

Building Urban Climate Change Resilience in Basirhat City, W. Bengal

Why Urban Climate Change Resilience (UCCR)

Most of the Indian cities are confronting challenges of resource scarcity, ageing and/ or inadequate infrastructure, and poor quality of critical basic services. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that installing new infrastructure has become nearly impossible due to very high densities and lack of space. Major changes in density and decongestion of core urban areas to improve services are politically unpopular and administratively challenging. Only in rare cases are Urban Local Bodies able to decongest and improve the services in core areas. This problem of development deficit is compounded further by additional stress from climate change on urban infrastructure and critical basic services consequently producing a large-scale multiplier effect on the rapidly burgeoning urban population.

Project Partners

- Lead: Gorakhpur Environmental Action Group (GEAG)
- Collaborating partners: Institute for Social and Environmental Transition International- (ISET) and SEEDS India
- City Partner: PRISM, West Bengal

Project period: 2012-2015

- City location : North 24 Parganas, W.B.
- City Population : 1,25,254 (Census 2011)
- Density : 5567 per sq.km
- Administration : Municipality
- Annual rainfall : 1580mm
- Average Temp : 25.69°C



UCCR Coordination

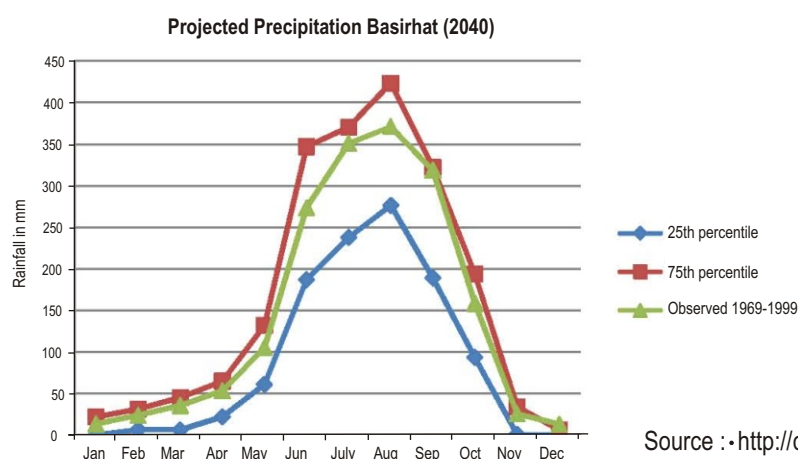
Gorakhpur Environmental Action Group (GEAG) is a partner in Asian Cities Climate Change Resilience Network (ACCCRN) India program. The ACCCRN- India program began in 2008 (Phase I: City scoping and selection). Three cities in India Gorakhpur, Indore and Surat were identified for engagement and assessment in Phase II (City level engagement and capacity building, development of City Resilience Strategy, 2009-2010). During this phase, TARU steered the program in Indore and Surat and GEAG in Gorakhpur. Phase III looked into implementation of urban resilience strategies and implemented interventions identified in the urban climate resilience strategy and action plan, 2011- 2014. Phase IV (2015-2016) is focussing on replication and scaling up of UCCR actions in India. In this phase GEAG is replicating its experiences of phase II and III in three cities namely, Basirhat (W.B), Saharsa (Bihar) and Jorhat (Assam) of eastern India.

The City Basirhat (Brief Profile of Basirhat City)

- Basirhat is a small town located in the southern deltaic plain of the Hugli-Ichamati rivers
- The town has its border with the state of Bangladesh in the east and is often referred to as a 'gateway' of Eastern Sundarbans to other areas of West Bengal;
- The area of town is 22.5 Sq.km with a population of 125254 as per 2011 census;
- The average annual rainfall is about 1580 mm and average temperature varies from maximum of 41°C in May to a minimum temperature of 10°C in January;
- The city has limited capacity to provide basic services like clean urban environment, safe piped water, drainage, solid waste treatment, sanitation, health services, sufficient transport network, and other urban amenities; and,
- Basirhaat is one of the most vulnerable to climate change, climate-extremes driven multifarious threats including tidal surges, alternate occurrence of drought and water scarcity, and water logging.



Source : PRISM



Source : • <http://cmip-pcmdi.llnl.gov/cmip5/>
• India water portal

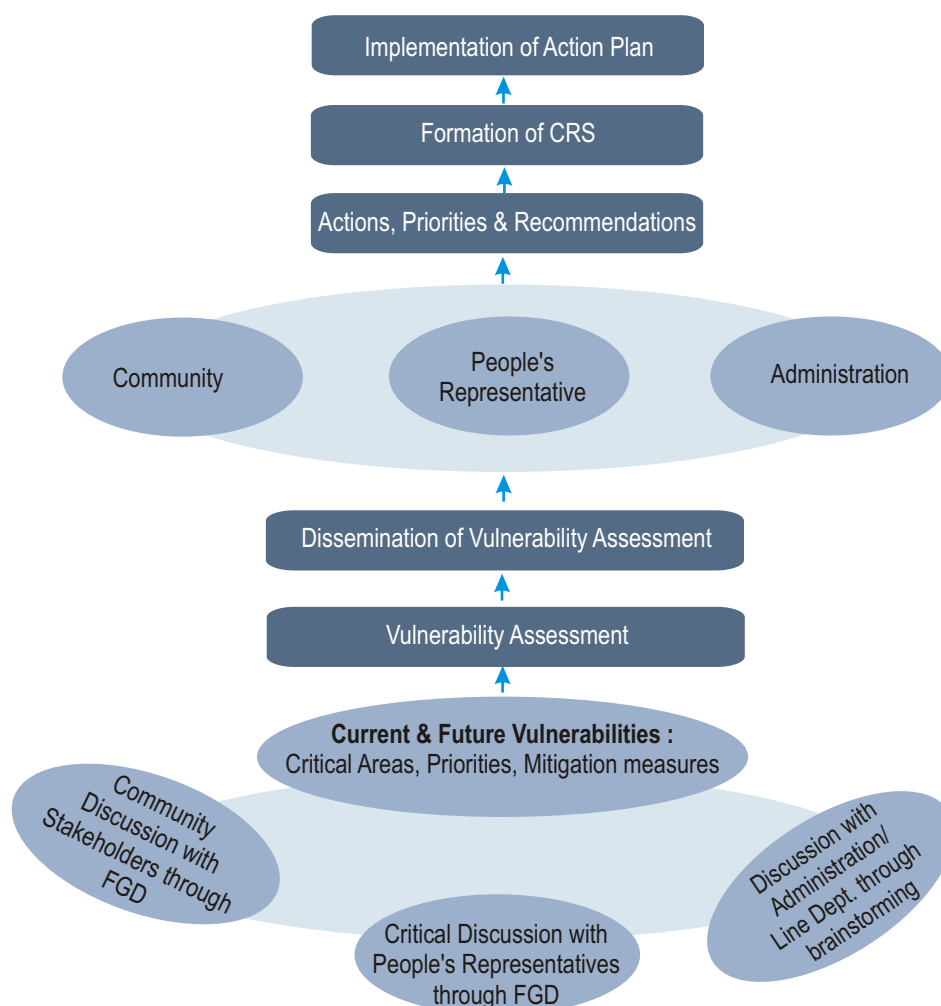


Key vulnerabilities of the city

- Key manifestations of climate change are flood and water logging
- The poor infrastructure and solid waste management causing widespread water logging during the whole monsoon period;
- The lack of effective early warning system, emergency response of local authority, and awareness and preparedness across the sectors exacerbate the impacts of widespread water logging;
- Urban poor in flood prone areas are most affected and unable to recover quickly;
- Business and commercial areas are susceptible to floods leading to great economic losses;
- Rapid urbanisation, population growth and associated need for more housing stock, and construction in water retention areas and floodplains have reduced flood discharge carrying capacity of the city; and,
- Prolonged waterlogging catalyses incidences of vector and water borne diseases.

Objectives

The main objective of the project is to enhance the capacity of the cities to develop Climate Resilience Strategy and undertake advocacy on UCCR issues at state, national and international levels for replication and scaling up of the ACCCRN process.



Project Outputs

- Vulnerability assessment conducted with community participation; and,
- The City Resilience Strategy developed (detailing actions for short, medium and long term)

Expected Impacts

- The project will benefit the populace of the city especially the poor and vulnerable and enhance understanding of vulnerability issues and Climate Resilience;
- Urban planners and Municipalities, will benefit through enhanced capacity to promote Climate Resilience with the aid of practical tools and methodologies made available to them; and,
- Programmes, policy makers and practitioners at the State and National level will benefit from dissemination of tools and methodologies, and cross learning on implementation experience of this project.

Lead by :



Supported by :



Technical Support :

