration of people and economic activities increase, so too does the vulnerability and risk in urban areas. This is one of today’s major challenges, particularly in rapid urbanizing contexts such as in Africa, Asia and Latin America, as it is estimated that by 2050, two thirds of the global population will reside in urban areas.</p> <p>To address these problems sound urban planning and design has a key role to play. But how do policy makers, politicians, planners and developers adhere to risk reducing urban planning principles? What are the incentives to plan better for resilience, and the political hurdles? While the planning process and design require vision, participation, appropriate knowledge and information on current and future risks, the implementation and capacities to provide for safe land and basic services to ALL urban dwellers require political leadership and decisions.</p> <p>This is one of today’s major challenges in rapid urbanizing contexts such as in Africa, Asia and Latin America. By 2050, it is estimated that two thirds of the global population will reside in urban areas.</p> <p>The Hyogo Framework for Action and the Making Cities Resilient Campaign have laid out the priorities, and “essentials”, for making nations, communities and cities more resilient. Urban planning is listed as essential to reduce the underlying risk factors. Several studies and guidelines for planners touch upon these issues, including some recent reports (Global Assessment Reports 2009, 2011 and 2013; Making Cities Resilient Report 2012, 2012 UN-Habitat Urban Planning Guide). More than half of the countries reporting on progress against the HFA recognize that they lack risk sensitive regulatory mechanisms for private investments into real estate development and land use. Investments in urban water management, including critical drainage infrastructure, are often not keeping pace with the speed of speculative urban development.</p>

	<p>The challenges that urban planning faces when confronted with disaster risks, which require political will and solutions as well as sound technical and financial ones, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making safe land available for building;</li> <li>• Addressing infrastructure deficits;</li> <li>• Developing and implementing equitable regulations for building and planning;</li> <li>• Linking urban planning to post-disaster recovery.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session Objectives</b></p>	<p>This session aims to explore the dichotomy between technical solutions and political decision-making and governance to promote sound urban planning and design for resilience by looking at different city experiences from the perspectives of local governments (Mayors), urban planners, and private developers. The panel will discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How city officials and urban planners are applying innovation to improve urban resilience through participatory planning, strategies and design</li> <li>• Barriers, and the national to local dichotomy of planning and investment opportunities: who decides and who drives the urban development choices?</li> <li>• Roles and functions of urban planners in a changing risk scenario with rapid urbanization, extreme events, and climate change.</li> <li>• Priority areas for “HFA 2” on urban and land use planning and implementation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Discussion agenda and structure</b></p>	<p><b>Moderator:</b> Mr David Cadman, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability</p> <p><b>11:15-11:25:</b> Welcome and Opening Remarks by Joan Clos, Executive Director, UN-Habitat</p> <p><b>11:25-11:30:</b> Moderator to introduce local government presenters</p> <p><b>11:30-12:00:</b> Three local governments (Mayors) will present "case studies" of their experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dawn Zimmer, Mayor of Hoboken, New Jersey: Post Sandy, Recovery for Resilience. Who drives change? What are the financing options?</i></li> <li>• <i>Mr Emilio Grateron, Mayor of Chacao, Venezuela: Urban Governance and Risk Reduction: Participatory approach to urban development and planning.</i></li> <li>• <i>Mr Al-Haj Wahid Abdul Ahad, Deputy Mayor of Kabul, Afghanistan: Resilience amid conflict and economic crisis (TO BE CONFIRMED).</i></li> </ul> <p><b>12:00-12:05:</b> Video: Imagine a City (3-4 min)</p> <p><b>12:05-12:25:</b> Panel discussion: A panel comprised of technical experts from Lao PDP, academia (UCL London, chairing the UNISDR Working group on Urban Planning and DRR), and private sector (Hindustan Construction Company, India), and one city representative, will comment on the presentations and discuss the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How city officials and urban planners are applying innovation to improve urban resilience through participatory planning, strategies and design.</i></li> <li>• <i>Barriers and the national to local contradictions (differences) of planning and investment opportunities: who decides and who drives the urban development choices?</i></li> <li>• <i>Roles and functions of urban planners in a changing risk scenario with rapid urbanization, extreme events, and climate change.</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How UNISDR's Making Cities Resilient Campaign is promoting resilience in urban planning.</i></li> <li>• <i>Priority areas for "HFA 2" on urban and land use planning and implementation.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>12:25-12:40:</b> Comments and Questions</p> <p><b>12:40-12:45:</b> Wrap-up and closing remarks</p>
<b>List of expected outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify barriers and opportunities for managing resilience planning and urban development, urban governance and roles of different players (political leaders, planners, local and national authorities);</li> <li>2. Challenges and opportunities for financing urban resilience plans;</li> <li>3. Recommendations for HFA-2 on city resilience and urban planning.</li> </ol>
<b>Relevance of the Initiative</b>	Importance to plan for resilience in new urban developments and existing urban space due to higher disaster risks posed by the increasing concentration of people and economic activities in urban areas.
<b>Subject's link to post-2015</b>	Cities and urban planning are at the front-line of reducing risk (reduce exposure of people and assets) and building resilience to disasters.
<b>Expected number of participants and speakers</b>	200 participants
<b>Technical Equipment Required</b>	Video projector, screen, computer, microphones (lapel and two roving)
<b>Background documents</b>	Concept Note on Guidance on Resilience in Urban Planning; Case studies of presenting cities.