

Call for participants for the

“Learning Process on Flood Management for Risk-Informed Urban Development”

Kick-off Event: 18th- 20th April, 2023; Windhoek, Namibia

Background information

The race against time to determine solutions to highly complex urban challenges is no more critical than in Africa. Until 2050, 90% of the global urbanization will be experienced in Africa and Asia. Despite Africa’s low contributions to GHG emissions, the continent remains the most vulnerable to hazards and risk drivers like climate change. Africa’s cities face exponential growth, unplanned urbanization trends and unfolding vulnerabilities threatening thus, to undo Africa’s urban development gains, increasing inequality. Sub-Saharan Africa’s cities are experiencing the fastest growth rates in the world. By 2050, most of the countries in the region will have made an urban transition, meaning that more than 50% of their population will live in urban areas, which are in turn are the cornerstone of Africa’s socio-economic development (IFRI 2022). As hubs of infrastructure, services, trade and people, cities are faced by one of the major urban threats in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), namely floods¹, subsequently challenging the continent’s socio-economic development ambitions. Urbanization is arguably an inevitable, unstoppable and positive trend which nevertheless has the potential to greatly increase flood risk.

Flooding in cities can be caused by rivers, coastal floods, pluvial and ground water floods, and artificial system failures; they typically stem from a complex combination of causes, including meteorological and hydrological extremes, i.e. extreme precipitation and flows. However, they also frequently occur as a result of human activities, including unplanned growth and development in floodplains, or from the breach of a dam or an embankment.

As a first step in urban flood risk management, policy makers need to understand the flood hazard that can affect the urban environment. This understanding is essential in designing measures and solutions which can prevent or limit damage from specific types of floods. Equally important is to know what population and assets occupy the potentially affected areas, their vulnerability, and how these areas are planned and developed, and is being done towards flood risk reduction.

To incorporate Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) measures into multilateral and bilateral development assistance programs within and across all sectors, as appropriate, related to urban development, and adaptation to climate change, as well as to address the complex nature of risks and safeguard sustainable development (Sendai Framework for DRR 2015–2030 p.22 VI., §47), to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG 11, target 11.5); to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts (SDG 13) and to incorporate DRR and CCA into urban and territorial development and planning processes promoting cooperation and coordination across sectors and build the

¹ Ramiaramanana, F.N.; Teller, J. 2021

capacities of local authorities on DRR (New Urban Agenda Item 101); Connective Cities (CC) and the Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management (GI:DRM) have called the joint initiative on risk-informed urban development (RIUD) **to enable peer to peer exchanges through a hybrid modular learning processes (LP) in which RIUD's continuation will focus on integrated flood risk management for RIUD in Sub-Sahara Africa.**

Objective of the learning process

The learning process on “Flood Management for Risk Informed Urban Development” aims at the development of solution options which tackle your urban flood risk management challenge(s) and that is/are locally adapted. With a focus on gender equity and climate change adaptation measures, the learning process will specifically:

1. Support the participating cities/municipalities to **develop solutions** to address urban flooding. This shall be achieved through **peer learning** and **customised technical advisory**. Solutions will be in the form of action plans, strategies and/or project proposals.
2. Provide a platform for exchange (practical examples and expert knowledge) by practitioners (from **Sub-Sahara Africa** and **Germany**) from RECs, national/local government, civil society organizations, research institutions and private sector in an effort to **further enhance the capacities** of cities/municipalities as they work on their solutions.
3. Complement the **solution development with financial advisory** in readiness to submit proposal for funding.
4. Document best practices and generate policy briefs to guide cities/municipalities to undertake legal reforms meant to enhance risk informed urban development.

Thematic focus

Flood risk management measures are commonly categorized as either structural or non-structural. Structural measures aim to reduce flood risk by controlling the flow of water on the surface while non- structural measures lead to change in processes and structures towards a risk informed urban development. We endeavour to explore these measures and solutions in an integrated manner and guided by three foci: 1) understanding and managing flood risk drivers; 2) green infrastructure and nature-based approaches for risk-informed solutions; and 3) risk communication flows and good governance.

1. Understanding and managing flood risk drivers

As mentioned above, urban floods are caused by certain factors often in combination. In order to minimise the flood risks, the drivers need to be identified and measures implemented to manage them. Examples of such measures include effective solid waste management services, stormwater drainage maintenance, enforcement of building codes, zoning of flood prone areas and protection of the same etc. Under this theme, cities/municipalities we will learn from cities/municipalities that have managed these drivers and subsequently reduced the risk of flooding. We shall also support cities/municipalities with challenges in this area to come up with measures to reduce flooding.

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2. Green infrastructure and nature-based approaches for risk-informed solutions

Urban development is often characterised by extensive investment in the grey infrastructure. Grey solutions such as dams and levees have been used to mitigate flood risks. These solutions may not always apply especially in the urban areas thus the green infrastructure needs to be integrated in the built environment. This green infrastructure is also known as Nature-based Solutions (NbS) which IUCN defines as “locally appropriate, adaptive actions to protect, sustainably manage or restore natural or modified ecosystems in order to address targeted societal challenge(s) - such as climate change adaptation -, while simultaneously enhancing human well-being and providing biodiversity benefits”. NbS protects populations from flooding, reduces riverbank erosion and flooding in addition to other economic, social and environmental co-benefits. Green infrastructure solutions include wetlands, buffer zones, green roofing, porous pavements, mangroves etc. A case in point is how the City of Quelimane has used mangroves to reduce the impacts of cyclones.

3. Risk communication flows and good governance

Flood risk management can only be realized with sound information systems where individuals, institutions and communities can understand the probability of the occurrence of a flood event, the intensity and magnitude. This information can help prevent, manage or limit the damage of a flood. There are tools that exist that help map flood prone areas, potential population and infrastructure at risk. Such tools include flood risk maps, flood simulations and forecasting. These tools are instrumental in designing flood risk management, policy formulation and communication with stakeholders. The overall governance structure dictates the flow of information (at the macro, meso and micro level) and stakeholder engagement.

Timeline of the learning process

February-March 2023:	Mobilization & bilateral calls with participants
March 2023:	Situation analysis
April 2023:	LP Kick-off Event (Windhoek, Namibia): Expert input-overview of urban flood risk management (Good practices, presentation of the cases from the participants, preliminary collegial consultations)
May 2023:	Exposure (virtual), good practices from other cities/municipalities through "Insight sessions"
June/July 2023:	In-person workshop in (Durban, South Africa, tbc); in-depth ideation of the solutions characterised by peer review and expert input, site visit, and network event involving DRR practitioners
July - December 2023:	Virtual sessions, formulation of solutions, financial advisory and expert missions

Participation and contact

Connective Cities (CC) and the Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management (GI:DRM) invites prospective urban practitioners from **Germany** and **Sub-Saharan Africa** to express

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interest in participating in this learning process. We encourage the participation of at least two participants from each city/municipality. The categories of participants are:

- (1) Municipal actors from the relevant departments with either (a) an example of a measure already implemented or (b) a challenge they would like to address in relation to urban flood risk management within the context of the thematic areas defined. Please send an email with the name of your city/municipality, country, designation as well as a short description of the measure to be shared or challenge to be addressed.
- (2) Experts on urban flood risk management willing to share practical examples with the cities/municipalities or accompany the cities/municipalities along the journey towards development of solutions.

If you are interested to participate or may have questions concerning the process, please write to us. Deadline for application is the **10th of March 2023**.

For **Sub-Saharan cities**, please contact:

- **Ms. Sophia Kamau** (sophia.kamau@giz.de)
- **Dr. Karl-Heinz Gaudry** (karl-heinz.gaudrysada@giz.de)

For **German cities**, please contact:

- **Ms. Sina Weber** (sina.webber@engagement-global.de)

Logistical note

Most of the sessions will be virtual. There will be, however two physical workshops. Connective Cities will cater for the accommodation and conference package. The participants are therefore, requested to mobilize resources to cater for flights to the hosting countries.

About Connective Cities

The international exchange platform Connective Cities has been bringing together international urban practitioners from city administrations, civil society, academia and the private sector since 2014. Connective Cities is a cooperation project of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the German Association of Cities and Engagement Global with its Service Agency Communities in One World. For more information on past and upcoming activities please check: www.connective-cities.net. You can also join the community of urban practitioners in SSA; <https://community.connective-cities.net/en>.

About the Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management

The Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management (GIDRM) is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in cooperation with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the Latin American Network of National Public Investment Systems (Red SNIP). The project aims at strengthening risk-informed development with partners in Southern Africa, Asia and Latin America. [The Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management \(gidrm.net\)](http://The Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management (gidrm.net))

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