

Press release

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73 South Korean Cities and Local Governments Get Together in Metropolitan city of Incheon to Discuss Urban Risk Reduction and Resilience Measures aiming to make their Cities Resilient To Disasters



16 December 2015 Incheon, REPUBLIC OF KOREA – High level Officials from 73 South Korean cities and Local government together with officials from Ministry of Public Safety and Security and Universities participated at 2 Day “*Urban Risk reduction and Resilience: Making Korean Cities Resilient to Disasters*” training workshop convened by UNISDR ONEA-GETI office in Incheon.

At the event 9 new Korean cities and LG’s officially signed up for the MCR Global Campaign making in total of **109 Korean cities** that have already joined the Campaign.



Mr. SIN, Yeong-eun (*Chairman of Special Committee on Safety, Incheon Metropolitan City Council*) has officially opened the workshop and stressed the role of cities and local governments in addressing disaster risks at local level, he also asserted that Mayors and local government leaders can learn a lot from each other at such events and join forces for more resilient communities as well as can act as the Advocate of the messages to spread beyond their horizon among the mass people.

"Dense population with rapid urbanization, industrialization and the lack of land use planning have created major environment problems which are contributing to increasing disaster risks, especially in urban areas. In this scenario it is very important to organise more events and training workshops for local governments targeting topics of Urban Risk Reduction and Resilience as well as to further promote the "Making Cities Resilient" Global Campaign commented **Mr. SIN Yeong-eun**.



Mr. Sanjaya BHATIA (*Head of UNISDR ONEA-GETI Office in Incheon*) at his Opening Speech told to Korean cities officials: *"Cities and towns are driving the campaign and are on the frontline when it comes to economic losses due to the rising frequency and intensity of floods and other disasters which have accelerated since this campaign was launched two years ago at the first Resilient Cities Congress. Economic losses since then amount to US\$ 500 billion"*.

He also mentioned that because of growing demand and solidarity among cities on the frontline of climate change and disaster risk the Making Cities Resilient campaign has been extended to 2015 and UNISDR is providing cities with tools to assess their progress in tackling risk and climate change as they seek to convince governments and the private sector to invest more in resilience.

Mr. BHATIA also informed Korean cities officials, that as a result of successful partnership and cooperation between UNISDR office in Incheon and Korean NEMA in harmonizing Korean Local Government Self-Assessment (LG-SAT) Tool with international MCA LG SAT tool Korean cities will now have a new revised version of a National tool in Korean language for self-assessment against the Campaign's Ten Essentials for a resilient city. Mr. Bhatia presented mayors with copies of new Korean version of the **"Disaster Resilient Scorecard for Cities"** (*new Assessment and Analysis Tool for cities*), that was recently translated and published in Korean language to guide and support the process of cities disaster risks and resilience assessment and analysis.



The workshop was mainly focused on implementation of MCR Campaign 10 Essentials, and provided participants an excellent opportunity to learn from various case-studies presented how 10 Essentials are

implemented in other developed and developing countries. The workshop also provided opportunity to Korean city government officials to work in groups to use in mock exercise MCR Campaign tools and using the results of previously conducted cities assessments exercise (early 2014) when they used harmonized version of Korean LGSAT tool to use the findings of the assessment to prepare Draft version of the City Resilience Action Plans.

During the workshop Korean city officials at their group work presentation sessions stressed the importance of this kind of capacity development workshops and the MCR Global campaign mentioning that together with their cities commitment it will help them to make their cities resilient to disasters, seeing this event as a beginning of a road map which can bring real momentum towards gaining significant reduction of risks at urban level. They suggested that such workshops can be used also as a platform for peer-to-peer inspiration and learning as well as sharing of experiences among different cities and their various customised to local needs perspectives on how to deal with the disasters.

The *'Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient'* include: organization and coordination of risk management; budget assignation; preparation of risk assessments; investment and maintenance of infrastructure that reduces risk; safe schools and health facilities; risk compliant building regulations and land use planning; education and training in disaster reduction; protection of ecosystems and natural buffers; early warning systems and emergency management; and the needs of survivors.

The Making Cities Resilient Campaign, launched in 2010, demonstrates local leadership and raises awareness of how efforts to reduce disaster risk are making cities safer and more resilient. Close to 1,000 local governments have now signed up and committed to the "ten essentials" as a guide for action planning and monitoring. Many cities are already developing and implementing local risk reduction and adaptation strategies in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action -- Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, the 2005-2015 global blue print for disaster risk reduction.

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About UNISDR: UNISDR is the UN office dedicated to disaster risk reduction. It is led by the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction and supports implementation of the ***Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters*** which seeks *"the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries."*