

# Roundtable discussion on building disaster resilient construction

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A Roundtable discussion on identifying the existing gaps and requirements of building disaster resilient constructions in disaster prone areas was held in Trincomalee of the East Coast of Sri Lanka on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2016.



Photo: Prof. Richard Haigh CRESCENDO lead from University of Huddersfield, UK

This was led by Prof. Richard Haigh as part of CRESCENDO (Community Resilience Engaging Society, Culture, and ENvironment against Disaster Outcomes) he leads. Hemanthi Goonasekera, National Coordinator, Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities was the leader from Sri Lanka representing the key user groups.



Photo: Hemanthi Goonasekera, National Coordinator, Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities was the leader from Sri Lanka representing the key user groups

Following list highlights some of the points that were discussed at the round table:

1. What is the level of awareness and understanding among local officials of the Sendai Framework for Action, Sustainable Development Goals, Climate Change Agreement and other global agendas?
2. What are the existing mechanisms by which these agreements are acted upon at the local government level?
3. How is progress against these agreements monitored or measured? Are any existing measures appropriate at the local level?
4. What other reporting requirements and legal and administrative measures are in place for progress against disaster risk reduction?
5. What national and local frameworks of laws, regulations and public policies guide the public and private sectors in addressing disaster risk in publically owned, managed or regulated services and infrastructures?
6. What local disaster risk information, including risk maps, is available and used by decision makers to inform planning and building decisions?
7. To what extent do land use and urban planning, building codes, environmental and resource management and health and safety standards have an adequate focus on disaster risk management?
8. Are building regulations enforced?
9. What training and support is given to local officials regarding disaster risk and resilience building?
10. What is done to raise awareness of disaster risk among local communities and businesses
11. To what extent are local citizens involved in monitoring DRR progress? If so, what are the mechanisms by which this takes place?



Photo: Prof. Richard Haigh & Ms Hemanthi Goonasekera – facilitating the Round Table

There were 25 invited participants at the Round Table representing key stakeholders in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka led by Hon. Ariyawathi Galappaththi, Minister of road development Eastern province; Planning Director; Government agent, District Secretariat office; Divisional Secretariat; Deputy Chief Secretary (planning); Provincial director, Department of Building; Urban development authority; Coast conversation department; Disaster Management Center, Divisional Secretariat office; Central Environment authority; General Manager, Housing Authority; Provincial Director, Animal product and health department; Secretary of education; Chief Secretary, Varothaya; Commissioner of Local Government – Eastern Province; Municipal Commissioner – Kalmunai MC; Municipal Commissioner – Batticaloa MC; and Asia Foundation.



Photo: Participants of the Round Table

The Global Disaster Resilience Centre at the University of Huddersfield and the Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities are working together on CRESCENDO to develop more disaster risk-sensitive urban planning and development processes. This includes local metrics with effective accountability mechanisms, as well as strategies for capacity development for urban and risk management local government officers and associated professionals.

**The project seeks to:** Engage key actors/stakeholders to identify the existing gaps and requirements associated with building disaster resilient communities in disaster prone areas; Formulate research aimed at addressing the gaps and challenges; and **Spreading** the benefits nationally and internationally

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