



Concept Note
Launch of the 'Making Cities Resilient Campaign
in the Central Asia and South Caucasus Region
12 November 2015 / Stepanavan, Armenia



More than 50% of the world's population now live in urban areas, with a projection of becoming 70% by 2030. While cities are engines of national growth and centres of educational and cultural excellence, urban growth is also associated with exposure of population and economies to complex risk scenarios. An extreme and changing climate, earthquakes, and emergencies triggered by man-made hazards are putting pressure on people and threatening the prosperity of cities.

To address increasing urban disaster risk challenges, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) launched **'Making Cities Resilient'** Global Campaign in 2010. The purpose of the campaign is to mobilize action by local governments to become more resilient and reduce urban disaster risk, with the slogan "My city is getting ready". The campaign brings attention on the Local governments as the closest authority to the population and its territory, the first to respond in case of disasters and through its services, plans and control mechanisms responsible for dealing with the disaster risks that are increasing in most urban areas.

Focusing on the topics: Know more - Invest wiser - Build safer, the campaign offers a 'Ten Point Checklist' as a guide for urban disaster risk reduction and resilience building. The campaign is creating a global network of engaged partners and cities of different sizes, characteristics, risk profiles and locations to achieve its objectives. It is raising the political commitment to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation among local governments, and creating space for dialogue between national and local actors. By now there are over 2,800 cities and towns who have joined the campaign with a combined population of some 700 million people.

In the Central Asia and Southern Caucasus region, there are significant migration processes which involve internal rural-urban and cross-border movements, leading to rapid growth of urban population. The region is featured by high exposure to a range of natural hazards, including earthquakes, floods, landslides, mudslides, avalanches and sand storms. Urban population, often living in dilapidated and poorly planned new construction, face exposure to a multitude of risks and are extremely vulnerable. A number of cities in Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have joined the campaign since the 2010 global launch. The City of Stepanavan, Armenia has been awarded the certificate of 'Role Model City' at the 3rd United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (3WCDDRR) held in Sendai, Japan in March 2015.

With the aim of intensifying efforts for urban disaster risk reduction in Central Asia and the South Caucasus, UNISDR and the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) have formed a new partnership. The project, "Resilient cities in the Central Asia and South Caucasus" implemented under this partnership aimed at creating local capacity for assessment of disaster risks and vulnerabilities and identifying ways for strengthening resilience of cities and their populations. 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 support the building of local capacity to conduct disaster risk assessments; update city development plans to make them risk sensitive; increase accessibility of expertise in disaster risk reduction; foster exchange of experiences and good practices between municipalities and local governments in the region and signing up of more cities in the region to the cities campaign.

A regional workshop will be organized on 11-12 November 2015, to bring together the experience the 8 cities have captured over the last one year 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 Disaster Risk Reduction implementation in the region.

On the Day 2 of the programme, 12 November, the regional launch of the Making Cities Resilient Campaign will be held in the Role Model city, Stepanavan, in Armenia, with the participation of the city Mayors from the CASC Region, national government representatives, UN agencies and development partners, and representative of community and stakeholder organisations.