

# Coalition Building in Coastal Cities



## Introduction

The Global Disaster Preparedness Center (GDPC) in collaboration with the IFRC and American Red Cross has received an award from USAID/OFDA to design and test a set of tools and services to assist Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) National Societies and their partners to create effective city coalitions on community resilience, targeting climate smart resilience and coastal risk reduction in particular. The RCRC National Societies will use its convening power to engage relevant partner organizations in lasting coalitions to focus city-wide expertise, capabilities, and resources on priority risks facing vulnerable communities in the city. The coalitions will complement existing urban governance processes led by local government and draw wider support from the business community, universities, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders into city-wide civic engagement on community resilience.

## Focus on climate change adaptation & coastal resilience

The project focuses specifically on addressing climate change adaptation and resilience needs in coastal cities. Communities worldwide have greater opportunities for growth and connectedness than ever before; yet the number of people exposed to hazards, shocks, and stresses is rapidly increasing, especially in coastal cities as a result of sea-level rise, changing storm patterns, and related risks. This is leading to increased fragility and vulnerability. To strengthen their resilience in the face of climate change, cities need enhanced civic engagement that draws on the strength and diversity of urban communities and that complements formal governance structures by engaging a wider set of stakeholders to focus on resilience at the community and household level.

*Coastal cities face a high risk from increasingly costly flooding from sea level rise amid climate change. Their current defenses will not be enough as the water level rises.*

By focusing on priority risks, the coalition can target those risk and threats of greatest concern. With the support of diverse coalition members, the coalitions can identify climate smart solutions and interventions to address the priority risks and bundle the solutions into local campaigns to engage local communities and link the efforts of individuals, households, businesses, community and local organization, and local governments. The project will draw in particular on support from the RCRC Climate Centre and The Nature Conservancy to strengthen the adaptation and coastal resilience outcomes of the project.

## **Background on the USAID/OFDA Grant**

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The award from USAID/OFDA for this project is structured in two phases: a two country pilot and then a wider regional expansion in SE Asia and the Pacific. The grant period for the overall award is five years, although the initial two country pilot is planned for two years. Financing for the project has come from USAID Climate Change Adaptation funds, so there is a strong focus in the project on developing local resilience solutions for climate change adaptation in coastal cities.

## Project locations

The project will be piloted in Indonesia and Vanuatu (still to be finalized with donor), with three other South-East Asia countries to participate as regional peer learning countries.



## Links to the One Billion Coalition for Resilience (1BC)

Central to One Billion Coalition is the conviction that individuals have the capability to take a variety of resilience actions within their immediate surroundings and social networks. They can also work together to undertake resilience actions within the organizations and communities to which they are directly connected. Further, they can participate in wider forms of civic engagement to coordinate and/or advocate for change in wider social and governance systems to improve resilience. Resilience gains can be made through either individual or collective action, but fuller states of resilience require a combination of the two.

This project provides a significant opportunity to develop and test local coalition-building and campaign approaches for collective action and the opportunity to marry these approaches to individual action. By focusing on cities, the RCRC and other 1BC partners will gain further experience working in cities and through urban governance processes and learn valuable lessons for wider application globally with 1BC.

The project will also be able to draw on the global resources being developed for 1BC, including the public engagement, business continuity, CSO partnership, advocacy, and operations platforms. Those platforms are described in more detail on the 1BC website.

## **Organization of the Project:**

The project will work with the RCRC National Societies and partners in two countries -- Indonesia and Vanuatu (still to be finalized with donor). For the initial round of activities, the project will focus on coalition-building in two cities in each country.

The project will develop tools and services to support 5 key activities in each city:

- ❖ Coalition-building (either building on existing forums or starting new if needed)
- ❖ City-wide risk assessment
- ❖ Design of solutions and interventions to address priority risks
- ❖ Development of a local action plan and campaign to implement the solutions
- ❖ Creation of a community fund to resource the campaign and on-going efforts of the coalition

The project will also provide a range of skill-building opportunities through:

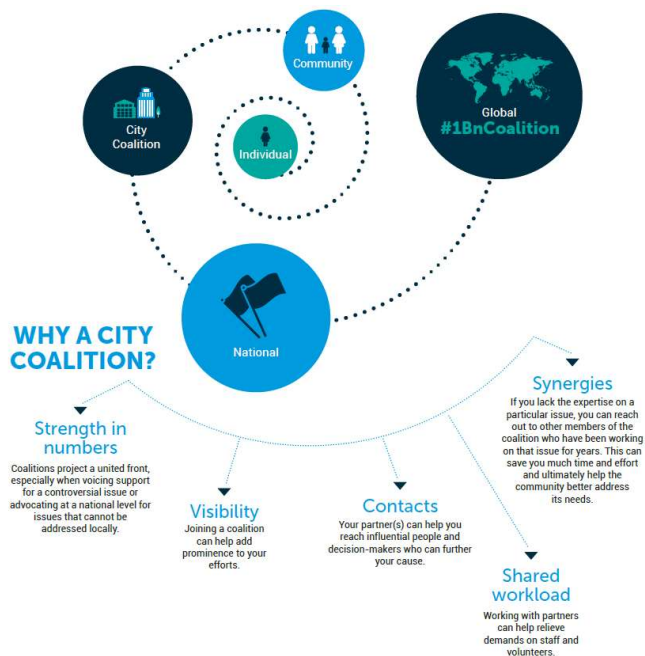
- ❖ Resilience Leadership Academy
- ❖ Regional peer learning

## Toolkits and services used in the project

### COALITION-BUILDING

Coalitions involving diverse members within the participating cities are the foundation for the rest of project activities, providing the resource- and skill-base to enable effective collective action on the priority risks identified by local stakeholders. The coalitions themselves are intended to live beyond the scope of the project and serve as a resource for ongoing civic engagement and collaboration on resilience.

The Americas region of the IFRC has already put together a set of guidance documents on coalition-building. The 'Coalition-building in Coastal Cities' project will build on these documents, add further case studies and examples to design and test a more detailed set of guidance materials for use in the project and more widely within 1BC.



### ASSESSMENT

A city-wide assessment of community resilience will anchor the start of the work of the coalition in each city. The assessment will review the relevance of the implications for community resilience in existing city risk assessments and seek to access additional secondary data, focusing especially on climate and coastal risks. The end result of the city-wide risk assessment will be a listing of priority risks facing communities in the city to serve as the targets for the wider resilience-strengthening activities that will take place under the project.

### DESIGN THINKING AND SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

To address the priority risks, the project will provide support to the local coalition to design local solutions and resourcing strategies. Where appropriate the coalitions will be encouraged to draw on existing global resources such as the corporate volunteering program developed by PMI (the Indonesian RC) and the American RC, the First Aid and Hazard apps, the Business Preparedness initiative being developed by the GDPC, the U-Report citizen reporting tool developed by UNICEF, and other similar tools and services.

### CAMPAIGNS

To engage the wider communities within each city in implementing the target solutions (and to link individual and collection actions), the coalitions will integrate awareness-raising about the priority risks as well as tools and services to implement the solutions as part of a local campaign and action plan. The campaigns will be planned around timeframes appropriate to the risks and solutions being targeted and will incorporate iterative sets of activities to allow learning and adaptation over the course of the campaign implementation.

The New Zealand Red Cross and the GDPC worked together on a mapping of a variety of previous awareness raising campaigns. The 'Coalition-building in Coastal Cities' project will build on these documents, add further

case studies and examples to design and test a more detailed set of guidance materials on campaign design for use in the project and more widely within 1BC.

## COMMUNITY FUNDS

The final element in the project is catalyzing local resourcing of resilience solutions. The project includes a small community grant fund that will make awards on a competitive basis to the coalitions in the participating cities to catalyze local resilience actions. In addition the project team will seek to link these community grant funds to other community funding opportunities. Conversations are currently underway with both the potential sources and programs for funding these initiatives. Ultimately the goal is to use these funds to match and incentive local investment in the targeted resilience solutions through contributions to the campaign element of the project by the local business community, local government budget allocations, and public fundraising and volunteer recruitment.

## *Skill-building opportunities within the project*

### RESILIENCE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The project offers a variety of skill-building opportunities aligned around the tools and services outlined above and structured as a Resilience Leadership Academy. The concept for this skill-building is that small teams from the coalitions in each participating city would be able to participate in a series of courses over the early stages of the project implementation.

The academy model is now being used by a number of other organizations, including the Rockefeller Foundation which has sponsored a Resilience Academy in the United States and the Humanitarian Leadership Academy which hosted by Save the Children. The GDPC and IFRC are currently exploring opportunities to link the series of courses developed in this project to these other academy efforts, with the goal of bringing the local level resilience leadership skill-building opportunities to a wider set of networks.

### REGIONAL PEER COUNTRIES

In addition to the two countries that will pilot the project, there will also be opportunities for the RCRC National Societies in other countries in SE Asia or the Pacific to participate as peer countries in various of the project activities. The peer countries will be able to participate in the skill-building courses offered through the project such as the city level risk assessment; to be provide peer support in the design of local resilience solutions and to be peer reviewers of project activities.

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