Section 2

Share national and local experiences and good practices in disaster risk reduction

(Agenda item 4)

Introductory plenary

The second day of the session was devoted to a set of workshops (agenda item 4) which were organized as a forum for national and local practitioners in disaster risk reduction to share their experience and to learn from other actors. The information provided at the workshops has been collected as part of a broader effort to compile good practices in disaster risk reduction and will be made available on the ISDR PreventionWeb at: http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/first-session/gp-1st-workshops.html.

The workshops addressed eight key areas of concern in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework. Four addressed disaster risk reduction as a national priority: Exchange of experience among countries and organizations on different institutional options and processes that lead to change (4.1).

These included:

1. National coordination mechanisms - national platforms for disaster risk reduction (4.1.1)
2. Policy and legislative systems for disaster risk reduction (4.1.2)
3. Mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into national development instruments (4.1.3)
4. From national frameworks to local action: Implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) (4.1.4)

Another four addressed integrating disaster risk reduction into sector agendas which allowed different sectors to share their lessons learnt and good practices in integrating disaster risk reduction into their agendas as follows:

5. Education for disaster risk reduction and safer schools in communities at risk (4.2.1)
6. Reducing risk in health facilities and the health sector (4.2.2)
7. Strengthening disaster risk reduction through preparedness (4.2.3)
8. Ecosystems and environmental management for risk reduction (4.2.4)

National representatives as well as other stakeholders provided detailed accounts of their experiences on the above topics. All the workshops provided lively discussion; a number of priority areas emerged for future focus that were of relevance to governments and to the support functions of the international community.

This report contains the main summary of the presentations and the discussions. The workshop agendas, list of presenters, all the presentations made and the complete reports of the sessions can be downloaded from the Global Platform website or from the CD-ROM attached.

Words Into Action: A Guide for Implementing the Hyogo Framework

During the introductory plenary to the workshops, Ms. Kathleen Cravero, Assistant Administrator, UNDP, and Director of the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR), launched the new guidance document "Words Into Action: A Guide for Implementing the Hyogo Framework". Prepared by the ISDR secretariat with extensive input from ISDR system partners, this provides a practical guide to help national authorities and others to implement the five priorities of the Hyogo Framework. The Guide contains a set of 22 suggested tasks, each addressing a primary area of effort for implementing disaster risk reduction with practical step-by-step advice and examples from around the world. Different users can draw on the parts of the Guide that are useful to them, adapting the tasks according to their particular needs. It is hoped that the Guide will serve as basis for systematically promoting and assisting implementation by all authorities and organizations. Interest in its use to guide training activities has been shown by development assistance authorities.

Session workshop 1:
National coordination mechanisms - national platforms for disaster risk reduction

Workshop prepared by the ISDR secretariat in partnership with ISDR national platforms[12]

Building on existing efforts, the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 calls on States to "designate an appropriate national coordination mechanism for the implementation and follow-up of this Framework for Action" (Priority for Action 1). The Hyogo Framework refers in this regard particularly to national platforms for disaster risk reduction. These coordination structures should be multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder fora and include for example line ministries, national Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies, NGOs, the private sector, academic and scientific institutions, donors and UN representatives.

Experiences presented

Sri Lanka

As a result of recent disasters, international NGOs, community-based organizations, donors and UN agencies increased their engagement in different aspects of disaster management to complement efforts by governmental bodies. While the Government highly welcomes this engagement, it also brought about certain challenges: a lack of overview on who is doing what, unsatisfactory cooperation and distribution of locations and a competition for resources with a certain duplication of efforts.

To tackle these challenges, which were particularly evident in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami, Sri Lanka underwent fundamental changes in its disaster-related institutional and legal set up and overall disaster risk management coordination. In 2005 a disaster management act came into force, and established the National Council for Disaster Management for the formulation of policies and programmes for disaster management, with the Management Centre as an implementation agency of the Council. In 2006, this was complemented by the setting up of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights and the development of Sri Lanka's Road Map for Disaster Risk Management "Towards a Safer Sri Lanka". An Inter-Agency Standing Committee on Disaster Risk Management was also set up in 2006, composed of the Disaster Management Centre and UN agencies as well as a National Advisory Committee on Disaster Management chaired by the Minister for Disaster Management and Human Rights. There is also a Coordinating Committee of Secretaries of relevant ministries chaired by the Secretary of the Disaster Management and Human Rights department.

Amidst such a diverse set of institutions, a strengthened coordination of efforts has been a particular focus in recent months. Efforts are currently being deployed to set up a multi-

European Network of National Platforms

This initiative establishes a more formal collaboration between the French, German and Swiss National Platforms to facilitate and improve exchange on good practices and national regulations. It aims at integrating disaster risk reduction into legislative systems and decision-making and to explore public-private partnerships in European countries at all levels. At the same time, the network, which invites other European countries to join, intends to influence decisions for a more strategic and harmonized approach to disaster risk reduction by the Council of Europe, European Union and other international organizations. Its members wish to promote NGOs' standpoints and target collaboration between national platforms in Europe and in developing countries. The network plans to hold 2-3 technical meetings per year to exchange on key issues, e.g. climate change or early warning, and to disseminate findings. It is also planned to establish a systematic information exchange among its members and with the UN/ISDR secretariat.

12 As at July 2007, 39 national platforms for disaster risk reduction have been registered with the ISDR secretariat: Botswana, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Djibouti, Ecuador, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kenya , Madagascar, Mali, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Philippines, Russian Federation, Senegal, Seychelles, Spain, Switzerland, United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zambia. For further information on national platforms see: http://www.unisdr.org/guidelines-np-drr-eng

stakeholder National Disaster Management Coordination Committee. This forum for disaster management actors aims to facilitate information exchange (including good practices and lessons learned), influence national policy in a more effective manner and overall to assist in coordinating disaster risk management among all actors for successful implementation of the "Road Map".

Islamic Republic of Iran

Set up in early 2005, the Iranian National Platform for disaster risk reduction provides strategic direction to national stakeholders in disaster risk reduction. Administratively it works under the supervision of the National Disaster Task Force of the Ministry of Interior and is chaired by the Deputy Minister of the Interior. It is a multi-sectoral National Platform, with designated responsibilities at the national and local level to facilitate co-ordination between different stakeholders. There are almost 30 organizations involved in the Platform, including 13 ministries, the media, NGOs, the Red Crescent Society, scientific institutes and the private sector. Eight technical committees have been set up.

Iran's National Platform seeks to enhance collaboration and coordination among disaster risk reduction stakeholders, to create an enabling environment for developing a culture of prevention and to integrate disaster risk reduction into development plans. After developing a 10-year Plan of Action, the Platform has been instrumental in revising regulations and by-laws pertaining to risk reduction. It has established earthquake and flood early warning systems and mapped related risks at provincial level. The Platform also played a key role in integrating risk education at different education levels. The National Platform collaborates with the Asian Seismic Risk Reduction Centre, which was established by Iran following the country's exposure to seismic risks and disasters (in particular the 2003 Bam earthquake).

Despite its achievements, the main challenge facing the Iranian National Platform still lies in shifting from response to risk reduction among key players and stakeholders and to ensure that risk reduction is a national and local priority. To obtain strong buy-in and political commitment by all actors, it would be preferable that the decision to set up a National Platform is taken at the highest political level.

Costa Rica

A first national emergency law adopted in 1969 established the National Emergency Commission, which became the National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Management following revision of the Emergency Law in 1999. The National commission, officially declared as National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, has the mandate to declare a "state of exception", which allows for the use of public funding, in particular from the National Emergency Fund. This fund was set up as one of the first in Latin America.

In the 2006 second law reform, thanks to intensive negotiation and awareness-raising, the disaster risk reduction community obtained political support and agreement that risk reduction and prevention cannot be postponed and must became the focus of activity. As a consequence, the reformed law attributed a risk reduction role to the State and the National Commission and defines risk reduction as a cross-cutting issue of the country's development policy. All public institutions are requested to take risk reduction into account in line with the National Platform for disaster risk management. The new law spells out details of the national risk reduction system and attributes the respective coordination roles. Significantly, it foresees an attribution of three per cent of the country's surplus to maintain the above-mentioned Emergency Fund for preventive work.

The National Commission has an annual budget of $10 million, while $20 million are for emergency management, including prevention and recovery. In 2006, $4.9 million have been spent on prevention measures including early warning, focusing on 30 out of 82 municipalities which are at highest risk. In addition, 20 per cent of the Commission's investments went into preventive construction. The revised law assigns a key role to the National Commission, which serves as a technical forum of exchange and draws up policies, which are submitted to the Legislative Assembly for approval. The Commission also submits periodic reports to the Government Council, estimating also the economic impact of emergencies. In particular also in charge of public awareness-raising for risk reduction, the overall supervision of the Commission is carried out by several line Ministries and the country's Presidency and the Red Cross. The implementation of risk reduction has had some setbacks. At times, for example, construction permits continue to be issued for settlements in hazard prone areas. Some construction regulations also

date back to the 1960s and need to be revised. The mobilization of youth as change agents is particularly important. The Commission has trained some 16,000 volunteers and helped set up 500 energetic community committees working with the Red Cross and Fire Departments. In 2006 alone, the Commission reviewed the vulnerability of 50 communities, which greatly helped to increase preparedness. It also forecasted hurricanes.

Madagascar

Risk reduction has gained the recognition of the Malagasy Government, who agreed to integrate disaster risk reduction in the national development plan, the Madagascar Action Plan and to set up a National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. This Platform serves as a think-tank for stakeholders on necessary action on risk reduction. It has a true multi-stakeholder composition and includes government services, local and national NGOs and the United Nations country team. It works with several thematic commissions, including those on health, education, logistics and information. Though the National Platform gathers participants for brainstorming, all participants are also involved in operations. As such, there is mostly a direct link between debate and action. In terms of risk reduction measures, a particular focus has been set on the setting up of a national early warning system for tsunamis and other hazards. Another key activity has been the development of school curricula and a teacher handbook for risk reduction in schools. Teachers in some 500 schools are using these tools to educate pupils on risk reduction. Emergency drills at community level and the development of risk maps and contingency plans complement this activity. With the 2003 new legal requirements, schools and hospitals henceforth have to be built to resist earthquakes and winds up to 275 km/h. Despite these achievements and the close cooperation with the international community, the mobilization of resources for prevention, mitigation and preparedness remains a real problem. It is still much easier to obtain necessary funding for the coordination of emergency response, which the national Emergency Relief Platform has supported since 1996.

Mainstreaming gender in disaster risk reduction

Women should participate in disaster risk reduction at all levels. A mapping exercise of women organizations, gender-disaggregated data collection and gender-sensitive plans and strategies and related benchmarks and indicators will be concrete steps for gender mainstreaming, especially if complemented by direct support to women and girls to assume leadership roles. Disaster risk reduction actors should use the strong empirical evidences and practical tools developed for mainstreaming gender issues in disaster risk reduction, and use the opportunity provided by the Global Platform to interact and renew the commitment for a safer world for women and men.

France

In France concerted action has been taken for 30 years to prevent and mitigate risks. The country has included sustainable development and environmental protection and risk reduction in key regulatory documents. The orientation council for prevention of major natural risks ensures a coordinated approach on the issue. The French association for the prevention of disasters is part of this council and adds a civil society dimension to risk reduction coordination. The Council focuses on a multitude of activities including risk mapping in all French departments, land-use planning, awareness-raising and early warning, and commissions thematic studies. France is also an important player in international risk reduction, for example in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership context, the Association of French-speaking countries and the European Network of National Platforms.

Germany

Founded in 2000 as a German follow-up arrangement to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), the German Committee for Disaster Prevention (DKKV) is the official National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. Legally registered as an NGO, DKKV represents 70 members from development and humanitarian aid organizations and NGO‘s/NGO-networks, civil protection organizations, scientific institutions, the media, insurance companies (including the association of insurance companies in Germany) and governmental agencies.

Members gather occasionally and are otherwise represented by the DKKV secretariat, the governing board and the technical advisory board elected on a three year term. The Committee assumes the responsibility for firmly establishing disaster reduction in the minds and action of policy-makers, private enterprises and administration. As such, it aims at rendering society capable of dealing with disaster risk and to prevent human, social, economic and ecological losses. The Platform tries to improve expertise and knowledge, strengthen existing capacities, create a better environment for exchange between science and practice, national and international, and develop synergies and links among sectors. It also intends to bridge the gap between national implementation and international concepts to improve advocacy capacities at regional and international level and to become a partner in regional structures.

Switzerland

Switzerland is highly exposed to the adverse effects of natural hazards, with a mean annual damage potential of €1.3 billion and annual expenditures and investments for protection of €1.7 billion. The setting up of the National Platform for Natural Hazards (PLANAT) in 1997 seemed a logical follow-up to tackle disaster risks more strategically. Composed of 20 representatives at all government levels, in addition to the research community, professional associations, the private sector and insurance companies, PLANAT aims to advocate a move towards a culture of risk prevention. Beside its work on awareness-raising, the national platform is a key in facilitating synergies among different stakeholders' work on disaster risk reduction and it contributes to protect assets, the population and the environment through some 20 projects mentioned in their plan of action. The Platform engages in cooperation at the regional level in Europe and with other partners as a crucial focus of its work.

Summary of the discussions

Value added by national platforms as forums for coordination

Participants confirmed the need for strong national coordination in order to advocate the inclusion of risk reduction in development plans, and to avoid duplication and competition among the various actors with related losses in efficiency and effectiveness. There should be one national approach to build resilience to disasters. To bring all players together and define responsibilities from the national down to the community level is critical to make a lasting change on a larger scale.

The presentations and subsequent discussion illustrated the wide range of institutional arrangements for national platforms, from inter-ministerial platforms to NGOs with coordinating function. Some are involved in direct operations, whereas others serve as a think tank to prepare for subsequent decision-making and action by partners. It was noted that national platforms do not always have a clear legal status.

In terms of composition of national coordination authorities, several participants stressed the benefits of involving the Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies, UN agencies, the scientific community and national and international NGOs, despite all the challenges to put together and maintain large multi-stakeholder arrangements. Exchanges with existing professional associations and NGO coordination bodies can help in selecting non-partisan representatives. The signing of memoranda of understanding (as in Sri Lanka) can further contribute to build a fruitful collaboration. Overall, cooperation and coordination through a national platform will reduce transaction costs.

Participants also noted the need for further capacity-building of disaster risk management structures. Enlargement of national systems in terms of actors and scope of action – to embrace the whole set of activities of the disaster management cycle – was considered by some as important task. It could contribute to raise the profile of and commitment to national platforms among decision makers.

Funding for national coordination mechanisms and disaster risk reduction

The absence of a sustained funding base for risk reduction remains a key challenge for many disaster risk reduction authorities. In developing countries in particular, longer-term funding commitments for risk reduction activities – such as operational cost – are still the exception. The inclusion of project proposals in disaster risk reduction plans was highlighted as a potential approach to mobilize resources. International donors continue to provide a major share of support of risk reduction, while national budgets often still focus on disaster response and recovery. An important positive exception to this rule is the Costa Rican cases with its 3 per cent national excess funding managed by the national platform.

Regional cooperation

Participants stressed the advantages of regional cooperation, referring to the newly created European Network of National Platforms and other existing regional partnerships such as the Coordination Center for Natural Disaster Prevention in Central America (CEPREDENAC). The exchange of experiences on dealing with the same hazards, along with concrete regional policies to further sustained funding for disaster risk reduction at national level, were identified as potential key contributions of such regional cooperation structures. Regional cooperation, where possible built on existing networks, can play a role in raising political commitment and investment in risk reduction, including as a means to protect livelihoods.

Conclusions

The session workshop formulated the following recommendations on specific actions that governments and the international community should address:

- Through the UN System, more governments need assistance to organize national platforms, if no appropriate national authority for disaster risk reduction is in place. The international community can encourage developments, but should not take the lead.
- Examples of best practices should be collected and shared.
- Disaster risk reduction should aim to achieve more than purely life-saving activities because the population affected relies on a number of resources also under threat by hazards.
- Schemes to secure the livelihood of the population need to be developed.
- Gender as an important aspect needs to be incorporated into the design of disaster risk reduction measures.

Session workshop 2:
Policy and legislative systems for disaster risk reduction

Session workshop facilitated by the United Nations Development Programme, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (UNDP/BCPR)

Good governance is an important prerequisite for the long-term success of disaster risk reduction efforts. The development and promotion of sound disaster related policy, legislation and regulatory frameworks are crucial for creating an enabling environment for disaster risk reduction efforts. They set out both the legal rights of citizens as well as the duties of the state and other stakeholders in giving them protection. Despite considerable progress in this area, many countries are still facing critical challenges. Policy setting is often undermined by lack of legal backing. Accountability is more easily reinforced when appropriate legislation is in place. The effectiveness of legislation further depends upon national administrative capacity and the acceptance and awareness of rules and norms by the population. The success of both policy and legislation is ultimately dependent upon the ability to articulate them at the local level.

The session on "Policy and legislative systems for disaster risk reduction" drew upon the experiences of a range of actors to take stock of the progress achieved in building sustainable institutions for disaster risk reduction as well as the contribution made by legislative and policy reforms. The case studies highlighted key processes and milestones in bringing about policy and legislative change and identify key challenges and pitfalls.

Experiences presented

Bangladesh

Bangladesh has undertaken extensive measures to mainstream disaster risk management through policy and institutional reform, spearheaded by the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme. Building knowledge and changing political and professional cultures are just a few of the challenges toward achieving a comprehensive risk reduction. A national framework that articulates all the major elements of the national strategy is key to successful mainstreaming. Equally important is to create an enabling environment – appropriate policy, and adequate institutional capacity – to operationalize the framework. Bangladesh now has a Disaster Management Act ready for Parliament endorsement and enactment along with an approved National Plan for Disaster Management 2007-2015. Disaster management has also been integrated in the National Poverty Reduction Strategy. The roles and responsibilities of Bangladesh's disaster management committees at district, Upazila (sub-district) and Union (local government) level are being revised, a monitoring and evaluation system established and extensive capacity training conducted for functionaries in these committees. The main challenges are: building a relationship of "trust" with stakeholders in the reform process, agreeing on uniform methodologies, building and maintaining a knowledge base, and institutional capacity. Significant level of knowledge, skills, sustained technical assistance and leadership is needed to drive policy and institutional reforms. Frequent training is required to establish and sustain institutional effectiveness. It necessitates partnerships across different levels of the government, NGOs and the private sector.

Nicaragua

The legal base for disaster management in Nicaragua is Law 337 of 2000, which created the National Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response System. The law and subsequent reforms evolved after Hurricane Mitch, which brought to light institutional weaknesses, short-sighted development processes, and the inadequacy of the previous disaster management model which focused on forecasting, preparedness and response. Following the event, discussions on disaster management became more complex. A set of studies were completed to analyse the Nicaraguan legal framework. It was found necessary to improve inter-institutional co-ordination and include a greater number of stakeholders to sustain disaster reduction as an integral part of the development process. The law set out the principles, standards, and instruments that would guide the establishment of a nation-wide system aimed at preventing, mitigating, and responding to natural hazards and man-made disasters. Immediately after the law was approved, the President of Nicaragua established the "National System for Natural Disaster Attention, Mitigation and Prevention", with the vice-presidency as the actual body in charge. An Executive

Secretariat, responsible for the co-ordination and articulation of the National System was also established. The preparatory assistance programme supported the negotiations, which allowed constant support to the process.

Mozambique

Mozambique's disaster management is now based on the Disaster Management Plan 2006-2009, which is complementary to the Poverty Reduction Action Plan II (2006-2009). The Plan lays out roles and responsibilities for coordination and implementation, from the high level Council for Disaster Management of the implementing Ministries, to the Technical Council of Disaster Management of the national directorates and agencies, down to the National Operational Center for Emergency (CENOE) with the technical departments and agencies. At the district level, the risk reduction committees provide the forum for coordination between the provincial council for emergency and district directorates, agencies and civil society. The flood events in 2007 provided key milestones in testing Mozambique's disaster management. Prior to the disaster, a contingency plan had been prepared which included the establishment of CENOE to provide monitoring and event forecasting. The National Civil Protection Agencies were set up, financial resources allocated and resources stocked at critical sites. When red alert was declared, early warnings were issued, the CENOE and the National Civil Protection Agencies were activated and resources disbursed. Decentralization, coordination and commitment of Government and partner agencies proved to be crucial. A key lesson has been that short-term contingency plans need to be linked with the medium- and long-term master plan of the Poverty Reduction Action Plan and MDGs. Mozambique is still highly vulnerable due to its low Human Development Index[13], vulnerable infrastructure including roads, supply systems and its high dependency on financial support and capacity of external agencies. It is recommended to approve the National Disaster Act, consolidate planning and coordination role and resource mobilization, and proceed with the ongoing decentralization process. Further, the establishment of early warning systems and stocking of resources should be continued, while rehabilitation and construction of infrastructures for drought and flood mitigation and reforestation need to receive greater attention.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Bosnia-Herzegovina is currently undergoing a process of establishing better structures for disaster management. The focus at this point is still on improving preparedness for response and not so much disaster risk reduction. The main State Law on Protection and Rescue of people and material goods against natural and other disasters is under preparation. It will provide a framework for all activities of the institutions related to the system of protection and rescue in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which will be harmonized with United Nations and European Union standards. It will establish a State Disaster Management Body and a State Emergency Center. Developing and building the capacity of lower structures of the protection and rescue system and government institutions that directly or indirectly deal with the protection and rescue will be a main priority.

South Africa

South Africa's experience on the role of legislation in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction across multiple sectors and disciplines has generated interest as an example of best practice. The reform process underwent three distinct phases from policy re-orientation (Green and White paper on Disaster Management from 1994-1999), to legislative reform (Disaster Management Bills and Disaster Management Act in 2003) to implementation (National Disaster Management Framework 2005). A number of enabling factors contributed to the reform process, including the political and legal reform context after the end of apartheid; intensifying disaster risk; a new professional and international emphasis on disaster management (UNDP's disaster management training programme, International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) and ISDR); and the dedication of a small group of skilled disaster management practitioners and political champions (member of parliament and parliamentary committee chairperson). However, mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into all organs of state at all levels has not significantly progressed. The case of South Africa demonstrates that reform requires long-term perseverance and sustained, high level political support, skilled and insightful political stewardship, and coherent and consistent messages from international partners. The leadership of the reform process must be explicitly committed to broad stakeholder consultation and those involved should be linked to disaster risk reduction

13 For more information on the Human Development Index see the UNDP Human Development Reports website at: http://hdr.undp.org/

constituencies. Further, implementation plan should be developed already during the development of legislation and explicitly state outcomes at the community level. Legislation should result in reform at the lowest administrative level along with investment of financial resources in local level activities.

Summary of discussions

Governance is at the heart of national level disaster risk reduction efforts

The case examples clearly illustrated that good governance is a pre-requisite for effective disaster risk reduction. The characteristics of good governance – participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and strategic vision – are as applicable to disaster risk reduction as they are to sustainable development. As such, it is a long-term undertaking. The case examples at the workshop highlighted that countries that have inherently weak planning and implementation structures also have problems in implementing their disaster risk reduction plans. In such cases, it would be important to strengthen capacities for planning – not just disaster reduction planning but overall development planning – at all levels.

Allocate resources for disaster risk reduction

Developments in the legislative and policy frameworks need to be backed by adequate and sustained allocation of financial resources at all levels. It is important that a vision for the implementation of the provision of new laws is developed alongside the process of enactment of the law itself. There are numerous examples where very forward-looking legislative arrangements have not been able to achieve significant risk reduction on the ground in the absence of adequate resources for the implementation of the provisions of the law.

Mobilize popular participation to inform the legislation

The development of legislation often tends to involve only high-level policy and decision makers. There is a need to devise mechanisms so that the popular participation can be mobilized to inform the process of enactment of new laws and policies. While governments bear the primary responsibility for bringing about policy and legislative reforms, they cannot and should not shoulder these tasks alone. Civil society, women's organizations, and the academia can play an important role in ensuring that concerns of the vulnerable groups including women and children are reflected in the formulation of legislation.

Complement strong legislation with strong regulatory framework

It has been observed that the regulatory framework to implement the provisions of the law is often weak. In order to ensure that the law has sufficient force, it is important that adequate attention is paid to developing strong regulatory frameworks.

Transition from command-and-control type organizations to developmental set-ups

Over the past ten years, a paradigm shift from "preparedness for response" to "disaster risk reduction" has meant that the national level institutions have had to evolve from being primarily command-and-control type – often with para-military or civil defence background – to more cross-sectoral and developmental organizations. This transition has not always been smooth. Some countries national institutions still predominantly retain the characteristics of an emergency management institution.

Strengthening the role of civil service

While considerable emphasis has been placed on enhancing the political will for disaster risk reduction to make it a national priority, not enough has been done to enhance the bureaucratic will and capacities to effectively implement the provisions of new laws and policies. In a number of countries there is a lack of adequate professional expertise and capacities to look at

disaster risk reduction in a comprehensive manner across all development sectors. Significant investment needs to be made in this direction.

Enhancing the understanding of disaster risk

At the national level, the understanding of existing and emerging patterns of disaster risk continues to be inadequate. It is largely based on perceptions and past major events. In that context, policy and decision making is based largely on perception rather than on solid evidence. It is important that investment is made in coming up with rigorous but easily understandable and usable analyses of disaster risk. This will assist in not only sustaining the political will but also in making informed decision making.

Must not "reinvent the wheel"

Several workshop participants reiterated the point that development in legislation, policies and institutional frameworks should build upon existing capacities and structures at the national level. Reinventing the proverbial wheel by setting up parallel structures is not a good use of resources and may in fact dilute the focus on disaster risk reduction at the local level.

Regional implications of national legislation

Development of legislation and policies is essentially an internal process in sovereign states. However, as some of the workshop participants highlighted, sometimes national legislation has regional implications. This is particularly relevant in situations where trans-boundary hazards are involved. Regional dialogue can inform the process of formulation of national legislation to ensure that it also contributes towards reducing disaster risk at the regional level.

Define desired disaster risk reduction outcomes at the local level

Enactment of new legislation or formulation is not an end in itself. There are numerous examples where in spite of a good legislative framework, risk reduction has not been achieved. It is important, therefore, to set benchmarks for desired risk reduction outcomes at the local level.

Conclusions

The session recognized that strengthened governance systems are key to achieving risk reduction at the national level. Two main issues and areas for action were identified.

First, there is a need to move from "command and control" structures for risk management to more developmental approaches. This shift has been previously achieved across national contexts by identifying champions who have an understanding of risk contexts and priorities for action. This understanding needs to be translated into institutional action by building knowledge and capacities of relevant ministries or civil services. The session concluded that countries should learn by comparing experiences, and avoid a "one size fits all" approach.

Second, legislative frameworks were recognized as being crucial. However, they need to be complemented by strong regulatory frameworks which enforce compliance. Key factors identified for feasible implementation of such national frameworks are: allocation of financial and human resources in order to strengthen planning processes at all levels, ensuring popular participation and civil engagement in developing policy and legislations, and setting benchmarks for outcomes in terms of risk reduction for all vulnerable groups including women and children. Legislations should take into account regional implications of national planning and potential trans-boundary risks, through regional coordination and planning.

Session workshop 3:
Mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into national development instruments

Session workshop facilitated by the World Bank Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (WB/GFDRR)

In January 2005, the World Conference for Disaster Reduction called for a stronger link between international development goals and disaster risk reduction. Recognizing the growing development losses resulting from disasters related to natural hazards, 168 nations collectively called upon international financial institutions and other stakeholders through the Hyogo Framework for Action: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters 2005-15 "to integrate disaster risk reduction considerations into development assistance frameworks and poverty reduction strategies." One of the strategic goals of the Hyogo Framework is to strengthen the "integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, and vulnerability reduction."

Focus during the session was on the enabling factors that generated commitment for disaster risk reduction among Ministries of Planning and Finance and the concrete steps that have been taken to translate poverty reduction and other strategies into action.

Experiences presented

Pakistan

Before the October 2005 earthquake occurred, no comprehensive structure existed for disaster management. During the crisis, a mandate was given to a federal relief commissioner to coordinate all actions taken, from civil to military. This was possible due to strong political support. In 2006, a National Disaster Management Authority was created, whose aim is to manage the complete spectrum of disaster management, define guidelines, and address vulnerability and risk. The National Disaster Management Authority has drafted a National Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction that highlights priority areas for integrating disaster risk reduction, such as training and education, community planning and hazard mapping.

Mozambique

In Mozambique, since 2006, the integration of the Hyogo Framework has been tied to the National Institute for Disaster Management, which has been shifted from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Home Affairs. This shift has placed greater emphasis on the need for mainstreaming risk reduction at the national level, as opposed to requesting external support following a disaster. The starting point for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction has been through macro-economic development and contingency planning channels. Mainstreaming has been a process over time that includes the integration of climate change aspects. In 2006, a national centre was created to deal specifically with preparedness, search and rescue, as well as rapid post-disaster recovery. By 2009, full incorporation of disaster risk reduction and climate change issues will be targeted, which is important because Mozambique faces droughts, floods and cyclones on a regular basis.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The experience from St. Vincent and the Grenadines highlighted the small island state's perspective of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into development, including how the country leverages knowledge through regional organizations, such as Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency. The Caribbean has a comprehensive disaster management strategy that was developed in 2001 and comprises four key areas: (i) enhancement of institutional support (national/regional levels), (ii) effective mechanism and programmes for management (educational curriculum), (iii) community resilience, and (iv) mainstreaming disaster risk reduction at the national level and in sectoral policies and programmes. This strategy has been accepted by the state governments of the Caribbean. To transfer the risks that cannot be sufficiently mitigated, the Government of St Vincent has joined the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance

Facility, which consists of $444 million in funding that is dispersed on the basis of parameters established for earthquakes and hurricanes.

Malawi

The Government of Malawi presented its experience with mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into development. Prior to 2006, the Government primarily focused on disaster response, with a shift towards a disaster risk reduction strategy integrating the Hyogo Framework. Disaster risk reduction has not yet been integrated into other government ministries, other than the Department of Poverty and Disaster Management Affairs. Implementation of disaster risk reduction has been advancing, especially at the departmental and district levels; however, to implement programmes, these groups require resources from the national government. A challenge at the national level is that the national disaster preparedness and relief committee does not include UN and donor representation. In Malawi, areas which are currently under development include a disaster risk reduction policy and creation of early warning systems.

Philippines

The Government of the Philippines gave a joint presentation with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) about the Regional Consultative Committee Program on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development Policy, Planning and Implementation in Asia. The Philippines case study illustrated how disaster risk reduction has been mainstreamed into guidelines for the infrastructure sector (e.g. roads). Programme implementation began in 2006, and it includes a technical oversight group composed of various national stakeholders (ministries, research centres, NGOs) to monitor performance. Although the programme is in the first phase of implementation, it was noted that there is a standards discrepancy between projects paid by foreign funds versus local projects paid by government funds, which the Government should address. ADPC noted the importance for governments to have clear budget lines for disaster risk reduction, and that investing in risk reduction is aligned with prudent public governance and investment, for example building to higher standards costs more but saves lives. Regional collaboration and knowledge sharing on guidelines for mainstreaming, advocacy, and research were highlighted as important contributions to mainstreaming risk reduction at the national level.

Summary of the discussions

Overarching issues that were cited as challenges to mainstreaming disaster risk reduction included:

- The occurrence of an adverse impact, which initiates the rush to rebuild, resulting in unsound reconstruction practices.
- The difficulty of changing cultural mindsets and perceptions of risk.
- The need to bring greater focus to several initiatives, such as information sharing, capacity-building for managing and monitoring disaster risk reduction mainstreaming progress.

In addition, opportunities for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction were discussed, including:

- Better use of analyses of previous catastrophes.
- More proactive involvement of international finance institutions.
- Engagement of the construction sector.
- Tax incentives for mitigation investments.

Participants emphasized the need to engage decision makers – such as heads of state, and the ministers of finance and planning – in their own language to highlight the economic development benefits of disaster risk reduction. International finance institutions, such as the World Bank, can assist the ISDR to facilitate this process.

Fora and platforms for disaster risk reduction, such as this Global Platform, should include members of these key agencies to increase their understanding of mainstreaming issues. The private sector, especially the construction sector, also has an important role to play. In addition, donors, governments, the private sector, and NGOs should use common definitions of mainstreaming to enable coordinated action.

It was noted that mainstreaming efforts should include communities directly and should consider the role that NGOs can play to link communities and governments. It was also recommended that planners ensure that disaster risk reduction measures do not further marginalize vulnerable groups and the poor.

Governments need to prioritize mainstreaming efforts and focus on key sectors, such as infrastructure, health and education. The importance of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into the education sector was also highlighted, both for safer construction of schools and heightened awareness of disaster risks. Finally, participants noted the importance of capitalizing on opportunities presented by a disaster to integrate disaster risk reduction into development instruments through a multi-hazard approach.

Conclusions

ISDR should develop international standards or benchmarks for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into development to assist governments to focus on more than awareness-raising. Donors must be convinced of the importance of disaster risk reduction; it is essential that new investment projects do not create new vulnerability to disasters; donors should be sensitized to this and this approach should be reflected in the projects they finance.

To this end, the international community should support the creation and dissemination of good practice examples, guidelines, and standards for mainstreaming that are useful to governments.

Session workshop 4:
From national frameworks to local action: Implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)

Session workshop facilitated by the ProVention Consortium

The Hyogo Framework places great emphasis on community participation and the need to integrate gender in all aspects of effective disaster risk reduction – noting that vulnerable groups and high-risk communities must be engaged in the design and implementation of plans and activities. Community experiences from hazard prone areas around the world have demonstrated that community-based organizations are key actors in disaster reduction. Their efforts have improved development outcomes and increased the capacities of high-risk communities to cope with disasters. To concretize the innovation and value addition communities bring to disaster risk reduction, this working group analysed locally focused, community-based risk reduction strategies, tracked emerging good practices and the range of actors who are initiating and implementing them. Case study presentations identified effective actions undertaken by grassroots residents of disaster prone poor communities – in Peru, Jamaica, India and Malawi.

"We have capacities to fight, work and get things done if we have the resources. We know what is coming with climate change and natural disasters. We can help our children and families survive and be resilient."

Olga Ramirez, Mujeres Unidas Para un Pueblo Mejor

Experiences presented

Peru

Omar Marcos Arteaga, Mayor of Ventanilla (on the outskirts of Lima), highlighted the benefits of working in partnership with communities and NGOs. An example of the low-cost construction technologies developed with informal settlements was presented by Marilu Sanchez of the NGO Estrategia. Based on this programme, Ventanilla municipality is planning to launch a low-income housing programme which focuses on low-cost secure housing for poor neighbourhoods and has the potential to be replicated at the national level.

Olga Ramirez, of "Mujeres Unidas Para un Pueblo Mejor", which represents women from 70 highly disaster prone towns around Lima, explained that community members have been trained in earthquake safe construction since 1990 by Estrategia and now have a group of community leaders who can train others. She emphasized that communities have knowledge and skills to reduce risk in their communities and they need partners to recognize the contributions of women, raise resources that enable women to work in partnership with local authorities to use their construction skills.

India

Vellamadam Chodalamuthupillai Nadarajan of the Covenant Center for Development (CCD) in Tamil Nadu, described the strategies used to restore, upgrade and diversify livelihoods of fishing communities, farmers and crafts persons while conserving the natural resource base in tsunami-hit areas. Today, CCD supports five federations of coastal livelihoods groups which cover 10,000 families – and indirectly impact 250,000 families.

Sivaperumal Manimekalai an award-winning village council leader, shared her own experience as village council president and tsunami survivor with accessing entitlements for her community in Nagapattinam district and the thousands of tsunami survivors. Following the tsunami she organized women into a fish-vendors federation in spite of resistance from men. Already this federation has saved over $50 million and repaid loans worth millions, contradicting the post-tsunami climate in which communities were being showered with grants.

Finally, Dhar Chakrabarti from the National Institute of Disaster Management and Government of India, complemented these presentations by emphasizing the importance of building on community coping strategies. He pointed out that the Government is not romanticizing community initiatives, and that communities need government

support to institutionalize and scale-up their work. He noted that in the second phase of this disaster risk management programme, implementers are faced with the challenges of ensuring community ownership in order to sustain and ensure the quality of the programme.

Jamaica

The Construction Resource and Development Center (CRDC) is the only NGO in Jamaica to train women in safe, low-cost, hurricane resistant construction. Carmen Griffiths of CRDC summarized the many years of experience this organization has in developing large-scale campaigns to educate communities on low-cost hurricane-safe roofing techniques. Marcia Christian, a community leader, presented the community risk mapping processes that she is leading in St. Thomas. CRDC is using a triangulation process to verify information in the community maps.

Franklin MacDonald, member of the National Climate Change Committee said that "communities have much more knowledge of how to cope (with disaster) than the Public Works Departments" and that professionals are now beginning to learn from these. He pointed out that in recognition of its pioneering work in promoting community friendly technologies and community-based disaster risk reduction strategies CRDC had been invited by the Government of Jamaica to join the National Climate Change Committee.

In addition to the three country panel presentations, Ms. Diana Rubiano, co-chair of the working group session and Head of the Direction for Prevention and Attention to Emergencies of Bogotá, highlighted the experience of her municipality and the importance of effective decentralization and devolution of roles and resources related to disaster risk reduction.

In addition, Tearfund screened a short film from its Malawi disaster risk reduction programme depicting the government/NGO partnership which includes national level participation linking government policies into district level practises, and demonstrates the capacity of the local community to reduce flood risk.

Summary of the discussions

Discussions focused on the need to strengthen, sustain and scale-up community-led disaster risk reduction efforts while maintaining the quality of work and countering dependency. There was a consensus on the need to scale-up community-led strategies with the support of local and national government. However, participants also recognized the challenges of sustaining quality, effectiveness and dynamic community involvement and ownership.

Existing policies and programmes do not adequately value the efforts of women and their communities in coping with disasters. Nor do they build on lessons learned from community actions to cope with disasters. Participants agreed that education on disaster risk reduction is not a one way process in which communities are educated by outsiders, but should be a process that builds on the knowledge and skills of communities.

Also emerging from the discussions was the need for disaster risk reduction to go beyond emergency response and preparedness. The entire development process must be addressed comprehensively if disaster risk reduction strategies are to succeed.

Conclusions

Designate funds

Establish a global financing mechanism to provide direct support to hazard prone, at risk, poor communities and their local authorities to demonstrate and scale-up disaster risk reduction strategies and enable their active participation in realizing the Hyogo Framework.

Engage local community innovators as technical experts in risk and vulnerability reduction

Establish community-to-community exchange and networking mechanisms and technical assistance protocols that enable community experts to train and transfer their knowledge and skills. Transferring bottom-up sustainable livelihoods, safe and affordable construction methods, asset protection, food security, community-wide information sharing and mobilization approaches will capacitate community-based organizations to partner with local authorities and take ownership of the Hyogo Framework.

Establish measurable targets for community participation and local action in reducing risks

Declare and commit 20 per cent of all global and national disaster risk reduction resources for community-based implementation and monitoring initiatives in 2008 and that by 2013 the share will have increased to 30 per cent of global and national disaster risk reduction investment.

Promote local partnerships

Establish local partnerships among community-based organizations and local governments that inform regional, national and global efforts to implement the Hyogo Framework.

Session workshop 5:
Education for disaster risk reduction and safer schools in communities at risk

Session workshop facilitated by the ISDR Thematic Platform for Knowledge and Education

The workshop focused on priority 3 of the Hyogo Framework covering:

- Development and sharing of content and strategies for teaching disaster risk reduction to children, in and out of school.
- Schools as hubs or centres for community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives.
- Physical safety of schools facilities and school disaster management.
- Outreach and use of mass media and campaigns.

Case studies and good practices both presented by panellists and raised by activists from the floor revealed that:

- Stakeholders throughout the world have made the "Disaster Risk Reduction Begins in Schools" campaign their own. The ISDR publication "Let Our Children Teach Us" has been used as a base for this.
- Efforts leading to school safety have been documented in approximately 20 countries, many undergoing post-disaster reconstruction.
- Disaster risk reduction education has been documented in 70 countries. (However none are yet multi-hazard, nationwide, and fully integrated into school systems).

Experiences presented

Islamic Republic of Iran

A leading teaching and learning institution has dedicated staff to this objective for 17 years, and as a result now has 20 school textbooks at every level and every subject, trains teachers, holds annual national drills for 15 million children, essay writing and poster competitions, workshop with 12-18 year olds. They have also begun a weekly television broadcast, and published new training materials for Kindergarten teachers. Ten years of campaigning has led to consumer demand and finally political will: the Government has now responded with $4 billion for strengthening of 100,000 unsafe schools within 4 years and $4 billion for safe new school construction.

Launch of the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative

The Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) was officially launched on 6 July 2007 at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. CADRI is a joint initiative prepared by UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. CADRI's goal is to advance the generation of knowledge and related experience pertinent to developing sustainable capacity for disaster risk reduction.

Within the context of the ISDR system, CADRI is the nucleus of a thematic platform for interests and institutions to enhance capacity for disaster risk reduction. It has identified the following objectives and is currently developing a work plan of supporting activities to:

1. Assist selected countries to enhance their capacity to make disaster risk reduction a national and local priority, with a strong institutional basis for implementation.
2. Stimulate expanded collaboration, innovation and the wider access or exchange of experience amongst disaster risk reduction training providers and organizations.
3. Expand the mutual exchange of disaster risk reduction in higher education, academia and formalized learning through structured networking.
4. Provide knowledge products (educational and learning materials, methodological tools and resources) for capacity development to advance the implementation of the Hyogo Framework and to increase the adoption of results-oriented approaches for capacity development.

Vietnam, Costa Rica and others

NGOs in partnership with Ministries of Education have used a cascading model to reach trainers of trainers, trainers and hundreds of thousands of school children with disaster risk reduction education.

Turkey

Distance learning tools have enabled cost-effective scale-up of cascading models of instruction to reach tens of thousands of teachers and millions of students.

Madagascar

The National Office of Disasters and Risks Management of the Government of Madagascar has partnered with the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research to develop a practical manual and a handbook for teachers.

Russian Federation

The Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of the Consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM) is distributing electronic versions of textbooks and is training 9,000 teachers per year in civil defence and disaster response skills, which nevertheless only satisfies 63 per cent of the demand.

Germany

Fifteen of the seventeen heterogeneous disaster management programmes at the post-secondary level are less than five years old.

Japan

Building code enforcement has improved since the Kobe earthquake. In-service training is being made use of by individual districts for teacher training.

Nepal

Curriculum mapping has been done to identify entry points for disaster risk reduction educational content.

Central America

Joint efforts of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Central America Cultural and Education Coordiantors (CECC), Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and ISDR, are underway to prioritize safe school construction in all Central American countries including Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. OAS in particular is working in a School Retrofitting Program.

Philippines, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Sri Lanka

Priority Implementation Partnerships are at work in the Philippines, Cambodia, Lao and Sri Lanka, bringing together Ministry of Education, national disaster management organizations, and a wealth of in-country materials with pilot testing of materials to be integrated throughout the curriculum.

Italy

Researchers have articulated a prioritization scheme for seismic intervention in school buildings using a framework which includes studies, vulnerability rating by visual inspection, and a simplified mechanics-based structural assessment, leading to assignment of priorities and timescales for retrofit.

India

In Gujarat the School Earthquake Safety Initiative launched in late 2006 has reached out to school principals, school teachers, parents and children. The State Government has committed to achieving zero mortality of children in disasters in 32,000 schools by 2010 with a series of immediate and medium-term action steps.

United States of America

Curriculum materials have been designed for integration into existing school curricula, with lesson plans, classroom activities, check lists and other materials. Major stakeholders have renewed efforts to build a standardized approach to outreach campaigns with a toolkit to engage mass media. The focus is on unified, easily understood messages, tailored to different end-users and with empowering action-orientation.

Summary of the discussions

Since 2005, new steps are being taken to integrate disaster risk reduction education into standards, and toolkits. Post-secondary programs are emerging to fill new needs. International conferences and regional gathering of experts in education and risk management have provided advocates with important opportunities for collaboration. Advocates are advancing the goal of "Zero Mortality of Children in Schools from Preventable Disasters by the year 2015". Some nations and regions – not necessarily the richest ones – have responded with a commitment to meet this goal even earlier.

Many challenges identified:

- Unsafe schools are still being built with donor funds.
- Initiatives and efforts taking place at the local, district and national levels are not sufficiently catalogued.
- Mass media need to be engaged to respond even at short notice to provide critical life-saving information.
- Efforts have concentrated on children, but not sufficiently on teachers, and not the teacher-training institutions. It is important to move from pilot projects and projects sustained by NGOs to standardized materials supported by teacher training that have an ongoing place in school curricula.
- Educational materials should be active, participatory, and empowering rather than prescriptive. They need to make technical information useful to bridge knowledge and practice. Materials need to be tested, learning from shortcomings and continuously improve. This includes moving from single-hazard focus to multi-hazard, moving from risk awareness and response to active risk reduction.
- Distance learning tools should be used, cascading models of instruction, knowledge networks and learning circles. As well as mass media, electronic media, web-based resources, games, YouTube and podcasts to reach out to youth and Web 2.0 tools to harness collective intelligence through open systems for review, commentary and evaluation.
- It was suggested to engage in a high profile project to work with three to five countries engaging education and disaster risk reduction players in identifying, translating, adapting and testing high quality educational materials focused on developing core competencies.

Conclusions

Disaster risk reduction education can only be accomplished across public, private, civil sector boundaries engaging family, home, school principals and teachers, government bureaucrats and politicians, civil society leaders and local community activists, ministries and boards of education, disaster management authorities, Red Cross and Red Crescent national societies, dedicated disaster risk reduction champions, international and local NGOs, businesses large and small, opinion leaders and mass media producers.

The greatest challenge lies in multi-stakeholder dialogue and cooperation. Professional, public and political will are required. Our continued focus on education is developing the widespread consciousness that in turn leads to consumer demand for both knowledge and safety, for policy, resources and action. It is therefore incumbent upon us to continue to reach out to the broadest possible public, and to create stronger multi-stakeholder networks.

It is recommended that donors and governments set aside a substantial percentage of funds for this investment in education for risk reduction.

A core priority in disaster risk reduction is to establish a worldwide culture of safety, partnering with school systems and communities to educate children to think critically and analytically, to draw upon old wisdom, to seek current scientific and technical knowledge, to assess both vulnerabilities and capacities, to problem-solve and to be proactive to reduce disaster risks. This investment in primary prevention is guaranteed to yield the highest rates of cost-benefit and assure longest-term sustainability.

Session workshop 6:
Reducing risk in health facilities and the health sector

Session workshop facilitated by the World Health Organization (WHO)

In 2005, the Hyogo Framework called on countries to promote "the goal of hospitals safe from disasters by ensuring that all new hospitals are built with a level of resilience that strengthens their capacity to remain functional in emergency and disaster situations and implement mitigation measures to reinforce existing health facilities." Given the critical importance of this issue, the ISDR has selected the topic of "safe hospitals" as the theme of the upcoming two-year global world disaster reduction campaign[14].

The objective of the workshop is to look at where the health sector is today in terms of emergency preparedness and risk reduction, highlight examples of best practices that have reduced risk, and prepare a broad outline of how nations work together to safeguard and guarantee the functionality and the emergency responsiveness of their hospitals and health facilities.

Experiences presented

Nepal

Amod Mani Dixit, Executive Director of the National Society for Earthquake Technology presented lessons learned from the impact of disasters on health facilities and why risk reduction measures must be incorporated into the planning, recovery and rehabilitation of health facilities.

Philippines

Carmencita Alberto-Banatin from the Health Emergency Management Staff Department of Health explained that if health facilities and health personnel are unable to function in the aftermath of crises, it has just as serious an impact as the physical loss of a structure. Governments are taking steps to reduce the risk of failing health services at a time when they are most needed.

Grenada/Barbados

Tony Gibbs presented the Hospital Safety Index - a low-cost, high-impact tool or scorecard to measure and rank a health facility's level of safety in terms of its structural, non-structural and functional aspects.

Summary of the discussions

Health is a unifying force for action on disaster risk reduction.

In the last 20 years, disasters caused an average of 205 deaths a day worldwide. In the same period, traffic accidents were the cause of 3,287 deaths a day, that is, 16 times the number of deaths compared to natural hazards. Communicable diseases ended the life of 36,438 persons a day, which is 11 times compared to traffic accidents and 177 times when compared to natural hazards.

Health care is an essential service for all women and men anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. In disaster situations its main responsibility is to safe lives, provide urgent health care to the injured and reduce the risk of communicable diseases and other health risks. This responsibility can only be performed if the health facilities and services are fully operational.

14 The 2008-2009 ISDR World Disaster Reduction Campaign will be on Safe Hospitals. More information will be found soon on ISDR website at: http://www.unisdr.org/

Even though structure is of the outmost importance, thousands of health services went out of service during disasters mainly due the loss of basic services as well as due to organizational and functional collapse. The most expensive hospital is the one that fails and no country can afford to have an expensive hospital. It costs the same to build a safe hospital, therefore it is politically, economically or ethically unacceptable to continue building health facilities that may not function when they are most needed.

Health is, de facto, a key actor in disaster risk reduction and response, but it is frequently not part of the initial planning and decision making processes.

Conclusions

- Health is a unifying force for action on disaster risk reduction.
- Health is the state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Therefore, the health sector must have a pivotal role in disaster reduction at local, national and international levels for many reasons, including the protection of infrastructure and delivery of health care when they are most needed.
- Within the Hyogo Framework, which calls on nations to ensure that all health facilities, large and small, new and existing, remain functional in case of disasters, there is a need to foster collaboration for a strong multi-sectoral approach in the implementation of the 2008-2009 ISDR World Disaster Reduction Campaign on Safe Hospitals.
- The health sector recognizes the importance of incorporating all five Hyogo Framework priority areas into its disaster risk reduction planning.
- There is an urgent need for all actors represented in this session of the Global Platform to jointly develop guidelines for an integrated common community approach to disaster risk reduction rather than many sector-specific approaches.

Session workshop 7:
Strengthening disaster risk reduction through preparedness

Session workshop facilitated by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

The workshop addressed strengthening disaster risk reduction through preparedness from the perspective of best practices at the local and national level and strategies to enhance, replicate or scale-up such initiatives.

Experiences presented

Ecuador

Ecuador insisted on the need to have good, transparent sharing of information, community-based approaches, local networks and the importance of building political and technical platforms. The principle of "subsidiarity" was outlined, meaning that national capacities should be put at the disposal of the local level when the latter's coping capacity has been exceeded. It is important to make use of existing platforms that are well integrated into the communities instead of creating new ones. The need for expedited procedures for emergency projects was identified as a key element.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

IFRC presented a community-based preparedness project in Jamaica and how it had mitigated the impacts of hurricane Ivan. The main features included participatory assessment processes, risk analysis, early warning, evacuation, retrofitting of houses and the development of local disaster response plans. The system has self-duplicated as other communities have requested assistance in creating similar structures. The use of the Red Cross movement was useful in avoiding confusion between social and political action.

Kenya

Kenya presented its innovative multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional approach to disaster management where all relevant ministries, departments, agencies, NGOs, civil society and international partners are incorporated. The Government has created a one-stop shop data centre of national inventory of resources and capacities available to all institutions. Disaster risk reduction has been mainstreamed into ministerial planning and budget process. Alternative farming strategies, resistant crops, etc. was highlighted as a means of mitigation and preparedness. The key element of this approach remains community-based.

Germany

Germany gave a report on the Global Wild Land Fire Project, its activities and achievements and the specificities of fire hazards. It is a project for defining fire management strategies with community participation with the inclusion of training and the promotion of a self-sufficient local mechanism. Benefits for the communities need to be identified and understood.

"Experience tells us clearly that if preparedness does not consider overall risk reduction aspects, at the time of a disaster, relief operations can take place in such a way that we actually end up exacerbating vulnerabilities instead of eliminating or reducing them."

Ms. Margareta Wahlstrom, Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator and Assistant Secretary-General, at the opening of the session workshop on Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction through Preparedness.

European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO)

ECHO presented the donor perspective and their approaches and the importance of including preparedness into relief and into development and early recovery. Around 10 per cent of its relief budget is dedicated to preparedness activities, through advocacy activities, mainstreaming and specific projects against drought. She also highlighted the challenge of mainstreaming small local community-based initiatives into national and international systems. The regional level should not be seen as a substitute for the national level.

Switzerland

Switzerland made a presentation on the Turkish neighbourhood disaster volunteer project. This project has trained 2,653 people in 62 neighbourhoods in Istanbul. It was s difficult to build such projects in urban rather than rural areas as Istanbul has 14 million people. The volunteers are certified for first assistance and could assist professional search and rescue teams when they arrive. They undertake public awareness and are now organizing their own training and other social service activities. The equipment provided to the teams is adjusted to the community needs and capacity.

Tajikistan

Tajikistan gave a regional risk scenario presentation based on threats to the natural dam of the Lake Sarez, which potentially have implications for neighbouring countries. They also gave details of the Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team (REACT) as a best practice on how governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as the international community, can work together.

India

India pointed out the need to stay tuned to the Hyogo Framework, and stressed the fact that governments should undertake a paradigm shift to a holistic disaster risk reduction approach, ensuring inclusive and participatory processes and assigning greater importance to prevention, mitigation and preparedness. Putting in place legal and institutional frameworks is crucial to achieve efficient disaster management. However, the ownership of preparedness activities should remain with the community.

Summary of the discussions

Community-based approaches were identified as the key element to ensure successful preparedness. Indeed, communities constitute the first responders and are also the ones that know their specificities and needs best.

- However, in order to be sustainable and to reach an acceptable national level of preparedness, political commitment and support to these initiatives is vital, otherwise they will remain scattered. It involves the development of local networks and building political and technical platforms using, where possible, existing structures. Adequate legal and institutional frameworks were also recognized as an enabling factor.
- Most experiences of successful preparedness activities relate to rural and limited community settings. The participants stressed the need to replicate these best practices in highly vulnerable urban settings where it is more difficult. Scaling up such projects has been recognized as a real challenge for preparedness implementation.
- Governments, humanitarian and other organizations pointed out the difficulty of committing funds as preparedness shows benefits only after disasters, and other needs tend to get priority. Indeed, preparedness is often not included in humanitarian and other projects.

There is some tension between preparedness measures and political and economic costs. Therefore preparedness needs to be more manifest and show positive investment. It is important to create political space in order to promote Disaster Risk Reduction.

Conclusions

Efforts from stakeholders should focus on mainstreaming preparedness into all aspects of disaster management and to create political space to promote disaster preparedness. Indeed, advocacy for disaster preparedness is vital, and should highlight the benefits of such initiatives and projects, which aim at limiting the adverse impact of a disaster, and usually make the relief phase less costly.

- It is important to include preparedness activities into humanitarian projects, but it should not remain limited to this area. Indeed, preparedness should be approached with a longer-term perspective than the actual relief phase, and incorporated into early recovery and development projects as well.
- A focused effort from the international humanitarian and donor community should be adopted, particularly to assist the "high-risk, low-capacity countries". Best practices should be replicated into highly concentrated urban areas, where risks are often greater and preparedness activities less easy to implement. International organizations as well as donors should highly support such projects.
- A strong involvement of the local population as well as civil society is crucial for implementing successful and sustainable preparedness projects. Therefore, such projects should always have a multi-dimensional approach, supporting collaboration between civil society, public and private actors.
- A serious and continuous commitment of all stakeholders is central to success. Political will from governments as well as the inter-agency community's support towards Hyogo Framework priority 5 is crucial.

Session workshop 8:
Ecosystems and environmental management for risk reduction

Session workshop facilitated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN)

The Hyogo Framework, the Millennium Declaration and the UN Millennium Ecosystem Assessment have different points of departure but reach the same conclusion that environmental degradation, poverty and disaster risk share common causes as well as common consequences for human security and well-being.

Ecosystem services, environmental management and environmental information offer opportunities to reduce risk, decrease poverty and achieve sustainable development. These services and skills will be increasingly valuable as vulnerable communities adapt to a changing climate in which more frequent and intense hazards threaten hard won development gains.

That environment, development and disasters are connected is rarely disputed, but the multi-dimensional role of environment has caused considerable confusion. While it is often recognized that ecosystems are affected by disasters, it is forgotten that protecting ecosystem services can both save lives and protect livelihoods. The ISDR Working Group on Environment and Disaster Reduction produced a guidance paper on issues and opportunities for environmental management in disaster risk reduction.

The key opportunities identified in this paper include:

- Engage environmental managers fully in national disaster risk management mechanisms.
- Include risk reduction criteria in environmental regulatory frameworks.
- Assess environmental change as a parameter of risk.
- Utilize local knowledge in community-based disaster risk management.
- Engage the scientific community to promote environmental research and innovation.
- Protect and value ecosystem services.
- Consider environmental technologies and designs for structural defences.
- Integrate environmental and disaster risk considerations in spatial planning.
- Prepare for environmental emergencies.
- Strengthen capacities for environmental recovery.

The paper was distributed at the workshop and is available online at:
http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/env_vulnerability.pdf

In this context the specific objectives of the workshop were to:

- Introduce the experiences of environmental managers in support of disaster reduction.
- Stimulate discussions of priorities directions for strengthening the role of environment and environmental management in disaster reduction.

Experiences presented

Jamaica

Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) in Jamaica were initiated in the 1970s and detailed consideration of risk in development planning and project preparation, were addressed over two decades ago. New laws and changing national and regional environmental agendas, as well as new challenges such as climate change and new

development, have given cause to review and adapt the EIA process. The Caribbean Development Bank is now using this method to assess the impact of proposed projects on environment. The assessments play a vital role as mechanisms for disaster reduction, with some limitations as they are not substitute for comprehensive risk identification.

Denmark

The role of environmental science and information for disaster risk reduction was discussed on the basis of several practical examples. The importance of information technology for preparedness planning was presented for various timescales: for long-term (spatial, economic, and environmental planning), medium-term (management plans and development control) and short-term (contingency planning and recovery management) measures. For all three time perspectives, ecosystems management is a key concern from the broad perspective of sustainable development. Enhanced preparedness at all three levels requires integrated and coordinated efforts with participation from all stakeholders to ensure that all capabilities are applied. There is also a need for decision support, enhancing risk awareness and strengthening enforcement at all levels.

Indonesia

The relevance of decision support systems for integrating environment and disaster risk information was presented on the basis of four case studies. Recommendations for collaborative activities include the development of detailed risk and vulnerability maps for hazard prone areas, review of existing laws and legal instruments, strengthening of national disaster reduction mechanisms, and encouraging the adoption and enhancement of land-use plans, and building codes to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards. Furthermore, the importance of encouraging and enabling community-based hazard identification and risk assessment from a multi-hazard perspective was highlighted. Finally, other measures were mentioned, including support for interdisciplinary research and knowledge transfer, establishing expert committees, ensuring that disaster warning systems are activated, promoting preventive measures, and implementing plans for establishing an effective and usable information system were mentioned.

Andean Region

The impact of rapid glacier retreat in the tropical Andes was presented. Continuing glacier retreat will significantly affect drinking water supply in developing countries. Various measures are urgently needed in different sectors. To ensure water storage capacity, it is important to build and operate small ponds to cope with water scarcity induced by glacier retreat and to invest in reforestation measures. In the agriculture sector, irrigation infrastructure needs to be upgraded and production needs to be increased to ensure food security. For basic rural and urban sanitation, drinking water, sewage, treatment of residual waters and environmental management of solid wastes is an important measure. The energy sector needs to protect and conserve the hydrological system of glaciers and associated reservoirs and the hydraulic conditions of river basins as well as maintaining the infrastructure.

United Republic of Tanzania

The role of environmental management for disaster risk reduction in Tanzania was presented. Several factors affect environmental degradation including illegal human activities related to agriculture and human settlement, deforestation and wild fires. Furthermore, unsustainable small and large-scale irrigation projects and programmes have negative consequences on biodiversity and general water availability. All these factors lead to desertification and drought in many parts of the country. Public awareness and involvement in environmental protection and sustainable utilization of natural resources is urgently needed. Land-use planning is an important tool for environmental conservation and participatory land-use plans need to address livestock carrying capacities in villages and districts is needed. Financial support for Tanzania's efforts to integrate environment and disaster risk reduction in the land-use planning process and other development programmes is needed and it was recommended that international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the European Union to streamline land-use planning for environmental issues and disaster risk management in their projects.

Sri Lanka

The link between coastal hazards, environmental impacts and disaster risk reduction in Sri Lanka was presented. It included the need for a multi-hazard coastal risk assessment framework. The functionality and advantages of various natural measures to protect coastal areas was discussed. These measures include coral reefs, sand dunes and mangroves. The combinations of different natural measures, the so called "hybrid" measures can be most effective and guidelines on such measures should be drawn up.

Summary of discussions

Participants highlighted the importance of moving from science and programmes to action as well as the general need for practical tools, guidelines and manuals on environment and disaster risk reduction issues. Other key themes that emerged in the presentations and subsequent discussions, including:

- Ecosystem services, environmental management and environmental information offer major opportunities to reduce risk, to decrease poverty and achieve sustainable development - ecosystems can provide services that save lives and reduce disaster risk.
- Gender issues need to be addressed in environment and disaster reduction work. Greater emphasis must be given to the role of women's knowledge.
- Indigenous knowledge must also continue to play an important role in environment and disaster reduction. This knowledge may be lost as urban migration continues. Steps should be taken to verify and apply traditional knowledge.
- Few finance ministries are aware of the huge impact of disasters in terms of economic loss. Standardized measures to capture figures need to be developed to raise awareness among decision makers and among the private sector in general.
- Environmental principles need to be included into Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and Development Assistance Framework and results of environmental impact assessments need to be applied in development plans. Strong environment laws need to be formalized and applied.

The workshop strongly endorsed efforts to actively engage civil society, NGOs, the scientific community and the private sector. In this context, it was agreed that there is a need to clarify the roles of different sectors.

Conclusions

The practical role of ecosystem services in reducing risk and strengthening community resilience must be better understood. Disaster reduction infrastructure should be made more environmentally friendly. Multidisciplinary science using gender-sensitive local knowledge is essential to achieve this.

Policy and planning frameworks that integrate environment and disaster risk reduction are essential for climate change adaptation and sustainable development. Existing frameworks and mechanisms such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) should be strengthened accordingly. Environmental management tools such as strategic environmental assessment, environmental impact assessment and land and natural resource use planning offer practical opportunities in this regard.

Engage environmental stakeholders in disaster risk reduction. Environmental authorities, NGOs, local communities, professional associations and private sector each bring valuable skills and capacities. Innovative and effective partnerships need to be fostered.

Encourage the international community to integrate environment in disaster risk reduction and assist in building corresponding national level capacity.