



UN CLIMATE CHANGE HIGH-LEVEL CHAMPIONS

10 November 2022

Acknowledging the members of the [Cities Race to Resilience](#) for their leadership and commitment in transforming urban spaces and adapting to climate change

Today, on top of increasing socio-economic and ecological inequalities, cities already face the often-disastrous impacts of climate change and act as the first responders to crises associated with a warming climate. Cities are at the forefront of loss and damages incurred by flooding, drought, extreme heat, sea-level rise, and more, and the threats posed by climate change are increasing all over the world, and particularly in the Global South.

As cities are home to 55% of our global population, and urban growth is rapidly increasing, they are the stage and centre for crucial climate change adaptation to secure the stability and well-being of local communities world-wide.

The IPCC report on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability, highlighted this year that it is more critical than ever to increase resilience and to ensure social justice and the protection of vulnerable communities most at risk is at the heart of climate action. Preparedness for a changing climate is one of the key factors that can help cities to overcome aspects of climate change that they still can adapt to and to avoid some negative consequences.

The importance of Cities in the Race to Resilience Campaign

As the next decade will decide the future of the planet and humanity, the race to a resilient world through impactful adaptation actions has already begun. Led by the UNFCCC High-Level Climate Action Champion for COP26 and the UK, Nigel Topping, and High-Level Climate Action Champions for COP27 and Egypt, Dr Mahmoud Mohieldin, the Race to Resilience is the sibling campaign to the global Race to Zero Campaign. The Race to Resilience rallies leadership and support from cities, regions, businesses and investors, and other non-state actors, to help frontline communities build resilience and adapt to the impacts of climate change and to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and objectives of the Convention on a sub-national level. In particular, the campaign aims to catalyse a step-change in global ambition for climate resilience, aiming to strengthen the resilience of four billion people in vulnerable communities by the year 2030.

Transforming cities so that both people and nature cannot just survive climate shocks and stresses, but thrive in spite of them, is at the heart of the initiative. To support cities with this herculean task, the UN Climate Change High Level Champions launched their global [Cities Race to Resilience](#) initiative in 2021. Under the global Race to Resilience campaign, the [Cities Race to Resilience](#) initiative is *the* primary initiative for cities themselves to join the Race to Resilience, and be formally recognised for their locally-led adaptation and resilience building actions.

Crucially, [Cities Race to Resilience](#) aims to ensure that city voices are put front and centre, and heard at the highest international level of climate change negotiations. It also strives to ensure that climate



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resilience goals are treated with the same, if not greater, urgency as the global race to halve emissions by 2030. Concretely, the initiative also acts as a global platform on which cities can showcase their ambitious climate adaptation actions that build the resilience of their population, and thus helps to increase adaptation actions worldwide.

The initiative is an effort in support of the COP27 Roadmap of Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency to the UNFCCC. C40 Cities, CDP, the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (GCoM), ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), Making Cities Resilient 2030 (MCR2030), Resilient Cities Network, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) have come together as partners to mobilize an unprecedented coalition of cities committed to prioritizing resilience and implementing inclusive and resilient climate action.

Impact

The Cities Race to Resilience initiative was officially launched at COP26 in 2021, and has gathered momentum in 2022 with 201 resilience actions regarding a variety of sectors reported via CDP-ICLEI TRACK.

Among the most frequently published actions are crucial **water security measures**. Notably, **Portsmouth, UK** is installing flood defences reducing the risk of 12000 homes and 1200 businesses to storm surges; **Makati, Philippines** has identified drainage deficiencies and regularly conducts drainage and waterways clean-up operations in flood-prone areas. Next to flood mapping, **San Francisco, USA** is fighting coastal erosion, including structural protection and beach nourishment measures. **Tagum, Philippines** is making rainwater harvesting mandatory in government buildings to prevent pressing water interruption issues.

Climate Change can pose significant risks to **public health**, particularly in the Global South. To better adapt to the risk of zoonotic and vector-borne diseases cities such as **Campinas, Brazil** adopt monitoring measures and establish strategies for intersectoral actions aimed at the prevention and control of diseases such as Dengue, Zika, and Chikungunya. This includes awareness raising campaigns in public schools and training courses for volunteers. **Peñalolén, Chile** implements a program to prevent the proliferation of cardio-respiratory diseases in the community in winter, aimed at the most vulnerable and at-risk population. This also includes emergency dormitories in municipal spaces for homeless people.

Restoring and protecting **biodiversity** is crucial to increase resilience and to ensure a cooling effect in highly urbanised areas. **Yaoundé 6, Cameroon** focuses on reforestation of the commune through awareness campaigns and the dissemination of seedlings to the local population. **Cocody, Ivory Coast** works on a sustainable restoration of its mangrove ecosystems, aiming for co-benefits such as carbon sequestration and growing medicinal and aromatic plants.



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Retrofit measures, as encouraged in **Saanich, Canada**, are crucial to reduce impact from heat waves and poor air quality events. Edinburgh includes climate change adaptation into the construction and retrofitting of buildings via its Design Guidance.

Awareness raising campaigns are key to help citizens to change their behaviour to better adapt to climate risks. To improve early responses to extreme weather events, cities implement early warning systems and awareness trainings. In **Salvador, Brazil** these measures protect citizens in 10 risk areas from landslides and floods. **London, UK** has developed a communications protocol to cascade heat risk messaging to keep citizens informed during extreme temperature events. A particular focus is put on the elderly and young children who are less able to adapt quickly and control their environments. **Gaziantep, Turkey** conducts Environmental Awareness Trainings in schools, focusing on the significance of water and soil as well as recycling measures to ensure a prosperous environment. Since 2016, a total of 199,000 pupils have been reached.

Reported resilience actions are publicly available at CDP's [Open Data Portal](#) so that local governments, NGOs, civil society and other stakeholders can browse the data and get inspired.

Acknowledgment of Cities Race to Resilience signatory cities

The UN Climate Change High-Level Champions thank all participating cities for their commitment and leadership to increase resilience in their communities.

The below listed cities have officially pledged their commitment to integrate climate change adaptation and resilience in all aspects of urban planning, some of whom have made their adaptation actions publicly available by reporting to the CDP-ICLEI Track:

- *Adamstown, Pitcairn Islands, British Overseas Territory*
- *Aurangabad, India*
- *Avellaneda, Argentina*
- *Baguio, Philippines*
- *Barcarena Municipality, Brazil*
- *Beira, Mozambique*
- *Belém, Brazil*
- *Belfast, United Kingdom*
- *Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo*
- *Bulawayo, Zimbabwe*
- *Cajica (Cundinamarca), Colombia*
- *Campinas, Brazil*
- *Chefchaouen, Morocco*
- *Cocody, Côte d'Ivoire*
- *Comas Lima, Peru*
- *Commune d'arrondissement de Garoua 2, Cameroon*
- *Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, United States of America*
- *Msunduzi Municipality, South Africa*
- *Municipality of Menjez, Lebanon*
- *Municipality of Peñalolén, Chile*
- *Municipality of Renca, Santiago, Chile*
- *Nansana Municipality, Uganda*
- *New Bedford, United States of America*
- *New Glasgow, Canada*
- *Newcastle, Australia*
- *Nottingham, United Kingdom*
- *Oakland, United States of America*
- *Oak Park, United States of America*
- *Oberlin, United States of America*
- *Olympia, United States of America*
- *Paris, France*
- *Portsmouth, United Kingdom*



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- *County Government of Nakuru, Kenya*
- *Derry City & Strabane District Council, United Kingdom*
- *Dipolog, Philippines*
- *Edinburgh City Council, United Kingdom*
- *Fokoué, Cameroon*
- *Freetown, Sierra Leone*
- *Gaziantep, Turkey*
- *Gibsons, Canada*
- *Halifax, Canada*
- *Harare, Zimbabwe*
- *Hinganghat Municipal Council, India*
- *Independencia, Chile*
- *João Pessoa, Brazil*
- *Kuntaur Area Council, The Gambia*
- *Lagos, Nigeria*
- *Leeds, United Kingdom*
- *London, United Kingdom*
- *Lusaka, Zambia*
- *Makati, Philippines*
- *Manzanillo, Cuba*
- *Quelimane, Mozambique*
- *Rajkot, India*
- *Reykjavík, Iceland*
- *Ruwa, Zimbabwe*
- *Saanich District, Canada*
- *Sabach Sanjal District, North Bank Region, Banjul, The Gambia*
- *Salvador, Brazil*
- *San Francisco, Philippines*
- *San Francisco, United States of America*
- *San Juan, Puerto Rico*
- *Sunderland, United Kingdom*
- *Tagum, Philippines*
- *Tirana, Albania*
- *Travis County, Texas, United States of America*
- *Tsévié, Togo*
- *Udaipur, India*
- *Wakefield, United Kingdom*
- *Walvis Bay Municipality, Namibia*
- *Whitby, Canada*
- *Wyndham City Council, Australia*
- *Yaoundé 6e, Cameroon*



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Cities Race to Resilience brings together all those who share our vision for a better future, based on a set of principles that address equity together with the environment. The UN Climate Change High-Level Champions invite your city to join the campaign ahead of COP27.

Signatures:

Nigel Topping

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Nigel Topping'.

Dr. Mahmoud Mohieldin

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dr. Mahmoud Mohieldin'.