



## Module 6: Strengthen Institutional Capacity for Resilience

Uscore2: City-to-City Peer Review Tool

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## INTRODUCTION

Uscore2 is a peer-to-peer review process for cities. Designed with funding from the European Commission, it enables cities to share and learn from good practice in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) from other cities across the world. Uscore2 focuses on the use of city-level peer reviews as a tool with which the activities of one city in the area of disaster risk management and civil protection are examined on an equal basis by fellow peers who are experts from other cities. This approach facilitates improvements in DRR through the exchange of best practice and mutual learning, whilst also maintaining impartiality and transparency. This peer review programme integrates an evidence based methodology for impact evaluation, enabling participants to demonstrate the value generated by the investment in the peer review.

Cities undertaking a peer review of Institutional Capacity for DRR will generally be undertaking this as part of a wider review as outlined in the 'Uscore2 Step-by-Step Guide to City-to-City peer reviews for Disaster Risk Reduction'. The Step-by-Step Guide provides an essential overview of the peer review process, the impact evaluation methodology (IEM) used to measure the impact of the peer review, and the 11 modules for conducting city-to-city peer reviews for DRR.

It is strongly recommended that cities interested in inviting another city to peer review their DRR activity work through the Step-by-Step Guide as a precursor to undertaking Module 6. This Module Guide gives information relevant to those steps in the peer review process which are specific to Module 6.

During the development of Uscore2, the peer review process has been piloted by three cities: Amadora (Portugal), Salford (UK) and Viggiano (Italy). The pilot cities spoke positively of their experiences:

"Peer reviews are interactive and about mutual learning, exchange of best practice and policy dialogue, a support tool for prevention and preparation under the EU civil protection mechanism and promote an integrated approach to disaster risk management, linking risk prevention, preparation, response and recovery actions".

## BACKGROUND

Module 6 explores the capacity available at a local government level for disaster resilience. In this context, local government includes institutions that deliver critical services to keep cities functioning effectively. Strengthening institutional capacity is an important issue for cities as it aims to bridge gaps in the ability of a city to act on risk reduction initiatives, and provide coordinating functions to support mitigation, prevention, recovery and response (UNISDR, n.d). For this to work effectively, all the institutions relevant to a city's resilience need to have the capabilities to effectively complete their roles in DRR.

Peer review offers a systematic way to support cities in assessing their strategies for strengthening institutional capacity. Such strategies include: identifying vulnerabilities within the city and the institutions which may be responsible for these; building local capacity and participation in resilience activities; and ensuring constant data on risk information (UNISDR, n.d).

To strengthen institutional resilience local government and critical service institutions will need skills, knowledge, and experience in identifying and mitigating risks; disaster planning; disaster response; and post-disaster recovery.

To support this, cities should utilise a multi-stakeholder perspective and recognise the importance of private sector organisations, industrial facilitators and operators, private and corporate building owners, NGOs, employers and civil society organisations in reducing vulnerabilities and supporting government measures. It is important to recognise the role of multiple stakeholders in supporting institutional capacity. The private sector can also provide services in emergencies to support the city's response. Equally, civil society through volunteers and NGO's can build societal capacity to prepare for and respond to

disasters. Additionally, the insurance sector can bring expertise and capacity to strengthen disaster resilience. As well as assisting cities to identify and understand risks, a good level of take-up of insurance can support both a city's economy and its communities to recover from disasters.

Cities should consider on-going education and awareness-raising campaigns for the public which can support holistic resilience building by improving information flow to governments and the population (van Niekerk 2015), therefore improving a population's overall understanding of risk (Gillisen et al. 2016). Additionally, public resilience information and DRR awareness can support coordination between various institutions and sectors in the city (Briceño 2010). This would be supported through ready-to-access information which would facilitate an integrated and effective understanding of risk.

Conversely, disaster resilience practitioners within the city's institutions would benefit from legislative initiatives which are able to support coordination and information sharing (Kamh et al. 2016). This may be through the development of agreed sets of data which provide information on the city's resilience which can be made available to relevant institutions and stakeholders.

Understanding both historic and current actions taken across the city to reduce or manage risk and to build resilience can help to detect gaps in local capacity to coordinate stakeholders in preventing and mitigating disaster risk, as well as in responding to and recovering from disasters. It can also help in identifying the best and most-effective approaches to strengthen relevant institutions for managing disaster risk.



Amadora (Portugal) piloted Module 6 in the development of Uscore2. Their experience has shaped this guide.

"The Peer Review process (M6) demonstrates the level of commitment of all entities around disaster risk reduction and the importance for the local government of the tool Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities".

"At the local level, it is important to ensure that all institutions in the city have the necessary capacity to play their role in resilience. Understanding the interconnection between the different plans that the municipality has for the various areas of activity (environment, social, emergency, community engagement, planning), is one of the priorities of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction".

## References

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Kamh, Y. Z., Khalifa, M. A., & El-Bahrawy, A. N. (2016). Comparative Study of Community Resilience in Mega Coastal Cities Threatened by Sea Level Rise: The Case of Alexandria and Jakarta. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 216(October 2015), pp. 503–517.

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## HOW CAN INSTITUTIONAL RESILIENCE BE ASSESSED AND IMPROVED?

The description of Essential 6: Strengthen Institutional Capacity for Resilience taken from the UNISDR's Making Cities Resilient website and given below, describes the activities a city should be demonstrating to improve resilience in this area. A city's capacity for resilience is the responsibility of a number of organisations, though it is usual for local government to take the lead and enable effective collaboration.

### Essential Six: Strengthen Institutional Capacity for Resilience

Identify the specific nature of each vulnerability and map against the respective organisations(s)

- Establish a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Build local capacities and strengthen participation in disaster management and resilience improvement
- Develop skills, including but not limited to: hazard / risk assessment, risk-sensitive planning (spatial and socioeconomic), integrating disaster and climate risk considerations in project evaluation / design (including engineering design) , coordination, communication, data and technology management, and disaster management, response, recovery, assessment of structures post disaster; business and services continuity planning]
- Organise trainings, ideally based on case studies of how disaster risk reduction can be implemented and what business continuity requires
- Ensure the consistency of data and disaster risk information among the stakeholders
- Create and implement information and data frameworks for resilience and disaster risk reduction that build consistency in data capture and storage and enable data access, use and re-use by multiple stakeholder groups for regular development processes.





## HOW CAN THIS BE MEASURED?

The following table describes the high level indicators for Essential 6 taken from the Disaster Resilience Scorecard Preliminary Level Assessment. These are used in this Module as indicators against which to gather evidence and make recommendations.

Ref	Subject / Issue	Question / Assessment Area
P 6.1	Skills and Experience	Does the city have clear access to all the skills and experience it believes it would need to respond to reduce risks and respond to identified disaster scenarios?
P 6.2	Public education and awareness	Does a coordinated public relations and education campaign exist, with structured messaging and channels to ensure hazard, risk and disaster information (that can be understood and used) is properly disseminated to the public?
P 6.3	Data sharing	Extent to which data on the city's resilience context is shared with other organisations involved with the city's resilience.
P 6.4	Training delivery	Are there training courses covering risk and resilience issues offered to all sectors of the city including government, business, NGOs and the community?
P 6.5	Languages	Are training materials available in the majority of languages in common use in the city?
P 6.6	Learning from Others	Is the city proactively seeking to exchange knowledge and learn from other cities facing similar challenges?

The full Detailed Assessment from the Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities is available through the following link:

<http://www.unisdr.org/campaign/resilientcities/home/toolkitblkitem/?id=4>

# METHODOLOGY

## PHASE 2, STEP 7: INFORMATION TO SEND TO REVIEW TEAM PRIOR TO THE REVIEW TEAM VISIT

Please refer to the Step-by-Step Guide for advice on both conducting and hosting Peer Reviews. This section sets out information that is specific to this Essential, which begins in Phase 2.

As set out in the Step-by-Step Guide if Modules 1 (Disaster Risk Governance) and 2 (Risk Assessment) are not undertaken at the same time as Module 6, then an overview of both the city's disaster risk governance and DRR risk assessment should be included in the pre-visit information sent to the Review Team.

The Host City should aim to send the pre-visit evidence to the Review Team three months ahead of the review visit. It is recommended that the pre-visit evidence is limited to 3 – 5 items for each Essential.

### Suggestions for the type of pre-visit evidence that could be shared between cities

A selection of evidence should be sent to the Review Team before their visit to the Host City. This could include the type of information listed below or any other information that the two cities agree would be of benefit.

It is **highly recommended** that the Host City prepare a **summary** of how the city promotes Institutional Resilience including:

- The extent to which disaster risks have been assessed for critical institutions such as local government buildings, schools, hospitals and healthcare facilities, together with infrastructure providing essential services in the city
- How the institutions mentioned above have prepared for disasters so that they maintain their operations during disasters including whether they have prepared business continuity plans
- How often regular disaster preparedness drills and exercises are undertaken in the institutions.
- Evidence of response to any recent disasters the Host City has responded to

- How the city government works with supply chains, the private sector and civil society to ensure the city is prepared for and has the capacity to access supplies and services when responding to a disaster.

In addition, **no more than 4 other items** should be selected from the suggestions below to demonstrate the city's baseline capacity.

### Overview: A Shared Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities

- An emergency plan or other document that provides an example of how institutions in the city work together to set out and agree their roles and responsibilities in an emergency
- A typical agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the city government and a private sector organisation for supplies or services in an emergency
- The outcomes of local completion of the UNISDR's Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities, Essential 6
- A DRR action plan or similar document designed to strengthen institutional capacity for resilience.

### P6.1 Skills and Experience; P6.4 Training; P6.5 Languages

- A copy of the programme, together with a list of the stakeholders that participated, in a recent training and exercising event for disaster risk practitioners within institutions. Include evidence that training materials are available in relevant languages
- A short description or overview as to how the city ensures it has the skills, knowledge and experience to identify risks, mitigate risks, plan for and respond to disasters, drawing down relevant expertise available within institutions, e.g. academic institutions.

### P6.2. Public Education and Awareness

- An overview of the city's public education and awareness programme together with some examples of the materials used and a short explanation of how the effectiveness of the programme is evaluated. Include evidence that public information is available in relevant languages
- An example of any formal reports, perhaps drafted for the local government or Mayor, on the public communication of risk
- Details of any public facing website, application or social media platform that gives information on risk and resilience.

### P6.3. Data Sharing

- Details of any website, application or other digital platform through which the city's DRR practitioners share data on risk and resilience
- Information in other media formats (video, YouTube etc.) that is relevant to institutional resilience.

### P6.6. Learning from others

- A report from, or description of, an example of a city-to-city knowledge exchange that has strengthened the city's intuitional capacity for resilience
- A case study demonstrating how the city has strengthened institutional capacity for resilience by drawing on a good practice example from elsewhere in the world
- An example of information about institutional resilience in the city that has been shared with other cities to promote knowledge transfer.





## PHASE 2, STEP 8: ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PEER REVIEW VISIT

As described in the 'Step-by-Step Guide', in the 3-6 months before the peer review visit, the Host City and Review Team are recommended to agree an agenda for the visit. This will include a range of activities to enable the Review Team to understand how the city is strengthening and improving institutional capacity for resilience. The types of activities could include some or all of those listed below, or any other relevant actions. It is anticipated that the review of this Module will take a day to complete. For all interviews, the Host City should ensure translators are available if they are required.

At the start of the Review Team's assessment of Essential 6, the Host City is **highly recommended** to make a **presentation** to the Review Team which sets out its approach to institutional resilience. This could include information about:

- The institutions in the city that are involved in identifying, mitigating, responding to or recovering from disaster risks
- How the institutions are coordinated and work together, including information about public and private sector institutions and how they are organised to deliver essential services
- Other institutions, NGOs and volunteers that could help the city's institutions in an emergency.

### Who should the Review Team interview?

When considering who is important for the Review Team to interview and / or receive a presentation from, it is **highly recommended** that the **Mayor** and / or other key local political leaders who give DRR leadership and a mandate to strengthen institutional resilience across the city are included and available.

The Host City and Review Team may also wish to consider who would be most appropriate in the light of their initial exchange of pre-visit information. Suggestions include:

- Senior managers of institutions that deliver services critical to keeping the city functioning effectively, whether part of the city government or the private sector
- People in the city who are responsible for, or who are part of, the city's supply chains for essential supplies and services to explore how key supply chains will be maintained in a disaster
- Representatives from the insurance industry to discuss the risks to the city's institutions, insurance coverage and the protection afforded to the city's institutions in a disaster
- Practitioners who have been involved in a city-to-city knowledge exchange to explore how this has helped the Host City to strengthen its institutional resilience
- Representatives from civil society, NGOs and volunteer organisations that can provide assistance to the Host City's institutions in an emergency
- Representatives from institutions in neighbouring administrations if there are agreements in place to support one another in case of a disaster.



## How can the Host City multi-agency capacity be demonstrated?

In addition to interviews and presentations, suggestions for activities within the programme for the visit include:

- Visiting a team researching and assembling data in relation to institutional capacity to prevent or mitigate disaster risk and / or in relation to responding to and recovering from disasters
- Talking with community representatives including, if possible, those who have experienced a disaster and the response of the city's institutions to the emergency
- Site visits to key institutions to see staff at work in disaster risk reduction, to explore how institutions are protecting the delivery of critical services in disasters or to see demonstrations of specialist capabilities.

## Exercises and Training

Observing an example of a public or practitioner training event taking place in the Host City at the time of the visit, or observation of a table top or live exercise to rehearse the response of the city's institutions in a disaster scenario, would be helpful. However, given the limited time available, if this is not feasible, the Host City may wish to include video or other evidence from these activities.



## PHASE 2, STEP 9: REVIEW TEAM: GATHERING EVIDENCE

The Review Team will gather evidence from the pre-review information submitted before the peer review visit, together with information from interviews and activities undertaken during the visit, to gain a view of the effectiveness of the existing institutional capacity for resilience. This will include:

- how the institutions develop skills and understand their vulnerabilities
- areas of strength and good practice
- how effective the strategies are within the city to engage civil society organisations
- how the topic of institutional resilience and the capacity to maintain services in a disaster is promoted in the city.

The Review Team will structure their evidence gathering and interviews to enable the Host City to describe and demonstrate their approach against each of the indicators included in the Disaster Resilience Scorecard Preliminary Level Assessment. Overall, the Review Team should determine:

- Who leads / contributes / coordinates / assesses performance in this area? Is this effective? Is shared ownership of DRR evident?
- Who is missing / underperforming or underrepresented?
- What skills and experience are evidenced? Are there deficits?
- What activities currently support performance in this area, are these activities effective?
- What, if any, additional activities would the Host City like to undertake in future? What are the barriers to extending activities?

- How are resources / information / training shared? Are there exclusions or barriers to access?
- How is the Host City accessing local / national / international sources of expertise to improve DRR in this area? Which networks is the Host City part of to support this activity?

Although the Review Team should design their own detailed questions in order to explore issues they consider relevant in the context of the Host City, the following questions are offered as suggestions that may be helpful in stakeholder interviews for Essential 6. They are example questions and it is wholly acceptable to tailor them or, equally, not to use them, according to the individual peer review. The Review Team could choose to select just the relevant questions as well as asking additional questions that have not been listed below.





Ref	Subject / Issue	Suggested Questions
P 6.1	Skills and Experience	<p><b>Does the city have clear access to all the skills and experience it believes it would need to respond to reduce risks and respond to identified disaster scenarios?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are your responsibilities and accountabilities in relation to institutional resilience?</li> <li>• What powers and capacity do you have to act on these responsibilities?</li> <li>• Who has the authority in the city to promote institutional capacity in DRR issues?</li> <li>• How does the city set a clear institutional strategy for disaster risk reduction in the city and what does it contain?</li> <li>• What is the role and responsibility of the institution in a disaster situation?</li> <li>• How does the institution go about and to what extent does it understand all the disaster risks and vulnerabilities to which it is exposed?</li> <li>• How are the capacities and resources of the institutions coordinated in disaster planning and in disaster response?</li> <li>• How do the city's governance arrangements encourage engagement with all relevant institutions, the private sector and civil society in disaster resilience?</li> <li>• How does the city understand which institutions have a role in identifying and mitigating risk and how does the city capitalise on these institutional capabilities?</li> <li>• How is the insurance sector engaged in risk identification?</li> <li>• How does the city plan to draw on private sector resources in and emergency?</li> <li>• How does the city plan to use NGO and volunteer resources in and emergency?</li> <li>• How does the city identify and prioritise resources to reduce risk?</li> <li>• How do the institutions in the city understand the roles and responsibilities of other institutions in the city during the response to a disaster?</li> <li>• In what ways have institutions in the city planned how to build back better and improve institutional capacity following a disaster?</li> </ul>

Ref	Subject / Issue	Suggested Questions
P 6.2	Public education and awareness	<p><b>Does a co-ordinated public relations and education campaign exist, with structured messaging and channels to ensure hazard, risk and disaster information (that can be understood and used) is properly disseminated to the public?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are multiple communication channels used to communicate with the public?</li> <li>• Does the information and public education programme reflect the information needs for disaster risk reduction of different community groups, including communities speaking different languages?</li> <li>• How does the city know that it has effectively communicated identified risks to the public?</li> <li>• How are climate change projections communicated to the public?</li> <li>• How does the city promote and know the extent of the level of take-up of insurance by business and residents in the city?</li> <li>• How does the city establish what information people, including vulnerable people, need in order to prepare for an emergency, especially those who live in high risk areas?</li> <li>• How does the city establish what help is available to vulnerable people in an emergency and how is this information communicated?</li> <li>• How does the city include resilience and climate change adaptation issues in the education programmes within schools?</li> <li>• How does the city coordinate its public and institutional education programmes?</li> </ul>
P 6.3	Data sharing	<p><b>Extent to which data on the city's resilience context is shared with other organisations involved with the city's resilience.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is technical data used for disaster risk reduction and resilience building in the city?</li> <li>• Who can access the data on the city's resilience?</li> <li>• What is the risk communication platform for the general public?</li> </ul>

Ref	Subject / Issue	Suggested Questions
P 6.3	Data sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is data shared within the city's institutions and with all the departments that have an involvement in disaster risk reduction?</li> <li>• How is data on risk shared in different formats and different styles so that it can be used by different groups such as students, the public, practitioners etc.?</li> <li>• How do public and private institutions share information about disaster risk in the city?</li> <li>• What type of collaboration exists in the city for disaster risk reduction publications and how are these shared with different institutions?</li> </ul>
P 6.4	Training delivery	<p><b>Are there training courses covering risk and resilience issues offered to all sectors of the city including government, business, NGOs and the community?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kind of planning or initiatives does your organisation promote to reduce risks and vulnerabilities: within city government, with other institutions and with the public?</li> <li>• How are the training and exercising needs of institutions and the public within the city identified?</li> <li>• What is the annual training and awareness program in your city for disaster risk reduction?</li> <li>• Who can access training and exercising events within the city?</li> <li>• What is the typical content of training and exercising events and do they cover risk, disaster preparedness, disaster response and considerations around building back better?</li> <li>• What percentage of staff receive this training per year in your institution? How, and based on what evidence, do you define any targets for the percentage of staff trained?</li> <li>• How does the city evaluate the effectiveness of its training and exercising programme?</li> <li>• How do institutions in the city assess whether they have access to the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience in an emergency?</li> </ul>



Ref	Subject / Issue	Suggested Questions
P 6.5	Languages	<p><b>Are training materials available in the majority of languages in common use in the city?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are risks communicated to people speaking different languages or who require information in different formats?</li> <li>• How does the city assess the effectiveness of its communication programme?</li> <li>• Does the city actively promote principles of equality and non-discrimination in disaster risk reduction, disaster response and disaster recovery?</li> </ul>
P 6.6	Learning from Others	<p><b>Is the city proactively seeking to exchange knowledge and learn from other cities facing similar challenges?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the city use international knowledge and research to factor factored climate change projections into its understanding of future risk?</li> <li>• How have the institutions in the city developed capabilities to respond to risk scenarios predicted under climate change projections and have these been validated against approaches adopted by other cities?</li> <li>• How does the city ensure it is continually identifying and learning from good practice?</li> <li>• What agreements does the city have in place with other cities or centres of knowledge around the world to conduct studies and share information on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation?</li> <li>• What approach does the city take to exchanging information with other cities about disaster risk reduction?</li> <li>• Can the city describe how a city-to-city knowledge exchange has contributed to strengthening institutional resilience in the city?</li> </ul>

## PHASE 3, STEP 11: RECORDING INFORMATION AND DRAFTING INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The 'Step-by-Step Guide' describes how the Review Team can record information during the peer review visit and includes a generic form that can be used to capture information during individual presentations, interviews and other activities.

At the end of each day, it is recommended that the Review Team assemble to consider all the information that it has heard during the day and summarise the evidence to understand:

- areas of good practice and strengths on which the Host City can build
- areas where further information may be needed before the peer review visit is finished
- areas where possible recommendations for the future may be made.

This process will help to inform both the remainder of the visit and the drafting of the peer review feedback report. The two tables below are offered as a way of recording the overall findings for Essential 6 together with the initial recommendations arising from the activities experienced during the day.



## SUMMARY OF INITIAL FINDINGS

	Comments	Justification for assessment	Good practice identified
<b>P 6.1 Skills and Experience</b> Does the city have clear access to all the skills and experience it believes it would need to respond to reduce risks and respond to identified disaster scenarios?			
<b>P 6.2 Public education and awareness</b> Does a co-ordinated public relations and education campaign exist, with structured messaging and channels to ensure hazard, risk and disaster information (that can be understood and used) is properly disseminated to the public?			
<b>P 6.3 Data sharing</b> Extent to which data on the city's resilience context is shared with other organisations involved with the city's resilience.			
<b>P 6.4 Training delivery</b> Are there training courses covering risk and resilience issues offered to all sectors of the city including government, business, NGOs and community?			
<b>P 6.5 Languages</b> Are training materials available in the majority of languages in common use in the city?			



SUMMARY OF INITIAL FINDINGS			
	Comments	Justification for assessment	Good practice identified
<b>P 6.6 Learning from Others</b> Is the city proactively seeking to exchange knowledge and learn from other cities facing similar challenges?			
Other			

## INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

	Description of areas for potential development	Justification	Time horizon
E.g. Extent to which data on the city's resilience context is shared with other organisations involved with the city's resilience.	E.g. Ensure a consistent flow of information between multi-agency partners.	E.g. A regular flow of information would improve understanding of risk and aid planning for partner agencies.	E.g. Short, medium, long term implementation.
<b>P 6.1 Skills and Experience</b> The city has clear access to all the skills and experience it believes it would need to respond to reduce risks and respond to identified disaster scenarios.			
<b>P 6.2 Public education and awareness</b> A co-ordinated public relations and education campaign exists, with structured messaging and channels to ensure hazard, risk and disaster information (that can be understood and used) is properly disseminated to the public.			

## INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

	Description of areas for potential development	Justification	Time horizon
<b>P 6.3 Data sharing</b> Extent to which data on the city's resilience context is shared with other organisations involved with the city's resilience.			
<b>P 6.4 Training delivery</b> There are training courses covering risk and resilience issues offered to all sectors of the city including government, business, NGOs and community.			
<b>P 6.5 Languages</b> Training materials available in the majority of languages in common use in the city.			

## INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

	Description of areas for potential development	Justification	Time horizon
<b>P 6.6 Learning from Others</b> The city is proactively seeking to exchange knowledge and learn from other cities facing similar challenges.			
<b>Other Area / issue</b>			



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