

# 2.2.0

**SERIES 2**  
Understanding  
Vulnerability & Risk



# CLARIFYING YOUR VULNERABILITY FRAMEWORK

## Contents of Set

- 2.2.0: Guide
- 2.2.1: Activity

Clarifying the vulnerability framework that will guide your research effort is the critical first step to conducting vulnerability and risk assessments. The framework provides a starting point for determining the units of analysis—specific populations, sectors or geographic areas—that you will initially study. At the same time, it can help you identify important links between the initial units of analysis and other units of analysis that will need to be investigated at a later point. Once you have developed your vulnerability framework, it will become easier for you to decide which methods for conducting the assessment are appropriate, to identify who will conduct the vulnerability assessment, and to establish a timeframe and budget for the work.

## IN THIS SET YOU WILL:

- ✓ Answer a series of questions that will help you focus and frame your vulnerability assessment

## Overview

There is no single standard approach to conducting vulnerability and climate risk assessments. Rather, there are a range of frameworks, tools and methods that draw on knowledge from a variety of fields—climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, sustainable development, and food security—that can be adapted and used for urban vulnerability and climate risk assessments. In particular, climate vulnerability and risk assessments in urban areas are still relatively recent, especially in developing countries. The vulnerability framework you will develop in this set, and the approaches outlined in the following five sets, will have to be tailored by your city working group to meet your resilience process needs. This is because to be locally useful, a vulnerability assessment must be tailored to your local conditions, must leverage locally available data and existing studies, must address local at-risk populations and sectors, and must address local enabling or restricting institutions (rules, regulations, social and cultural norms and expectations, and government policies).

### A BASIC VULNERABILITY FRAMEWORK IDENTIFIES:

- Why the vulnerability assessment is being undertaken;
- What information the finished assessment should produce or include, and how that information will subsequently be used;
- Units of analysis—people, neighborhoods or districts, city systems, services or functions, specific sectors such as the water sector, etc.;
- Timescale of analysis—how far into the past you want to go to establish trends in population, urbanization, economic development, migration, climate, AND at what point or points in the future you will assess future conditions, like 2030 and/or 2050;
- Geographic scope of study—current city administrative limits, city center plus surrounding peri-urban areas, a specific sub-district;
- Who will do the vulnerability and risk assessments. Members of the city working group should assist in conducting the vulnerability and risk assessments, but you may need additional expertise or help from a university, research institution, or NGO. The

stakeholder review (Set 1.2) and policy review (Set 1.5) can help you identify who can assist with your vulnerability and risk assessments;

- An initial review of who has or might have various types of data needed, including historical climate data;
- Financial resources and time available for conducting the vulnerability and climate risk assessments; and
- A draft workplan outlining how many, what type, and when Shared Learning Dialogue or other types of meetings will be held so that all important stakeholders (Sets 1.2 and 1.3) can review the city working group's progress and results, and make sure the analysis is still on track.