



United Nations
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

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PRESS RELEASE

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Lami signs up to the World Disaster Reduction Campaign “Making the Pacific Resilient – My community is getting ready!”

Suva, Fiji – In a signing ceremony held in Lami on 8th March 2011, Special Administrator Suva/Lami Mr. Chandu Umaria signed Lami’s Certificate of Commitment to Disaster Resilience for the 2010-2011 World Disaster Reduction Campaign “Making Cities Resilient“. Lami is the first Pacific island city to join the global campaign coordinated by the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR).

“Making Cities Resilient” addresses issues of local governance and urban risk while drawing upon previous ISDR Awareness Campaigns on safer schools and hospitals, as well as on the sustainable urbanizations principles. The campaign has been regionally adapted to: ***Making the Pacific Resilient – My community is getting ready!***

The Campaign objectives are to 1) **Know more** - Raise the awareness of citizens and governments at all levels of the benefits of reducing urban risks; 2) **Invest wisely** - Identify budget allocations within local government funding plans to invest in disaster risk reduction activities; and 3) **Build more safely** – Include disaster risk reduction in participatory urban development planning processes and protect critical infrastructure.

UNISDR encourages Pacific island cities, towns, villages and other urban communities to commit to addressing one or more of the *10 Essentials for Making Cities Resilient* – a ten-point checklist to serve as a guide for commitments by local governments to work to reduce disaster risks in their jurisdictions.

“We hope the example of Lami will lead the way for many more cities and local governments in Fiji and other parts of the Pacific to join the campaign so that their experiences and good practices can be shared with the more than 600 cities worldwide which have already signed up.”, says Angelika Planitz, the UNISDR Sub-Regional Coordinator for the Pacific.

The signature of the campaign certificate was part of Lami Town Council’s celebrations of the International Women’s Day organized in the Tikaram Park and attended by Lami’s Catholic Women’s League, Lami Senikau Club, women from the different settlements in Lami, Lami market vendors as well as several business houses in Lami. In addition to Chief Guest Special Administrator for Suva/Lami Mr. Chandu Umaria, guest speakers were invited from UNISDR, the Commonwealth Local Governance Forum (CLGF) and the Catholic Women League.

Notes for Editors:

- For more information on Making Cities Resilient-campaign, visit:
<http://www.unisdr.org/english/campaigns/campaign2010-2011/>
 - See also the Campaign's Ten-point Checklist below
 - To learn about UNISDR
Visit our website - <http://www.unisdr.org>
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Ten-point Checklist: Essentials for Making Cities Resilient¹

- 1.** Put in place **organization and coordination** to understand and reduce disaster risk within the local government, based on participation of citizen groups and civil society-build local alliances. Ensure that all departments understand their role and contribution to disaster risk reduction and preparedness.
- 2.** **Assign a budget** for disaster risk reduction and provide incentives for homeowners, low-income families, communities, businesses and public sector to invest in reducing the risks they face.
- 3.** Maintain up-to-date data on hazards and vulnerabilities, **prepare risk assessments** and use these as the basis for urban development plans and decisions. Ensure that this information and the plans for your city's resilience are readily available to the public and fully discussed with them.
- 4.** Invest in and maintain **infrastructure that reduces risk**, such as flood drainage, adjusted where needed to cope with climate change.
- 5.** Assess the **safety of all schools and health facilities** and upgrade these as necessary.
- 6.** Apply and enforce **realistic, risk-compliant building regulations and land use planning principles**. Identify **safe land for low-income citizens** and develop upgrading of informal settlements, wherever feasible.
- 7.** Ensure **education programmes and training** on disaster risk reduction are in place in schools and local communities.
- 8.** **Protect ecosystems and natural buffers** to mitigate floods, storm surges and other hazards to which your city may be vulnerable. Adapt to climate change by building on good risk reduction practices.
- 9.** Install **early warning systems and emergency management capacities** in your city and hold regular public preparedness drills in which everyone participates.
- 10.** After any disaster, ensure that the **needs of the affected population are placed** at the centre of reconstruction. Pre-plan and include the affected population and community organizations in the design and implementation, including rebuilding homes and livelihoods.

¹ Building on the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters) www.unisdr.org/hfa