

Urban risk and the revised HFA



UNISDR chief Margareta Wahlstrom with representatives from the ten boroughs of Greater Manchester shortly after joining the Making Cities Resilient Campaign this week: Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. (Photo: UNISDR)

By Biljana Markova

SALFORD, 10 September 2014 - The 2nd Steering Committee Meeting of the UNISDR Making Cities Resilient Campaign came to a close yesterday in the city of Salford, Greater Manchester, UK, following two days of intense discussions on how urban priorities can be accommodated in the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

“The post-2015 framework for DRR should specifically address the local level. We want to collaborate with national government, but we want this support to be decentralized and responsive to cities’ needs,” said Alessandro Attolico, Executive Director of Territorial Planning and Civil Protection in the Province of Potenza, Italy.

The steering committee members, consisting of representatives from local and national governments, private sector, NGOs and UNISDR, discussed the Making Cities Resilient Campaign in the context of the upcoming Third UN World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction which will adopt a revised version of the existing global blueprint for disaster risk reduction, the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA).

Steering committee members reviewed priorities and challenges, other global initiatives for building disaster resilience on the local level, new proposals and mechanisms for fast-track implementation, and took the opportunity to exchange experiences and foster new partnerships.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström, and Head of UNISDR also took part in some of the meeting sessions following her participation in a ceremony on Monday, welcoming Greater Manchester, including all ten boroughs, as a role model into the Making Cities Resilient Campaign.

“The question is: where does local government fit in the future disaster risk reduction agenda?” asked Manu Gupta from the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN). “Cities are economic hubs – they house huge population numbers and most of countries’ GDP. So the importance of discussing the future of urban resilience cannot be overstated.”

The recent release of the Co-Chairs’ pre-zero draft of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction after the First Preparatory Committee in Geneva last July, has triggered much discussion on the implications for local and regional governments. How will cities be represented in this new framework? What will the collaboration between local and national governments look like? What needs do cities have to be addressed, and where exactly do they fall short in their DRR performance?

Addressing local governments at the meeting, Steve Barnes from the UK Cabinet Office said: “Resilience in the UK starts from the local level and is a bottom-up approach. The National level tries to only become involved when we are asked to. But ultimately, we believe cities and the local level, know best, without interference from national government. We remain very supportive of what the role and responsibilities of cities should be in post-2015 disaster risk reduction, and will support the steering committee in its deliberations for the role of the local and community level in this context”.



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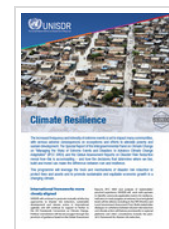
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UNISDR Chief of Advocacy and Outreach, Jerry Velasquez, noted: “What we are seeing more and more in the assessment of disaster losses data, is that it is not the major, newsworthy disasters that cause the most damage. Indeed, cumulatively, it is the often unreported more recurrent, smaller local disasters that have the biggest impact on people’s lives and livelihoods. For this reason, the underlying drivers of disaster risk, such as poor urban planning, poverty and failure to protect and nurture ecosystems, must be addressed in the post-2015 framework.”

The steering committee meeting agreed on the establishment of several working groups that will feed into the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction in the local context.

One Working Group will focus on the so-called Making Cities Resilient Marketplace - a new concept for a platform for promoting and sharing innovation technologies and services between local and national governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, communities and other stakeholders. Development of the Resilient Cities Marketplace will start this year, with an official rollout planned for 2015 in Sendai, Japan at the Third UN World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Date: 10 Sep 2014

Sources:

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction - Regional Office for Europe (UNISDR EUR)

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[Co-chairs' pre-zero draft of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction](#)

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