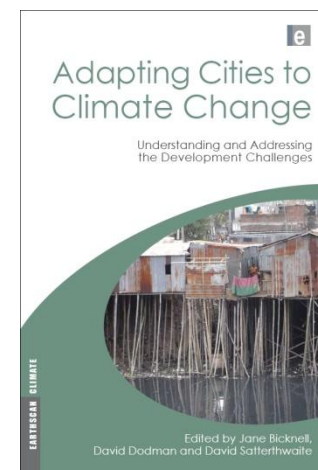




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The book *Adapting Cities to Climate Change* is unusual within the climate change literature:

- *Focus on urban areas* (most discussions on adaptation are for nations or for rural areas)
- *Focus on adaptation* (most discussions on urban areas are on mitigation)
- *Focus on low- and middle-income nations*



Key issues:

- *Most of the world's urban population in low- and middle-income nations*
- *Tens of millions of these very vulnerable to climate-change (eg more severe or frequent storms, floods, heat waves.....)*
- *Climate change impacts come on top of vast backlogs in protective infrastructure (eg sewers, drains, emergency services.....)*

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# Copenhagen Accord

- Little attention to urgent needs for adaptation in nations most at risk from climate change
  - *mostly low-income nations with little power or influence in global negotiations*
- Some progress on international funding for adaptation but
  - *no recognition of lack of adaptation capacity in most urban governments in low & most middle-income nations*
  - *If low-income nations lack adaptation capacity, mitigation becomes even more urgent*
  - *Worst outcome: rich nations throw money at adaptation & do not deliver on emissions reduction*
- Copenhagen Accord delivers little for low-income groups & nations

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## Large (& increasing) risks facing urban (& rural) populations in low- & middle-income nations

- Now/near future, mostly increasing existing hazards
  - *most extreme-weather disaster deaths are in low & middle income nations*
- More catastrophic disasters if global emissions not reduced
  - *60-80% emissions reduction targets in high-income nations in next few decades dropped from Copenhagen Accord*
- Very little association between people that cause climate change & those facing most serious impacts
  - *Rich nations, people and enterprises cause most emissions but face least risks & can adapt*
  - *1000 fold difference between richest & poorest 2% globally in GHG emissions per person?*
  - *Poorest rural & urban dwellers with very very low emissions*

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# Why focus on urban areas in low & middle income nations

- They have most of the world's urban population most at risk:
  - *mega-deltas in Asia (Dhaka & Shanghai) & Africa (Nile & Niger....)*
  - *many West African coastal cities; also Alexandria, Mumbai.....*
  - *Vast urban (& rural) population dependent on glacier melt for water*
- Most cities already have large populations at high risk from storms & floods
  - *30-60% of population live in informal settlements*
  - *High proportion on dangerous sites – floodplains, steep slopes*
  - *Drainage networks rarely cover more than half a city's population*
- Adaptation impossible without basic protective infrastructure & services for entire population
  - *but many governments refuse to work with those living in informal settlements*

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# Most urban centres lack institutions to address climate change risks

- Governments that will not/cannot address needs of low-income groups for water, sanitation, drainage, health care...will not address climate-change risks
- Misleading to see 'solution' as increased funding
  - *Needs local government reform but this is complex, contested...*
- Massive under-estimation of adaptation costs
  - *UNFCCC costings ignore cost of addressing deficits in protective infrastructure (eg storm and surface drains) & housing*
  - *Based on cost estimates of modifying infrastructure; you cannot modify infrastructure that is not there*

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# Role of mitigation in urban centres in low & middle-income nations

- Will mitigation take attention away from adaptation?
  - *At present for cities – yes*
  - *Copenhagen Accord wording makes it possible to steer most international funding to mitigation*
  - *Rich nations' self interest to push mitigation not adaptation in low-income nations to reduce their need to reduce emissions*
- Not much synergy between adaptation & mitigation
  - *Most urban centres in low- and middle-income nations have such low emissions so not much to mitigate!*

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## Need to build adaptive capacity in 50,000 urban centres:

- that works with reduction of risks to other environmental hazards
- *is strongly pro-poor (focus on those most at risk)*
- builds on knowledge on how to reduce risk from disasters
- *builds a strong local knowledge base of climate variabilities & of likely local impacts from climate-change*
- supports actions now to reduce risks (& vulnerabilities) & measures for long-term changes; *steady incremental change*
- *core of this is building competence & accountability of local government:*
  - *changing their relationship with those living in informal settlements*
  - *Getting them to support contributions of individuals, households, community organizations & enterprises*
- complementary roles from higher levels of government & international agencies
- *build resilience/adaptation capacity in rural areas too*
- build into the above a mitigation framework (*But generally only for successful economies*)
- **Change the UNFCCC to the UNFCCCCCCC**

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