DRR4AFRICA

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION:
A RESILIENCE AGENDA 4 URBAN AFRICA

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Interactive Step-by-Step Guide to Mainstreaming Climate Adaptation & DRR in African Cities

CASE STUDIES

1. Cape Coast: Forming a multi-stakeholder working group

Multi-stakeholder engagement is essential for ensuring that climate action is inclusive, grounded in local realities, and responsive to diverse needs. In Cape Coast, the establishment of a dedicated working group created a platform for actors across governance levels and sectors to collaborate, exchange knowledge, and co-develop solutions under the DRR4Africa project.

With support from a focal point allocated by the Metropolitan Assembly, ICLEI Africa identified and mapped relevant stakeholders to partake in project engagements. The final group included representatives from various municipal government departments, the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO), researchers from the University of Cape Coast and Cape Coast Technical University, funders such as GIZ as well as traditional and community leaders. Their commitment was evident through active participation in two multi-day workshops, where they contributed insights on local risks, institutional capacities, and community priorities.

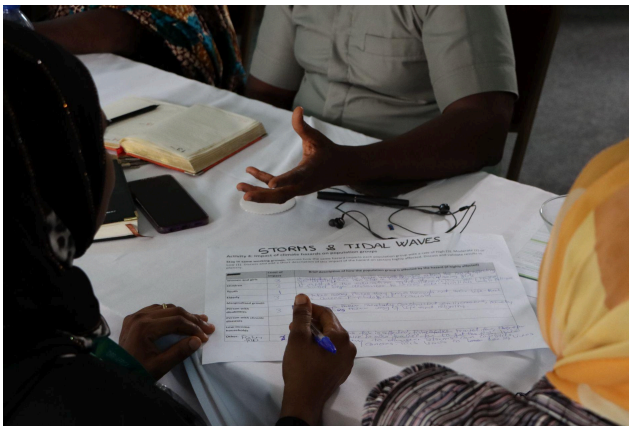
This collaborative process not only ensured inclusive representation but also built trust between institutions and communities. By drawing on diverse expertise, Cape Coast's working group laid the foundation for more effective and locally owned adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies that can be sustained beyond the project's lifetime.

2. Cape Coast: Addressing flood risks through a pipeline of priority actions

Under the DRR4Africa project, Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly (CCMA) undertook a robust, collaborative process to identify a pipeline of priority climate adaptation actions. This began with the development of a comprehensive Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (RVA), complemented by the UNDRR Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities. Together, these tools provided a strong evidence and an experience base for informed decision-making.

The RVA drew on recent research from Ghana's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and detailed Cape Coast's climate history, socio-economic profile, exposure to hazards, and projected climate impacts. The Scorecard assessed governance capacities for disaster risk reduction and climate resilience, shaped by inputs from a diverse range of local stakeholders. These perspectives were gathered through inclusive, multi-day workshops facilitated by DRR4Africa.

By combining scientific data with community-driven knowledge, the resulting Baseline Report offered a clear picture of Cape Coast's risk landscape. This enabled CCMA and its partners to strategically identify feasible and high-impact adaptation actions at a second workshop, focussed in part on validating the baseline report findings. Making evidence-informed and inclusive decisions regarding priority adaptation actions is critical for building resilience for all in a context of constrained resources and rising climate threats.



3. Port Louis: Combining global and local data

Access to reliable, high-resolution data is critical for generating climate risk insights and guiding adaptation, mitigation, and disaster risk reduction measures. Yet, in many cities, including Port Louis, Mauritius, local data can be scarce, outdated, or difficult to access. To overcome this challenge, the DRR4Africa project strategically combined global, national, and local datasets to co-produce a climate risk and vulnerability assessment (RVA) for the city.

The RVA integrated country-level climate and demographic data from national sources such as Mauritius Meteorological Services and Statistics Mauritius alongside global resources including the World Bank's Climate Knowledge Portal, African Development Bank Group and ReliefWeb. Given the island's relatively small geographic size of 2,040 square kilometres, some national-level data could be reliably applied to the city context (e.g. climate projections). This was further enriched with city-scale data provided by Mauritius Meteorological Services, as well as evidence from academic research and reliable reports (e.g. detailed flood mapping). Further local-level data was collected and validated during a participatory workshop with key stakeholders in the city, including CSOs (e.g. how vulnerable groups are affected by main climate hazards). The draft RVA was then circulated among stakeholders for validation, ensuring its accuracy and relevance.

When local data is insufficient, cities can still access valuable insights and develop robust risk assessments by strategically combining multi-scalar datasets and ground-truthing findings through local stakeholder engagement.

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4. Lusaka: Engaging women leaders

Women play a central role in strengthening community resilience, yet their voices are often underrepresented in decision-making. In Lusaka, where the majority of the population lives in informal settlements and gender inequality is high, ICLEI Africa's disaster risk reduction (DRR) project placed a strong emphasis on engaging women leaders, from grassroots organisations to political leadership. A key champion has been Her Worship Mayor Chitangala, who actively supported the integration of gender perspectives into resilience planning and financing. As a dedicated climate champion, she has democratised access to inclusive community and scientific knowledge, and significantly advanced disaster resilience efforts, not only in Lusaka but across the continent.

The recent DRR4Africa workshops and dialogues brought together women leaders across sectors, highlighting their experience in community mobilisation, health, and education - critical entry points for building resilience. By creating space for women leaders to shape disaster management strategies, the project ensured more inclusive approaches to both preparedness and response. This strengthened not only community trust but also broadened

the scope of solutions considered, linking household-level realities with municipal and national planning. The Lusaka experience demonstrates how empowering women leaders can shift DRR from reactive measures to proactive, community-driven resilience.

5. Lusaka – Mobilising domestic resources for early action

In the rapidly growing city of Lusaka, limited access to international climate finance often delays disaster response and recovery. To address this, ICLEI Africa worked with the city to explore how local mechanisms and projects can be mobilised for early action. Through a series of workshops with local and national government, NGOs, and academia, officials identified ways to allocate municipal budgets more effectively, strengthen contingency funds, and engage financial institutions in resilience planning. By examining the role of insurance, risk pooling, and community-based financing, Lusaka gained practical insights into how to take earlier, cost-effective action before disasters escalate. The initiative highlighted that while international funds remain important, mobilising domestic resources more effectively - whether through budget earmarking, partnerships with local banks, or community savings mechanisms - can significantly reduce delays and enhance preparedness. This approach not only strengthens financial independence but also ensures that disaster management aligns with local priorities and capacities.

6. Port Louis: Engaging the national government

Mauritius is a centralised island state, making strong coordination between local and national levels critical for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction (DRR). Cities like Port Louis and Beau Bassin Rose-Hill are highly vulnerable to cyclones, sea-level rise, and recurrent flooding – climate hazards which often exceed local preparation and response capacity.

The national government holds most of the authority, resources, and technical expertise to design policies, establish institutional frameworks and mobilise finance that guide local action. Including local government perspectives is essential to ensure these policies reflect on-the-ground realities, enabling local governments – who are closest to affected communities – to implement tailored preparedness and response measures effectively. This is why each municipality in Mauritius now has a DRR focal point.

Under the DRR4Africa project, the Beau-Bassin and Port Louis DRR focal points played a central role in convening and training municipal and national officials on multi-level coordination and the integration of climate change in existing processes.

Without national engagement, local initiatives risk being both fragmented and under-resourced. Strong national-local partnerships are therefore critical for safeguarding livelihoods, ensuring equitable response and building long-term resilience in Port Louis' climate-vulnerable context.

7. Lusaka: Local champions take a seat at the international table

Under the leadership of Her Worship Mayor Chitangala, Lusaka has become a model for bringing local voices to international climate and disaster resilience negotiations. Through initiatives such as the DRR4Africa project, the city has combined scientific tools with community-led risk assessments to ensure that local climate impacts, including the lived-realities of marginalised groups, actively shape resilience strategies in Lusaka, and other cities globally.

Mayor Chitangala's influence reaches beyond Lusaka's borders. As a Regional Executive Committee Member of ICLEI Africa and the Vice-Chairperson of the Covenant of Mayors in Sub-Saharan Africa (CoM SSA) Regional Mayors Forum, she channels local insights into regional and global platforms, influencing policy discussions at events such as COP and UNDRR Global Platforms. By having this "seat at the table", the Mayor of Lusaka champions innovative and community-led policies which address climate change, urban sustainability, and social inclusion. This advocacy not only influences local policies but also provides inspiration and guidance for other cities grappling with similar climate-related disasters while ensuring that African urban realities are represented in global climate change and disaster response frameworks.