



Round Table 2
“LOCAL AUTHORITIES ON URBAN RISK REDUCTION”
Wednesday, 17th June 2009”

LOCAL AUTHORITIES ON URBAN RISK REDUCTION: On Wednesday, 17th June, Narayan Gopal Malego, Mayor of Katmandu, Nepal, and Violeta Seva, Earthquakes and Megacities, the Philippines, co-chaired the roundtable on urban risk.

Co-Chair Narayan noted the important role local authorities play in the implementation of urban risk reduction (URR) strategies, highlighting that this role will be broadened as the effects of climate change increase. He emphasized the need for central government support of local government actions and greater investment in local-level URR strategies.

Co-Chair Seva highlighted the importance of: a review of the role of local authorities in contributing to the HFA mid-term review; increased investment in urban risk reduction by donors; a redistribution of funds to favor the more vulnerable; increased capacity building at the local level on urban risk reduction and disaster risk reduction; and city-to-city cooperation to enhance the sharing of ideas and experiences.

Bhichit Rattakul, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, highlighted that although some cities are trying to tackle climate change as a stand-alone disaster, the most effective way of combating climate change in urban settings is through a holistic URR plan.

Alfredo Lazarte Hoyle, International Labour Organization, stressed that more attention should be given to local communities' capacities to use the available and allocated resources. He pointed to the need for viable city disaster plans and land-use plans, and urged support for the local community to better articulate their position on URR.

Ian O'Donnell, ProVention Consortium, stated that engagement of local-level actors, particularly local authorities, will be of key importance in the second half of the HFA implementation period. He underlined that the international community must find ways to invest in local-level HFA implementation activities.

Inga Bjork-Klevby, Deputy Executive Director, UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), reiterated UN-HABITAT's support for urban risk reduction measures and noted that there are many more challenges and risks that arise from growing urban populations, which are compounded by the threat of climate change.

The Chair concluded by stressing again the relevance and importance of local authorities and local actors in the implementation of disaster risk reduction. He mentioned that the attention to local actors is a very positive sign for recognizing the critical need for their involvement. The second part of the HFA represents an opportunity for moving towards local implementation.