

RISE UP: Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor



UN-Habitat's Flagship Programme 3

The challenge

One of the greatest challenges for climate change adaptation is how to build **resilience for the more than three billion people** living in highly vulnerable climate hotspots¹ and the **more than one billion urban dwellers** who live in informal settlements today. Despite all efforts, the reality is that urban vulnerable groups are disproportionately and adversely affected by climate change.² Climate action efforts are at risk of leaving behind large, marginalized groups in cities while they are the ones who contribute the least to root causes of climate change.

The IPCC 2nd Assessment Report states that climate change will negatively impact people living in informal settlements with “expected damages to homes, businesses, infrastructure and facilities; disruption of livelihoods and food security; reduced tenure security; higher food, water and energy prices; and increased disease, morbidity and mortality”.³ The inconvenient truth is that climate impacts will accelerate beyond 2050, and continue to escalate beyond 2100, even if we stop global warming today.

The climate finance gap for adaptation is precarious and leads to the following paradox: On average, only around 21% of climate finance is going towards adaptation and resilience. Of that, only 10% of climate fund investments are being spent on the local level where climate vulnerabilities compound; a fraction of what is needed in the rapidly growing cities. By 2030, the UN Environment Programme estimates that the developing world will have to spend up to US\$300bn a year just to cope with exacerbated climate impacts. While the Parties to the UNFCCC pledged US\$100bn per year; to date adaptation finance peaked at US\$80bn in 2019. We already can observe how Covid-19 recovery and the current energy and food crisis, triggered by the war in Ukraine, are redirecting funds away from the climate emergency.



Our vision

The RISE UP Flagship will improve the socio-economic prosperity of poor urban communities by reducing climate disruptions to livelihoods, protecting them from the monetary and social costs of climate disasters, and improving basic services. The programme will achieve the effective adaptation of a significant proportion of the climate-vulnerable urban poor. The Flagship's vision, building resilience for the vulnerable urban poor, has been adopted across UN-Habitat and is coordinated with the other Flagship programmes (see QR code), UN Agencies, as well as state and non-state actors. RISE UP continues to push for the integration of urban issues, including the climate vulnerabilities of the urban poor, into larger city-wide and national frameworks, mobilization and coordination of large infrastructure investments in resilience, and empowerment and capacity development.

The flagship programme

In support of our Strategic Plan 2020–2025, the objective of this Flagship is to mobilize large scale investments in resilience where it matters – for the benefit of the most vulnerable urban poor. By focusing on resilience challenges, national and local governments and communities will have the resources, knowledge, institutional capacities, and policy environment to accelerate climate-resilient actions, allowing vulnerable communities to transition into a resilient, green, and just urban future.

[1] IPCC WGII Sixth Assessment Report on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Chapter 8.

[2] IPCC WGII Sixth Assessment Report on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Chapter 12.

[3] Urban Climate Change Research Network (UCCRN) Second Assessment Report on Climate Change and Cities (ARC3.2). Chapter 11.

Goals and Outcomes

1 Implement cutting-edge, feasibility-proven, and bankable resilience solutions for the urban poor and the natural and built environment

As 75% of the world's infrastructure is yet to be built by 2050, the global urbanization trends offer a time-limited opportunity to work towards widespread and transformational adaptation and Climate Resilient Development for the most vulnerable urban poor.

2 Create an enabling policy environment

Pro-poor climate action is mainstreamed in national and city climate policies, plans and commitments, and into the priorities and strategies of important parts of the global climate action and finance architecture respecting fundamental rights.

3 Address the climate finance paradoxes

Investment and financing for inclusive pro-poor adaptation projects in urban vulnerability hotspots are increased, with a focus on small and medium-sized cities in developing and transition countries, Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

4 Coordinate and accelerate the efforts for urban poor resilience of key partners

Capacity is enhanced among all levels of government and core partners to effectively coordinate action towards building the resilience of the urban poor, and access and mobilize investments in resilience.

Case studies

Building Climate Resilience in Lilongwe, Malawi

Malawi is leading the way globally on implementing nature-based solutions. The RISE UP project “Building Resilience of Informal Settlements Through Nature-based Solutions”, is one of many examples. UN-Habitat started restoring 35 hectares of mangroves in Lovobe and Kimony in March 2022, supporting community-driven nature-based risk reduction measures surrounding the Lingadzi and Mchesi rivers that will reduce the impact of floods in the area.

Bush Gardens as Nature-based Solutions for Climate Resilience, Food Security, and Income-Generation in Honiara, Solomon Islands

The “Climate Resilient Honiara” project is UN-Habitat's response to rapid urbanization and the growth of informal settlements in Honiara. The programme uses nature-based solutions as a cost-effective and inclusive way of enhancing the climate resilience of informal urban residents. Working closely with the natural environment, the implementation of Bush Gardens improves livability, provides benefits for biodiversity, addresses extreme heat, and serves as a source of food and income for local women and their families.

Building Urban Climate Resilience in Morondava, Madagascar

Morondava, a tourist city on the west coast of Madagascar, is threatened by coastal erosion and experiences severe floods during heavy rains. In collaboration with the municipality of Bemanonga, the local associations CODE Menabe, and Consortium des Jeunes Mahery CJM, UN-Habitat restored 35 ha of mangroves in Lovobe and Kimony to increase the water-storage capacity of wetlands, achieve climate adaptation, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity conservation targets simultaneously. Additionally, these communities expect an increase in crab and shrimp fisheries in the restored mangrove sites, therefore improving their source of income.

Experts

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“The more decisively and the earlier we act, the more able we will be to address unavoidable changes, manage risks, improve our lives and achieve sustainability for ecosystems and people around the world – today and in the future,”

Debra Roberts, Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change Co-Chair for Working Group II



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