

## Thematic scope

### F2F Event 2016: Urban DRR and Urban Resilience

#### **Objective of the Event:**

Conduct a two-day F2F event on Urban DRR and Urban Resilience in a developing country context for members and partners of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform and other interested actors to exchange with a larger Community of Practice.

#### **Expected results of the Event:**

- 1) Participants have a good understanding about the scope of urban DRR in relation to urban development and urban resilience as well as in comparison to rural contexts.
- 2) Participants benefit from exchange and networking with other Platform members, partners from NGO networks, SDC and other institutions such as from the private sector and research.

#### **Key hypotheses:**

##### Hypothesis 1:

Disaster risks in cities are shaped by the built, the natural and the socio-economic environment, which are influenced by urban specific factors such as diversity, geospatial aspects, informal aspects and governance and policies (Figure 1).

##### Hypothesis 2:

Compared to disasters in rural contexts, urban disasters are mainly influenced by the built environment, density and informal aspects, whereas the higher density of structures and people in cities increases the risk of cascading effects of adverse disaster impacts.

##### Hypothesis 3:

Cities are dynamic places where investments of the private sector, other institutions and individuals concentrate. Risk reduction is thus – even more than in rural areas – to be directed towards risk informed investments resulting in acceptable levels of risk, avoiding disasters as a result of development failures.

##### Hypothesis 4:

Disasters in urban areas affect informal settlements more often and to a larger extent, as authorities do not recognize their “duty to protect and provide” and legislation generally considers such settlements illegal which results in inadequate or lack of support and services by the authorities and unacceptable high levels of risk for the inhabitants in such areas. Under such circumstances, self-governing approaches

and advocacy for formal recognition of informal settlements can be considered key strategies to manage urban risks.

**Hypothesis 5:**

Urban Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) requires non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to work across scales as well as to coordinate and collaborate with a myriad of stakeholders, recognizing that local governments are in the driver’s seat and intervening in informal settlements can be highly politicized. The space and niches for NGOs to effectively contribute to sustainable DRR in urban areas, building on existing structures and processes, need to be clearly identified.

**Hypothesis 6:**

DRR frameworks tend to relate more to the state’s overall role and responsibility in ensuring DRR and resilience and are therefore less applicable in informal fragile urban areas where non-state actors take on more responsibility in DRR due to the absence of government.

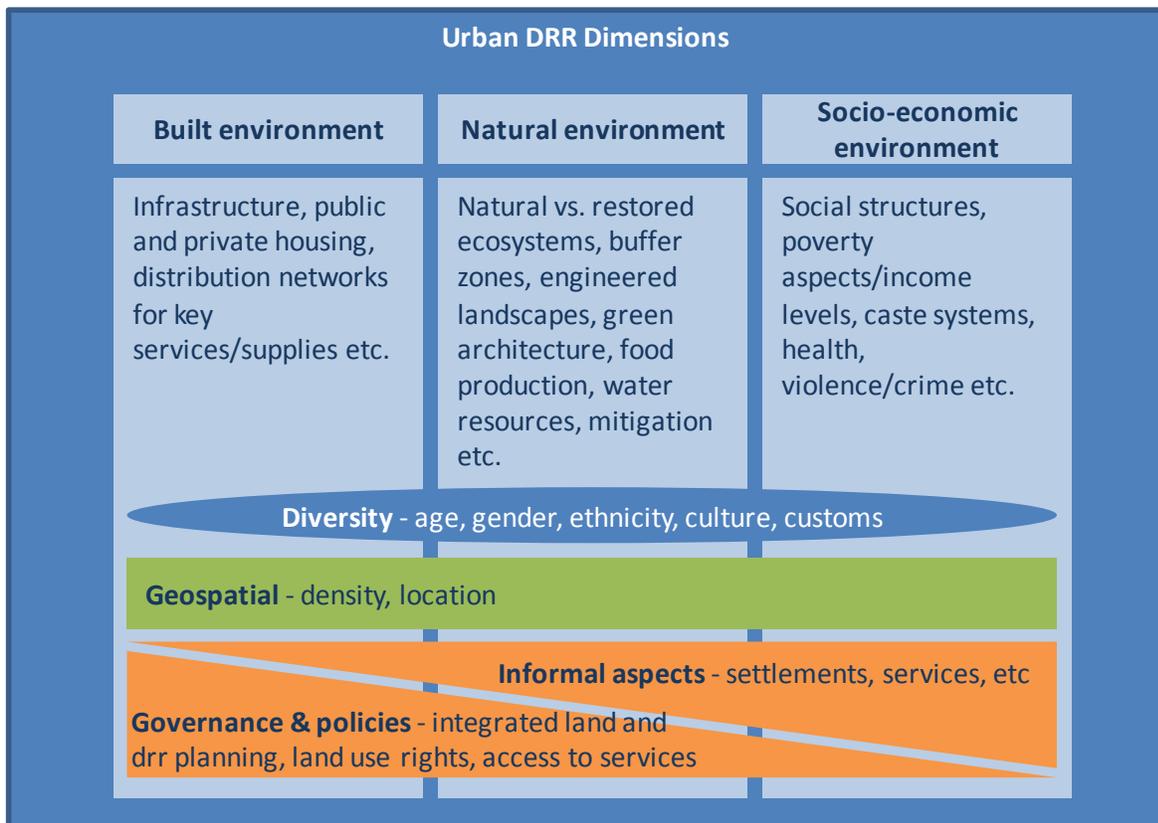


Figure 1. Urban DRR Dimensions

**Workshop part:**

**Objectives of the Workshop:**

1. To clarify and validate the main issues, hypotheses and questions
2. To address the key questions

**Key questions to be addressed throughout the Workshop:**

1. Scope of urban DRR (will be mainly addressed in Block I)
  - A. Why a urban focus matters?
  - B. Which aspects, which hazards and vulnerabilities are we addressing in the urban context?
  - C. How do we relate urban DRR to urban development and urban resilience?
2. From rural to urban (will be addressed in Block III and IV)
  - A. How is DRR in urban settings different from DRR in rural contexts? How does the DRR work of NGOs differ between urban and rural areas? What is different from business as usual?
  - B. Which lessons can be learnt from DRR interventions in rural areas for urban programming and where do we have to adapt and reframe our interventions? How can we adapt rural DRR tools to urban contexts?
3. NGOs in the urban DRR context (will be addressed in Block II, III and IV)
  - A. How are NGOs currently engaged in urban DRR?
  - B. What have we learned from our DRR interventions in urban areas?
  - C. What are the opportunities, what the challenges of NGOs working in urban DRR? And how are they different from working in rural DRR contexts?
    - For the beneficiaries
    - For us as agencies
  - D. Are we using an integrated DRR approach and have interventions been successful?
  - E. What is the space for NGOs to make a meaningful contribution to urban resilience through DRR? Can we define the scope of our own working area in urban DRR? How can synergies be used?
  - F. What are the entry points for addressing the major disaster influencing factors in urban areas i.e. built environment, density, diversity?