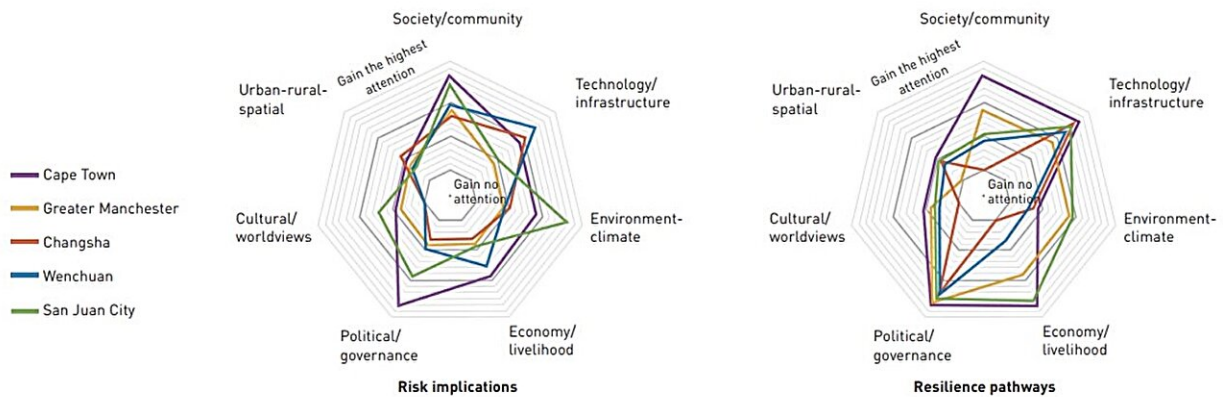# Comparative research on resilience-related policies and local practices in five cities worldwide

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Comparison of risk implications and resilience pathways in resilience-related policy documents across the five cities. Credit: Jing Ran, Qionghui Li, Joe Ravetz, Tristram C. Hales, Adrian Healy, Zorica Nedovic-Budic, Omar Pérez Figueroa, Anna Taylor

In the context of urban studies and urban planning, future cities' development and prosperity is highly related to their capacity to adapt and recover from shocks and changes caused by diverse types of hazards. Hence, resilience has emerged as a fundamental concept exemplified by frameworks like the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030).

The United Nations also published several guidebooks outlining pathways to build hazard-resilient cities. This reflects a growing acknowledgment of the intricate challenges posed by cascading and non-stationary risks within interconnected and increasingly globalized societies.

Although the globalized nature of initiatives helps align objectives for resilient future and develop resilience strategies at national level, it has sparked critiques regarding their effectiveness in enhancing local risk management and practice, particularly for lower-income countries.

These critiques underscore chronic governance issues often exacerbated by colonial legacies, different governance cultures and approaches, and economic challenges related to neoliberal economic models.

A study, in *Landscape Architecture Frontiers*, provides a comparative analysis of the journey toward hazard-resilience by examining the resilience-related policies and local practices in five exemplary cities worldwide: Cape Town (South Africa), Greater Manchester (UK), Changsha and Wenchuan (China), and San Juan City (Puerto Rico). The work is titled "Towards Hazard-Resilience Cities: Comparative Research on Resilience-related Policies and Local Practices in Five Cities Worldwide."

Based on previous research, a framework is developed to decompose the resilience of urban systems into seven closely interrelated dimensions: social/community, technology/ infrastructure, environment-climate, economic/livelihood, political/ governance, cultural/worldviews, and urban-rural-spatial.

This framework holds three significant implications for comprehending disaster risk and proposing effective pathways for resilience construction.

Firstly, it acknowledges that elements influencing disaster risk and resilience encompass both material factors and human factors. Secondly, the seven dimensions offer insights into both risks and resilience pathways. Thirdly, theoretical exploration of hazard-resilience cities necessitates a top-level design view and systematic understanding of city mechanisms as complex social-environmental systems.

This study has integrated policy analysis and local practice examination, to offer nuanced insights into resilience pathways across diverse urban contexts. An in-depth analysis of five case cities—Cape Town, Greater Manchester, Changsha, Wenchuan, and San Juan City—within a hazard-resilience policy framework, reveals distinct approaches to addressing disaster risk and building resilience.

Cape Town's resilience in water infrastructure adaptation, Greater Manchester's focus on climate adaptation and multi-sector cooperation, Changsha's emphasis on government-led planning and [community engagement](link), Wenchuan's multifaceted post disaster recovery methods, and San Juan City's response to various urban disaster risks collectively underscore the significance of government, financial support, and community participation in enhancing resilience.

However, a common trend across most case cities is the relatively little consideration on the cultural/worldviews and urban-rural spatial dimensions, especially within governmental planning. Bridging this gap is paramount for effectively managing direct technological risks and mitigating the impact of interconnected social risks. Moreover, respect for traditional concepts can foster community participation and enhance cooperation among stakeholders to bolster urban [resilience](link).

In conclusion, the insights derived from this research offer valuable lessons for cities worldwide grappling with climate changes and natural disasters, contributing to the ongoing pursuit of resilient and sustainable

urban futures.

More information: Jing RAN et al, Towards Hazard-Resilience Cities: Comparative Research on Resilience-related Policies and Local Practices in Five Cities Worldwide, *Landscape Architecture Frontiers* (2024). DOI: 10.15302/J-LAF-1-020091

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