

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Part I

Nominees must describe in less than 800 words the results of initiative they are undertaking to reduce the impact of climate disasters and build disaster resilience, who are involved and the level of outreach. State the challenges being confronted and the solution that is being proposed.

ISSET's partnership with Rockefeller's ACCCRN has been instrumental in its work on disaster resilience. ISSET's role consisted of:

- Working with partners in each of the ACCCRN countries and cities to build local and national capacity to implement and analyze vulnerability assessments and develop city resilience strategies;
- Developing, testing, and refining a framework (the Urban Resilience Framework or URF) to achieve urban resilience;
- Building partner capacity to apply the URF to assess resilience opportunities, identify sensible courses of action, and measure gains;
- Providing technical support by training and mentoring personnel; and
- Fostering networking and teaming for the ACCCRN project and supporting linkages with national level policy.

ISSET has built on their ACCCRN experience by further leveraging the URF, by replicating through M-BRACE , and through supporting the implementation.

There are many influences on cities that can promote disaster risk. For example, fast urbanization in Asia frequently leads to construction in flood plains. Legal and policy frameworks can rectify or complicate matters by limiting or incentivizing risk-enhancing behaviors. Actions taken by individuals to reduce their risk can increase risk for neighbors. Layered on top of these challenges, climate is changing and with it the nature of hazards. In this complex landscape, fraught with change and uncertainty, a framework to structure analysis and action is critical.

The URF is a means to address these complex, systemic issues. The framework is a conceptual approach to assessing vulnerability and building resilience that has been extensively field-tested and refined. The URF builds off the emerging recognition that vulnerability depends heavily on the dynamics of *built infrastructure and ecosystems*, the *behavior of individuals and organizations*, and the *enabling or constraining laws, policies and social norms that regulate and guide human behavior*. By addressing the relationship between systems, individuals and organizations, and legal and cultural norms, the Framework addresses the need for an approach that clarifies complex sources of

vulnerability and addresses the complexities of resilience, yet is simple enough for local practitioners to apply in their own context.

One of the first ACCCRN-funded resilience projects in Vietnam was the “Storm Resistant Housing for a Resilient Danang” project. In this work, ISET partnered with the Danang Women’s Union (DNWU) to build a resilient housing “ecosystem” combining urban planning design, a system of micro-financing for low-income, female headed households, and training of construction workers to implement storm-resilient housing designs.

In parallel in the CDKN funded “Sheltering from a Gathering Storm” project, ISET created and hosted a Resilient Housing Design Competition to generate storm resilient housing designs. The winning designs were used in the DNWU housing project.

The combined output of these two projects produced a community of homes that incorporate design elements in both houses and community layout that are familiar enough to win local acceptance while also substantially increasing structural resistance to damage by wind. This innovative approach was put to the test when Typhoon Nari hit Danang in September 2013. When the storm had passed all of the 220 households completed under this project withstood the typhoon, though damage city-wide was extensive. ISET, with local partners, is advocating for policy interventions to ensure similar resilient designs are replicated city- and country-wide.

The combined Women’s Union and Sheltering projects highlight how work that addresses local issues, is informed by local priorities, and builds local capacity for design and implementation can strengthen resilience, not just for project recipients, but through influencing local to national practices and policy. This is one of ISET’s strengths and an element that sets them apart from much of the DRR community.

An area of focus for ISET in building urban climate resilience is governance where they engage cities governments on risks and vulnerability to help them invest more wisely and build safer. Fundamental elements of the URF are also the key elements of UNISDR Cities Resilience Campaign Ten Essentials:

- Understanding risk and vulnerability
- Multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder participation to identify resilience challenges from complex system understanding vs. responding to events
- Measurement of resilience and effectiveness of efforts is a great contribution to learning
- Strengthen partnerships especially with academia and private sector

Since 2010, ISET has supported cities in Vietnam and Thailand to apply the Local Government Self-Assessment Tool (LGSAT) in resilience planning.

Though ISET’s work in disaster resilience has been highly successful, they remain a small, solely grant-funded organization. This has limited their ability to disseminate results with cities and practitioners working in the space of disaster resilience. The successes that they have realized and the lessons that they have learned could benefit many more locations and populations. A solution they are actively exploring is developing a separate funding stream for communications. By making communications a priority in the work

they do, ISET can expand their sphere of influence and ensure that their learnings are incorporated into resilience building globally.

Part II

Nominees must describe in less than 400 words, the financial implications of the initiative that has been nominated. The nominee must describe what level of funding has been invested so far and if they win the prize how the award money would be used to support the continuation of the initiative. If the nominee does not intend to use the award money for this purpose, that nominee must state how it is planned to be used.

ISSET's investment in climate change resilience and disaster risk reduction initiatives has been possible due to the funding of multiple donors. Through ISSET's programs and research, ISSET has been able to deliver a series of high profile communication products in the form of dissemination workshops, shared learning dialogs, the production and dissemination of reports, case studies, policy briefs, etc. However, their ability to impact change and share the findings of their research has been limited to the set deliverables and timelines of research projects and programs.

In 2011, ISSET hired its first dedicated communications staff person. With the support of this resource, they have seen a clear increase in the adoption and impact of results—reaching parts of the world where ISSET has never engaged, like New Zealand and Switzerland. Through the use of information graphics, graphic design, editing, and the diversification of media—moving beyond the typical research and publish model—ISSET's communications have been able to reach audiences beyond their expected audiences.

Funding this communications position, although there is obvious and seen value, has had its limitations. In most projects there is only room for about 1–5% of the project's budget to be dedicated to communications activities and staff time. Though ISSET has been highly successful in securing new funding for specific initiatives, dissemination of results has been funded primarily on a project-by-project basis until recently. In 2013, the Rockefeller Foundation awarded ISSET a Resilience Narratives: Focused Communications to Catalyze Change grant. The Resilience Narratives are designed to increase communication on basic characteristics of resilience. Though generous, this funding is limited and focused primarily on ACCCRN achievements.

The Sasakawa award would allow ISSET to pursue communications strategically as a core institutional activity, encompassing all of their projects and programs. ISSET would use the award to distill key messages and findings from across the network, engage with decision-makers, and deliver resilience content on multiple platforms, across regions, to promote awareness, understanding, and innovative paths forward. Responding to opportunistic events, such current events and media engagement will allow ISSET to influence the disaster resilience dialog globally, and share insights from their global network on success and challenges of building disaster resilience.

Urban Resilience Framework

