

Task Force On Local and Regional Government Disaster Response

Terms of Reference

1. TITLE OF THE GROUPE

The working group is called the **Task Force on Local and Regional Government Disaster Response**

2. MANDATE

The Task Force will provide a platform for local governments, to exchange knowledge and expertise on disaster management. It will improve and increase the availability of local governments expertise to disaster-affected municipalities and it will highlight and develop the role of local governments on the international disaster management, resilience and response. The UCLG members that started the process for the creation of this Group are particularly interested to harmonize their individual technical assistance initiatives in the field of disaster preparedness and response (share know how, capitalize on lessons learned and provide increasingly articulated technical support in crisis situations).

The Task Force members who are interested in that field can decide to join forces and develop a technical assistance program proposal and seek external funding to improve their existing technical capacities. The Task Force mandate will include activities such as the mapping of technical expertise among members of UCLG, the gathering of existing disaster assistance tools, information sharing, the coordination of assessment missions and technical assistance when necessary, and support to develop concrete proposals for funding by national or multilateral funders, if relevant. The Task Force, which is to expand its membership over time, could also serve as a resource group, as a coordination board to joint programs (among its members), and as a think tank and lobby group.

3. BACKGROUND

Local government disaster management policy is not new to UCLG. Due to the Tsunami in South East Asia in 2004 were put forward in governing bodies of UCLG by the mayor of Paris, Mr. Delanoë.

In April 2008, the “Local Action for Disaster Risk Reduction” Programme was launched by UCLG in partnership with ICLEI, Metropolis and CITYNET and with the technical

support of the Earthquakes and Megacities Initiative (EMI). This initiative was created with the approval of the United Nations Secretariat for the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN-ISDR). The objective of the Programme, which has been running since, is to promote the adoption by local and regional governments of risk reduction policies and to promote their participation in the United Nations Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, which was launched in 2007.

When disasters strike, local governments are the first line of response, often with wide ranging responsibilities but insufficient capacities to deal with them. Local governments are equally on the front line when it comes to anticipating, managing and reducing disaster risk, setting up or acting on early warning systems.

International disaster response efforts often lack a local governance dimension addressing specific needs of local governments. Members of United Cities and Local Governments have historically launched solidarity missions to crisis areas. They are convinced that this area of work should be developed under UCLG flag and in cooperation with strategic international partners. In order to improve the position and the action of local governments in the face of disaster and those dealing with the consequences of disaster, it has been proposed that a Task Force On local government disaster response is to be created under DCCD (Development Cooperation and City Diplomacy Committee). Initially made up of representatives of VNG, FCM, CUF and UMT, the city of Istanbul and UCLG MEWA, this body will help to stimulate debate, legitimize joint initiatives and engage new actors.

4. RESPONSABILITIES

The Task Force on Local Government Disaster Response will incorporate the following aspects:

- Debate and support the preparation of UCLG policies in the field of local government disaster management;
- Discuss and validate quality standards and other collective approaches that are being prepared as part of joint Programs;
- Maintain / increase the capacity of UCLG members to technically mobilize when a disaster has taken place.
- Discuss / prepare opinions in relation to decision making / initiatives of UN agencies in the field of disaster management (with a clear relation to local government);
- Share approaches, tools, methodologies and knowledge on program development (for example: approaches, proposal templates, guiding principles, criteria for identification and selection of new program areas, etc.);
- Discuss new programming opportunities and exchange on strategies to assess and seize these opportunities;

5. COMPOSITION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Task Force is presided by a Chair. The present president is the mayor of Geneva. The Chair of the Task Force will act as UCLG's main political representative in the field of Disaster Preparedness and Response. Vice-Chairs come from UMT (Turkey).

The proper functioning of the Task Force requires support by a Secretariat. The Secretariat of the Task Force is to be provided by Cités Unies France.

The Task Force On Local Government Disaster Response is created under the umbrella of the DCCD UCLG Committee.

6. TASK FORCE FUNCTIONING

The task force will operate as follows:

- **Meetings:** The task group will meet regularly on the occasion of UCLG statutory meetings. Exceptionally it can decide to meet as many times as needed and with a restrict group in order to managing a specific program or actions. **Reporting:** a noted taker will record discussions.
- **Activities:** The agenda of activities will be decided during the regular meetings and implemented collectively with the help of the secretariat.
- **Functioning budget and budget for activities:** the members of the Task force decide to seek common funding in order to improve the capacity of the Task Force secretariat. Extra funding needs to be allocated to each activity or program will be decided to implement.
- **Role of the Task Force secretariat:** The main tasks performed by the Secretariat are the preparation of Task Force meetings (preparation of the agenda, logistics, Support to the Chairperson of the Task Force). The secretariat role of coordination in specific "recovery" programs or other activities can be improved and reinforced. The secretariat needs to receive a specific mandate for it from the Task Force members.