Making Cities Resilient Report 2019:

A snapshot of how local governments progress in reducing disaster risks in alignment with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

UNDRR
UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Global Urban Resilience Challenge

Rapid growth of urban population has concentrated people, jobs, and properties in areas exposed to high risks from hazards and shocks. Globally, more people live now in urban areas than rural areas, and by 2050, it is projected that nearly 70% of the world's population will be urban. Cities, therefore, have huge responsibilities in ensuring the health, safety and well-being of its growing number of residents. Subsequently, strengthening urban resilience is the key to sustainable development and enhanced prosperity.
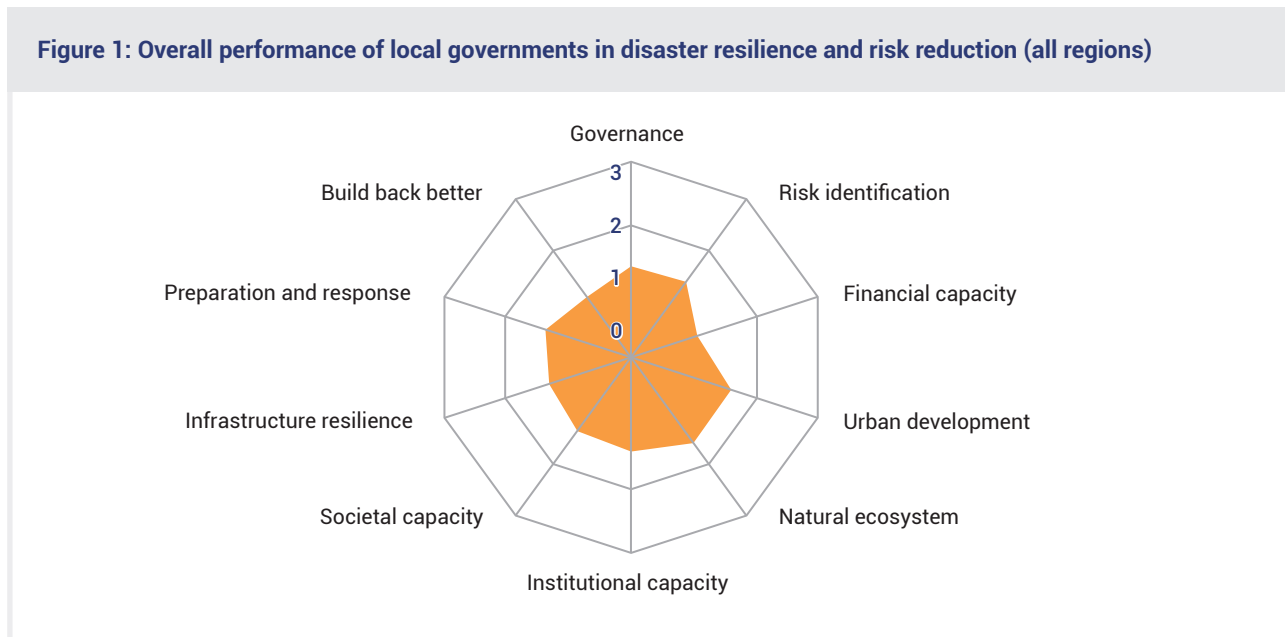
Resilience is the ability of a person, community or city to adapt to changing conditions and to withstand shocks while maintaining essential functions. It cannot be achieved without significantly changing the way cities manage urban spaces. Efforts from various stakeholders, including local government decision makers, city officials, departments, central and provincial governments, the private sector, civil society, non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, research institutions and institutions of higher learning, are required to create a sustainable resilient urban environment.

Approaches for building resilience may range from highly technical and resource-intensive, to simple and inexpensive practices. The Making Cities Resilient (MCR) Campaign, coordinated by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, promotes disaster resilience building in cities through raising awareness among local governments and providing tools, technical assistance, city-to-city support networks, and learning opportunities. The Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities (Scorecard) was developed following the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and helps cities develop a baseline understanding on the progress made on disaster risk reduction. The results of the scorecard assessment reflect the progress made by local governments in the achievement of the Sendai Framework targets, as well as SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
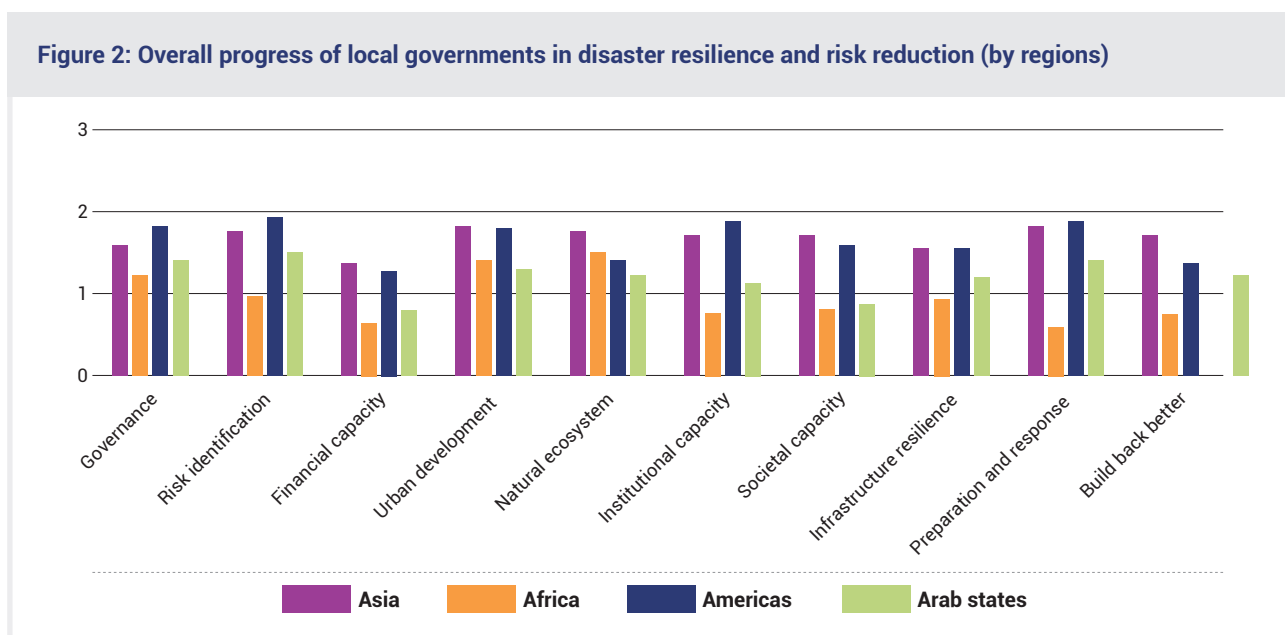
During 2017-2018, 214 cities/municipalities from Asia (88), Americas (50), Sub-Saharan Africa (50), and Arab States (26) conducted the Scorecard assessment. The European Commission provided funding support. The Scorecard is structured around the 'Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient', which offers a broad coverage of the many issues that cities need to address, including governance and financial capacity, planning and disaster preparedness, and post-event recovery. The results of these assessments have provided the basis for this analysis of the global trends of resilience actions at local government level, and its correlation with progress in the implementation of SDG11.5 and 11.b.

2. Trends in Disaster Risk Reduction and SDGs 11.5 & 11.b

SDG 11.5 focuses on significantly reducing the number of people killed and people affected, and on substantially decreasing the direct economic losses relative to the global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations. The overall performance across the regions according to the Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient is shown in Figure 1 (scale of 0-3).

Figure 1: Overall performance of local governments in disaster resilience and risk reduction (all regions)

Overall, 'Essential 4: resilient urban development' is the area of highest progress (1.55), followed by 'Essential 2: risk identification' (1.52), 'Essential 5: enhancement of ecosystems' protective functions' (1.50) and 'Essential 1: disaster risk governance' (1.46), respectively. In contrast, 'Essential 3: financial capacity for resilience' (1.01) is the area that needs the most improvement. The level of progress is however quite modest in all areas.

Figure 2: Overall progress of local governments in disaster resilience and risk reduction (by regions)
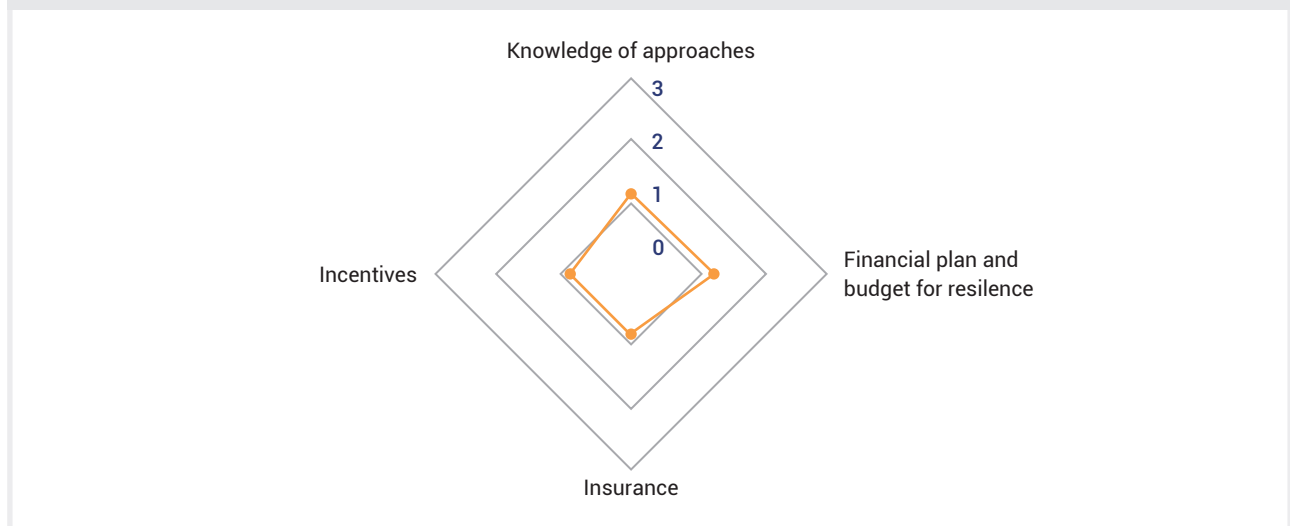
The most common shortcoming in all regions is on financial capacity for disaster resilience. This shows that securing a substantial budget for disaster risk reduction is a challenge for most nations.

Resources

To implement disaster risk reduction initiatives, substantial financial and human resource allocations, are required. However, the results show that local governments have limited knowledge of approaches for attracting funds for resilience investments (Figure 3). The results also reveal that incentives for different segments of business and society to support resilience building and the use of insurance as a risk transfer mechanism are notably low in almost all cities. While cities are progressing in terms of financial plans for disaster risk reduction, only 39% of local governments have a financial plan that allows for disaster risk reduction activities with ring-fenced budget. Studies highlight the disproportionate allocation of funds, where most of the disaster-related funds are allocated for relief and reconstruction work, while the allocation of funds for mitigation and risk reduction is comparatively low.
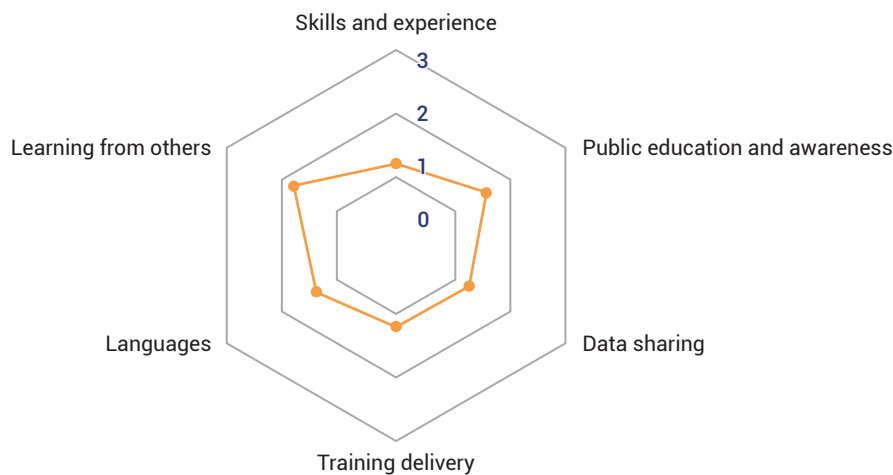
Figure 3: Overall progress of local governments in financing for disaster resilience (all regions)

Local Institutional Capacities

Figure 4 reveals that the institutional capacity of local governments across the world on data sharing among relevant institutions, availability of training courses covering risk reduction and resilience issues for all sectors, and access to skills and experience to reduce risks and respond to identified disaster scenarios is relatively low. However, all regions are proactively seeking to enhance knowledge and learn from other local governments facing similar challenges.
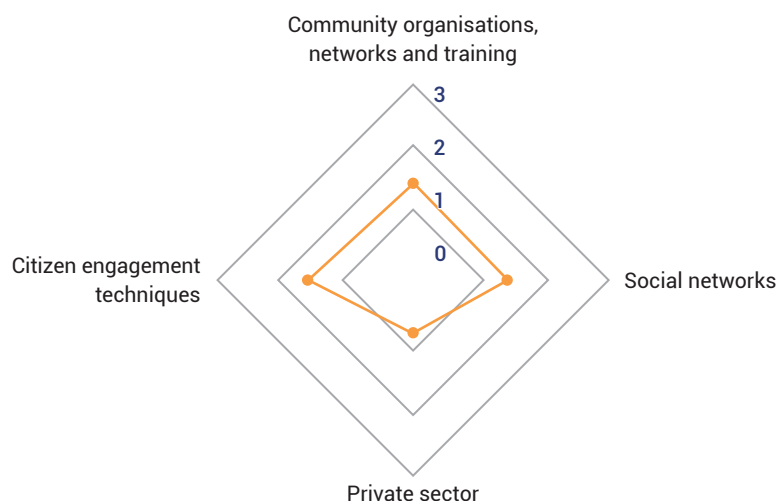
Figure 4: Overall progress of local governments in strengthening institutional capacities (all regions)

Community participation

Local government needs support from communities to create communities that are resilient to disasters. However, some of them suffer from a lack of community engagement. As shown in Figure 5, most of the cities score low on engaging with private sector businesses and employers for disaster resilience. There is some progress in strengthening the capacities of vulnerable groups and social networks, reflecting more engagement of local governments to 'leave no one behind'.

Figure 5: Overall progress of local governments in strengthening societal capacity for resilience (all regions)
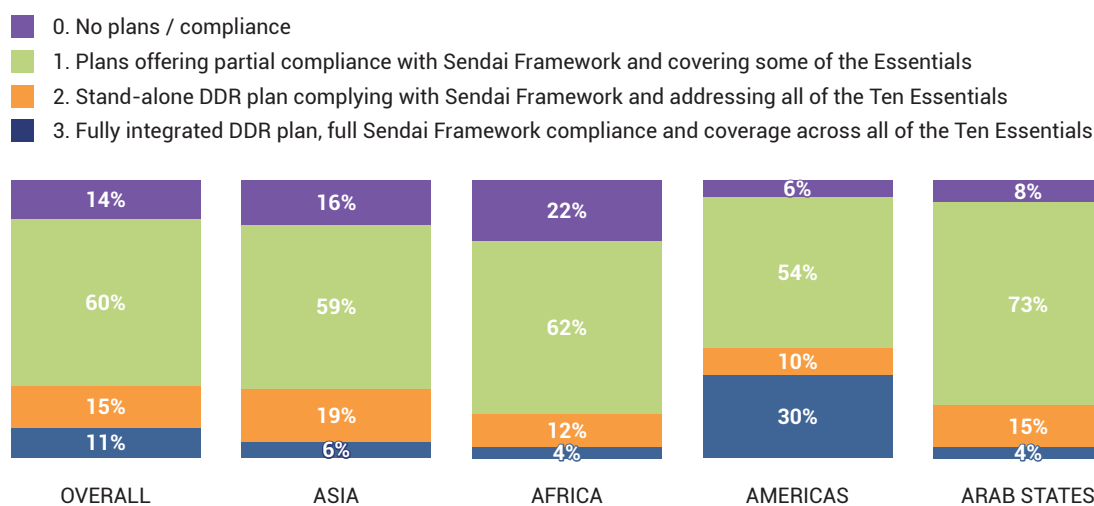

SDG 11.b targets the substantial increase in the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change and resilience to disasters. The Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities allows local governments to self-assess capacities to strengthen disaster resilience, including issues of coordination and participation, and integration of resilience with

other vital functions of the cities. This assessment corelates to the prospects of achieving SDG 11.b.

Local Disaster Risk Governance, Policies, and Plans

The scorecard assessment shows that, 86% of the participating local governments have plans that offer full or partial compliance with the Sendai framework, and covering some of the ten essentials for making cities resilient. However, only 11% of the local governments implement a fully integrated DRR plan in accordance with the Sendai Framework and all of the Ten Essentials. In contrast, 14% of the local governments do not have any plans in this regard.

Figure 6: P1.1 Plan Making

- 0. No plans / compliance
- 1. Plans offering partial compliance with Sendai Framework and covering some of the Essentials
- 2. Stand-alone DDR plan complying with Sendai Framework and addressing all of the Ten Essentials
- 3. Fully integrated DDR plan, full Sendai Framework compliance and coverage across all of the Ten Essentials

	OVERALL	ASIA	AFRICA	AMERICAS	ARAB STATES
0	14%	16%	22%	6%	8%
1	60%	59%	62%	54%	73%
2	15%	19%	12%	10%	15%
3	11%	6%	4%	30%	4%

3. What's next for SDGs 11.5 and 11.b?

If cities are the frontier in the endeavour to reduce disaster and climate risks, and achieve sustainable development, the results show a significant gap in achieving resilience. SDGs 11.5 and 11.b are not attainable unless more attention is given to the following challenges:

Local disaster risk governance

- Inactive disaster management committees
- Lack of coordination and communication among disaster management agencies
- Undefined roles for inter-agency coordination
- No shared understanding of infrastructure risk among various institutions
- Lack of authority for local governments
- Practical barriers in implementing zoning and development plans
- Limited on ground promotion of green and blue infrastructure
- Unavailability of disaster management sub-divisions in the municipality
- No knowledge about private sector/employers

Stakeholders

- Traditions and habits of the communities restrict DRR implementations
- Lack of stakeholder awareness
- Lack of stakeholder understanding on natural assets
- No regular training for communities
- Illegal and unplanned settlements
- Lack of commitment and capacity

Resources

- Limited budget and inconsistency of resources
- Insufficient information
- Lack of funding sources for incentives
- Limited knowledge of staff to deal with cascading impacts
- Limited skilled human resources
- Limited data sharing among institutions
- Limited number of provisional shelters for evacuated people

Policy and plans

- City master plans do not include DRR
- Available insurance policies are expensive
- Outdated zoning plans, building codes and development plans
- Non-availability of hazard mapping
- Delays in approving policies and plans
- Lack of consideration of ecosystem service in city development activities
- Lack of integrated comprehensive responsive plan for recovery and reconstruction
- No standards for evacuation of buildings
- No early warning systems
- Old buildings are still in use without protective measures

Technology

- Unavailability of technical instruments
- Unavailability of water distribution systems

Lack of financial capacity and inconsistency of resources are the most highlighted issue. Results show that the identification of all possible funding sources for disaster risk reduction is the first step to solve this issue.

A very significant effort is required globally to respond to the challenges for achieving urban resilience and the sustainable development goals. A business as usual approach will not suffice.