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# **Final Report of Uscore2: City-to-city local level Peer Review on Disaster Risk Reduction**

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# Contents

1. Project partnership, objectives and deliverables .....	4
Partnership.....	4
Specific project objectives .....	4
Deliverables.....	5
2. General summary of project implementation process.....	5
Comparative analysis of initial and actual time schedule of project (2 years).....	7
Planned and used resources during the project.....	8
Expected and actual results .....	8
3. Summary of the evaluation of project management/implementation process – (Detailed in Appendix 1) .....	9
Partnership/core group cooperation.....	9
Cooperation with the Commission .....	9
Lessons learnt .....	10
4. Activities .....	10
Comparison between initially planned and actually implemented activities, including monitoring, evaluation and dissemination.....	10
Qualitative evaluation of the activities.....	10
5. The presentation of the technical results of the activities and the deliverables - (Detailed in Appendix 2) .....	10
6. Evaluation of the technical results and deliverables .....	10
Lessons learnt .....	10
Challenges and/or improvements to be tackled through further action.....	11
Recommendations to stakeholders, partners, national and local authorities, and EU institutions .....	11
7. Follow-up .....	12
Comparison between initial and current follow-up measures.....	12
Additional follow-up approaches.....	13

## **1. Project partnership, objectives and deliverables**

### **Partnership**

The Uscore2 project partners designed, tested and published a generic, practical, easy-to-use tool for conducting peer reviews between cities on disaster risk reduction (DRR). The partnership included:

- **three cities** at the forefront of DRR practice (Salford [UK], Amadora [Portugal], Viggiano [Italy])
- **authorities** that support city government (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government [UK], National Authority of Civil Protection [Portugal], Associazione di Protezione Civile Gruppo Lucano [Italy])
- **academics** bringing scientific rigour to the design and testing (University of Manchester [UK])
- **international non-governmental organisation (INGO)** in DRR with experience of working with over 4000 cities globally through the Making Cities Resilient campaign (UNISDR)
- an **International Advisory Board (IAB)** involving cities in 6 countries ensuring wider appeal of the tool.

This diverse partnership ensured the tool was practical, supported, rigorous, and globally appealing.

### **Specific project objectives**

1. To design a City-to-city Peer Review tool to evaluate existing DRR activity and identify improvements
2. To apply the Peer Review tool to cities in 3 EU Member States (MS) to support their DRR practices and refine the tool to enable it to be more broadly applicable
3. To develop and apply an Impact Evaluation Methodology (IEM) to rigorously evaluate the peer review process and gauge the impact of the peer review on enhancing DRR in the cities
4. To disseminate the Peer Review tool and Impact Evaluation Methodology to ensure wide take-up.

The Peer Review tool and IEM were designed to:

- ensure they were applicable to; cities of different sizes (population range in project c. 3,500 – 2.8 million), cities with different hazards and risks (including flood, wildfire and industrial incidents), cities from different parts of Europe, different cultures, different governance structures
- identify the need for development in DRR (peer review outcomes incorporated into city resilience planning) and appreciating the desired impact of additional measures
- be intuitive so that it can be used by people who had not conducted reviews before.



(Picture depicts an evacuation exercise at a local school during the Peer Review in Amadora, Portugal -©Uscore2 2017)

## **Deliverables**

The project finalised 43 deliverables across seven work packages (WP 1-7). First, the project designed an initial Peer Review tool and IEM and tested them in the first pilot in Viggiano. Then a process of development, reflection, adaption, trialling and evaluating was conducted to further develop the Peer Review tool and the IEM in the pilot reviews in Salford and Amadora – working towards final versions that were fit for purpose. The final version of these outputs are reported in a Step-by-Step Guide, associated modules and IEM all of which were approved unanimously by the partners before publication. 20 of the project deliverables have been published on the project website ([www.Uscore2.eu](http://www.Uscore2.eu)) (D7.2).

The project's deliverables add an evidence based, proven tool to the suite of mechanisms available within Europe to enable cities to work together to prepare for and prevent disasters.

## **2. General summary of project implementation process**

The Peer Review tool (D5.2a) and IEM (D5.3a) were based on the latest evidence of good practice found through our comprehensive literature review (D1.1) and survey of the available DRR performance indicators. This solid foundation proved invaluable for partners to reach agreement on, and build confidence in, the format of the peer review and IEM processes. The development of the processes led to the production of a Step by Step Guide for the peer review and impact evaluation and a series of eleven modules focussing on key factors affecting DRR. The UN's Making Cities Resilient (MCR) 10 essentials were adopted as an organising framework for the peer review modules, albeit an additional Module (8b) was developed to enable the impact of public health on DRR to be peer reviewed. In addition, the Peer Review tool was aligned to the local indicators for the Sendai Framework and MCR campaign enabling on-going assessment of its applicability in supporting cities in reporting local progress against the Sendai Framework.

The 11 modules are:

- Module 1. Organise for Disaster Resilience
- Module 2. Identify, Understand and Use Current and Future Risk Scenarios
- Module 3. Strengthen Financial Capacity for Resistance
- Module 4. Pursue Resilient Urban Development and Design
- Module 5. Safeguard Natural Buffers to Enhance Ecosystems' Protective Functions
- Module 6. Strengthen Institutional Capacity for Resistance
- Module 7. Understand and Strengthen Societal Capacity for Resilience
- Module 8a. Increase Infrastructure Resilience
- Module 8b. Public Health and Disaster Risk Reduction
- Module 9. Ensure Effective Disaster Response
- Module 10. Expedite Recovery and Build Back Better.



(Picture depicts media coverage of the start-up workshop in Amadora, Portugal-©Uscore2 2017)

To explain how a peer review takes place, a peer review is organised by a Host City which is the beneficiary of the peer review, and a Reviewer City which is invited by the Host to assess the Host's DRR practices. The Host City selects 2-3 modules based on their current and future risk scenarios. In advance of the peer review, the Host City select and supply evidence of the current activities, governance arrangements and risk assessments, along with any contextual evidence the Reviewer City might find useful in selecting and informing members of the Review Team. The peer review is held over a period of 3/4 days. The Review Team meet key leaders and workers in the Host City, visit relevant sites and resources,

review further documentary evidence and may observe live or table top exercises. At the end of the review visit, initial feedback is presented to the Host City, followed up by a full Review report which is received alongside the IEM, undertaken by the Host City.

This process of peer review was piloted in the three Uscore2 cities which have different disaster risk profiles; geographical and demographic characteristics; and statutory and regulatory frameworks. These differences demonstrate the Peer Review Tool can add value to cities with different contexts and characteristics. The effectiveness of the Peer Review Tool for these different cities was evaluated using the IEM. The outcomes were also scrutinised by the IAB.

Dissemination of the findings from the pilot peer reviews has been ongoing through the project website, Twitter (@Uscore2EU), face-to-face contacts in pilot cities, and two Master Classes (D7.3). The first Uscore2 Master Class, was held at the Smart City Expo World Conference in Barcelona on 13 November 2018. The conference participants came from over 700 cities in 146 countries. The Master Class was oversubscribed, attended by over 100 delegates, with standing room only. The second Uscore2 Master Class was held at the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction in Rome on 21 November 2018. Around 90 delegates from cities across Europe attended.

The partners have also published articles and papers and presented interim and final project findings at high level DRR network meetings and conferences (D7.4) e.g.:

- Presented at American Society for Public Administration (ASPA). 79th Annual Conference. Denver, USA. 9-13 March 2018.
- Presented at Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), Manchester Moreno J and Shaw D (2017) Involving spontaneous volunteers in emergency response.
- Wales Civil Contingencies Conference, Deeside. 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017.
- Shaw D (2017) ISO22315 – Planning for mass evacuation. 13<sup>th</sup> European Civil Protection Congress. The German Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance, Berlin, 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2017.

The project teams are continuing to disseminate the outcomes of the project. For example, Salford and Amadora are speaking at the International Conference on Risk, Security and Citizenship (UCSRC 2019) in March 2019 and Salford is preparing a proposal to speak at the Global Platform for DRR in May this year.

#### **Comparative analysis of initial and actual time schedule of project (2 years)**

The project was delivered on schedule with the literature review (D1.1) complete and the Peer Review and Impact Evaluation tools developed and published. The WP stages have been broadly in line with the original schedule and the dissemination element of the project is well underway.



(Picture depicts an Gruppo Lucano major incident exercise during the Peer Review of Viggiano, Italy-©Uscore2 2017)

### **Planned and used resources during the project**

The staffing resources required to deliver the project have been sufficient, allowing for a core team and additional translators where required. These have been supplemented by local experts and stakeholders giving their time to ensure the pilot peer reviews were a success. The project has been delivered under budget due to reduced staffing costs and currency fluctuations.

The total amount of EU funding contribution allocated within the original Grant Agreement at project outset was €757,639, which was 75% of the projected total project cost of €1,010,186. The project has been delivered with the final request for a EU funding contribution of €655,290 based on a total project cost of €880,752.

(For full details see financial EU document Annex VI [USCORE2 CONSOLIDATED- Annex VI (6. Annex\_VI\_Financial\_statement EU FINAL v1.0 (formally DRAFT V0.2)]).

### **Expected and actual results**

There has been little variation between the expected and actual results, Appendix 1 & 2 provide further details. There are individual reports / documentation available to verify each of the deliverable actions if required.

### **3. Summary of the evaluation of project management/implementation process – (Detailed in Appendix 1)**

There have been significant **positive aspects of and opportunities arising** from the use of the Uscore2 tools. For example, the UN now has an additional tool to complement MCR, the roll out of the Peer Review Tool and the Resilience Score Card is imminent and the project has enabled the development of an international standard (ISO22392) titled “Guidelines for conducting peer reviews” (D7.5).

In addition, the cities that were both peer reviewed and undertook peer reviews of other cities reported benefits including greater political engagement in local level DRR, wider stakeholder participation and a broad range of technical improvements.

There have been some **difficulties encountered**, though none affected the critical success path of the project, principally:

- Unanticipated additional simultaneous translation was required during the peer review of Amadora.
- International variation in protocols for information sharing between the public and commercial sectors.
- Time and capacity of the project team. During the project, major incidents occurred in two partner cities, namely the Manchester Arena terrorist attack (Salford, UK) and the large scale forest fire (Amadora, Portugal).

#### **Partnership/core group cooperation**

The Partnership and group cooperation has been exemplary. All partners have consistently demonstrated outstanding commitment to task completion, information sharing, quality assurance and timeliness.

#### **Cooperation with the Commission**

From the outset of the project, the partnership has maintained a positive relationship with EU Project Officers and they have been invited to all Uscore2 workshops. No concerns whatsoever have been raised by the EU Project Officers.

The project has evidenced **added value for the wider European community** and beyond. The comprehensive literature review has added to the body of research available in Europe and this has been particularly evidenced in the development of Module 8b, Public Health, which has facilitated a very active and transformational European conversation on the crucial role public health factors play in DRR. In the final workshop, a presentation from the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) recognised "the contribution that Uscore2 had made to the European work on national peer reviews through fostering dialogue and trans-boundary communication, helping address the challenges governments face in political decisions and in financing". There was also recognition that "local peer reviews, as opposed to national, recognise a larger need at the local level for actions, are a bit more action orientated and help local governments access leverages they have been struggling with".

The cities involved in the pilot peer reviews, through both their choice of themes for their peer reviews and through subsequently building the outcomes into work programmes and resilience strategies are helping to meet the **targets of the Sendai Framework**. In particular, this work supports the target to increase the number of local disaster risk reduction strategies and the target to substantially reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure.

### **Lessons learnt**

Implementation of the process has been facilitated by linking with widely accepted frameworks (e.g. MCR) rather than reinventing the wheel and pulling the practitioner community in new directions. Uscore2 adds to existing frameworks, particularly in the area of public health. The clear role for IAB has been evidenced through regular interaction around specific questions to them. The work of the project has gone beyond EU routes to globalise EU best practices e.g. MCR.

## **4. Activities**

### **Comparison between initially planned and actually implemented activities, including monitoring, evaluation and dissemination**

All foreseen activities have been conducted successfully. The planned activities outlined in the Grant Application have been undertaken in line with the plan and delivered the desired results.

### **Qualitative evaluation of the activities**

Activities were monitored throughout the project by the project leader, each partner and the IAB. Anecdotal feedback from partners, elected representatives, and network members has been positive. In addition, the IEM offered a rigorous analysis of the impact of the peer review process. The peer review outcomes were also fed back to expert audiences in each city, enabling a level of challenge and of evaluation of their applicability to the city. The three pilot cities are taking forward recommendations made within the peer reviews, also supporting the quality of the assessment achieved through the review process.

## **5. The presentation of the technical results of the activities and the deliverables - (Detailed in Appendix 2)**

Appendix 2 lays out how each deliverable has achieved its purpose, the evaluation supporting this, how this effective practice has been disseminated, enabling the overall objectives of the project to be delivered successfully and demonstrating added value for the EU.

## **6. Evaluation of the technical results and deliverables**

### **Lessons learnt**

The effectiveness of the Peer Review Tool and the IEM were demonstrated in each of the pilot cities, the lessons learned and recommendations from each review are detailed in the peer review reports, D2.3, D4.3 and D4.7 and the IEM reports D2.4, D4.4, and D4.8. All are available on the website [www.Uscore2.eu](http://www.Uscore2.eu)

The **strengths** of the Uscore2 tools and IEM are their ease of use, evidence based effectiveness and adaptability. The Peer Review Tool methodology is comprehensive and

covers all the 10 Essentials from the UN's Making Cities Resilience (MCR) Framework, thus enabling global opportunities to promote the use of the Peer Review Tool. Each city's DRR priorities and governance arrangements vary. The Step by Step guide sets out the importance of preparation and evidence sharing to ensure the appropriate mix of modules and reviewers are selected to enable the Peer Review Tool to be adapted to fit the context of different cities.

### **Challenges and/or improvements to be tackled through further action**

Further collaboration between cities, partners and national agencies will assist in improving cooperation and mutual understanding regarding the challenges faced when dealing with DRR whilst allowing 'joined up' thinking to provide solutions across the DRR agenda.



(Picture depicts site visit to Electricity infrastructure build back better project during the Peer Review of Salford, Greater Manchester, UK. ©Uscore2 2018)

### **Recommendations to stakeholders, partners, national and local authorities, and EU institutions**

The overall recommendation of the project team is that undertaking a peer review either as a Host City or as a peer reviewer can very effectively highlight areas of strength and those needing improvement. The experience of working on a peer review builds partnership agreements and develops the skills of staff involved.

## 7. Follow-up

### Comparison between initial and current follow-up measures

The aim of Uscore2 is to create peer review processes and tools which will enable cities in Europe and globally to understand and improve DRR and for the impact on pilot cities to be sustainable and transferable beyond the lifetime of the project. To this end, initial follow up measures were identified in the Grant Application:

- Increase engagement and knowledge transfer of the Peer Review tool and IEM to other cities and nations
- Make available a diverse range of DRR practitioners with experience of conducting European peer reviews at a City-to-city level.

The experience gained during the project has not identified a need to amend the initial follow on measures and has encouraged partners to commit to follow on peer reviews at appropriate intervals. The UN, through the MCR network, are positively endorsing city to city peer reviews as best practice (see UNISDR website:

<https://www.unisdr.org/campaign/resilientcities/home/toolkitblkitem/?id=32>), supported by the ISO which will shortly be in place. Academic work on peer reviews has been published, with further papers planned. There is an appetite for access to the results of Uscore2, evidenced by invitations to significant national and international events to further disseminate the findings, significantly in South America, evidenced in recent approaches from Chile and Argentina and also Sweden.



(Picture depicts a Gruppo Lucano major incident exercise during the Peer Review of Viggiano, Italy-©Uscore2 2017)

### **Additional follow-up approaches**

The Partners have identified some key lessons of process, incorporated into the ISO. There is a need to consider how these may apply to National level peer reviews which may require additional measures and information. The option of a UScore3 project on this should be considered. Other possible projects to complement Uscore2 include how the build the outcome of peer reviews into Sendai Framework compliant city disaster risk reduction strategies and the further roll-out of the tool. The partners are also committed to continue to evaluate the long term impact of the peer reviews to add to the body of knowledge in DRR and to contribute to the EU National review, looking 5 years ahead.



(Picture depicts the Uscore2 presentation stand at the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, Rome, Italy where one of the project Master classes were held in November 2018 -©Uscore2 2018)

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