

**2018 ECOSOC Integration Segment: “Innovative communities: leveraging technology and innovation to build sustainable and resilient societies”  
1 – 3 May 2018, UN Headquarters, New York**

**Contribution by UN-Habitat**

1. What is your assessment regarding the main risks faced by your membership currently and in the next 10 years, within the context of the work of your Office?

Today, our cities and citizens are facing new and amplified challenges as a result of rapid urbanization, climate change and social instability. We, as UN-Habitat, support cities and its inhabitants to face these challenges and become resilient. From earthquakes to flooding, rapid immigration to cyber-attacks, all cities face a range of shock and stresses natural and human-made. Unplanned cities are more vulnerable to shock as they often have pre-existing stresses. In cities that are not prepared for or able to recover from shocks, stresses on the system can accumulate or magnify other challenges. UN-Habitat, through its City Resilience Profiling Programme, works with local governments and their partners to provide training, tools and guidance to build urban resilience.

2. Please kindly rate a short list of vulnerabilities faced by Member States as identified by your Office in the course of its undertaking of its mandates:

- Extreme Weather & Natural Disaster  
Very Vulnerable

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- External trade or Economic shocks  
Somewhat Vulnerable

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- Food Crises  
Somewhat Vulnerable

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- Unemployment/Underemployment  
Very Vulnerable

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- Cyberattacks  
Somewhat Vulnerable

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- Governance  
Somewhat Vulnerable

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- Large-Scale Migration  
Somewhat Vulnerable

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- Water Crises  
Very Vulnerable

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- Environmental Disaster  
Somewhat Vulnerable

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- Data Fraud/Theft  
Somewhat Vulnerable

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- Social unrest/conflict  
Somewhat Vulnerable

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- Infrastructure  
Somewhat Vulnerable

3. What are the highlights of your Office's current work in terms of leveraging technology and innovation to build more sustainable and resilient societies?

UN-Habitat's understanding of a resilient city is one that is able to absorb, adapt, and recover from the shocks and stresses that are likely to happen, transforming itself in a positive way towards sustainability. In this scenario, Urban Resilience becomes a hub between the areas of Risk Reduction and Sustainability, and also a link between Humanitarian and Development activity. UN-Habitat's definition of Urban Resilience is the measurable ability of any urban system, with its inhabitants, to maintain continuity through all shocks and stresses, while positively adapting and transforming toward sustainability. In this line, UN-Habitat developed the City Resilience Profiling Tool (CRPT) to be a robust and comprehensive approach for cities to build their resilience. The CRPT provides a transversal diagnosis and pathway to resilience-based sustainable urban development. Following a multi-sectorial and multi-scale approach, the CRPT considers multiple shocks and stresses within the urban system. The CRPT can be implemented in all cities, regardless of their size, culture, location, economy and/or political environment. UN-Habitat developed the urban system methodology as a model through which a comprehensive diagnosis of the city can be achieved. As a result, UN-Habitat is assessing local governments in Actions for Resilience (A4R). Dimensions in which UN-Habitat is collecting data: Spatial attributes, Organizational attributes, Physical attributes, Functional attributes and Time. The tool is composed by 153 indicators. 60% of them are aligned with the SDGs and 80% with the New Urban Agenda. <http://urbanresiliencehub.org/tools-for-action>

4. Please provide an assessment of resilience gaps, or vulnerabilities, and areas requiring urgent attention within the context of the work of your Office and pertaining to building more sustainable and resilient societies for the advancement of the 2030 Agenda.

There is a need of understanding that resilience also lies at the core of the Humanitarian-Development nexus, bridging together two often disparate agendas. Ingraining resilience can reduce risks by increasing capacities and addressing vulnerabilities can decrease fragility and mitigate impacts, hereby enhancing effective and forward-thinking response. There is a gap on understanding resilience takes multiple forms, but in its essence, must seek the betterment of people, specifically those in vulnerable situations, who are at the centre of our aim and mandate.

5. Please share the most important challenges and opportunities, as well as valuable lessons learned, your Office has encountered in supporting the advancement of the 2030 Agenda through the use of technology and innovation to strengthen resilience and inclusion in an integrated manner. If your Office has work related to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, please share any specific initiatives undertaken to reduce disaster risk through the Framework.

Building urban resilience contributes to the Framework's overall objective to reduce vulnerability to disasters and increase preparedness for response and recovery, including contributions to the Four Priorities for Action. Our work contributes to the Framework's overall objective to reduce vulnerability to disasters and increase preparedness for response and recovery, including our contributions to the Four Priorities for Action: Priority 1. Contribution: Data collection and analysis, and building knowledge on disaster risk reduction; Priority 2. Contribution: Strengthening disaster risk governance through the adoption of plans; Priority 3. Contribution: Investment in risk reduction for resilience; Priority 4. Contribution: Scaling-up of preparedness and a 'build-back better' approach in recovery. The Framework calls for resilience on all levels, from local to regional and national. Building resilience in cities becomes a key pillar for achieving global development goals: The top 600 cities are home of 1/5th of the world's population and produce 60% of global GDP (UN-Habitat, World Cities Report). By 2030, without significant investment to make cities more resilient, natural disasters may cost cities worldwide \$314 billion each year, and climate change may push up to 77 million more urban residents into poverty (World Bank).

6. Please share strategies, plans, policies or initiatives in which your Office has been involved where different stakeholders – such as government, civil society organizations, private sector and

academia – have engaged in coordinated actions to enhance resilience at the local, national or international levels. What approaches have proven effective in this respect?

Global commitment to urban resilience has grown substantially over the past decade. As a result, a growing number of communities of practice working on the topic have been created. UN-Habitat contributes, leads or hosts a number of the networks to further knowledge, practice and awareness of urban resilience:

- **Medellin Collaboration for Urban Resilience:** Launched at the 7th session of World Urban Forum in Medellín, Colombia in 2014, this collaboration gathers the most prominent actors committed to building resilience globally including UNISDR, The World Bank, Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, Inter-American Development Bank, Rockefeller Foundation, 100 Resilient Cities, C40, ICLEI and Cities Alliance, and chaired by UN-Habitat. Collectively the partners work in over 4,000 cities globally, with more than USD 2 billion committed annually toward advancing resilient and sustainable urban growth. <http://urbanresiliencehub.org/medellin-colaboration>
  - **Making Cities Resilient Campaign (MCRC):** Launched in May 2010, UN-Habitat is a partner in the Making Cities Resilient: "My city is getting ready!" Campaign addresses local risk governance, urban risk and resilience. The MCRC will continue beyond 2020 with the support and recommendations of many partners and participants. The campaign has been successful in raising the awareness and political profile for disaster risk reduction and resilience among cities, creating a broad alliance and platform for dialogue and exchange, and developing some basic tools with technical content to guide capacity development and implementation of resilient cities. <https://www.unisdr.org/campaign/resilientcities/home/index>
  - **Global Alliance for Urban Crises:** The Global Alliance for Urban Crises was launched during a Special Session at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016. The Alliance arose out of consultation with urban experts, developing the Urban Crises Charter based on a set of urban recommendations to be put into action. Prior to the launch, UN-Habitat and other organizations co-led a series of consultations with urban experts to inform Alliance principles towards humanitarian response. Currently, the Alliance has over 50 members from the international humanitarian/development sector, knowledge management organizations, networks of urban professionals and local authorities. [www.urbancrises.org](http://www.urbancrises.org)
  - **RESCCUE:** The RESCCUE project, Resilience to cope with Climate Change in Urban Areas, aims to provide practical and innovative models and tools to end-users facing climate change challenges to build more resilient cities. [www.resccue.eu](http://www.resccue.eu)
7. Please share the most relevant examples and recommendations related to your Office's work in building more sustainable and resilient societies using technology and innovation, as well as emerging issues in this area likely to affect the achievement of the SDGs.

Through our experiences with cities, UN-Habitat's knowledge Hub is growing. The Hub approach gathers best practices, challenges and experiences from local and their partners working on resilience issues in order to learn each other and help to make actions more effective. Our biannual flagship publication "Trends in Urban Resilience 2017" showcase a global perspective of the topic. [http://urbanresiliencehub.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Trends\\_in\\_Urban\\_Resilience\\_2017.pdf](http://urbanresiliencehub.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Trends_in_Urban_Resilience_2017.pdf) On another note, the Urban Resilience Hub -[www.urbanresiliencehub.org](http://www.urbanresiliencehub.org)- is the UN-Habitat's platform for knowledge, best practice and innovation in urban resilience to make our cities flourish. The Urban Resilience Hub aims to: o gather the latest news and thinking on urban resilience; o showcase work and results on the ground; o provide a space for communities of practice to grow and collaborate; o and raise awareness around the importance of resilience action.

8. What can ECOSOC do to better leverage the work of the UN system in supporting countries to pursue integrated policies and apply technology and innovative solutions at the national, regional and global levels, to effectively enhance resilience and manage risks in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?

- Promoting the elaboration of national urban policies on resilience.
- Fostering the creation of cross-cutting units/departments within local governments to build urban resilience.
- Enhancing the processes of gathering relevant data and ensuring its traceability as an essential step in building resilience.
- Promoting guidance on developing profiles and inclusive resilience action plans in urban areas.