

July 2016

Climate and disaster resilience planning of vulnerable settlements in Laos PDR funded through the Adaptation Fund

Following a two year process, UN-Habitat was accredited to the Adaptation Fund in August 2015. It has since successfully submitted a concept note entitled, "Enhancing the climate and disaster resilience of the most vulnerable rural and emerging urban settlements in Lao PDR".

The project, currently in the phase of detailed project design, focuses on the southern provinces of Laos where the primary beneficiaries are approximately 47,000 people in 189 vulnerable settlements. In these settlements at least 60 per cent of the population is impoverished, and many represent ethnic minorities. The settlements are affected by floods, droughts, landslides and climate related diseases. Very little basic services exist in these settlements.

Southern Laos is wedged between Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam. Economic opportunities stemming from trade between these countries as well as cross-border traffic have resulted in rapid urbanization in the region. Climate induced rural-urban migration has also further accelerated the growth of towns in the region.

In close collaboration with three



Stakeholder consultation in preparation for the AF project in Laos © UN-Habitat

Ministries, three provincial governments, and local governments, the project will deliver three work packages:

Firstly, the project will build the climate change planning capacity of key national and local government authorities through trainings, the development of risk maps and climate change vulnerability assessments, and the participatory development of climate action plans.

Secondly, local resilience strategy and action plan development for the targeted 189 communities in close collaboration with the participating communities. Plans will prioritize

community infrastructure systems.

Thirdly, climate and disaster resilient infrastructure systems will be built in the 189 communities that address the community priorities of preventing flooding, droughts and landslides. Co-benefits from climate resilient infrastructure include employment as well as knowledge and skills on enhancing resilience, as some community members will participate in implementing these projects. Furthermore, project management capacities will be developed. Close to two-thirds of the project budget will directly benefit the communities.

EU Covenant of Mayors and Compact of Mayors merge to form largest coalition of cities committed to fighting climate change

On 22 June 2016, European Commission VP Maros Šefčovič and UN Special Envoy Michael Bloomberg announced the creation of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and

Energy. This new entity, which will "go live" on 1 January 2017, will represent the merger between the UN-Habitat supported Compact of Mayors, focused on climate action,

and the EC-supported Covenant of Mayors, which prioritizes action on renewable energy and energy efficiency. Paulius Kulikauskas, Chief of the UN-Habitat Office for

EU Covenant of Mayors and Compact of Mayors merge to form largest coalition of cities committed to fighting climate change (continued)

Europe and European Institutions, represented UN-Habitat at the announcement ceremony in Brussels.

UN-Habitat Executive Director Dr. Joan Clos saluted this development: "As one of the founders of the Compact of Mayors, UN-Habitat welcomes the merger of these two initiatives. The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy will

serve as the global platform for cities to commit to ambitious climate and energy action. As Habitat III approaches, we invite partners to the Global Covenant to ensure that this urgent priority is firmly enshrined in the New Urban Agenda".

UN-Habitat helped to develop the Compact of Mayors, which was launched at the UN Climate Summit

in New York City in September 2014, and has continued to serve on its Management Committee. UN-Habitat expects to have a seat on the Founders' Council of the new Global Covenant.

Applying the Guiding Principles for City Climate Action Planning in Vilankulo, Mozambique and Glasgow, Scotland

In December 2015 at the Paris Climate Summit, UN-Habitat together with 45 endorsing partners launched the Guiding Principles for City Climate Action Planning. Endorsing partners included the World Bank, Global Environment Facility, UNEP, UNISDR, UCLG, ICLEI, WRI, CDP, seven cities and many others. In the months since then the focus has shifted on testing and applying these eight Guiding Principles at the city level. To that end, UN-Habitat and partners first developed a set of indicators to make those principles operational. Then we assembled a toolkit to help endorsing partners and others apply the eight principles at the city level via 'accompanied missions'. Under this methodology, a planner 'accompanies' an ongoing climate change or similar planning process in a given city, to provide feedback on that process from the perspective of the Guiding Principles.

The first of these accompanied missions was to Vilankulo, Mozambique (population 165,000) in late March 2016. The municipality is using the City Resilience Action Planning Tool (City-RAP) developed UN-Habitat and the Technical Centre for Disaster Risk Management, Sustainability and Urban Resilience (DiMSUR). The City-RAP is a 3-phase process that aims to enable local governments of small to intermediate sized cities and towns to plan and undertake practical actions to strengthen their resiliency. It seeks



Validation workshop as part of resilience action planning in Vilankulo © Faderr Johm

to put local governments and urban stakeholders in the driver's seat in planning for greater resilience.

The accompanied mission to Vilankulo coincided with Phase 3 of the City-RAP process, where the priority actions, activities, and implementation strategy for the Vilankulo Resilience Action Plan, developed in earlier phases, were validated and further developed.

The mission confirmed some significant strengths of the City-RAP process, e.g., its inclusivity. At the same time it illuminated certain areas where the process in Vilankulo could be strengthened. For example, efforts at collaboration beyond the city boundaries could lead to important new approaches to

building resilience, e.g., the buffering of settlements from storm surge by protecting mangrove forests. Or again, mitigation benefits could be built into some of the prioritized resilience actions, e.g., ensuring that new street lights used solar or LED technologies.

A partner undertook a second accompanied mission in mid-June to Glasgow, Scotland, where the city council is currently undertaking a climate change action planning process. Initial findings from applying the GP look promising. On his way home from Glasgow, the team leader advised that there is a strong appetite from the Glasgow City Council for future engagement with the Guiding Principles initiative. Further updates will be forthcoming.

UN-Habitat launches two Sida-funded climate action projects

With the generous support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), UN-Habitat is launching two new projects in the area of cities and climate change.

The first project, "Developing and Financing City Climate Action Plans", will support a small number of cities in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) whose mayors have announced a commitment to the Compact of Mayors.

It is no surprise that a number of committed cities are large, capable, recognized leaders in climate action: Rio de Janeiro, San Francisco, Copenhagen. Such cities should have few difficulties in meeting these commitments – and indeed some cities such as Rio already have been found to be compliant with the Compact. Other committed cities, however, are smaller and less prosperous. These include human settlements in LDCs such as Cotonou, Benin; Kitwe, Zambia; and Thimphu, capital of the mountainous Kingdom of Bhutan. Some of these cities and towns are relatively small, e.g., Port Vila (pop. 44,000) and Mutsamudu (pop. 30,000), located in the Small Island Developing States of Vanuatu and Comoros, respectively. Altogether 25 cities from LDCs (20 in



CCCI has been supporting Port Vila, whose Mayor recently committed to the Compact of Mayors. Community and stakeholder hazard map from the 2014 Greater Port Vila Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment © UN-Habitat

Africa, 5 in Asia/Pacific) have signed up to the Compact. It is such smaller, poorer cities that the present Project will target, firstly with developing climate action plans to comply with the Compact of Mayors, and then in efforts to secure funding to develop priority climate actions for financing.

The second Sida-funded Project, "Pro-poor Planning of Climate Resilience in Marginalized Neighborhoods", likewise will help to address an important need. It is well recognized that families living in certain slums and marginalized neighborhoods are particularly vulnerable to climate-

type disasters, e.g., flooding or landslides brought about by cyclones. Strengthened approaches to building resilience at the neighborhood level, that draw from the lessons gleaned from the distinct disciplines of slum upgrading and adaptation to climate change, are urgently needed. The present Project will help to develop and pilot such approaches.

While both new projects under the CCCI umbrella are of modest size, they will thus both help UN-Habitat to address key needs. Both projects are expected to run for four years (2016-2019).

New promising engagements of CCCI in Caribbean Cities

In 2016 UN-Habitat is placing strategic emphasis on responding to growing demands for city-level work on climate change from cities in Latin America and the Caribbean. This focus follows a recommendation from the 2012 Mid-Term Evaluation of CCCI that, as funds allow, we should expand our geographical coverage. Two new activities have been started in the Caribbean, in Belmopan (Belize) and Canaan (Haiti).

In 2015 Belmopan, the Capital of Belize, requested support in updating its old Master Plan to support rapid city development. During a first scoping mission to Belmopan in

late 2015, stakeholders confirmed climate change as a major theme of city development; this is due to the multifaceted climate impacts expected for Belize. During the just concluded 6th Caribbean Urban Forum in Paramaribo (Suriname), Belmopan and UN-Habitat signed a MoU to formalize the relationship. Joint actions planned include developing the new Master Plan for a climate resilient and low-carbon Belmopan, developing transformative projects, and protecting and restoring a green and blue space network. The concept plan proposed a climate sensitive city extension to accommodate the rapid growth of the City.



Diagram of Green and Blue public space network to enhance resilience of future Belmopan, © UN-Habitat

New promising engagements of CCCI in Caribbean Cities (Continued)

Canaan, Haiti, is a large emerging settlement on the northern outskirts of Port-au-Prince that saw a rapid influx after the 2010 earthquake. After that earthquake the population quickly mushroomed from almost zero to around 200,000 today. Canaan developed informally and is not serviced by infrastructure networks.

UN-Habitat is supporting the Haiti government to provide a strategic vision and an urban structure for Canaan, in order to overcome the challenges and enhance sustainable urban development. CCCI has started to ensure that this vision is climate proof, and that major climate vulnerabilities such as flooding

and landslides are adequately addressed in the planning, design and programming phase, leading to enhanced resilience.

Both projects represent a collaboration between the Climate Change Planning Unit (CCCI) and the Urban Planning and Design Lab.

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 2016

Bonn, Germany: A series of CCCI supported events will take place at the ICLEI Resilient Cities Congress between July 6 and July 8 2016.

Tacloban, The Philippines: Stakeholder consultations will be held in Tacloban - the city at the epicenter of super Typhoon Haiyan that devastated the central Philippines in November 2013.

Honiara, Solomon Islands: In conjunction with the Solomon Island

National Urban Conference, the final draft of the Honiara Urban Resilience and Climate Change Action Plan will be discussed on 30 June and 1 July 2016.

Fiji: The first climate resilience planning workshop for informal settlements affected by Tropical Cyclone Winston, which hit the Fiji Islands in February 2016, will be held on 7 July 2016.

Philippines: To support the

review of the Philippines National Urban Development and Housing Framework, a series of consultations will take place throughout July and August to mainstream climate change into this urban umbrella policy.

Quito, Ecuador: The third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) is to take place in from 17 to 20 October 2016. CCCI will hosting and supporting several side- and networking events.

ABOUT US

Headquartered at UN-Habitat in Nairobi, the Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI) involves the participation of more than 40 cities worldwide. It targets medium-sized cities in developing and least-developed countries, and emphasizes good governance and practical initiatives for the municipalities and their citizens.

The CCCI team has adapted

participatory processes developed previously by UN-Habitat so as to specifically address climate change issues within the city. A complementary set of tools has been and is being further developed to support cities in assessing vulnerabilities, analyzing baseline emissions, and prioritizing mitigation and adaptation actions. Since 2008, CCCI has been generously supported by the Governments of Norway,

Germany and Sweden, the United Nations Development Account, the Cities Alliance, and other sources of global, regional, national and local funding.

Newsletters of the Cities and Climate Change Initiative are periodically published electronically. For more information, or to be added to our mailing list, contact cci@unhabitat.org or visit www.unhabitat.org/cci.

CCCI Cities and Countries

