

How to successfully bring down the chances of disasters in cities and towns

Lessons from Beau Bassin-Rose Hill township, Republic of Mauritius



In today's busy towns and cities, there are a lot of challenges, including more frequent and stronger storms and other types of weather. Cities and towns are also affected by climate change such as droughts and heat waves. Cities and towns also often experience more people living in them than originally planned.

To help manage better, cities and towns are including disaster risk reduction (DRR) plans alongside other plans for city and town development.

The “Leading the Way: Disaster Risk Reduction Training for Local Government Champions” training programme was organised by the [Resilience Initiative Africa](#) (RIA) project of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and partners the [United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) (UNDRR); the African Union Commission; [United Cities and Local Governments](#) and its [Africa section](#); and [Slum Dwellers International](#).

The training programme brought together regional, national and local people and organisations working on disaster prevention and response planning from over 20 countries. It took place from 19 to 21 March 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya. Participants exchanged insights on challenges and good practices through learning from other people doing the same work, as well as learning from experts.

This factsheet looks at how well the township of Beau Bassin-Rose Hill in the Republic of Mauritius managed planning for disasters and disaster risks when dealing with climate change.

Supported by the UNDRR Regional Office for Africa and the [Making Cities Resilient](#) (MCR) 2030 initiative, Beau Bassin-Rose Hill has become the first Mauritian town to achieve Stage C of the MCR2030 resilience roadmap by implementing DRR measures and is leading the way in DRR in Mauritius and Africa.

Background and challenges

Beau Bassin-Rose Hill is in the district of Plaines Wilhems, on the mainland of Mauritius in the south-west Indian Ocean. After independence in 1968, Beau Bassin-Rose Hill quickly changed from a single-crop sugar-cane region to one of the most built-up areas in Mauritius.

In 2022, Beau Bassin-Rose Hill covered a total surface area of 20 km². It had a population of 103.900. The Municipal Council of Beau Bassin-Rose Hill runs it. The township has a mild tropical climate with two seasons: a warm summer from November to April (also known as the cyclonic and rainy season) and a drier and cooler winter from May to October.

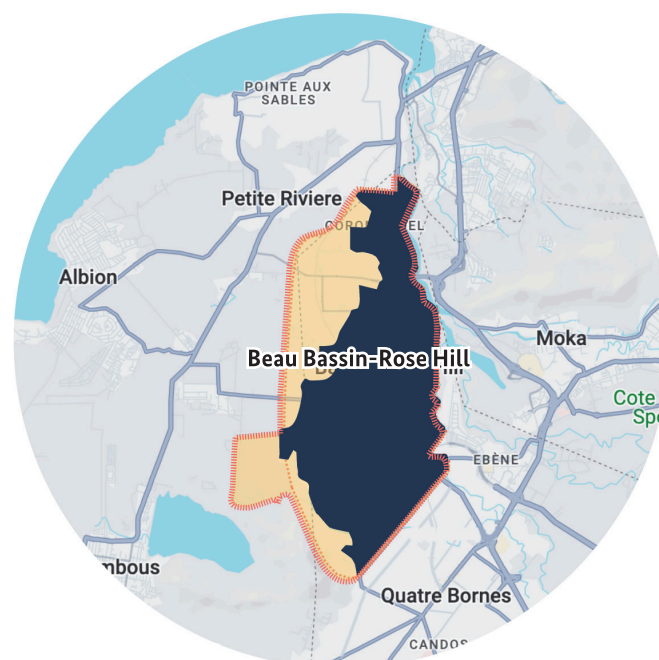


Figure 1: agricultural land and settlements on former agricultural land of Beau Bassin-Rose Hill

- Township Beau Bassin-Rose Hill enclosed by river and agricultural land
- Settlements on former agricultural land
- Remaining agricultural land

Over the past tens of years, a lot of living and working spaces across the township have been built on land that is vulnerable to things like tropical cyclones, flooding, flash floods, landslides and rockfalls.

The quick growth that wasn't planned for, as well as all the climate changes made its suburbs and buildings more in danger of being badly affected by changes in nature.

Why has Beau Bassin-Rose Hill been successful



1. They developed a local DRR strategy that consulted widely and took into account local experts

Through the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Committee, the Municipal Council of Beau Bassin-Rose Hill worked closely with different community partners, government organisations and other agencies, to develop the [Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management \(LDRRM\) Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2030](#).

This plan will guide the township's disaster risk teams, and uses an approach that lets teams make decisions for themselves, which is what the [UNDRR Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#) suggests as the best way to plan.

What helped with the successful development of the LDRRM strategy was making use of previous locally led work such as a risk assessment, a so called risk matrix, developed in 2021. The results of this earlier work as well as new work done under the LDRRM strategy, such as finding out who would be less able to help themselves, will be very important information that will help improve the township's disaster risk profile and decision-making processes.



2. They improved their disaster risk planning through international collaboration

Beau Bassin-Rose Hill collaborates with the UNDRR to strengthen its technical skills and knowledge.

Through this partnership, Beau Bassin-Rose Hill has used disaster resilience planning tools such as the [10 Essentials for Making Cities Resilient](#) toolkit and the [Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities](#), developed by the UNDRR, to inform and formulate an effective LDRRM Strategy and Action Plan.



3. They involved local communities, including vulnerable and marginalised groups, in resilience planning

Beau Bassin-Rose Hill actively involves local communities, including at risk groups, in urban resilience planning.

The Municipal Council has organised working sessions with people from civil society organisations, grassroots women's associations, special education authorities, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare, the Ministry of Social Security, emergency services and community members.

These sessions were about community-based disaster management ideas and making sure that persons with disabilities were included



Picture 1: Heavy flooding is especially a risk in Beau Bassin-Rose Hill during rainy season

in the township's overall disaster readiness, response, and recovery planning by addressing their specific needs.

Through these working sessions and open dialogue with the township's executives (mayor, chief executive and elected members), information received was carefully looked over and used to include dedicated work areas and actions in the LDRRM Action Plan.

The approach of actively involving community members in disaster risk planning processes makes the community's understanding of DRR and engagement in joint Beau Bassin-Rose Hill resilience efforts better.

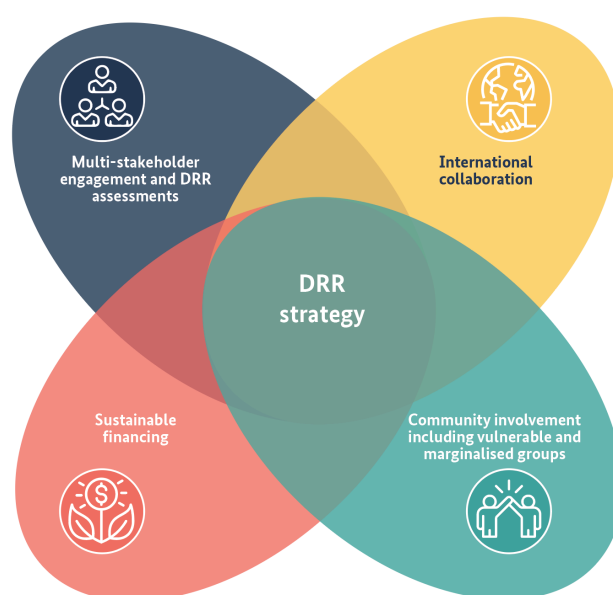


Figure 2: Success Factors for sufficient DRR strategic planning in Beau Bassin-Rose Hill



4. They made sure that they had enough money for their resilience planning and projects

Beau Bassin-Rose Hill is using national DRR budget and grant allocations to make sure that resilience projects can continue for a long time.

In 2022, the Municipal Council of Beau Bassin-Rose Hill got a grant from the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development to develop the LDRRM Strategy and Action Plan. As well, through workshops with the Ministry of Finance as a key stakeholder, the national government gave Rs 18 million from the 2023/ 24 national budget for the implementation of disaster risk management programmes across all local authorities in the country.

“I am proud to say, that we are the first MCR 2030-member city among Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the Indian, Pacific and Atlantic Oceans to get to the Stage C of the MCR2030 initiative, implementing our risk reduction and resilience actions”

- David Bablee, Local Disaster Management Coordinator, Municipal Council of Beau Bassin-Rose Hill

The amount given to the Municipal Council of Beau Bassin-Rose Hill was used to start the LDRRM strategy and do the objectives outlined in the Action Plan, while agreeing with the [National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Policy 2020-2030](#). For instance, money was given towards planning and doing the social vulnerability assessment of critical flood-prone areas.

It is expected that more money to help with disaster risk management will be given by the Ministry of Finance for the fiscal year 2024/25, which will help with the implementation of the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2030.



This publication is part of the RIA Learning and Exchange Platform. RIA offers actors engaged in urban resilience and disaster risk reduction the opportunity to access information on risk-informed urban development by providing an inclusive and barrier-reduced learning environment. This includes facilitating the exchange of experiences between different state and non-state actors in the region to enhance mutual learning on urban resilience.

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