



Global Platform
for Disaster Risk Reduction
Fourth session, Geneva, Switzerland
19-23 May 2013



High-Level Dialogue Communiqué Ahead of the Wave: Leading the Way to Resilience

GENEVA, May 22 - A High-Level Dialogue was held on Tuesday 21 May 2013 in Geneva, Switzerland, at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction with the participation of Government Ministers, business executives and senior experts to reflect on the future of disaster risk and a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

The High-Level Dialogue called for urgent action to address the existing, and growing risks, faced by communities and nations across the world. Participants underscored the need to support the most vulnerable, such as children, women and people with disabilities, to build their resilience to disasters.

The participants recognized the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Regional Platforms for their highly inclusive participation and as key mechanisms in the consultations for the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. Participants also emphasized the central role of women in protecting vulnerable groups as well as in building community resilience.

The High-Level Dialogue acknowledged the increased efforts of countries to reduce disaster risk, following the adoption of the Hyogo Framework for Action. Whereas some results have been achieved, like the reduction of mortality from weather-related disasters in particular, risk continues to increase due to the existing public and private investment policies and development practices.

Poor land use planning and regulation, the lack of awareness, the increase in weather-related hazards and the impacts of climate change are key elements which contribute to this trend. Critical infrastructure is often built in vulnerable areas where, for example, natural drainage of flood waters is blocked. There are an unacceptably high number of schools and hospitals collapsing, reflecting an urgent need to retrofit and design new ones to be safe. The safety of children must be a priority in accordance with their views as captured in the consultations on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

Participants highlighted the 'no regrets' nature of investments in disaster risk reduction. They also recognized that private investments are heavily exposed to, and affected by, disasters in the form of business and supply chain disruptions, commodity price fluctuations, and asset damages. Fostering public-private partnerships is seen as critical to managing future risk.

Participants recognized that there is an urgent need to address the drivers of risk as this is instrumental to social, economic and environmental sustainability and well-being of people and this should be a core part of the post-2015 development agenda, future sustainable development goals, and the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. The importance of science and the data for evidence-based decision-making was emphasized, as was the need for well-functioning and integrated early warning systems.

The High-Level Dialogue looked forward to the World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Japan in 2015. Countries and other stakeholders will convene to assess progress and implementation of the

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Hyogo Framework of Action and to adopt the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. The preparation of the post-2015 framework will be an opportunity to recommend actions to build the resilience of nations and communities.

The High Level Dialogue proposed the following actions for all stakeholders to rally behind:

1. Advocate for disaster risk reduction and the building of resilience to be a central part of the future we want in sustainable development; the post-2015 development agenda; and the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. All of which are to be supported by a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.
2. Call on countries to develop nationally agreed standards for hazard risk assessments especially of critical infrastructure (including schools, health centers, electricity and water supply systems, nodal ITC data centers, and road and transport systems).
3. Start a global safe schools and safe health structures campaign in disaster-prone areas with voluntary funding and commitments to be announced at the World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction for 2015.
4. Call on the private sector to integrate disaster risk considerations in risk management practices.
5. Stimulate collaboration among the public and private sectors at local and national levels in risk management.