



SDC Network

Disaster Risk Reduction

In September the DRR Network and the working group from the Learning Journey on urban-rural linkages organized a BBL on resilience in urban areas: from concepts to practice. Herewith the three key messages of the presenters from a NGO and a private sector perspective.

Presentation 1) Reto Bühler and Christian Willi, EBP.

Experience on risk and resilience assessments of urban water systems:

- Urban resilience shall preferably be addressed system-wise e.g. type of infrastructure and related services. We understand resilience as the ability of a (technical, organizational, social) system to prepare itself for shocks and unfavourable developments, to resist them, to cope with them, to quickly recover from them and to adapt to them more and more successfully in order to maintain or regain the functionality of the system as much and as quickly as possible.
- Proposed resilience concept bases on the main steps of resilience screening, evaluation of measures and resilience optimization. The goal of the resilience screening is to assess the current resilience of the system and the recording of the “baseline”. This can be done by means of a questionnaire or by determining the current resilience curve. The evaluation of measures comprises the identification and assessment of measures that can increase the robustness of the system on the one hand or its adaptability on the other. The aim of the resilience optimization is to determine the resilience of the system after implementation of the measures and the comparison with the “baseline”. All steps require expert know-how and a close collaboration with “local” stakeholders.
- A resilience score can be incorporated as an additional criterion in a multi-criteria analysis.

Presentation 2) Michael Szönyi, Zurich Insurance.

Experience from the Floods Resilience Alliance Initiative:

- Have a clear definition of (disaster) resilience. For us in simple terms, we define disaster resilience as managing disaster risk while continuing to grow and develop. We therefore don't see a competition between development and DRR investments but rather aim to mainstream risk-informed decision making for development.
- Resilience is a rich concept that can help you understand a system and its components. Today, we need to look beyond just physical, engineered aspects and understand how human, social, natural, financial and physical capital can contribute to resilience (the 5C). Other lenses such as the four properties of a resilient system (the 4Rs) and the time steps in the disaster risk management cycle also allow you to identify strengths and weaknesses.
- The creation of risk is a different concept from that of resilience. In order to address risk holistically, you need to assess the (natural) hazard itself (the potential of a natural process to cause harm), the exposure (the physical assets or the human that are in harm's way), and the vulnerability (social, physical and economical vulnerability of how quickly the natural process leads to damaging consequences).

Presentation 3) Sarah Sabry, Save the Children.

Experience working in Urban Slums of Bangladesh:

- A good starting point to achieving outcomes at scale in a city is to start with a stakeholder mapping and analysis of actors whose work is relevant to urban resilience, and an overview of the situation of the city, especially an understanding of where the most marginalized live.

BSM - SDC DRR Shareweb

- Informal settlements must not be forgotten: Thinking about urban resilience must include deliberate thinking about informal settlements. This is often where the most marginalized and vulnerable live. These neighbourhoods are often deliberately ignored by governments.
- Extensive versus intensive risks: When identifying hazards in informal settlements, small disasters and every day risks can be significantly more important to address than large scale and intensive risks. Fire, localized flooding, the lack of sanitation infrastructure, and inadequate solid waste management systems cause significant illness, disease, death and destruction.

Download the full presentations from the SDC DRR shareweb

<https://www.shareweb.ch/site/DRR/Pages/Content/newsdetail.aspx?ItemID=566&Site=public>