

# Leading the Way: Disaster Risk Reduction Training for Local Government Champions



December 2024

# Foreword

The rising frequency and severity of disasters are driven by key factors such as climate change, health crises, urbanisation, poor infrastructure, ecosystem degradation, conflict and instability. These underlying risk drivers increase vulnerability and intensify impacts of disasters. With Africa's urban population expected to grow by nearly one billion over the next three decades, cities and urban areas across the continent are particularly predisposed. As a result, the integration of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) into urban planning is becoming increasingly crucial for the sustainable and resilient development of Africa's cities. However, rapid urbanisation and increasing population especially in informal settlements, present distinct challenges, as cities are often exposed to multiple hazards simultaneously, which can threaten lives, livelihoods, and infrastructure. Addressing these risks through comprehensive DRR strategies is critical to safeguarding development gains and building resilient communities.

We are therefore delighted to have brought together city representatives from over 20 countries across the continent in March 2024 for the workshop 'Leading the Way: Disaster Risk Reduction Training for Local Government Champions,' held in Nairobi, Kenya. This event provided a unique platform for participants to exchange experiences in managing and mitigating urban risks, while working together to develop shared solutions to challenges in urban development.

With the support of the regional programme Resilience Initiative Africa (RIA), commissioned by the Federal German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

*"This workshop showed the large potential of African cities to drive resilience through shared knowledge, innovative tools, and inclusive approaches. By coming together, we have not only deepened our understanding of disaster risk reduction but have also built a foundation for ongoing collaboration that spans cities, organisations, and communities. We invite you to explore the insights and tools presented in this report to build resilience and inclusive cities across Africa."*

*Ria Hidajat, Head of project, GIZ Resilience Initiative Africa*

and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the workshop offered a vital space for cities and stakeholders across Africa to share best practices, learn from one another, and equip local leaders with the essential tools they need to address disaster risks. This event marked an important step in RIA's ongoing effort to establish an inclusive, barrier-reduced learning and exchange platform that promotes the exchange of knowledge, tools, and strategies among urban actors across Africa, ultimately fostering risk-informed urban development.

This report highlights how the workshop brought together a diverse group of participants, including representatives from cities, local governments, and organisations from across the continent. Each participant shared valuable insights into the challenges and successes of DRR within their cities. We hope that, through this report, you will discover useful approaches that can be applied in your own city to advance gender-responsive and inclusive urban development. You will also find innovative tools, such as the Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the Resilience Learning Modules from United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), and the Know Your City tool from Slum Dwellers International (SDI), which can empower you to better manage disaster risks in the urban areas.



# Insights

## Mr. Huw Beynon, Deputy Chief, UNDRR Regional Office for Africa

As local and regional governments, it is essential to understand how to position ourselves to implement the Sendai Framework and resilience activities in ways that are tailored to local realities.

Local governments, with their insights into on-the-ground situations during disasters, play a crucial role in advocating at the national level.

Through technical, financial and capacity-building support, local governments can significantly influence high-level policy decisions and the national legislative landscape in integrating disaster risk reduction governance.

Together, we should focus on shifting the paradigm from response to prevention guided by a disaster risk governance structure that is aligned with the Sendai Framework at the local level.



*Huw Beynon, Deputy Chief - UNDRR Regional Office for Africa*

## Dr. Robert Sangori, UCLG Africa Director Climate and Biodiversity and Food Systems

To build more resilient cities and territories, it is crucial to bridge the capacity gap in disaster risk reduction at the local government and community levels, where it is most needed.

The current implementation of disaster risk reduction activities by local governments is inadequate, highlighting the need for better integration of action plans across local governments in Africa.

It is crucial to emphasize the importance of engaging all sectors inclusively to formulate coherent policies in strengthening DRR within sustainable development frameworks. Empowering local authorities in disaster risk reduction decision-making is integral for adopting a “Build Back Better” approach.



*Dr. Robert Sangori, Director Climate and Biodiversity and Food Systems – UCLG Africa*





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Training Group Photo

# Introduction

The “Leading the Way: Disaster Risk Reduction Training for Local Government Champions” aimed to increase knowledge on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and urban resilience. This is crucial given the current threats posed by natural hazards, climate change, epidemics, and pandemics, which undermine economic and social development and worsen inequalities across various regions in Africa.

The [Resilience Initiatives Africa \(RIA\)](#) is a regional project commissioned by the Federal German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. The project aims to increase the capacities of regional, national, local state and non-state actors for risk-informed urban development in Africa through fostering technical exchange and coordination across countries by bringing together relevant actors with existing and proven approaches to reduce, mitigate and manage risks.

In line with this, RIA organized the training in collaboration with its partners [United Nations for Disaster Risk Reduction \(UNDRR\)](#) Regional Office for Africa, [United Cities and Local Governments \(UCLG\)](#), [UCLG Africa](#), and [Slum Dwellers International \(SDI\)](#), from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2024, in Nairobi. The training targeted local government officials and stakeholders involved in urban development across Africa with an objective to enhance the participants’ knowledge on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and trigger transformative action at the local government level.

The local governments were from Abidjan-Côte d’Ivoire, Accra-Ghana, Beau Bassin Rose Hill-Mauritius, Benguéir-Morocco, Bukavu-Democratic Republic of Congo, Dakar-Senegal, Dar es Salaam-Tanzania, Freetown-Sierra Leone, Homa Bay-Kenya, Kampala Capital City Authority-Uganda, Kinshasa-Democratic Republic of Congo, Kisumu County Government-Kenya, Kwa Zulu Natal-South Africa, Lusaka-Zambia, Lomè-Togo, Mwanza-Tanzania, Nairobi City County Government- Kenya, Sarh-



Chad, Toamasina-Madagascar, Quelimane-Mozambique, and Windhoek-Namibia.

Additionally, other key organizations such as the African Union Commission, GIZ; Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Togo, the National Civil Protection Agency-Togo, National Ministry of Public Works and Infrastructure-DRC, SDI-Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Tanzania and United Disabled Persons of Kenya (UDPK) also participated.

## The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Equip the participants with fundamental knowledge, principles and frameworks of DRR.
- Introduce participants to participatory risk analysis tools employed by UNDRR and SDI.
- Provide a platform for exchange of practical examples and expert knowledge by practitioners as well as peer to peer consultation.





# 1. Learning Sessions

The workshop was structured around interactive learning and exchange sessions built on the Resilience Learning Modules developed by UCLG, UNDRR and UN-Habitat. The sessions introduced both theoretical and practical aspects of disaster risk reduction and were conducted by experts from UNDRR Regional Office for Africa, UCLG, UCLG Africa, and SDI.

The methodology emphasized active participation and interactivity, featuring presentations, group discussions, networking sessions, exercises, and dynamic games. Participants engaged in exchange-sessions, group reflections, and case-based inputs, fostering collaborative learning and knowledge exchange. Additionally, field visits showcased practical examples of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and their potential role in DRR and enhancing resilience.

## 1.1 Introduction to Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Concepts

Urban areas and communities are increasingly exposed to diverse, complex, systemic and dynamic hazards and risks that call for disaster risk management. This complexity necessitates that local and regional governments understand what constitutes and shapes disaster risk, and provide solutions that not only reduce it, but also build resilience to ensure equitable and sustainable development in their communities.

The workshop began with an introduction to the fundamental concepts of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and resilience, anchored on the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction \(SFDRR\)](#) 2015-2030.

Adopted in 2015, the Sendai Framework is a 15-year, voluntary, non-binding agreement that recognizes the primary role of

the state in reducing disaster risk but also highlights that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders, including local governments and the private sector. The framework outlines four priority areas:

- Understanding disaster risk.
- Strengthening disaster risk governance.
- Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience.
- Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

These priorities guide actions to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks through integrated and inclusive measures.

The Sendai Framework is closely linked to other global agendas, particularly the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), [New Urban Agenda](#) and the [Paris Agreement](#). It emphasizes the need for coherent policies and actions across sectors to ensure that efforts to reduce disaster risks also support sustainable development and climate adaptation goals. For instance, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 11, which focuses on making cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable, directly aligns with the objectives of the Sendai Framework.

Building resilience at the local government level is crucial, as cities and municipalities are often the first responders to disasters. By investing in disaster risk reduction and enhancing the capacities of Local and Regional governments (LRGs) within institutional, technical and financial environments, cities and territories can mitigate risks, enhance resilience, and create safer, more liveable environment for all residents. Moreover, local governments that prioritize DRR can attract investments, foster economic stability, and ensure the well-being of their communities.



Training UCLG Group Work: The Futurilities Game



Presentation on Introduction to DRR and Resilience concepts by Juan Carlos Uribe, Program Officer (Learning) - UCLG

Local and regional governments, as key decision-makers, require a clear understanding of the risks, vulnerabilities, and capacities of their cities. To integrate resilience into decision-making, LRGs need access to accurate data, relevant information, and appropriate tools.

These include risk assessments, early warning systems, climate projections, and socio-economic data. Tools such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), risk mapping, and scenario planning can help local governments visualize risks and develop strategies to mitigate them. Collaboration with academic institutions, the private sector, and international organizations can also provide additional resources and expertise for more risk-informed decision making for risk informed development (RID).

## 1.2 Fundamentals of Resilience Building and DRR for Local and Regional Governments

Effective DRR and resilience building rely on robust governance mechanisms, including an enabling institutional framework, coordinated actions, and multi-stakeholder partnerships with adequate financial backing.

Disaster risk reduction is essential for fostering social and economic development. Therefore, it is crucial to align with SDGs principles when integrating DRR and resilience building into development plans and strategies.

This session focused on the key SDG principles and the main essential components for effectively building resilient cities and territories.

The key SDG principles to be aligned in resilience building include:

1. **Leave no one behind**- Ensuring inclusivity
2. **Integrated nature**- Promoting integration across sectors

3. **Partnership-based approach** -Emphasizing collaborative approaches
4. **Multilevel governance**- Strengthening governance at multiple levels
5. **Accountability**- Upholding transparency and responsibility

These principles further require sufficient technical expertise to conduct comprehensive multi-hazard risk assessments, understand systemic and contextual risks, and formulate appropriate strategies and action plans for DRR and resilience building.

The four main fundamentals for effectively building resilient cities and territories include:

### Fundamental 1: Risk and Resilience Governance

Effective governance is foundational for resilience and DRR efforts within LRGs. This includes establishing laws, policies, and coordination mechanisms to create an enabling institutional environment. Strengthening governance through multistakeholder partnerships and financial support ensures accountability and smooth implementation of DRR and resilience strategies. It is imperative for these governments to strengthen coordination across different governmental levels (vertical governance), as well as amongst different sectors of society (horizontal governance) to align efforts and pool resources effectively.

### Fundamental 2: Risk and Resilience Assessments

Comprehensive risk assessments are necessary to identify and analyze various multi-hazards incorporating both qualitative and quantitative assessments specific to urban areas (territorial context).

Additional resilience assessment through a baseline analysis

looks beyond risks and into governance/coordination structures, and implementation capabilities to identify systemic strengths and weaknesses. The session highlighted risk and resilience tools such as the UNDRR's disaster resilience scorecard for cities as adopted by the City of Bukavu and Beau Bassin Rose Hill for their respective risk and resilience assessments.

By using this assessment tool, LRGs can develop well-informed, context-specific initiatives that enhance urban resilience and ensure sustainable development

### Fundamental 3: Financing DRR and Resilience

Local authorities face significant financial challenges, in the assessment, development and implementation of Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Action Plans.

Resilience investments with key enabling financing mechanisms include intergovernmental fiscal transfers embedding DRR in all sectors, incentives for homeowners and businesses, community-driven finance mechanisms, mobilizing the private sector, compensatory risk management, and risk insurance. These strategies offers long-term benefits and win-win outcomes for the local governments, fostering sustainable development.

Moreover, Local government associations (LGAs) play a crucial role in advocating for financial support from national governments. They help raise awareness on DRR needs, advocate for stronger fiscal decentralization, support effective multilevel governance, build capacity, and foster decentralized cooperation. By doing so, LGAs assist local governments in securing the necessary resources to develop and implement effective resilience strategies.

### Fundamental 4: Strategies and Action Plans

Target E of the Sendai Framework calls to substantially increase national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020, as these strategies will make the basis of actions that will be taken to reduce existing risk, prevent future risk, and build resilience. Indeed, achievement of Target E by 2020 is thought to be a marker of progress and an essential element of the enabling environment to achieve all the Sendai Framework targets and its goal by 2030 (UNDRR 2019a).

Resilience strategies and action plans must be tailored to the unique needs, risks, and territorial contexts of each city or region, considering factors like decentralization and availability of democratic, technical, administrative and economic resources.

Effective strategy development involves assessing and prioritizing risk and resilience, governance and policies, and financial resources, including the cost of inaction. This is followed by programming and planning for resilience in urban development, critical infrastructure, and response efforts.



*Presentation on Fundamentals of Resilience Building and DRR for Local and Regional Governments by Jerome Byukusenge, Head of Unit- T. A UCLG-Africa*



Lastly, monitoring and institutionalizing these plans ensure accountability and measure impact.

The main challenges in DRR strategy development include securing substantial budgets, decentralization, coordination among different levels of government, and technical capacity for risk assessments. By integrating DRR and resilience into all sectors, local governments can create sustainable, resilient communities.

In conclusion, the session underscored the importance of integrating resilience principles into local policy cycles, fostering multi-level and multi-stakeholder governance, co-developing DRR policies, inclusive community participatory assessments and formulating effective strategies and action plans. By adopting these practices, Local and Regional Governments can significantly enhance their capacity to reduce disaster risks and build resilient, sustainable urban environments. Reference materials: [Module I :Fundamentals of resilient governance and Development for Local and Regional Governments](#) (LRGs) and [Module II : Strategies and Actions](#).

## 1.3 Building Social Resilience and Leaving No One Behind

In this session we explored gender mainstreaming and disability inclusivity into disaster risk reduction and how critical they are in informing DRR responses and measures.



*“I appreciate the ongoing discussions on DRR issues around gender and intersectionality which also align greatly with the GIZ Feminist Development Policy. I believe for successful DRR implementation and planning intersectionality exploration is key, as it supports in identifying the powers, privileges and how they interfere with social justice and ultimately how these can be addressed in an equitable manner for all..”*

*- Joy Mugambi, M&E and Gender Advisor, GIZ -Energy Transport and Climate Change Cluster*



With an understanding that disasters are not experienced uniformly by everyone in society, effective disaster risk reduction must incorporate intersectionality in assessing socio-demographic dynamics within the different vulnerability levels of the different affected persons.

### 1.3.1 Gender Mainstreaming into Disaster Risk Reduction

Gender is defined as a social and cultural construct that distinguishes the norms, behaviours, role and responsibilities of men and women. While intersectionality describes the ways in which gender norms interact with different issues such as ethnicity, religion, sex, disability, ownership of assets etc.

Intersectionality asks to explore the intersecting categories and identities a person and within a group (i.e female group, male group, disability group) and explores the different levels of

vulnerabilities of the categories within the groups.

In efforts to develop Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) strategies that cater to the different categories of groups that are experiencing different levels of vulnerabilities, it is integral to understand the difference between equality and equity.

Where, equality is the effect of treating each as without difference, without counting of their measurable attributes; treated as the same of those with differing attributes. While equity is the quality of treating individuals fairly based on their needs and requirements.

A successful gender responsive and inclusive approach applies equity in Disaster Risk Management (DRM) planning by considering the needs, capacities and vulnerabilities of marginalized groups and aiming to provide equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded.



Power Walk Exercise- to explore different vulnerabilities in Programs for greater inclusion



Panel discussion on Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Management (from the left to the right: Agnes Bugaba, Manager Risk Management, Executive Director's Office Kampala Capital City Authority; David Bablee, Local Disaster Management Coordinator, Municipal Council of Beau Bassin Rose Hill; Tobias Rachuonyo, Stakeholder Management and Coordination on Disaster Management, County Government of Homa Bay)



Panelist: Eric Ngondi, Director of United Disabled Persons of Kenya-UDPK

Adoption of comprehensive gender analysis through tools such as [World Bank Social Inclusion Assessment Tool](#) (SiAT) is a key cornerstone in assessing how social inclusion can be addressed in projects and policies for an effective gender-sensitive DRM planning.

### 1.3.2 Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Management

In this session, the inclusivity of Persons with Disabilities (PwD) and key influencing factors such as policies, resource allocation, metrics for success, and collaboration between local governments and persons with disabilities were explored.

**Disability** is an evolving concept resulting from the **interaction between persons with impairments and an environment** filled with barriers that prevent their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. The main barriers include and not limited to attitudinal barriers, communication barriers, institutional and physical barriers.

With approximately 16% of the world's population constituting of people with disabilities, many are socially or logistically isolated, disproportionately affecting their resilience to disaster risk vulnerabilities. The failure to include them in global disaster

risk reduction efforts often leaves them behind in relief and response efforts becoming a determinant factor between life and death in a disaster situation.

An immediate focus on increasing the effectiveness of disability inclusion policies and practices should be directed towards addressing attitudinal barriers. This can be achieved through universal design, sensitization, capacity building, and awareness creation, aiming to improve both community and local government understanding of the specific needs of the PwD community.

Moreover, the disability inclusion efforts at the local level should be assessed and measured to monitor the success and progress made for further implementation of the efforts of PwD needs inclusion. Application of the [inclusion of persons with disabilities](#) as an annex to the disaster resilience scorecard for cities allows introspection, safeguarding the participation and addressing the needs of PWD.

The optimization of resource allocation to support disability inclusion initiatives presents significant challenges for local governments aiming to meet the diverse needs of Persons with Disabilities. Key strategies to address these challenges include:

*“Attitude, communication, physical environment and policies are the key barriers to peoples with disabilities. Therefore, capacity building, data collection and budget allocation is imperative in the success of inclusive DRR”*

*- Eric Ngondi, Director of United Disabled Persons of Kenya – UDPK*



- Identifying impairments of PwD in vulnerable areas and prioritizing them in emergency response plans tailored to specific hazards.
- Incorporating DRR principles into special needs education to enhance preparedness among PwD.
- Training caregivers for PwD in evacuation center management and post-disaster recovery procedures.
- Conducting sensitization campaigns through specialized educational teams focused on PwD needs.
- Including PwD in annual hazard simulations to evaluate and improve first responders' ability to provide effective support.

These measures aim to ensure comprehensive disability inclusion in emergency preparedness and response efforts, thereby enhancing community resilience and support systems for PwD during crises.

Local governments can enhance collaboration with PwD representatives is crucial to ensure that the voices and needs of PwD are adequately represented by improving data collection at the grass root level, to inform inclusive policy-making, and improving access to public participation by addressing

communication, attitudinal, physical, and policy barriers. LRGs can collaborate more effectively to ensure the voice and needs of PwD are adequately addressed in policy design, policy planning and implementation. Through addressing the issue of data availability, area of PwD public participation involvement and inclusive financing.

Where, inclusive financing emphasizes the need for budgeting that includes reasonable accommodations for PwD, making engagement activities specific and beneficial for them.

Conclusively, disability inclusion in DRR is essential for creating resilient and inclusive communities. By addressing the barriers to inclusion, measuring and monitoring progress, promoting inclusive financing, collection and availability of data and empowering PwD community participation, can ensure that people with disabilities are protected and empowered in the face of disasters. These efforts align with global frameworks such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which emphasizes the need for inclusive and equitable disaster risk management.





## 2. Urban Resilience Initiatives and Tools



Tools have been developed to support local governments and communities in assessing and understanding disaster risks for informed planning and implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies. Some of the tools explored during the workshop include the Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities tool by UNDRR and the Know Your City Tool by SDI.

### 2.1 Making Cities Resilient 2030 Initiative

The [Making Cities Resilient \(MCR\) 2030](#) is a cross-stakeholder initiative for improving local resilience whose secretariat is UNDRR. It mobilizes cities worldwide to enhance disaster resilience capabilities at the local level. Cities commit to implementing DRR strategies aligned with global frameworks like the SFDRR 2015–2030, New Urban Agenda, Paris Agreement, and Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

This initiative encourages cities to take proactive measures to reduce vulnerabilities and build resilience against disasters.

Cities participating in MCR2030 develop comprehensive roadmaps for action. These roadmaps outline specific steps across sectors such as infrastructure, community engagement, governance, and risk management.

Once subscribed to the initiative, the cities are guided on a 3-stage resilience roadmap that guides the cities on how to improve resilience over time.

**Stage A – cities know better:** Commitment to move along a pathway to develop and implement a DRR and resilience strategy.

**Stage B – cities plan better:** Commitment to move towards development of a DRR and resilience strategy and ensure development plans are risk-informed

**Stage C – cities implement better:** Commitment to implement and mainstream DRR and resilience across all sectors and to share experiences.

A key feature of MCR2030 is its dashboard for monitoring and evaluating cities' progress. This dashboard tracks implementation, measures outcomes against targets, and facilitates peer learning among cities. It enables continuous improvement and adaptation of resilience strategies based on shared experiences and best practices.



*“We all have different starting points but we share one common goal to make our cities more resilient.”*

*Isabel Njihia, Associate Programme Management Officer, UNDRR  
Regional Office for Africa*



# The Resilience Roadmap

## Stage A - Cities Know Better

Stage A focuses on enhancing cities' understanding of risk reduction and resilience. Stage A cities are committed to developing and implementing a disaster risk reduction strategy by raising awareness around DRR and resilience and bringing relevant city actors and the public on board with the city's plans.

## Stage B - Cities Plan Better

Stage B cities will initially focus on improving assessment and diagnostic skills, increasing alignment between local strategies and national and regional strategies, and improving early-stage strategies and policies. Stage B cities may have had some early successes and momentum towards achieving DRR, sustainability and resilience improvements, and have some form of strategy to address disasters but may not yet incorporate risk reduction or preventive measures. The cities must demonstrate the commitment to move towards development or refinement of a DRR and resilience strategy and ensure development plans are risk-informed.

## Stage C - Cities Implement Better

Stage C of the resilience roadmap focuses on supporting cities in the implementation of risk reduction and resilience actions. Cities in this stage have a relatively robust DRR, resilience and sustainability plan in place and may be in the early stages of implementation or already working towards mainstreaming the DRR/resilience strategy and activities across its governments' structure.

### Activities along a continuum

Integration across activities to ensure coordination/comprehensive and systematic responses, strategies and action.

### Themes that cut across all three stages

- Increasing national/regional links and alignment with local governments
- Improving knowledge exchange with city structures and sectors
- Improving knowledge exchange between cities

## Outcomes

Disaster risk reduction and resilience mainstreaming: Horizontal and vertical integration of resilience and sustainability across municipal agencies and departments as well as within city functions.

## Impact

Cities improve resilience and are on sustainability pathways to deliver Sustainable Development Goal 11.

### 2.1.1 Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities

The Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities is a tool that provides a set of assessments allowing local governments to assess their disaster resilience, structuring around [UNDRR's ten essentials for making cities resilient](#). (see also the [handbook for local government leaders: How to make cities more resilient](#))

The assessment is structured with indicators across dimensions such as governance, integrated planning and resilience planning. The scorecard enables cities to identify strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in their resilience strategies. This helps prioritize actions for improvement and enhances cities' ability to respond effectively to disasters.

*“To enhance community engagement and support urban resilience, it is vital to integrate community members throughout the entire project cycle, from planning to final implementation stages. This entails empowering them with comprehensive data about their communities and enabling informed decision-making at the grassroots level to effectively support the process.”*

– Kilion Nyambuga, Programme Manager, Slum Dwellers International (SDI) Kenya

## 2.2 Slum Dwellers International - Know Your City Tool

[Slum Dwellers International \(SDI\)](#) is a global women-led movement of slum dwellers with the slogan “Women Transforming the Slums of Our Cities”. The organisation has over 25 years of experience organizing urban poor communities into national federations that amplify the voice, agency, and influence of the world's 1 billion slum dwellers and transforms the communities in which they live.

SDI has 22 national slum dwellers federations worldwide, working at settlement, city, national and global levels to improve the livelihoods of the urban poor. SDI's approach to improving the lives of slum dwellers is anchored on key federation rituals of daily savings; community-led slum profiling and mapping; peer-to-peer exchange; partnership with government; and learning-by-doing methodologies.

These approaches create impact in the form of improved security of tenure, upgraded slum settlements, enhanced economic livelihoods, improved climate justice; strengthened health and security systems; and increased pro-poor data-driven urban development policy and practice at the national and global level.

There is need for adoption of more women-led movements for the slum-dwellers, that support in organizing urban poor

The tool also helps to monitor and review progress and challenges in the implementation of the SFDRR and informs the DRR strategies.

The [Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities](#) has a preliminary and detailed assessment:

- The **preliminary assessment** helps to open up multi-stakeholder dialogue on disaster resilience.
- The **detailed assessment** creates an in-depth review, forming a basis for a detailed city resilience action plan.



communities and amplifying the voice, agency and influence of the slum dwellers to the local governments for more inclusion within planning policies and development plans.

The SDI's Know Your City (KYC) is a global campaign for participatory urban governance focused on uplifting impoverished communities. It unites slum dwellers and local governments through community-led initiatives such as slum profiling, enumeration, and mapping. KYC believes in the power of knowledge and gives a voice to the majority who live in the shadows of the formal city ensuring that each neighbourhood understands how data helps them make choices and influence development.

The Know Your City tool includes:

- **Community-led approaches:** SDI prioritizes solutions driven by the needs and aspirations of slum dwellers themselves.
- **Partnerships with local governments:** SDI fosters collaborations with local authorities to advocate for inclusive urban policies and programs.
- **Advocacy and capacity building:** SDI engages in advocacy efforts (see [SDI KYC You Tube Channel](#)), facilitates peer-to-peer exchange, and builds the capacity of slum dwellers to actively participate in decision-making processes.





Adama Bamba, Urban Resilience Analyst, African Union Commission



## 2.3 Africa Urban Resilience Programme

The Africa Urban Resilience Program (AURP) of the [African Union Commission \(AUC\)](#) was established as the number of disasters increases in Africa and their compounded impact due to geo-political volatility, socio-economic instability, and related pressures. Between 1970 and 2019, more than 1,000 disasters caused over 1 million deaths due to natural hazards, with economic losses significantly rising, necessitating the urgent need for effective disaster risk management. Urbanization dynamics, coupled with inadequate urban planning, exacerbate disaster risks, particularly in urban informal settlements.

On this premise, the African Union needed to guide member states on how they can reduce urban disaster risks and encourage them to pay closer attention to urban communities and the unique needs of the most-at-risk, hence the African Urban Resilience Programme (AURP).

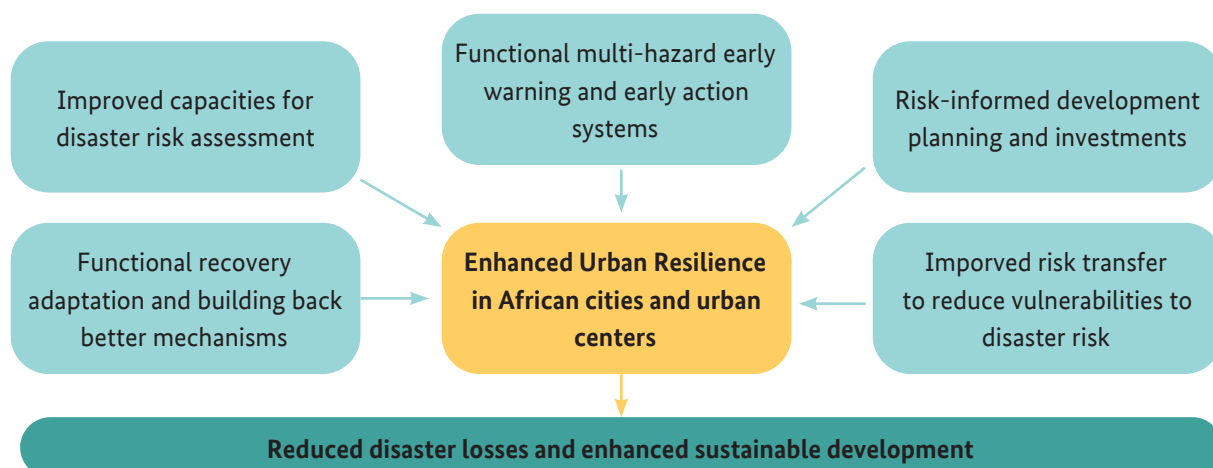
The AURP aligns with the [Agenda 2063](#), [Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction](#), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and other key AU strategies such as the [Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan](#). The AURP leverages on the current AU-led DRR efforts including the [Green Recovery Action Plan](#), and the [Programme of Action for the Implementation of the SFDRR in Africa](#).

The AURP emphasizes building resilience in urban areas through several strategic drivers identified as the program's five objectives of the cities and urban centres:

1. Improved capacities for disaster risk assessment.
2. Development of functional multi-hazard early warning and early action systems.
3. Integration of disaster risk reduction into their development planning.
4. Development of functional recovery, adaptation and building back better mechanisms.
5. Improved risk transfer to reduce vulnerabilities to disaster risk.

The AURP program focuses on enhancing disaster risk knowledge and assessment by leveraging local and indigenous knowledge, improving risk education, and developing multi-hazard early warning systems. It emphasizes risk-informed urban development, sustainable management of resources, and empowering local communities.

AURP supports sustainable post-disaster recovery through enhanced capacities for Post-Disaster Needs Assessments and improved resettlement plans. It also promotes innovative municipal financing and insurance to reduce vulnerabilities. By tackling these critical areas, AURP aims to build resilient urban centres and support Africa's overall resilience against disasters.



## 2.4 Resilience Learning Modules on the localization of the Sendai Framework

The Resilience Learning Modules on the localization of the Sendai Framework, developed by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), in partnership with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat), aim to support local and regional governments (LRGs) in the creation of an enabling environment for disaster risk reduction and resilience building. The modules

are designed to foster learning and raise awareness about the links between local action and the achievement of the global agendas, and showcase tools, strategies and actions available for LRGs to build their resilience.

The modules are designed as a guide for practitioners and facilitators to adapt and organize their own workshops and trainings, with interactive exercises and dynamic learning games. The theoretical part of the modules is based on lectures, case studies, and additional resources built on the experiences of LRGs and existing research. Interactive exercises aim to facilitate knowledge exchange and build on the theoretical part, providing opportunities for reflection on concepts, as well as integration of context specific experiences and knowledge from participants' own cities and territories. The content of two Modules, [Resilience Learning Module I: Fundamentals of Resilient Governance and Development](#) and [Resilience Learning Module II: Strategies and Actions](#), have been applied during the workshop and are described in more detail in the first chapter "Learning sessions".



[Resilience Learning Module I: Fundamentals of Resilient Governance and Development](#)



[Resilience Learning Module II: Strategies and Actions](#)

### Futurilities

This role-playing exercise has proved to be a great tool to foster reflection on the importance of investing in DRR and resilience. Participants play the role of local government officials making decisions on the allocation of their budget across three different rounds starting in 2020 and finishing in 2100. The decisions taken will have short- and long-term effects which impact the future of the city in different ways. The exercise fosters critical reflections on decision making processes and dynamics within local and regional governments, data available to integrate resilience and climate adaptation into policy making processes, and the importance of seeing resilience building as an investment.

### Urban Planner Power

From land use plans to building codes to urban upgrading programs, local and regional governments have multiple tools at hand to strengthen the resilience of their environment. The game aims to encourage participants to reflect on the planning and development control tools and processes available to build resilience, and the importance of middle and long-term city visions to guide the development, prioritization and implementation of spatial resilience building strategies.



UCLG Game - Futurilities



UCLG Game - Urban Planner Power



### 3. Field Trip

The field trip to Michuki and Uhuru Parks in Nairobi's central business district exemplified the integration of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in urban development.

**Michuki park**, formerly a dumping site, was transformed into a green space by rehabilitating the riparian land along the Nairobi River, removing about 20,000 tons of waste, and planting 6,357 indigenous trees. It features gabions for riverbank stabilization, pathways, a tree nursery, and recreational amenities.

**Uhuru park** is one of the most significant urban parks in Nairobi. It provides a green oasis in the heart of the city, where residents can escape the hustle and bustle and connect with nature. It has an artificial pond used for boat riding, many national monuments, grounds for public events and recreational purposes.

#### Role of NbS and Public Spaces in Disaster Risk Management

Both parks display NbS characteristics such as the green and blue infrastructure whose benefits include enhanced biodiversity, improved air quality, human health and well-being. In general, NbS and public spaces have a critical function in DRM, as outlined in the synopsis below:

##### (a) Pre-disaster

**Community resilience and preparedness:** Public spaces provide venues for community engagement, training, and awareness programs on disaster preparedness and response. Community drills, workshops, and educational campaigns held in public spaces can help build resilience, increase awareness, and empower individuals to take proactive measures to mitigate risks.

**Green infrastructure for disaster resilience:** Green public spaces, including parks, gardens, and green belts, serve as natural buffers against natural hazards such as flooding, landslides, and heatwaves. Vegetation in these spaces helps absorb excess

water, stabilize soil, reduce surface runoff, and mitigate the urban heat island effect, thus minimizing the impact of disasters on urban environments.

##### (b) During disaster

**Safe shelter and evacuation areas:** Public spaces such as parks, squares, and open grounds can serve as safe shelter areas during emergencies or disasters like earthquakes, floods, or storms. These spaces provide refuge for displaced individuals and communities and can serve as assembly points for evacuation efforts.

**Emergency communication and information hub:** Public spaces often have infrastructure such as notice boards, information kiosks, or community centers that can be utilized for disseminating critical information and emergency alerts to the public during disaster events. They can serve as communication hubs for coordinating rescue and relief efforts.

**Access to basic services:** Public spaces located strategically within communities can ensure access to essential services such as clean water, sanitation facilities, medical aid, and temporary shelters during emergencies. Well-equipped public spaces can act as distribution points for relief supplies and emergency provisions.

##### (c) Post disaster

**Social cohesion and mutual support networks:** Public spaces foster social cohesion and community bonding, which are crucial for effective disaster response and recovery. Strong social networks formed in public spaces facilitate mutual support, collective action, and solidarity among residents during times of crisis.



Michuki Park, Nairobi, Kenya



Uhuru Park, Nairobi, Kenya



## 4. Exchange Sessions

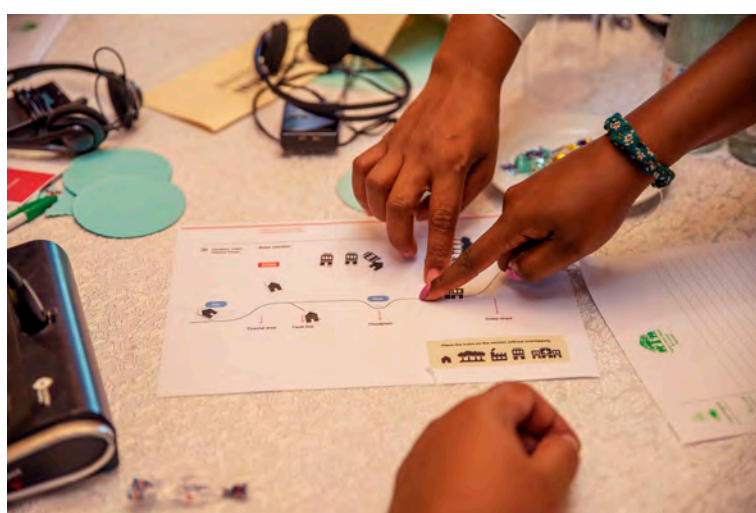
The training facilitated a series of peer-to-peer and group work sessions, in which the participants exchanged on their challenges and solutions, identifying areas of action, based on the learning sessions and experts' inputs. The outputs of these sessions are summarised in the following sub-sections.



Workshop Group Work



Workshop Group Work: Beyond the Timeline



Workshop Group Work: Urban Planner Power

### 4.1 Insights from Cities on Disaster Risk Resilience Building

Cities worldwide face increasing challenges from natural disasters and climate change, necessitating robust strategies to integrate resilience into urban development and planning. This section explores how the cities of Quelimane, Beau Basin Rose Hill, Kampala, and Homa Bay share their disaster risk reduction (DRR) challenges and best practices.

They address the following challenges and best practices related to:

1. Integrating disaster resilience into urban planning and development.
2. Leveraging international and inter-city collaborations.
3. Involving local communities, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, in decision-making.
4. Planning for long-term sustainable financing of resilience projects.

**Kampala, Uganda**, embeds disaster resilience into its urban development through key plans like the Kampala Climate Change Action Plan and the Kampala Drainage Master Plan. The city collaborates with international partners such as Strasbourg and networks like UGCities4Resilience, enhancing its resilience through skills development and knowledge exchange. Kampala also emphasizes disability-inclusive approaches, partnering with the National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda to integrate disability inclusion into DRR strategies.

*Agnes Bugaba, Manager Risk Management, Executive Director's Office Kampala Capital City Authority*



**Beau Bassin Rose Hill, Mauritius**, demonstrates a commitment to disaster resilience through systematic policy frameworks and international collaborations. The city has achieved Stage C in the Making Cities Resilient 2030 initiative and developed a comprehensive National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Policy and Strategic Framework with support from UN agencies and international partners.

*David Bablee, Local Disaster Management Coordinator; Municipal Council of Beau Bassin Rose Hill*

**Quelimane, Mozambique**, prioritizes mangrove restoration and management to mitigate flood risks and enhance environmental resilience. The city engages local communities in planting mangroves and employs data-driven early warning systems for vulnerable communities. Quelimane participates in international forums and training sessions to exchange knowledge and resources with other cities facing similar challenges.

*Maria Moreno, Deputy Mayor, City of Quelimane*



**Homa Bay County, Kenya**, focuses on inclusive resilience strategies tailored to local needs and vulnerabilities. The county ensures marginalized groups are involved in resilience planning through community engagement and legislative measures. By integrating indigenous knowledge into early warning systems and collaborating internationally, Homa Bay strengthens its resilience and empowers communities.

*Tobias Rachuonyo Ongure, Stakeholder Management and Coordination on Disaster Management, County Government of Homa Bay*

These insights illustrate how each city proactively embraces integrating disaster resilience strategies into their broader urban development processes by emphasizing advocacy, inclusive-participatory approaches, knowledge sharing, and city-to-city learning networks.



## 4.2 Cities Challenges and Next Steps

Through out the exchange sessions participants from over 20 cities exchanged on their needs, expertise and identified next steps to ensure disaster risk resilience. The map below is a summary of the group breakout sessions.



Workshop Group Work: Needs and Experience



Presentation of Next Steps of City of Sahr by Ngarmadji Ndilabaye, Secretary General of the Town Hall, City of Sarh, Chad



**Dakar, Senegal** is facing frequent flooding and coastal erosion.

**Next steps** include strengthening disaster recovery and preparedness strategy through international collaborations with UNDRR, focusing on developing DRR programs and enhancing early warning systems.

**Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire** identified the need of financial resources to support the development of the a DRR plan and strategies.

**Next steps** include strengthening the understanding of DRR and mobilization of resources to kickstart development of a DRR plan.

**Lome, Togo** identified the need of a DRR platform focusing on strengthening DRR understanding at local governmental and communities' level.

**Next steps** include community and local government capacity building and sensitization of DRR, adaptation of risk assessment to better understand their risks and hazards.

**Freetown, Sierra Leone** is facing urbanization and population living in disaster-prone areas, necessitating an inclusive and participatory disaster risk management plan.

**Next steps** include application of the disaster resilience scorecard and undertake the development of a DRR strategy.

**Kampala, Uganda** is facing funding challenges and advocacy of DRR activities at national government level.

**Next steps** include establishment of multi-stakeholder structures, platforms, and capacity building at all levels.

**Bukavu, DR Congo** is facing funding and capacity building challenges on DRR plans and policies.

**Next steps** include involvement in DRR training workshops and application for financial support to develop a DRR plan.

**Windhoek, Namibia** identified the need of a DRR action plan strategy and is facing funding challenges.

**Next Steps** include finalisation of the resilience and action plan strategy and develop a DRR awareness and communication plan.

**Benguérir, Morocco** is facing damaged infrastructure during hazardous events and lacks capacity to prepare and recover effectively from disasters.

**Next steps** include development of a local DRR plan and capacity building on risk-proofing of critical infrastructure

**Sarh, Chad** is facing challenges in the integration of DRR policy into the local development plan.

**Next steps** include capacity building of members of the multisectoral committee, community sensitization on DRR, development of bankable resilience projects.

**Nairobi, Kenya** is facing funding challenges and identified the need to strengthen departmental coordination in DRR planning and preparedness.

**Next steps** include capacity building for local government departments to collaboratively respond to shocks and stresses, participation in peer-to-peer learning and networking to develop bankable risk-informed development strategies.

**Lusaka, Zambia** is facing urban flooding issues and lacks a localized DRR strategy.

**Next steps** include development of a DRR strategy centred around inclusive community participation and capacity building workshops to enter the disaster risk scorecard tool.

**Toamasina, Madagascar** municipality identified the need for an action plan on DRR.

**Next steps** include capacity building on the development of a local DRR strategy.

**Beau Bassin Rose Hill, Mauritius** identified the need for increased human resources at municipal level to implement DRR measures.

**Next Steps** include creation of a DRM unit at the municipality with a dedicated staff.

**Quelimane, Mozambique** identified the need to fully assessed disaster risks.

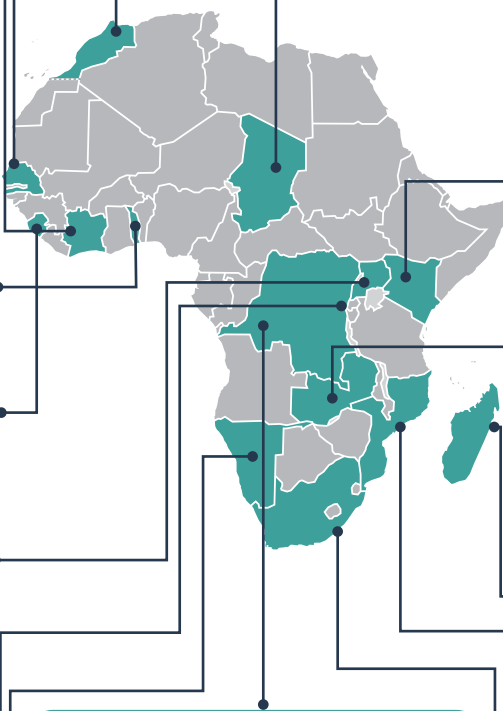
**Next steps** include adoption of UNDRR disaster resilience scorecard and the SDI KYC tool for better and informed decision making.

**Kinshasa, DR Congo** identified the needs of a DRR strategy and implementation structure for managing risks and disasters.

**Next steps** include adoption of the disaster resilience scorecard tool to better understand their risk levels and promotion of local government and communities' stakeholder discussions on DRR.

**Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa** identified the need of a risk assessments and tools to monitor and inform DRR and resilience building.

**Next Steps**, include adoption of an integrated planning for urban resilience.



## 5. Conclusion

The workshop highlighted the fundamental principles and frameworks of disaster risk reduction into urban development to enhance resilience in African cities, further exploring participatory risk analysis tools employed by UNDDR's Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities and SDI's Know Your City tool. These tools support local governments and communities in assessing and understanding their disaster risks that subsequently inform planning and implementation of DRR Strategies.

Furthermore, the workshop provided a platform for exchange on challenges, needs and best practices through peer-to-peer learning and consultations. Where several similar challenges in implementing effective DRR strategies, such as funding constraints, weak departmental coordination, lack of localized strategies, and inadequate capacity building were explored. These challenges hinder the development and execution of comprehensive DRR plans, leaving urban populations vulnerable to disasters.

The best practices shared included establishing multi-stakeholder structures, enhancing community engagement, aligning local policies with international frameworks, and strengthening institutional collaboration. The recommendations emphasized the need for participatory risk assessments, boosting awareness and capacity building, and coordinating resource allocation to ensure sustainable and inclusive DRR practices.

Conclusively, the training reaffirmed the critical role of multi-sectoral approaches and NbS solutions in building resilient African cities. By understanding their risks, developing and implementing comprehensive DRR strategies, cities can mitigate disaster risks, enhance environmental sustainability, and improve the quality of life for their residents. Moving forward, the collaboration and knowledge sharing facilitated by this workshop will be instrumental in addressing the challenges and advancing the resilience agenda for African local governments and ensuring a safer and more sustainable future for all.



Group Photo Michuki Park, Nairobi, Kenya





## 6. Annex

*List of participants and organisations etc.*

### Participating Local Governments

- Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
- Accra, Ghana
- Beau Bassin Rose Hill, Mauritius
- Benguéir, Morocco
- Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo
- Dakar, Senegal
- Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
- Freetown, Sierra Leone
- Homa Bay, Kenya
- Kampala Capital City Authority, Uganda
- Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo
- Kisumu County Government
- Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa
- Lusaka, Zambia
- Lomè, Togo
- Mwanza, Tanzania
- Nairobi City County Government, Kenya
- Sarh, Chad
- Toamasina, Madagascar
- Quelimane, Mozambique
- Windhoek, Namibia

### Other Organizations

- African Union Commission
- GIZ- Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya and Togo
- National Civil Protection Agency, Togo
- National Ministry of Public Works and Infrastructure, DRC
- Slum Dwellers International - Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Tanzania
- United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
- UCLG Africa
- United Disabled Persons of Kenya (UDPK)
- United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction - Regional Office for Africa

This workshop report is part of the RIA Learning and Exchange Platform. RIA offers actors engaged in urban resilience and disaster risk reduction the opportunity to access information on risk-informed urban development by providing an inclusive and barrier-reduced learning environment. This includes facilitating the exchange of experiences between different state and non-state actors in the region to enhance mutual learning on urban resilience.

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