

Concept Note
Regional Workshop
Experience sharing of the Resilient Cities Project in
Central Asia and South Caucasus¹
11 November 2015 / Tbilisi, Georgia

Central Asia and South Caucasus region experience high growth rates in urban territories and population. The urban share of population in the region account for over 40%. Rapid growth of urban populations is also attributed to the significant migration processes which involve internal rural-urban and the cross-border movements in the region. Urban populations in the region are exposed to a multitude of risks. Outdated housing and infrastructure in the built environment as well as health, education and other community services are not geared to cater to rapidly growing urban populations and to the expanding economic activities. Further, the critical infrastructure and services do not receive sufficient resources for maintenance and upgrading. The local executive authorities in the CASC region are faced with these and a range of new challenges of urban development.

The project, “Resilient cities in the Central Asia and South Caucasus” aim at creating local capacity for assessment of disaster risks and vulnerabilities and identifying ways for strengthening resilience of cities and their populations². Implemented in 8 locations in the region: Noyemberyan and Berd in Armenia; Tbilisi and Gori in Georgia; Ust-Kamenogorsk and Ridder in Kazakhstan; and Bishkek and Karakol in Kyrgyzstan, the project strives to increase the awareness on the importance of strengthening urban resilience and build capacities of the key decision makers and partners, and develop disaster resilient action plans for each of the participating cities by end of September 2015.

The Mayors and the representatives of city administration in the mentioned cities have initiated conducting city risk assessments and developing plans of action in line with the Local Government Self-Assessment methodology promoted in the ‘Making Cities Resilient’ global campaign. The municipal structures, national disaster management authorities and key government department representatives at the local level are active participants in this exercise.

The regional workshop to be held on 11 November 2015 brings together the experience the 8 cities have captured in the process of conducting risk assessments and developing resilient city action plans. The workshop will consolidate the project outcomes, agree on follow up actions, including a ‘Road map for making cities resilient in the CASC region’ founded on the learning of the project, as part of the Sendai Framework for DRR implementation in the region. Workshop will also include the Mayors of the eight participating cities join the regional launch of the Making Cities Resilient Campaign in the Role Model city, Stepanavan, in Armenia³.

¹ ‘Resilient Cities Project in Central Asia and South Caucasus’ project is implemented by the UNISDR office in Central Asia and South Caucasus to apply the LGSAT methodology in 8 selected cities in 2 countries in Central Asia and 2 countries in South Caucasus; and to promote the ‘Making Cities Resilient campaign’ in the region. Project implementation period: 01 October 2014 to 31 December 2015.

² The principal objective of the project is: “Build resilience of Central Asian and Caucasus urban communities by strengthening integration of disaster risk reduction into national and local policy and development priorities for an improved implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, focusing on the “Making cities resilient” Global Campaign”.

³ Stepanavan was awarded ‘Role Model City’ at the 3rd United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (3WCDDR) held in Sendai, Japan in March 2015.

The Regional Workshop aims to achieve the following objectives:

- ✓ Share the results and outcomes of the project with the national governments, partners, development and donor community in the region.
- ✓ Agree on a 'Road Map' building on the results of the project for implementing the resilient city action plans with an expanded network of cities within the priorities for action of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- ✓ Launch the Making Cities Resilient (MCR) Global Campaign in the CASC region, hosted by the Role Model City, Stepanavan, Armenia (12 November 2015)⁴

Workshop participants:

Mayors and the core staff of the participating cities; National government focal points and coordinators of the project, partner organizations and stakeholders; Regional development partners and donor agencies; DIPECHO partner organizations in the region; UN agencies and media representatives.

Expected outcomes:

1. A Regional Road Map for implementation of the priorities of action in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction at the local level agreed
2. Making Cities Resilient Campaign launched in the CASC Region
3. ECHO and other regional donors are provided with concrete plans of action for consideration to support, including resilient city action plans from 8 cities and a Regional Road Map.

⁴ Stepanavan can be reached by road from Tbilisi in approximately 2 hours