



International Recovery Forum 2018

Build Back Better in Urban Resilience
Hotel Crown Palais Kobe, Kobe, Hyogo, Japan
11:00 – 16:30, 24 January 2018

Draft Concept Note
(As of 12 Jan 2018)

1. BACKGROUND

The Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 stipulates that the International Recovery Platform (IRP) is a mechanism that enhances the sharing of experiences and learning on “Build Back Better” among countries and all relevant stakeholders primarily through the annual organization of the International Recovery Forum. For 2018, the theme of the Forum will address **how Build Back Better contributes to urban resilience.**

Urban Resilience refers to the ability of any urban system to withstand and quickly recover from all plausible shocks and stresses, and maintain continuities of its functions. A resilient city is able to Build Back Better in a sustainable way that leaves nobody at risk and in a way that involves affected community members in determining, with dignity, the course of their lives and futures.

Enhancing urban resilience is essential for cities to continue the important roles they play, while faced with many types of risks and hazardous events. Cities are hubs for service provision, powerhouses of economic growth, and catalysts for inclusion and innovation. By the middle of this century, 66% of the world’s population will be living in cities. On the other hand, cities are experiencing challenges such as excessive population density, unplanned immigration, ageing of population, poverty, economic decline, urban sprawl, disorganized land use and poor infrastructure. For example, the number of elderly population (65 +) is growing faster in urban areas, compared to non-urban area in OECD countries. At the same time, urban areas are expanding even faster than the global population growth rate as a whole.

Cities will be further threatened by natural hazards with increasing frequency and intensity due to unabated pace of climate change. The shocks and stresses from these hazards will trigger economic, physical, and social disturbances. Unplanned urbanization can often result in greater vulnerability, accumulating urban risk as development continues in hazard prone and cheap locations.

In this regard, cities need to be resilient in the face of numerous shocks and stresses, including natural hazards, for the wellbeing of its urban residents, the prosperity and development of the area, as well as the entire country. The process of disaster recovery is a unique opportunity to demonstrate their resilience. By being resilient, cities are able to “Build Back” their economy, society and environment “Better” than before - more effectively, efficiently, sustainably and equitably.

It is important to note that the process of “Build Back Better” requires a very comprehensive approach. The whole of society should be engaged in the process, including public and private sectors, academia, and civil society, etc. “Build Back Better” should not only focus on the recovery of infrastructure, but also achieve the recovery of economic activities, employment, opportunities for the most vulnerable and community as well as urban attractiveness together. This should be based on the lessons of how their cities have been damaged by hazardous events and of how disaster impacts are mitigated and addressed by urban communities.

There are many examples of how “Build Back Better” aims to reinforce recovery of the economy, environment and society after disasters so that future disasters will not impact cities in the same way and as adversely as previous ones. For example, the relocation of residential areas from coastal areas which were hit by tsunami to hillsides is a good practice in Tohoku region. However, there should be more examples and a clear concept on *what specific recovery approaches* can help cities develop their resilience and capacity to absorb the impact of hazards, protect and preserve human life, and limit future damage to and destruction of public and private assets – all while continuing to provide essential infrastructure and services in the aftermath of a disaster.

How to Build Back Better in urban areas, in ways that can contribute to long term resilience needs to be unpacked. In order to achieve Build Back Better, it is essential to foster urban resilience by actively promoting comprehensive, inclusive and integrated urban planning and management that is based on a multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder, and multi-hazard understanding of urban environments. Such approaches should include economic and social perspectives, especially of SMEs and of the urban poor, as they can be particularly vulnerable to shocks and stresses.

2. OBJECTIVES

The International Recovery Forum 2018 will address the following two items:

2.1 What does it mean by “Build Back Better” for urban resilience?

The Forum intends to discuss what is meant by “Build Back Better” for urban resilience, drawing from recent experiences. “Words into Action guidelines: Build back better in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction (consultative version)”¹ for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR points out four major tasks: 1) Develop a national disaster recovery framework, 2) Enable a pre-disaster recovery planning, 3) Formalize systems for assessment, 4) Strengthen policies on Build Back Better. To address this question “What does “Build Back Better” for urban resilience mean?” recent experiences will be discussed, considering these four major tasks stipulated in the Words into Action Guidelines. Discussions in this Forum will further provide inputs to the consultative version of the Words into Action Guidelines.

2.2 Innovative approaches by learning from past experience and initiatives and How to measure success of “Build Back Better” in cities.

The Forum intends to discuss innovative approaches for “Build Back Better” drawing from the experiences and initiatives of local governments and other actors in cities, including private sector and civil society entities, to achieve longer-term resilience, in the aspects of housing, business and social protection. For example, Hyogo Prefecture and Kobe City achieved “Build Back Better” after the Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in 1995.

There are a number of recent innovative tools and guidance on Build Back Better and resilience of which many local governments are still unaware, such as risk-sensitive land-use planning linked to building regulations (Japan) and probabilistic risk assessment (Philippines) tools to guide recovery processes. In view of this, the Forum offers a venue for sharing these tools and guidance. Learning from innovative approaches, it is also critical to measure the success of “Build Back Better” in cities.

3. PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF THE FORUM 2018

10:30-11:00	Registration
Opening	
11:00-11:20	<input type="checkbox"/> Remarks: Mr. Stefan Kohler , Chair of the Steering Committee of the International Recovery Platform (UNOPS) <input type="checkbox"/> Welcome Remarks: Mr. Mamoru Maekawa , Vice-Minister for Policy Coordination, Cabinet Office of Japan <input type="checkbox"/> Welcome Address: Mr. Toshizo Ido , Governor of Hyogo Prefecture
Keynote Presentations	
11:20-12:30	Two keynote presentations to set the tone and direction of the Forum regarding how Build Back Better contributes to urban resilience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prof. Takashi Onishi, President, Toyohashi University of Technology (Former President of Science Council of Japan, to present “Considering the Meaning of Build Back Better from the experience of Catastrophe” (20 minutes) - Mr. Corey Gruber, Deputy Associate Administrator for Response &

¹ Words into Action guidelines: Build back better in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction (consultative version) <http://www.preventionweb.net/publications/view/53213>

	<p>Recovery, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to present “Lessons for urban resilience and Build-Back-Better from Hurricanes Harvey and Maria in Houston and Puerto Rico” (20 minutes)</p> <p>Discussion moderated by Mr. Nigel Fisher, Former United Nations Assistant Secretary-General (30 minutes)</p>
12:30–12:35	Group Photo
12:35-13:20	Lunch Break
Panel Discussion 1: What does it mean by “Build Back Better” for urban resilience?	
13:20 - 14:40 (80 minutes)	<p><i>Moderator:</i> Mr. Stefan Kohler, Chair of the Steering Committee of the International Recovery Platform (UNOPS)</p> <p><i>Panelists:</i> (10 minutes presentation each)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Setsuko Saya, Co-Chair of the IRP Steering Committee (Cabinet Office, Government of Japan) (to present the consultative version of “Words into Action for Build Back Better” and Japanese experiences) - National Disaster Management Authority, Government of India (tbc) (to present local experiences in India and initiatives by the Government of India) - Mr. Hans Guttman, Executive Director, Asia Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) (to present how build back better is integrated into the programs of ADPC) - Mr. Josef Leitmann, GFDRR/World Bank (to present and contrast build back better and urban resilience). - Mr. Atsushi Koresawa, Director, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, UN-HABITAT (to present “People’s Process” approach to strengthening urban resilience) <p><i>Interactive Discussion (30 minutes)</i></p>
14:40 – 14:50 (10 minutes)	Coffee Break
Panel Discussion 2: Innovative approaches by learning from past experience and initiatives and How to measure success of “Build Back Better” in cities	
14:50-16:10 (80 minutes)	<p><i>Moderator:</i> Mr. Nigel Fisher, Former United Nations Assistant Secretary-General</p> <p><i>Panelists:</i> (10 minutes presentation each)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Corey Gruber, Deputy Associate Administrator for Response & Recovery, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) - Mr. Chiri Babu Maharjan, Mayor, City of Lalitpur, Nepal (to present local innovative approaches on build back better following the 2015 earthquakes) - Mr. Huang Sanping, Vice Mayor, the People's Government of Tangshan Municipality, China (to present local experiences and measures being taken for urban resilience in the City) - Mr. Noboru Shimizu, Manager, Planning, Crisis Management Office, Kobe City (to present innovative approaches on build back better in housing and business, and how these contribute to long-term urban resilience). - Mr. Shahbaz Khan, Director of Jakarta Office & UNESCO Representative (to present UNESCO’s activities on build back better) <p><i>(Interactive Discussion (30 minutes))</i></p>
16:10 – 16:25	<input type="checkbox"/> Wrap up and synthesis of the Forum by the Moderator (Mr. Nigel Fisher)
16:25 – 16:30	<input type="checkbox"/> Closing Remarks: Ms. Setsuko Saya, Co-Chair of the Steering Committee of the International Recovery Platform (Cabinet Office, Government of Japan)

4. OUTCOME DOCUMENT

- A report of substantive discussion
- This Forum will also providing inputs to the consultative version of the Words into Action Guideline for Build Back Better in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.
- (An idea of developing IRP Guidance note on urban resilience to be developed reflecting on the discussions is to be discussed later)

5. PARTICIPANTS

About 150 including policymakers, practitioners, experts, academe, and general public