Mapping for change – hazards, vulnerabilities and capacity to act: capacity building workshop in Freetown. Braima Koroma, Co-Director, SLURC

The DPU's **Rita Lambert** and **Emmanuel Osuteye**, and SLURC's research counterparts (**Braima Koroma, Sudie Austina Sellu**, **Joseph Macarthy, Akopon J Bertin** and **Sulaiman Kamara),** as part of WP 4.3 (building collective capacity to disrupt urban risk traps), conducted a three-day capacity building workshop 15 -17th March 2017 to enhance the capacity of local disaster risk management structures in Freetown, Sierra Leone to monitor and document the processes that drive risk accumulation over time and to appraise the practices deployed and resources mobilised to mitigate, reduce and prevent risk.

This component of the DPU's Urban ARK research led by Adriana Allen and supported by Braima Koroma city-led research counterparts at SLURC aims to provide fresh insights into how the governance of risk reduction currently works in the context of Sierra Leone and to enhance the capacity to act of those most vulnerable to be trapped in risk accumulation cycles, as well as of state and external agencies to disrupt these traps strategically, inclusively and collectively.

The workshop was attended by 40 participants including informal settlements community residents, Federation of the Urban and Rural Poor, Disaster Management Department, Environmental Protection Agency and NGOs.

In summary, the objectives of the training delivered were:

- To corroborate the boundaries of informal settlement, administrative areas and wards.
- To consolidate and validate the knowledge produced so far by SLURC in relation to the hazards and vulnerabilities affecting informal settlements in Freetown and any existing information at ward level.
- To identify and evaluate the capacity to mitigate, reduce and prevent risk of local organisations, individual households and state agencies.
- To equip participants with skills to map (both manually and through mobile processing applications like 'Ramblr') and systematically monitor the above conditions through the tool ReMapRisk.

During the workshop, mapping of the settlement was undertaken in two informal settlements, both in the west of the city, namely, Dwazarck, a hillside community, and Cockle Bay, a coastal community. At the community level, the team brought together men and women from each of the two settlements, to discuss and decide where to map, why and how, as a way to apprehend their community profile, infrastructure, capacity to act and a means to document and monitor how risk accumulation cycles or 'urban risk traps' materialise over time and where, feeding feed spatial and temporal details into an interactive online database about specific hazards, who is affected, where, how and why. The fieldwork exercise tested various participatory tools such as focus group discussion, mapping using smart phones and applications such as Ramblr to collect data that feed the information gathered into ReMapRisk.

Community members identifying landmarks in the community satellite image, Cockle bay

Moreover, the focus group discussion and transect walks served to reflect upon and refine the settlement profiling, the selected variables and methods for further mapping.

The mapping process is to generate localized and georeferenced data on the hazard profile, vulnerabilities and capacity to act within the informal settlements boundaries. This data will be synthesized into a virtual analytical tool called **'ReMapRisk Freetown'**.

Having completed this first phase, a team of trained community representatives/FEDURP, supported by urban ARK research counterparts at SLURC, will further focus on data collection as well as mapping the remaining 13 informal settlements across the municipality of Freetown.


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