



Amadora Peer Review on Disaster Resilience

Amadora's Peer Review: lessons learned and contributes

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Resumo: A redução do risco de catástrofe é uma missão com responsabilidade partilhada. Por princípios de humanismo e solidariedade, deve fazer parte do nosso quotidiano, desde a forma como educamos os mais novos até à forma como planeamos as nossas cidades. Num evento potencialmente destrutivo, uma prevenção adequada pode garantir uma reconstrução rápida e eficaz. No entanto, as estratégias de redução do risco de catástrofe (RRC) só terão sucesso quando os governos e a sociedade civil entenderem que o impacto das catástrofes é o resultado de políticas de desenvolvimento desequilibradas. Para garantir a resiliência de uma comunidade é essencial ter uma abordagem de envolvimento, partilha de informação e implementação dos diferentes níveis de conhecimento. A participação na campanha internacional “Construir Cidades Resilientes” da UNDRR trouxe ao Município da Amadora a capacidade de promover a RRC, nomeadamente através de parcerias com diversos intervenientes e sessões de sensibilização sobre riscos e catástrofes. Assim, este artigo tem como objetivo demonstrar os benefícios do processo de revisão por pares sobre resiliência a catástrofes, e o seu contributo no contexto local.

Abstract: The responsibility for disaster risk reduction is a mission that involves everyone. By principles of humanism and solidarity, should be part of our daily lives, from how we educate the youngest until how we plan our cities. In a potentially destructive event, good preparation can ensure a quick, effective and appropriate reconstruction. However, strategies for disaster risk reduction (DRR) will be successful only when governments and civil society understand that impact of disasters are a result of unbalanced development policies. To ensure the resilience of a community is essential to have an approach of engagement, information sharing and implementation of the different levels of knowledge. The Making Cities Resilient UNDRR campaign brought to the Municipality the ability to promote DRR, particularly through partnerships with several stakeholders and awareness sessions about risks and disasters. Thus, this paper aims to demonstrate the benefits of the peer review process on disaster resilience at local level and the learnings and visions ahead.

Palavras-chave: resiliência, risco, U-Score, revisão por pares

Keywords: resilience, risk, U-Score, peer review

1. Introduction

In 2010 Amadora joined the United Nation's Making Cities Resilient Campaign in order to place the issue of risk, disaster and resilience on the municipality agenda, to build an institutional capacity (culture of safety and resilience) and reduce disaster impacts. The focus has been on strong coordination/ leadership, crucial to be successful and empower all communities to participate in DRR.

After working with stakeholders in creating a local campaign team and introducing several DRR good practices, Amadora joined, in 2015, the international EU-funded project U-SCORE aimed at piloting the



UNDRR Disaster Resilience Scorecard tool in Europe and providing valuable feedback, to improve the tool and indicators based on the ten essentials for making cities resilient. As part of the Project, Amadora went through a comprehensive Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities analysis.

In 2016, Amadora was recognised as Role Model City for the capacity to engage local stakeholders in the MCR Campaign and for having an exemplary approach to citizen engagement in resilience.

In 2017, Amadora joined the second edition of this project, the U-Score2, participating alongside the cities of Manchester (UK) and Viggiano (Italy), in the definition of a new city-to-city peer review tool to assist cities around the world to strengthen their approaches to risk reduction. The achievements accomplished by this Municipality earned the city the Sasakawa Award of the Nippon foundation.

By April 2018, Amadora agreed to have the peer review tool tested on two modules in order to help to validate the tool and to support its final development. The effectiveness of the peer review tool was also evaluated using a methodology developed by the University of Manchester.

2. USCORE2 peer review process in Amadora – identified good practices and areas to improve

Amadora identified the following areas for assessment through the USCORE2 peer review process and based on the Ten Essentials of the Making Cities Resilient Campaign: organise for disaster resilience and strengthen institutional capacity for resilience.

The peer review team identified as good practices:

1. Being well aware of the importance of establishing a DRR strategy for the city providing a political mandate to the local Civil Protection Office to deliver an effective programme;
2. Having in place a number of Emergency and Contingency Plans which have benefitted from a good level of collaboration with external knowledge centres on risk analysis and from working with the Lisbon district in partnership with academic experts to develop a climate change mitigation plan;
3. Understanding both the importance of response and the role of prevention and planning. A good emergency response integrated system is in place with the participation of all relevant functions. Emergency plans for most of the relevant private stakeholders have been approved and audited by national civil protection authorities;
4. Having a team with multi agency participation to increase awareness on DRR among city departments and to raise public awareness;
5. Having an impressive public relations and education campaign especially focused on children and the elderly;
6. Structuring strong relationships with a large number of relevant stakeholders. This has allowed the city to access an impressive number of skills and expertise in DRR, reflected in outcomes;
7. Pursuing open data sharing among relevant stakeholders and has built an excellent structure to manage the response to the most probable risks. Training and drills are undertaken by public and private stakeholders usually in partnership with the emergency services and civil protection service;

The review committee also pointed out a few areas of improvement for the municipality of Amadora:

1. After joining the MCR campaign, Amadora has done impressive work in delivering a change in society on the subject of resilience and risk reduction. These efforts resulted in improving the overall understanding of risk and in creating several tools to prevent and manage risks;
2. Amadora should explore a formal mechanism to ensure a continuous shared understanding of risk between different departments and create a multi-agency/sectoral mechanism or local platform that formally meets on a regular basis to address the information about risk assessment and DRR in general;
3. The city of Amadora is part of a large number of highly populated and interconnected districts that share similar risks and stresses. Although the city has some collaboration with adjacent municipalities on climate



change analysis, there is a need to create a closer and more structured cooperation with neighbouring cities, sharing risk information and governance planning;

4. The city developed an excellent understanding and response planning for the most probable risks, encouraging the interest of communities in safety, security and prevention. However, it is unclear if the same level of analysis and prevention and response planning has been devoted to the most severe risk for Amadora (seismic);

5. Amadora has a comprehensive range of data regarding risk analysis (available to stakeholders) on the most probable risks. It would be beneficial if data sharing could be less left to the willingness of stakeholders to access, and more structured through a common platform with a more proactive approach;

6. The training offers many opportunities to stakeholders under the management of the civil protection service, particularly the training for schools, which could be improved by extending scenarios for drills to more risks other than fires, extending them to a wider audience and additional community groups;

7. The city could consider holding a multi-agency exercise for one or more of the city's reasonable worst case disaster scenarios with an emphasis on testing decision-making processes where high level/political decisions are required, exploring ways to increase public participation in drills and exercises;

8. Several main highways that interconnect the metropolitan area cross Amadora and a third of its population leave the city daily to travel for work or study. Road accidents are the most probable risk in Amadora. The city should build strong links between accident prevention work of the police and the experience of firefighters in responding to traffic accidents;

9. While there is strong evidence of volunteer participation in the educational and communication programs, the city should explore more the involvement of NGO's in emergency response;

10. The city has developed a large variety of education, training and communication tools for risk prevention and preparedness. The team feel that, due to the presence among the city's population of groups of immigrants from several foreign countries with no Portuguese language heritage, the city may want to explore the effectiveness of communication on risk and preparedness with these groups;

11. Several stakeholders highlighted the importance of psychological support during the response to emergencies. This component may also be very important in case of disasters involving large segments of the population, like earthquakes and terroristic attacks. It could be beneficial to work with organisations in Amadora, to explore if it's appropriate to build such psychological support into emergency plans.

2.3 – Lessons learned and strategies for the future

By the end of the peer review process, Amadora received not only the constructive criticism mentioned above, but also a series of important paths to take and objectives to tackle in the future, which include:

a) The establishment of a Local Campaign Team and the effective work that the civil protection department has delivered under political leadership, generating growing engagement of city stakeholders in resilience, could be put forward as best practices within Portugal and across the wider international community;

b) The city should identify a governance mechanism for the DRR action plan and focus on developing a master plan incorporating resilience and risk reduction to meet the objectives of the Sendai Framework;

c) Capitalize on the existing large stakeholder participation in resilience and risk reduction and on the existence of a Local Campaign Team to create a local platform that formally meets on a regular basis. This mechanism will improve data sharing across sectors on risk scenarios and on governance solutions to DRR;

d) The active role in risk reduction played by Amadora at an international level should be capitalized on at the regional and national levels with a proactive approach to transferring its experience on organising for disaster resilience to neighbouring municipalities and to the national civil protection system;

e) The city should utilize its network of collaboration with technical stakeholders in order to strengthen risk analysis, scenario studies and response preparedness for the most severe risk of an earthquake disaster;



f) Once the city's emergency plan is approved, the city should consider improving its emergency response through a full validation of the plan through specific sets of drills and exercises.

g) Amadora has made sharing and learning from other cities an important component of its take to DRR. This has materialized in a number of international projects in which the city is actively involved. The city should pursue a similar approach in Portugal, particularly with the municipalities of the Lisbon metropolitan area.

h) Amadora may consider formally launching a local platform for risk reduction and a programme of work in line with the global commitments in the Sendai Framework;

i) The city should promote the existing work developed within the education and training campaign for children and elder as good practice with other cities resilient cities;

j) The city should strengthen the education and prevention campaign on risks to reach all parts of the population, including parents, adults and groups within the community who do not speak Portuguese;

So far, Amadora has reviewed its work, supported also on the peer review findings, and has been developing its strategy for the 2030 horizon, based on the concepts of community, cohesion, cooperation and climate, combining the MCR's main objectives for this new campaign, as well as the political agenda, taking into account the Sendai's Framework's directives and Amadora's risk The Local Campaign's new strategic goals will shortly be presented to the general public and the scientific community, and will obviously seek further review by other resilient cities.

5. Bibliographic references

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