

## Background Note

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

6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016

#### Background and Rationale

Over the past years, the importance of cities has drastically increased as more than 50% of the world's population live in cities and urbanization is further on the rise. The most rapid urbanization over the next decades is expected to occur in small and medium-sized towns and cities of Africa and Asia which often are less equipped with services, infrastructure and resources and lack adequate governance.

While urbanization comes along with economic, social and ecological benefits and opportunities, unplanned urbanization can result in considerable risks that threaten population and sustainable development. Cities can be subject to climate related and other natural as well as man-made disaster risks. In addition, urban areas are often located in areas that are highly exposed to natural hazards, such as floodplains, coastal belts and fault lines, resulting in a high density of assets and people being highly vulnerable to disastrous effects should an extreme event strike. Cities and urbanization processes are closely linked to rural areas resulting in various interdependencies between urban and rural areas.

In the face of rapidly growing cities and their population, the capacity of cities to develop in a sustainable and risk-informed way will become a key factor in absorbing and regulating the various effects of this rapid growth. In many cases, however, it will constitute a major challenge particularly so in less developed regions where infrastructure development and institutional frameworks cannot keep pace with rapid urbanization. A typical result is the fast spreading of informal settlements or slums where people cannot rely on public services and are considered particularly vulnerable in the face of natural and man-made disasters. Currently, about 828 million people worldwide live in slums.

Effective disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience building in urban areas therefore is high on the global agenda as reflected by international frameworks and agreements such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (in particular Goal 11 that is to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable), and the recent New Urban Agenda of Habitat III as well as various initiatives and programmes that involve numerous cities around the world.

#### Scope of the Workshop

Swiss NGOs have long focused on rural areas in less developed countries in their DRR work. Recognizing the increasing relevance of urban areas and their interdependencies with rural areas, more Swiss NGOs are starting to consider expanding their DRR work in urban areas. Given the high complexity of urban



areas, there is increasing interest in obtaining a better understanding about the scope of urban DRR and the potential role and niche of NGOs in contributing to urban DRR and urban resilience building.

Compared to rural areas, interventions to reduce risks from hazards in urban areas seem to face different challenges that arise from built environment and increased population density as well as diversity and complexity. An important starting point therefore will be to identify the differences between urban and rural settings in terms of DRR as well as to assess to what extent and how NGOs can leverage their expertise and experience from rural to urban areas.

Reflecting on shared experiences and learnings from current work and practice of NGOs and other institutions in urban DRR, discussions will focus on the potential role and niche of NGOs in urban DRR and building urban resilience, as well as on possible partnerships with different stakeholders and institutions.

These and other topics will be looked into during this year's F2F workshop of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform along the following four thematic blocks.

#### **Block I: Introduction – Disaster risks in the face of increased urbanization**

Current urbanization trends coupled with climate and environmental change are expected to increase the level of disaster risks, particularly where planning is inadequate or inexistent. Urban disaster risks are influenced by a multitude of different factors so for example built environment, density, diversity and informal settlements development and many more that often are context-specific. Urbanization, on the other hand, can offer more opportunities for innovation and solutions to effectively address these risks due to economies of scale and density, than rural areas.

Reflecting on the current state of knowledge on urban DRR, this introductory block will set the scene for the workshop by outlining the overall scope of urban DRR and how it relates to urban resilience and urban development. Further, it will elaborate on the urban context including stakeholders and actors as well as the hazards, vulnerabilities and communities that need to be in the focus of interventions, and provide an overview on available frameworks that can guide the work in urban DRR.

#### **Block II: Analyze – Understanding urban disaster risks**

The context of urban DRR and urban resilience is shaped by different dimensions. Key dimensions that need to be considered for effectively addressing the underlying drivers of urban risks encompass urban structures and processes such as the built environment including housing conditions as well as critical infrastructure which can be both driving and affected by disasters, the socio-economic environment under which we understand power relations from the perspective of our target audience as well as the landscape of stakeholders that are involved in risk reduction, the processes of urban planning and development, but also economic and environmental factors that influence disaster risks.

For a better understanding of these key dimensions, experience from international organizations (UN-Habitat, SDI) will be shared and discussed to showcase how urban disaster risks and disasters are being



addressed by different organisations. Distilling the learnings, room will be provided to discuss the key hypotheses as well as the applicability of existing frameworks as relevant for the work on urban DRR and urban resilience.

### **Block III: Apply – Interventions for Urban DRR**

Acknowledging the array of existing DRR and resilience-building interventions in urban areas and the diversity of actors involved, space will be provided to representatives of different organisations and institutions including NGOs, International Organisations, Swiss Government and the private sector for sharing their knowledge and experiences from working in urban DRR and urban resilience building.

The Global Market Place will offer insights into a variety of best practices and approaches, ranging from the application of specific tools, risk-resilient building approaches, integrated flood management, institutional strengthening, urban planning, to mainstreaming DRR into urban projects.

For gaining a better understanding of the perspectives of different Swiss institutions, representatives of the Swiss Government (SDC, SECO) and the private sector (Swiss Re) will share their approaches and experiences from working in the urban context, particularly reflecting on climate risk resilient development and climate change adaptation as well as on disaster response. They will also provide their views on how NGOs could engage and what could be possibilities for cooperation.

Zooming in on what is currently practiced by the Swiss NGO DRR Platform, members and partners of the Platform will present good practices and approaches focusing on three case studies from different geographic regions. Thematically, they will look into a business approach for urban DRR, resilience building of mothers and their children in slums, and scaling-up of traditional DRR interventions in urban settings.

### **Block IV: Advocate – The space and strategy for NGOs in working on urban DRR towards resilience**

Building on the different perspectives and the various learnings and insights shared in the previous sessions, the workshop participants will concretize what an effective engagement of NGOs in urban DRR and urban resilience could look like, what enabling conditions would be and what they would need or expect from other stakeholders. In addition, expectations from other actors and stakeholder will be identified and key messages from the workshop will be developed that will be brought forward on the Public Day.

### **References**

Mosel I et al, *Urbanisation: Consequences and opportunities for the Netherland's Directorate-General for International Cooperation* (London: ODI, 2016) <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/10219.pdf>

*Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (UNGA, 2015) [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E)



*Draft outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III)* (UNGA, 2016) <https://www2.habitat3.org/file/537303/view/591155>

*Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* (Geneva: UNISDR, 2015)  
[http://www.unisdr.org/files/43291\\_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf](http://www.unisdr.org/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf)

### **Recommended Reading on urban DRR and resilience**

For a short introduction to the subject, read Twigg J, *Disaster Risk Reduction*. (London: Humanitarian Practice Network, 2015), Chapter 13, 'Managing Urban Risk' [www.goodpractice-review.org](http://www.goodpractice-review.org)

#### Overview

*World Disasters Report 2010: Focus on Urban Risk* (Geneva: IFRC, 2010)  
<https://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/disasters/WDR/WDR2010-full.pdf>

#### Background and issues

Campbell L, *Stepping Back: Understanding cities and their systems*. (London: ALNAP/ODI, 2016)  
<http://www.alnap.org/resource/23595.aspx>

Dodman D, Hardoy J, Satterthwaite D, *Urban Development and Intensive and Extensive Risks*. Background paper to *Global Assessment Report 2009* (Geneva: UNISDR, 2008),  
<http://www.preventionweb.net/english/hyogo/gar/background-papers>

*We're not in the field anymore': adapting humanitarian efforts to an urban world*. (London: ALNAP/ODI, 2012) <http://www.alnap.org/27backgroundpaper>

*Forced Migration Review*, Issue 34: Adapting to Urban Displacement (2010)  
<http://www.fmreview.org/en/urban-displacement/FMR34.pdf>

UNISDR, *Making Cities Resilient Report 2012. My City Is Getting Ready! A Global Snapshot of How Local Governments Reduce Disaster Risk* (Geneva: UNISDR, 2012)  
[http://www.unisdr.org/files/28240\\_rcreport.pdf](http://www.unisdr.org/files/28240_rcreport.pdf)

#### Methods and tools (excluding resilience frameworks)

*Integrating Climate Change and Urban Risks into the VCA [vulnerability and capacity assessment]* (Geneva: IFRC, 2014) [http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/disasters/reducing\\_risks/VCA/1260200-VCA-EN-LR2.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/disasters/reducing_risks/VCA/1260200-VCA-EN-LR2.pdf)

ADPC, *Integrating Disaster Risk Management into Urban Management* (Bangkok: Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, 2013) <http://www.adpc.net/igo/contents/Publications/publications-Details.asp?pid=409&t=Integrating%20disaster%20risk%20management%20into%20the%20development%20process#sthash.Sm6JX7e6.dpbs>

Jha, AK, Miner T, Stanton-Geddes S, *Building Urban Resilience: Principles, Tools and Practice* (Washington DC: The World Bank and Australian Aid, 2013) <http://www.preventionweb.net/publications/view/31969>

*Guide to Climate Change Adaptation in Cities*. (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2011)  
<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTURBANDEVELOPMENT/Resources/336387-1318995974398/GuideClimChangeAdaptCities.pdf>



## Speakers

**Alain Geiger** is Urban Development Focal Point and Program Manager of the Infrastructure Financing Division within the Economic Development Cooperation Directorate at the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). Prior to his current function, he held various positions – also within Swiss NGOs - in the fields of development cooperation, organizational development and humanitarian aid.

**Andrew Wilson** is Project Manager of the MarketMakers youth employment project at Helvetas in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He has been involved in development cooperation since 2007 when he joined a Helvetas project in Lao PDR. Primarily a private sector development specialist, he has been actively working on DRR and disaster risk management issues since 2011.

**Annita Annies** is economist by training with over 15 years of experience in environment and development. She is supporting various organisations in setting up public private partnerships on DRR and climate adaptation. Currently, she is managing a C&A Foundation financed DRR programme piloted in Brazil, China, India, Bangladesh, and Mexico, as well as overseeing a research component that is seeking to collect evidence on Urban DRR Programmes in 17 countries in Asia and Latin America.

**Gavin White** is DRR and Resilience Coordinator for Middle East and North Africa at IFRC. He joined the Red Cross Movement in 2004 where he has supported National Society capacity building and Standard Operating Procedure reviews, conducted assessments of response systems and trained volunteer and community teams. Gavin is particularly interested in the design and implementation of collaborative solutions to humanitarian needs through which he worked with international organizations, NGOs, Governments, the World Economic Forum and the Red Cross's One Billion Coalition initiative.

**Joel Bolnick** is Managing Director of the Slum Dwellers International (SDI) Secretariat in Cape Town. Founder of People's Dialogue, South African NGO supporting the Federation of the Urban Poor. Manager of Urban Poor Fund International, SDI's global finance facility. Board member of Dialogue on Shelter (Zimbabwe), Actogether (Uganda), SDI Kenya (Kenya). Manager of uTshani Fund – SA Federation's local finance facility. Manager of Inqolobane Trust, SDI's investment arm.

**John Twigg** is Senior Research Fellow in the Risk and Resilience Programme at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). Previously he was a Senior Research Associate in the Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering at UCL and a Co-Director of UCL's Centre for Urban Sustainability and Resilience. He has worked in DRR for over 20 years, as an academic, a consultant and in the NGO sector. He has researched and published on a range of subjects, including community resilience, policy and institutional aspects of disaster management, and disability and disasters.

**Lukas Sundermann** is Natural Catastrophe Specialist at the Global Partnerships at Swiss Re Ltd. Trained as an earthquake geologist he conducted field research in Asia, the US and Antarctica before joining Swiss Re in 2012. At Swiss Re he develops innovative risk transfer solutions for the public sector, he authored a well-recognized global ranking of the world's metropolitan areas at risk and is currently involved in various public-private partnership initiatives aimed at fostering resilient cities.



**Marina Filipović** is Project manager at Development Association NERDA, Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The scope of her work is Regional Economic Development including consultancy for establishment and management of development funds for SMEs, creation and management of flood relief programme for SMEs in BiH, and development of project proposals for domestic and foreign donors and project implementation. Previously she worked in reconstruction and return of refugees in BiH (SDC project), SME Development (InWent gmbH, Bonn, Germany), and Economic development (GIZ).

**Mathias Spaliviero** is Senior Human Settlements Officer and Focal Point for Risk Reduction, Climate Change and Resilience at the Regional Office for Africa of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). He has been promoting the formulation of national urban policies and spatial development frameworks in a number of African countries, is managing 10 active country programmes, and leading the establishment of the Technical Centre for Disaster Risk Management, Sustainability and Urban Resilience (DiMSUR) in Maputo, Mozambique, for which he has led the development of the City Resilience Action Planning (CityRAP) Tool.

**Mirjam Macchi** is Program Manager at the Global Programme Climate Change at the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) since 2011. She has over 10 years of experience in the field of climate change. In her current position she is mainly responsible for the India Portfolio of the Global Program Climate Change. Previously, she worked as a climate change adaptation specialist at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) where she focused on qualitative and quantitative vulnerability assessments in the Himalayas.

**Markus Zimmermann** is a freelance consultant for NDR consulting, based in Thun, and has more than 25 years of experience in the field of DRR, of which 20 years in the private sector. He also regularly teaches on risk management and geomorphology and is member of the Swiss National Platform for Natural Hazards.

**Ray Kancharla** is National Humanitarian-DRR CCA Manager at Save the Children India and has 10 years of experience in Community Based DRR, out of which 8 years have been dedicated to developing innovative/niche model of Child Centred DRR in India. Ray has done pioneering work in Community Based DRR in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and India post-Tsunami in establishing communities of practice. Currently, he is managing an urban DRR programme in 4 cities of India (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Patna) and is leading a study on Chennai City and Children, post-flood 2015.

**Simon Tschurr** is Deputy Head of the Rapid Response Unit and Desk Officer Preparedness / USAR Capacity Building at the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) Humanitarian Aid and SHA. Having a professional background as an architect, he was assigned SDC Country Director in Istanbul / Turkey for the implementation of a mid-term DRR / Preparedness program after the devastating Marmara earthquakes in 1999. At present he is responsible for the implementation of projects with special focus on urban search and rescue capacity building and community based preparedness.