

Port of Spain Declaration of the Making Caribbean Cities Resilient Workshop

The world has become increasingly urbanized during the past few decades. More than half of the world's population now lives and works in cities. This shift in population centres to the cities has brought about economic transformation and development. As such, cities are now considered nodes of production, technological innovation and specialized services.

Many cities in the developing world, including the Caribbean, generate a disproportionately large share of the national income. Urban centres have also been the beneficiaries of a disproportionate focus of our economic and social activities and infrastructural development. Urban risk must therefore be a key consideration in the risk reduction strategies of the Caribbean states and territories, particularly with respect to changes in development planning, policy and practice, if we are to make progress in changing the loss profile of our countries.

Compounding the risk associated with our urbanized centres is the whole issue of Climate variability. As such it imperative that stakeholders within the Participating States (PS) of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) be engaged to consider and develop mechanisms to increase the resilience of urban communities.

The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) is a major advocator of resilient cities. The 2010-2015 World Disaster Reduction Campaign "*Making Cities Resilient: My City is Getting Ready*" addresses issues of local governance and urban risk while drawing upon previous ISDR Campaigns on safer schools and hospitals, as well as on the sustainable urbanization principles developed in the UN-Habitat World Urban Campaign 2009-2013.

Mayors and their local governments are the key targets and drivers of the 'Making Cities Resilient' campaign. This is based on the premise that local governments are the institutional level most in tune with the needs of their citizens and communities and play the first role in responding to crises and emergencies and in attending to the needs of their constituencies. They deliver essential services to their citizens (health, education, transport, water, etc.), which need to be made resilient to disasters.

Therefore based on the fore going we, the Participants of the Making Caribbean Cities Resilient Workshop convened at the 6th Annual CDM Conference 2011 in Port of Spain, Trinidad, coming from 62 cities in 10 countries , together with our respective partners:

1. Recall that the Caribbean has experienced many disasters over the years resulting in loss of lives and economic losses and slowing of our development.
2. Recognize that local disaster risk reduction and adaptation strategies - making cities resilient – must support local sustainable development and improve the quality of life of our inhabitants, in particular the urban poor; women, children, the elderly, the physically challenged, and other vulnerable groups who are most exposed to the impacts of climate change and other hazards.
3. Recognize the need for new approaches to cooperation between local governments and their partners on all levels, in order for us to build and increase resiliency of our cities and towns.
4. Recognize the opportunity presented by the *Making Cities Resilient* campaign of the UNISDR and the 6th Annual Comprehensive Disaster Management Conference, 5-9 December 2011, in Trinidad and Tobago to further highlight the need for increased disaster risk reduction programmes in the Caribbean.
5. Recognize that local governments need direct access to financing mechanisms and technical resources from all levels – multilateral, national and local – in order to implement their strategies and initiatives.
6. Commit to increasing the resiliency of our cities.
7. Commit to taking a leadership role in linking local level development and disaster resilience, understanding that all stakeholders should be integrated in planning, awareness raising and investing in disaster risk reduction and resilience building in our cities and towns.
8. Commit to becoming promoters and leaders of the Global Campaign for *Making Cities Resilient: My city is getting ready!* at the Central Government, Local Government and Community level, including the participation in city-to-city dialogue, evaluation and scaling up of best practice, and implementation of the *10 Essentials making cities resilient*.

9. Commit to working with our city councils, civil society including the private sector and others to promote legal frameworks proportionate budget increases and training initiatives aimed at strengthening capacities for resilience at the local government level through strategic spatial and territorial planning, land-use, and development programming.
10. Commit to invest in local action and protecting the most vulnerable through appropriate enabling legal and regulatory frameworks that recognize the role of local government in planning for risk, and building in resilience.
11. We request ISDR to work with CDEMA towards the establishment of a regional Resilient Cities support group with participants from central and local government, and community levels, local authorities, associations and networks, professional and technical organizations, academia, the private sector and civil society, and the development partners in country. This group will promote disaster risk reduction at the local level including the setting of standards and benchmarks, knowledge transfer, broadening political space, sharing experience and monitoring progress.
12. Will lobby among international and national entities to make resources available through coordination with local governments as a way of strengthening autonomy, capacity, accountability and transparency for increasing resilience within our communities, towns and cities.
13. Will advocate for the enforcement of laws, standards, regulations and codes that advance disaster risk reduction.
14. Will advocate for disaster risk reduction to all sectors, raising awareness amongst decision-makers at all levels to commit to and apply policies and especially financial and legal means for creating disaster and climate resilience at the local level.
15. Will where appropriate, upgrade local development plans to integrate risk reduction in all municipal functions including: building and land use plans and regulatory systems, solid and liquid waste management, water production and distribution systems, parks and environmental management, emergency management, and development sectors.
16. Will institute and maintain a local government-led regular dialogue for local leaders and national authorities in the context of the campaign.

17. Will share up to date information regularly through all media and develop the knowledge base for capacity enhancement on risk reduction for cities in our region and engage in periodic monitoring and evaluation.
18. Will work together to achieve a decentralized political, administrative and legal framework that increase capacities and resources for local governments to deal more efficiently with disaster risk and resilience.
19. Will define the contributions, obligations and responsibilities of all sectors: state, local government, private sector, community groups, and external partners including academia, faith-based groups, NGOs, city networks, and those with indigenous knowledge.
20. Will encourage meaningful participation of community and interest groups, creating and strengthening community groups and networks and coordination, promoting multi-stakeholder local platforms/alliances.

In conclusion:

We call upon the Heads of Government of the Caribbean region, the Caribbean Community Secretariat and its associated institutions, including the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, other regional technical and academic institutions, to sign on to the Making Cities Resilient Campaign of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR and to commit to improving the safety and security of our cities.

**Adopted unanimously on 5 December 2011,
in Port of Spain, the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago,
and declared by Alderman Louis Lee Singh, Mayor of Port of Spain,
Chair of the Making Caribbean Cities Resilient Workshop**

ANNEX 1

PLAN OF ACTION

- 1) Sign up to the Ten-point checklist for local governments- Ten essentials for making cities resilient, and advocate for their adoption in country.
- 2) Ensure multi stakeholder engagement at all levels for the implementation of the “Making Caribbean Cities Resilient” campaign through increased multi phase public awareness campaign
- 3) Support Collaboration between Local Government (Engage in Sister Cities collaboration and city to city learning).
- 4) Recommend the introduction of a line item in the Local Government budget for disaster risk reduction and emergencies
- 5) Encourage Private sector involvement in DRR investment.
- 6) Recommend the allocation of funds for DRR from the national budget as follows: 10% of emergency response funds, 10% of reconstruction investments and 1% of development budget.
- 7) Encourage Central Government to create a Disaster Risk Reduction fund. Allocations are to be guided by a comprehensive national vulnerability and risk assessment
- 8) Promote the development of a disaster loss database to raise awareness of the impact of high frequency low magnitude events so as to ensure equitable allocation of funds
- 9) Develop a database of all possible regional and international donor agencies and criteria to access available funds, and increase the technical capacities of local governments to develop project proposals.
- 10) Ensure the protection of the environment and eco systems, using the “Greening of Cities” initiative as a possible model.
- 11) Incorporate DRR measure in local development planning
- 12) Strengthen institutional capacities, develop strategic plans and performance management frameworks that incorporates and measures Disaster Risk Reduction.

ANNEX 2

TEN-POINT CHECKLIST - ESSENTIALS FOR MAKING CITIES RESILIENT

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 survivors are placed at the centre of reconstruction with support for them and their community organizations to design and help implement responses, including rebuilding homes and livelihoods.