Pro-poor approaches to climate action

Climate change disrupts homes and livelihoods, pushing people into poverty. We directly address vulnerability in cities and communities by embedding the multiple effects of climate change in strategies and actions for low income and informal settlements.

Our Projects

Pro-Poor Planning for Climate Resilience of Marginalized Neighborhoods
Merging the work of the Climate Change Planning Unit (CCPU) and the Participatory Slum Upgrading Program (PSUP) in addressing the effects of climate change and urban poverty, UN-Habitat has initiated the “Pro-Poor Planning for Climate Resilience of Marginalized Neighborhoods Project” within the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) region. Funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), the project has focused on Montego Bay (Jamaica), Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), Bamenda (Cameroon), Lami (Fiji) and Honiara (Solomon Islands).
UN-Habitat has launched these projects under its Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI), funded by the Government of Sweden and Adaptation Fund. PSUP has operational experience in 160 cities, from 35 different countries.
http://www.worldurbancampaign.org/un-habitat-launches-climate-resilience-project-marginalized-neighborhoods

Increasing the resilience of informal urban settlements in Fiji
Fiji experiences frequent cyclones (on average, one cyclone per year) and with them damaging winds, rain and storm surges. Besides cyclones, the country suffers from other extreme events associated with climate change such as extreme rainfall, flooding, droughts and temperature extremes as well as sea-level rise. The project focuses on informal settlements across four urban areas and towns in Fiji, through: institutional strengthening for enhanced local climate response; local resilience strengthening enhancing resilience of community level physical, natural and socio-economic assets and ecosystems; awareness raising, knowledge management and communication. The project is funded by the Adaptation Fund since 2017.

As a mayor, I address the most vulnerable first by coordinating actions and planning with the people.

UN-Habitat helps strengthening relationships between sub-national government, NGOs and local civil society organizations to address climate change at the neighborhood level.
Enhancing the climate & disaster resilience of the most vulnerable rural & emerging urban human settlements in Lao PDR
The project’s main objective is to enhance the climate and disaster resilience of the most vulnerable rural and emerging urban human settlements in Southern Lao PDR by increasing sustainable access to basic infrastructure systems and services, emphasizing resilience to storms, floods, droughts, landslides and disease outbreaks. The specific objectives are: to develop institutional capacities of the national government and local authorities to increase the resilience of human settlements and infrastructure systems; to enable communities to improve their well-being/health conditions by developing local capacities and resilience strategies for their settlements and infrastructure systems; to enhance climate and disaster resilient infrastructure systems; to ensure project compliance with the Adaptation Fund and UN-Habitat standards for Knowledge Management, Advocacy and Monitoring. The project was approved by the Adaptation Fund in 2016.

Partners: AF, the Government of Lao PDR

Initiatives

Cities & Climate Change Science Conference
The Conference was co-organized by UN-Habitat, UN Environment, Cities Alliance, C40, ICLEI, Future Earth, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the World Climate Research Programme, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, and United Cities and Local Governments. Held in Edmonton, Canada (5-7 March 2018), the conference created an enhanced understanding of the impacts of climate change at the urban level, the range of possible responses, and the role of cities in the implementation of the Paris Agreement and other international global agendas, including related to informal settlements. This conference sought to contribute to a positive and integrated engagement between the scientific community, urban practitioners and policy-makers.
https://citiesipcc.org/

Highlights

Multilevel governance for Climate Action in Fiji
The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme, from June 2014 to December 2015, in Fiji, has helped strengthening relationships between national and sub-national government, NGOs such as the Peoples Community Network as well as active inclusion of land stakeholders such as the Taukei Land Trust Board as a critical partner in the Town Wide Upgrading project (accessing traditional land for development).

Resilience action planning training in Burkina Faso
In 2016, the “Planning for climate resilience in informal settlements in Burkina Faso” project kicked off activities in Ouagadougou, by training stakeholders in resilience action planning. 32 professionals from different level of government were introduced to the theoretical knowledge and equipped with the practical skills to implement the City-RAP Tool within a municipality or neighbourhood.

Mitigation activities in Lao PDR
In Lao PDR, the “Enhancing the climate & disaster resilience of the most vulnerable rural & emerging urban human settlements” project has completed 3 provincial, 8 districts and 189 settlements’ vulnerability assessments, helping to address climate change challenges in the country. Through community consultations, planning meetings and workshops with representatives from central, provincial and district governments, technical capacity has been built and community action plans developed.
Cooperation and exchange between institutions of higher education and UN-Habitat is promoted through the Habitat UNI partnership, with universities worldwide.

**Our tools**

**Quick Guide for Policy Makers on Pro-Poor Urban Climate Resilience in Asia and the Pacific**

This guide focuses on the need to enhance understanding of the region’s key urban stakeholders on climate change, discusses how it affects efforts to realize sustainable urban development, and explores what actions can be taken to synergize continued commitments to poverty reduction alongside urban climate resilience.

Through examples across the region, the Quick Guide illustrates pro-poor approaches to urban climate resilience that are holistic, flexible and participatory and that can be effective to foster inclusive and sustainable development – an essential task for policy makers in meeting the key urban challenges in the Asia-Pacific region.


**Addressing the Most Vulnerable First - Climate Action in Informal Settlements**

This thematic guide is aimed at national and municipal government officials and civil society leaders in low- and middle-income countries, to encourage them to make and implement policies and plans that tackle the challenges of climate change and development in informal settlements.


**Land, Environment and Climate Change: Challenges, Responses and Tools**

This publication provides an overview of some of the most important land-related environmental and climate change problems that the world is facing. Land, Environment and Climate Change offers an overview of the relationship between land tenure, land management approaches and the environment.

Partners: Global Land Tool Network


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**Principles of action**

Climate resilience for the most vulnerable lies in:

- Understanding the physical conditions, demographics and vulnerability of human settlements.
- Supporting community-led initiatives.
- Empowering citizens through inclusive approaches and inclusion.
- Improving livelihoods.
- Enhancing access to climate funding.

To build climate resilience and develop adaptation processes, a multi-faceted approach is required, taking into considerations physical, economic, social and political conditions. Moreover, collective processes allow a better identification of priority areas and targets for action.

"With the reality of Climate Change, we cannot approach slum upgrading & urban development as before, everything we do must be climate-feasible."

Dr. Asad Mohamed,
Director of blueSpace – Caribbean Network for Urban Land Management

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In my urban planning studies, we address vulnerability at every level!

Cooperation and exchange between institutions of higher education and UN-Habitat is promoted through the Habitat UNI partnership, with universities worldwide.
UN-Habitat supports local and national authorities in identifying adequate additional funding to carry out slum upgrading activities and expanding programmes to be truly city-wide, notably through the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP).