

# Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

First session, Geneva, Switzerland  
5 - 7 June 2007



## Announcement

In an increasingly vulnerable world, nations, communities and individuals are confronted daily with the suffering and loss of lives and livelihoods resulting from disasters triggered by natural hazards. Worldwide, the number of disasters grows every year. This trend, compounded by dramatic projections related to climate change and global warming, has made the international community realize how urgent it is to significantly increase national, local and community action to reduce risk, manage vulnerabilities and prevent further disasters.

The *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* was adopted by 168 Governments at the World Conference for Disaster Reduction in Kobe (Japan) in January 2005 to achieve a “substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets”. Governments committed to five priorities for action:

1. Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.
2. Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.
3. Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.
4. Reduce the underlying risk factors.
5. Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, in his capacity as chairperson of the International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (ISDR), launched a consultative process in 2006 to consider practical ways to strengthen the ISDR system and better support Governments to meet their commitment to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action. Those broad consultations identified a set of proposals, one of which was to convene a multi-stakeholder Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.



In setting up the Global Platform, it is foreseen that it will become the main global forum for all parties involved in disaster risk reduction, namely Governments, United Nations agencies, international financial institutions, regional bodies, civil society, the private sector, and the scientific and academic communities to:

**Raise awareness on reducing disaster risk:**

- Increase the profile of disaster risk reduction as part of development and climate change adaptation, recognizing that it is “everybody's business” and must be a multi-stakeholder undertaking, with Governments' playing a central role;
- Reiterate the commitment of policy and decision-makers to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action.

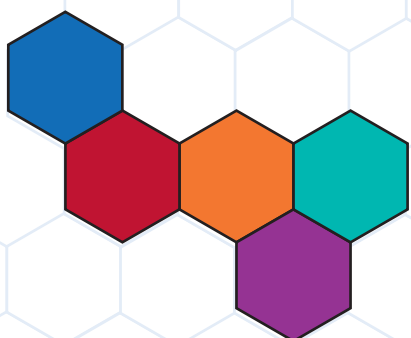
**Share experience:**

- Learn from good practice;
- Provide practical guidance for nations and communities to reduce disaster risk.

**Guide the ISDR system:**

- Assess progress made in implementing the Hyogo Framework, and identify obstacles, critical problems and emerging issues that must be addressed to speed up national and local implementation;
- Enhance cooperation and concerted action by the international community to support national and local implementation of disaster risk reduction including identification of priorities for the ISDR system for 2008-2009.

Regional meetings and processes will complement and feed into the Global Platform.



## Date and venue

The first session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction is scheduled to take place in Geneva, Switzerland Tuesday to Thursday, 5-7 June 2007 at the Centre International de Conférences de Genève (CICG). The venue will also be available for selected meetings and side events on Monday 4 June and on Friday 8 June 2007.

## Participation

Representatives of Member States of the United Nations and members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction are invited to the first session of the Global Platform together with other regional, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations that are actively engaged in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction is being convened by the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs on the basis of a mandate contained in the resolution of the General Assembly on the ISDR that calls for the adoption by Governments of the Hyogo Framework for Action and the convening of the Global Platform as a successor mechanism to the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction, with the same mandate. The General Assembly also decided that the Global Platform would be open to all Member States and that the outcome of its deliberations should be reported to the General Assembly.

The Global Platform is a membership based mechanism for the ISDR system, as was the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction. The criteria for membership will be included as an agenda item at the first session.

For information on the members of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction please consult [www.unisdr.org/eng/task%20force/tf-members-eng.htm](http://www.unisdr.org/eng/task%20force/tf-members-eng.htm)

# Structure of the session



The session will place particular emphasis on topical issues of concern to policy makers and specific substantive themes linked to the first priority for action in the Hyogo Framework: *Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.*

On the first day of the session, a *high level dialogue* will consider the urgency for all stakeholders to engage in disaster risk reduction from three perspectives:

- Reducing disaster risk through the Hyogo Framework for Action as a key strategy for *climate change adaptation*.
- Challenges in reducing disaster risk in urban settings and *mega-cities*.
- Roadblocks, costs, and opportunities to implement *disaster risk reduction policy*.

These discussions will bring together senior policy-makers, experts and practitioners who will offer views from their respective experiences.

On the second day a series of session *workshops* will address thematic priorities of the Hyogo Framework for Action. They will provide an opportunity for participants to exchange good practice and lessons learned from their work experience. They will also offer guidance in specific subject areas. The themes chosen for the first session are:

*Make disaster risk reduction a national and local priority:* exchange of experience among countries and organizations on different institutional options and national platforms.

*Integrate disaster risk reduction in different sectors:* exchange of experience among a range of stakeholders on lessons learned in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in the fields of:

- education and safer schools;
- health and safer health care centres;
- environment and ecosystem management;
- disaster preparedness.

On the third day of the session *plenary meetings* will focus on *monitoring progress in implementation of the Hyogo Framework* and will identify gaps, opportunities and priorities for further action by ISDR system partners. The results of the workshops will be brought to the plenary on the third day.

The Global Platform will also provide a venue for *parallel meetings and side events*, independently arranged by ISDR system partners addressing a range of issues of relevance to disaster risk reduction. Side events will include:

A dialogue on public-private partnerships to reduce disaster risk.

International policies on financing disaster risk reduction.

The role of non-governmental organizations, the media and other stakeholders in building resilience of communities to disasters.

Early warning: follow-up to the recommendation of the Secretary General's Global Survey of Early Warning Systems, and the Tsunami Early Warning system.

Risk assessment and disaster statistics to inform decision makers.

The Platform will also make space available for partners to present their work through *poster displays* and *publications and documents* of a non-commercial nature related to the themes of the session.

A detailed annotated agenda will be made available to participants in mid-March 2007.

## Outcome of the session


The outcome of the first session of the Global Platform will be reflected in a report to be prepared by the ISDR secretariat. It will be a summary of the discussions highlighting the key points and suggestions raised during the event. The report will constitute an input to the Report of the United Nations Secretary General on the ISDR to the General Assembly.

## Organizational aspects

The ISDR secretariat is organizing the Global Platform on behalf of the United Nations Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs.

Interpretation in the six official United Nations languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish) will be available in the plenary and high-level panels. Session workshops will be conducted in English, French and Spanish. Side events will normally take place in English.

It is anticipated that limited resources will be available to cover the participation of delegates from developing countries, particularly the least developed countries and small island developing states. Further information will be made available in due course.



For all enquiries about the first session of the Global Platform please consult the website [www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform](http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform) which provides up-to-date information on the background, programme, organization of side events and displays, as well as practical information for participants. The website will act as a portal to centralize, compile and disseminate session documents, inputs and contributions during the preparation phase. Queries may also be sent to the ISDR secretariat at the following e-mail address [globalplatform@un.org](mailto:globalplatform@un.org) . Tel: +41 22 917 8895 Fax: +41 22 917 8964.

Printed on recycled paper