

Concept Note

ICoE and need for the Specialist Centres work together in support of Recovery and Resilience in Puerto Rico and other places

Introduction

What happened during the past ten months of 2017 may well prove how serious and urgent the work of recovery and resilience should be conducted in the worldwide context. From the devastation wrought in the western hemisphere by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Katia, and Maria to massive flooding in China, Bangladesh, Nepal, and India. From Cyclone Debbie and tropical flooding in Australia to massive earthquakes that has left Mexico City, the fifth most populous city in the world, unrecognizable and Volcanoes in Bali and Ambae, they all suggest how urgent rebuilding is required all over the world.

However, the current path of rebuilding is unsustainable. The costs, already staggering, continue to increase. Preliminary estimates for the total combined costs of the above-named disasters, all of which have occurred within the last six months, are more than **\$750 Billion**. According to the National Resources Defense Council, projected yearly disaster losses will triple to 1.5% of global GDP (\$900b/yr) by 2050.

Now that the International Public Private Partnerships in Resilience Centre (IPPPRC) has come into existence endorsed by the U.S. State Department, and operating out of New Orleans with a staff of four, the centre has been helped by support from other Specialist Centres and given the huge challenges of reconstruction and “building back better” for many regions, cities and countries recently devastated including Puerto Rico, it is proposed that coming together can make a difference.

Possible Solution

As a matter of fact, PPP in resilience (which includes preparation, mitigation, and recovery/rebuilding), and embedding resilience into all PPP projects is no longer a “nice idea”. It has become a true necessity. It provides global standing and global opportunities for those willing to invest in implementation and operations. Furthermore, it directly impacts five UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which includes Goal 3 (healthy lives), Goal 9 (resilient infrastructure), Goal 11 (resilient cities), Goal 13 (combat climate change impact) and Goal 16 (inclusive, access, effective institutions), and indirectly impacts all SDGs.

So far, there is a need to undertake 3 pilot projects in PPP in resilience toward sustainable goals, which includes cases of shelter to affordable home, PPP for resilient transportation and regional resilient food network (see Annex).

To discuss further, all specialist Centres will hold a special meeting at the First Session of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships on 22nd November from 13:30 to 15:00 to develop a framework, led by the ICoE and coordinated by the Specialist Centre for PPP in Resilience, which would guide all Centres to collaborate and focus on rebuilding and recovery from disasters worldwide. Hebei Province, China, Mexico City and Puerto Rico would be pilot projects to work within the framework the centres develop and approve. There are many potential sources of sponsorship, from both private and public sources, for the Specialist Centres to perform this important work.

All centres should together agree on a plan using the respective expertise and network that would address the needs of the devastated regions.

Annex

Puerto Rico and other American countries

In this September, Puerto Rico and many other American countries and territories, such as Dominica and the U.S Virgin Islands, suffered the catastrophic damages from Hurricane Maria, which could cost Puerto Rico \$45 billion to \$ 95 billion in damage, according to the report from CNN. The Moody's further estimate that nearly 40 billion could be lost in economic output because of impassable roads and lost power, and the damage of property could reach to \$55 billion.

However, Puerto Rico's economic situation is also ailing. As CNN report indicated, this island has been recessed for the past 11 years, and in this May, it faced the largest municipal bankruptcy in the history of U.S. The worrying economic situation of Puerto Rico suggests that its public sectors may not be able to provide enough findings for the reconstructions.

China

Every year, China suffers serious flooding disasters in many provinces. Though led by central, local or both governments and their funds, the path of reconstructing in China also involves in PPP. For example, in the government report for rebuilding management of last year's flooding in Hebei province, it covers many perspectives including the rebuilding criteria, subsidy management and financing mechanism. In the areas of reconstructing schools and hospitals, it adopted PPP model to varying degrees.

- **Schools:** Though public sectors play dominated role on reconstructing schools, governments also mobilized enterprises and individuals to donate for schools in the affected area, by **awarding naming rights and public awards**, etc.
- **Hospitals:** For hospitals at county level, **PPP model** and **financial leasing** etc. that mobilize social capital were also encouraged to participate the reconstruction by the governments.

Though currently PPP in resilience is not a mainstream solution in China's reconstructions, it has been experimented and encouraged by the governments step by step.

Mexico City

On 19 September 2017, the magnitude 7.1 earthquake in Mexico City, the most powerful earthquake since one which hit Mexico in 1985, has killed at least 273 people, nearly 4,000 buildings were damaged by the quake. As report from the Vox news states, "the impact of this tragedy is likely to span weeks and months, if not years". Considering the catastrophic damage and the giant size of Mexico City itself, the government of Mexico is facing a tremendous problem on rebuilding the beautiful city and providing proper enough decent living places for its citizens.