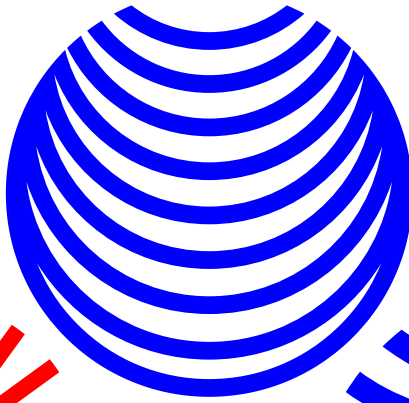
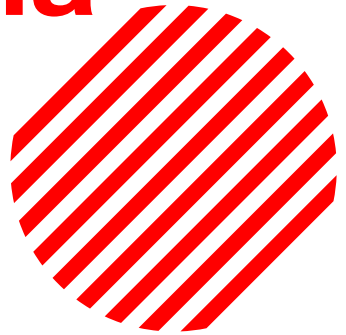


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Water for as Resilient Cities Leverage Asia

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Water represents man's most challenging and complex risk. Floods and draughts, pollution and water conflicts combine in conceivably disastrous ways with rapid urbanization, a growing demand for food and energy, migration, and climate change. Yet water's connecting and interdependent strength also provides us with a not to be ignored opportunity: we can use water as leverage for impactful and catalytic change.

The water challenges carry with them the risk of disruptive transitions. Only a better understanding of the complex risks will allow us to de-risk the world effectively. Recognizing that water can also be used as leverage helps us find opportunities for real change, for transformative projects everywhere and on every scale. And we have no time to waste if we want to safeguard our planet and our future, and achieve our climate goals, our sustainable development goals, and reach beyond.

Taking up the challenge, the Dutch Water Envoy, the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam (IABR), and Architecture Workroom Brussels (AWB) have initiated Water as Leverage. In partnership with the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and 100ResilientCities, and supported by the UN/World Bank High Level Panel for Water and the Global Center of Excellence on Climate Adaptation (GCECA), we now launch Water as Leverage for Resilient Cities: Asia.

Nowhere on earth are water-related disasters as widespread and costly, both in terms of human life and loss of (social) wealth, as in South and South East Asia. Asian cities account for 83 percent of the population affected by sea level rise. That is why we will test how water can be used as a lever for change in Asia. Chennai in India, Khulna in Bangladesh, and Semarang in Indonesia are our initial test sites, coming from thorough research and on-the-ground collaboration. These three city regions are just the beginning, our list runs longer and we need to and will continue on this quest, with the partnerships we have founded and building on the outcomes of this challenge.

The challenge is to match long term comprehensive urban planning with short term innovative transformations; ambitious climate adaptation plans with bankable projects; developing ever more knowledge of the water system with building more resilient cities; research, design and implementation with inclusive urban alliances. Therefore result driven collaboration is essential, across all sectors, all layers of government, all stakeholders—from activists and vulnerable communities to private and public institutions.

We call on everyone to help us tackle this challenge, to build a global water coalition and together, to use water as leverage for real change.