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UNISDR Asia and the Pacific

c/o UNESCAP - UN Conference Centre Building
Bangkok 10200 - Thailand

Subject: EMI Nomination of Mumbai for the Sasakawa Award

The City of Mumbai, under the leadership of the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM), is undertaking significant and sustained steps towards building its resiliency to disasters. In a few years, it made a shift from a response-based and reactive based mindset to a more proactive and development focused approach in disaster risk reduction (DRR). Concrete examples of its broad efforts on DRR are as follows:

- Capital investment in flood defense projects;
- Investments in human resources through capacity-building in DRR;
- Partnership with the UNDP on community-based DRR;
- Improved institutional planning for preparedness including the development of the monsoon preparedness plan and regular drills and simulations for various hazards;
- Development and adoption of a disaster risk management master plan (DRMMP) as a multi-sectoral multi-hazard city-wide system for DRR in Mumbai
- Explicit technical requirement for the development of a risk sensitive land-use plan for the City.

Implementation of these efforts is being guided by the city’s strong commitment to implement the provisions of the Government of India’s Disaster Management Act of 2005 and operate within the framework of the country’s commitments to the Hyogo Framework for Action. The City signed up for the Disaster Resilient Cities Campaign at the early stage of the Campaign and also committed to be a role model in the Campaign, as a further indication of its maturity and engagement in DRR.

One of the most notable indicator of Mumbai commitment to DRR pertains to its investment in undertaking the Disaster Risk Reduction in Greater Mumbai project or DRMMP. The project engages a vast range of stakeholders (more than 100 institutions and organizations) to establish a comprehensive, structured and scientific approach to managing disaster risk and in establishing a systematic and sustainable system for resiliency building in the city. In this project, all the relevant stakeholders of the city are working together to understand the risks that they are facing and to identify solutions that have a broad-range of support among their leaders and constituencies. Key parameters that received focused attention by the stakeholders in Mumbai are as follows:

- Legal and Institutional Processes and Policies
- Public Awareness, education and Capacity Building
- Critical Services and Infrastructure Resiliency
• Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery Planning
• Development Planning, Regulation and Risk Mitigation

These are the areas within the city’s governance, functional and operational systems where mainstreaming of risk reduction is addressed, and where indicators were built around to track progress on the mainstreaming of risk reduction in city development systems and processes. These indicators are anchored in the HFA goals and in the “Ten Essentials” of the Resilient Cities Campaign. This marks a clear commitment to benchmark performance and to monitor progress.

Efforts within the last two years are already reflected in the concrete results as this year’s monsoon has been prepared and managed much more effectively causing very little disturbance and negligible losses in the City compared to previous years. More notable is the improvement in the inter-institutional coordination within the City institutions. This also demonstrates not just a commitment to perform but a dedication to sustain initiatives that would improve the current conditions of the city and its citizens.

In addition, in acknowledging the complex and enormous challenges of having a 6.5 million slumdweller population, Mumbai’s stakeholders have likewise expressed commitment to participatory processes that will meaningfully engage the most vulnerable populations to building their resiliency and to addressing issues such as health, sanitation and water. It must be recognized that this is a tremendous task that will take years if not decades to complete; but policies are being taken and concrete actions are being put in place to address such complex problems with dedicated investments that would improve the lives and living conditions of the most vulnerable segments of its population.

With the foregoing concrete accomplishments and forward-looking plans, we are nominating the City of Mumbai, represented by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai for consideration in the Sasakawa Award. The global prestige and recognition of the Sasakawa award will further motivate the citizens of Mumbai and their leadership to work towards their goal of making their city disaster resilient.

Sincerely,

Fouad M. Bendimerad, Ph.D., P.E.
Chairman and Executive Director

Cc: Shraddha Shridhar Jadhav (Mrs.), Mayor of Mumbai
    Sudhir Kumar (Mr.), Commissioner Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai
    S.S. Shinde, Joint Municipal Commissioner
    Ravi Sinha (Prof.), IIT Bombay