



Resilient Cities Asia-Pacific 2015

The 1st Asia-Pacific Forum on Urban Resilience and Adaptation

11-13 February 2015 | Bangkok, Thailand

Bangkok Call for Action

Towards Urban Resilience in Asia-Pacific

In order to effectively address challenges that cities in the Asia-Pacific region are facing, radical and innovative solutions that facilitate a transformation from a disaster risk-prone state to one that is more resilient are urgently needed.

It has become increasingly clear that the cumulative impacts of the three major phenomena of our times, namely, urbanisation, climate change and globalisation, increasingly result in disasters and shocks in our cities and their surrounding regions.

How local governments understand risks, to a significant extent determines how effectively they are able to respond to them. There are no simple answers as the interactions between social and ecological systems and developmental agendas in cities create a complex and dynamic set of problems. It is this complexity within urban risks that local governments need to better understand, with the aim of developing actionable and integrated urban resilience strategies that address both sudden and slow-onset disasters.

Sustainable urban development and the need to engage local and subnational governments more actively to demonstrate leadership in global disaster risk reduction efforts is therefore essential.

There is a need to do things differently; to be prepared; to innovate; to constantly learn and adapt; and to enact the full spectrum of resilience actions, including disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery, for current and projected risks. The 1st Resilient Cities Asia-Pacific Congress, convened by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability at a historical moment when national governments are in the process of finalizing the post-2015 development agenda, sought to understand how this can be done and to provide a platform to foster partnerships that can make this happen.

The Congress participants, comprising of elected and other city representatives, local government networks, as well as urban practitioners and researchers from the Asia-Pacific region, strongly urge national governments to recognize local and subnational governments as their governmental stakeholders, and reiterate their commitment to collaborate with them to:

1. Focus on innovative systems-based approaches to enable transformation towards new and resilient trajectories of growth, especially considering the scale of urban infrastructure development needed in Asia-Pacific in the immediate to near future;
2. Promote concerted and coordinated urban resilience action in Asia-Pacific through active community involvement and stakeholder engagement;
3. Explore opportunities for increasing partnerships between local governments, other levels of governments, donor communities and private sector;
4. Ensure that urban risk status is regularly monitored and assessed to provide quantifiable evidence that is mainstreamed into urban planning, including land-use policy development and implementation, ecosystem and infrastructure projects;
5. Develop and benefit from new, additional and innovative financial and fiscal instruments in order to support risk-sensitive public and private investments;
6. Build capacities of local government officials to assess existing and anticipated risks and to be prepared to respond to them appropriately;
7. Ensure that measures for reducing risk and building resilience are equitable, adequately address interests of the urban poor, and are gender sensitive;
8. Connect urban risk reduction planning and implementation with existing initiatives, mechanisms, processes, in particular focusing on climate adaptation such as Durban Adaptation Charter, Compact of Mayors, Resilient Cities Accelerator Initiative, Medellin Collaboration and Resilient Cities Congress Series

Within the scope of the above, we reiterate our appeal to national governments and the global community to ensure appropriate recognition, engagement and empowerment of local and subnational governments through the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, the Goal 11 on sustainable cities and human settlements within the Sustainable Development Goals, UNFCCC COP 21 in Paris, and the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito in 2016. .

Adopted unanimously on the 13th of February 2015 in Bangkok, Thailand

and declared by

Mom Rajawongse Sukhumbhand Paribatra
Governor of Bangkok, Thailand