

Global Network for  
Disaster Reduction



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## Urban Risk Reduction: Private-Public Partnerships – Civil Society Perspectives

# Context: **Setting the scene for an unparalleled human tragedy in a major urban disaster**

## **Rapid urbanisation in large cities of Africa, Asia and Latin America**

- **Cities often exposed to climatic and geological hazards**
- **30-70% of poor live and work in “informal” sector**
  - Poor quality housing in high density settlements
  - Lack of infrastructure and access to basic services
  - Unregulated settlements often in dangerous locations
  - Public policies, laws and regulations have limited applicability
  - People live in conditions of ***high vulnerability***

## **Climate change will worsen the problem**

- Increased severity and frequency of extreme weather events
- Changing settlement pattern (increase rural > urban migration)

# Problem Statement: **Unplanned urbanisation leading to high concentrations of disaster risk**

- **A mismatch between supply and demand for basic infrastructure and services:**
  - Public authorities compete to attract private investment to drive economic growth – create employment, reduce poverty
  - Insufficient resources and capacities to accommodate increased demand caused by economic growth

**Urban growth is a fast track to accelerated risk.**

**Fundamental change of approach is required....**

# Key Actors: **Government**

- **Primary responsibility to protect people & property**
- **Authority and capabilities to formulate policy**
- **Accountable for policy implementation**
- **Mobilisation of resources and assign responsibilities**
- **Create an “enabling environment”**
- **Critical role of good local governance**

**... but power often controlled by economic elites with different needs to urban poor within a culture of patronage politics and a patrimonial state.**

# Key Actors: **Private Sector**

- **Globalisation – growing corporate influence**
- **Represent 86% of global financial flows**
- **“Multiplier” of public policy intent**
- **Major funder of the public sector**
- **Main investor and employer in socio-economic development**
- **Expertise and resources**
- **Significant footprint of society – societal responsibility commensurate with level of impact**

**Profound role in the creation / reduction of risk, but market has strong incentives to maximise short-term rate of return**

# Key Actors: **Civil Society**

**Local people and CSOs crucial for effective DRR**

- **First responders**
- **Established presence**
- **Working relationships, accessible to poor**
- **Relevant experience, skills and knowledge**
- **Ability to raise awareness, mobilise resources**
- **“Effective demand” for goods and services**
- **Exert downwards “*public*” accountability**
- **Foster local ownership**
- **Facilitate dialogue, built trust and partnerships**

**But... under-resourced, limited capacities, fragmentation, marginalisation, accountability and representation issues.**

# Getting ahead of the disaster curve: **Challenges and Opportunities**

- **Retrofitting existing building prohibitively expensive ?**
- **Enhanced awareness, preparedness & response reduce loss of life and assets ... but not underlying urban processes that create vulnerabilities**
- **Substantial investment in local institutional capacities (state & civil) to manage increasing urban populations**
- **Urban planning & development to consider risk in formal & informal settlements at the design phase**
- **Economic investment to include disaster risk assessment**
- **Economic growth / Poverty reduction strategies must not generate vulnerability**

# A need for innovative private-public partnerships ?

- Where do the resources for increased investments come from ?
- How to strategically engage private sector in DRR policy debate?
- How to raise critical consciousness, building grassroots constituencies and capacities for engagement?
- Can we incorporate DRR into corporate business practices?
- How to strengthen public accountability for disaster risk impact?
- How to open political space for reform ? Who are the champions within the sector ?
- How to build trust, constructive relationships, collaborative approaches and alliances ?



Want to know more?

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## Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction

- A major international network of civil society organisations implementing and influencing disaster risk reduction policy and practice
- A diverse membership with a broad range of expertise, skills, experience and perspectives from 90 countries around the world