Resilience building options for Durban

The purpose of this summary document is to outline the two ‘resilience building options’ that have emerged from the 100 Resilient Cities (100RC) Systems Analysis process.

Background

By the end of Phase 1 of 100RC, six resilience focus areas had been identified for deeper exploration in Phase 2. These focus areas were: Bold and Participatory Governance, Knowledge-centred City, Innovative Place-making, Sustainable and Ecological City, Catalytic and Transformative Economy, and Equitable and Inclusive Society. Given the breadth and interconnectedness of these focus areas, a ‘systems analysis’ process was undertaken by Dalberg between January and April 2016 with the intention of identifying cross-cutting ‘levers for change’ and potential intervention points that could have catalytic impact across multiple focus areas. A series of stakeholder engagement meetings were convened at various points during this process in order to inform its outcomes. The six cross-cutting ‘levers for change’ that emerged were as follows: Lever 1: Strengthen local communities and build social cohesion; Lever 2: Improve effectiveness of education and skills development; Lever 3: Promote economic growth in line with 21st century trends and opportunities; Lever 4: Manage environmental assets more effectively; Lever 5: Create a more inclusive and integrated spatial plan; and Lever 6: Improve municipal effectiveness. A key challenge with these levers was that they remained too broad for the purposes of practical implementation and therefore a further stakeholder engagement process was undertaken at the end of April 2016 to identify more specific ‘resilience building options’ from these. The key principles that were used to guide the selection of these resilience building options were the need to find practical interventions, that could address multiple levers simultaneously and that had the potential to be transformative in their impact. Through this stakeholder engagement process, two resilience building options were identified: (1) Facilitating integrated informal settlements planning; and (2) Addressing current governance challenges in Ingonyama Trust areas in the context of securing environmental protection.

Resilience building option 1: Integrated informal settlements planning

The challenge: Durban’s legacy of segregated spatial planning has resulted in households located in the urban periphery often being far from job opportunities and transport corridors. This, combined with the high costs of housing near job centres and high transport costs, has led to significant growth of informal housing settlements within the eThekwini Municipal Area. These settlements face

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1 Dalberg is a development consulting company and was allocated to Durban as the city’s ‘Global Strategy Partner’ as part of 100RC.
service delivery challenges, poor living conditions and high levels of vulnerability, and also contribute to a range of environmental and health challenges usually related either to their location in environmentally sensitive areas or to the impacts of wastewater and pollution runoff into adjacent rivers. A key challenge in addressing these challenges is the significant service delivery backlogs for housing provision, meaning that it will be a long time before such issues are sufficiently addressed. For this reason, the Human Settlements Unit and other service delivery departments in the Municipality have adopted the approach of ‘in situ’ upgrades to existing informal settlements as an interim measure to improve living conditions.

*The opportunity:* An important opportunity lies in how these upgrades are undertaken, and their potential to begin to address some of the resilience ‘levers for change’ identified through the systems analysis process. Initial thoughts proposed by stakeholders during the consultation process regarding the resilience levers that could be addressed through a more integrated approach to informal settlement planning were as follows:

- **Improve effectiveness of education and skills development:**
  Artisanal skills have been identified as a key gap in the Municipality and the Skills Unit is in the process of finalising an Artisan Development Programme to help address this. Given the vulnerability of informal settlements, their generally high levels of unemployment and the related difficulties of breaking out of this cycle of poverty, such areas could provide an important location in which to focus this aspect of skills development. Onsite opportunities for communities to implement these skills to improve homes and infrastructure within informal settlements could also be important, as well as exploring how to connect trained artisans with the corresponding ‘gap’ areas in the market where these skills are required.

- **Manage environmental assets more effectively:**
  Given the significant environmental impacts associated with poorly located and under-resourced informal settlements, planning more effectively for informality could help to reduce some of these impacts. There are also opportunities to explore more innovative approaches to the design of these settlements in order to promote better stormwater and wastewater management practices and to maximise green economy opportunities.

- **Improve municipal effectiveness:**
  Important elements of municipal effectiveness relate to how the Municipality engages with partners and communities to facilitate project implementation, how internal municipal departments connect with each other in order to ensure that implementation is done in an integrated and resource efficient way, and how innovation is facilitated and encouraged. The focus on informal settlements as one resilience building option has the potential to draw together a range of work areas across multiple departments in the Municipality in specific geographic areas, to collaborate to find solutions to existing challenges. It will also require partnerships to be strengthened with existing NGO’s and CBO’s already active in these spaces. The exploratory nature of this work will also test the rigid performance management structures within the Municipality and could serve as an important conversation starter to explore how such systems could better support new and innovative work. This work will also require significant engagement from city leadership, given the complexity of issues relating to the planning and management of informal settlements, and could provide an important
platform to facilitate conversations around alternative approaches to addressing such challenges.

- **Strengthen local communities and build social cohesion:**
  Improving the living conditions in informal settlements and helping to facilitate community-based initiatives that are already mobilising to address these challenges, could contribute to strengthening local communities. Some work has already been piloted by the eThekwini Municipality to provide creative urban design that could inspire a range of housing typologies, public facilities, urban open space and income earning opportunities in these informal settlements.

- **Promote economic growth in line with 21st century trends and opportunities:**
  A specific focus on informal settlements would allow economic dynamics to be better understood at this scale and could provide insights into opportunities for alternative economies.

**Resilience building option 2: Addressing environmental challenges in the governance of Ingonyama Trust land**

*The challenge:* Substantial parts of the rural areas in the eThekwini Municipal Area (EMA) are under the control of traditional leadership systems through the administration of the Ingonyama Trust Board (ITB). The ITB, with the consent of the Traditional Council has the authority to issue tenure rights and lease of trust land and there is currently very little coordination between the eThekwini Municipality and the ITB around land use planning and management. Most areas under the management of the ITB are of high biodiversity value and deliver key ecosystem services (e.g. water supply, flood attenuation, water quality etc) that support human wellbeing and development in the EMA. The relative absence of formal governance relationships between the two systems therefore has the potential to undermine planning processes, environmental protection and effective service delivery. From an environmental perspective, significant investment has to date been made in ‘stewardship programmes’, which aim to achieve environmental objectives through partnerships, in this case with traditional authorities. Although significant progress has been made in this regard through relationship building, there are still no mechanisms to formalise these partnerships in a way that ensures the protection of key environmental assets.

*The opportunity:* An opportunity exists to explore whether there are mechanisms available that could formalise the decision-making that happens across these governance systems to secure key environmental assets. Formalising some of these relationships could unlock opportunities for the creative use of tools such as ‘payment for ecosystem services’ and ‘environmental offsets’ to incentivise the protection and management of key environmental assets in these areas. The application of most of these tools requires a greater level of surety around land ownership and management, which currently does not exist. Initial thoughts proposed by stakeholders during the consultation process regarding the resilience levers that could be addressed through addressing these dual governance challenges in ITB areas were as follows:
• **Manage environmental assets more effectively:**
  As outlined above, finding mechanisms to formalise environmental protection in ITB areas would help to secure key environmental assets in the upper catchment areas within much of the EMA, with related ecosystem service benefits.

• **Improve municipal effectiveness:**
  Given that much of the EMA is under traditional governance systems, finding ways to work more effectively across these systems is critical.

• **Promote economic growth in line with 21st century trends and opportunities:**
  A number of tools exist that could help to incentivise environmental protection and management in the ITB areas. The application of these tools could provide financial, or other, benefits to communities and could provide space to explore new forms of economic opportunity in these areas.

• **Create a more inclusive and integrated spatial plan:**
  Although the initial focus of the work would be from an environmental perspective, the intention would be to use this work as the basis for exploring similar governance relationships in the arenas of town planning and land use management. These issues are fundamental in being able to implement integrated planning at the municipal scale.

**The way forward**

On the 8th June 2016 the outcomes from the systems analysis, including the proposed ‘resilience building options’ described above, will be presented to stakeholders. Thereafter, working groups comprising municipal officials and non-municipal representatives will be convened to explore these options more closely in order to better understand the associated challenges, the work that is already underway to try to address them and the key barriers that still need to be overcome in order to move forward. The outcomes from these conversations will form the basis for Durban’s Resilience Strategy, which will be finalised by February 2017.