

Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas : Annual Work Plan and Strategy 2014-2015

UNISDR regional office for the Americas

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The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) is the United Nations-mandated global strategy to engage a wide range of actors in a coordinated effort to reduce the risks of disasters and to build “a culture of prevention” in society as part of sustainable development. The UNISDR acts as the focal point in the UN system for the coordination of disaster reduction as well as to ensure that disaster risk reduction becomes integral to sound and equitable development, environmental protection and humanitarian action.

The ISDR system comprises the cooperative mechanisms, including, the biennial Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, regional and national platforms, through which governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, international financial institutions, technical institutions and networks, and civil society organizations interact, share information and collaborate on risk reduction programmes and activities.

UNISDR coordinates the partnerships and leads a global disaster risk reduction movement focused on meeting the objectives of the Hyogo Framework of Action.

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KEY FACTS about UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas

17 National Platforms established

4 Regional Platforms for Disaster Reduction (RP) since 2009

1200 participants from 46 countries in 3 regional platforms

RP12 : 24 national delegations and 250 organizations

8 post 2015 framework for DRR (HFA2) consultations in the Americas

350 cities participating in the “Making Cities Resilient: My City is Getting Ready”

Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR13)

517 participants from the Americas at GPDRR013

16 disaster loss databases updated

1 Excellence Centre for Disaster Risk Reduction Established in Brazil

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION 2012-2013

3,5 million visits on UNISDR Americas website

28,000 views of videos on YouTube

1,358 mentions on regional and local media

965 press releases, stories and other items shared

65 systematization tools developed

Message from UNISDR Americas head of office

The cumulative impact of disasters represents significant lost opportunities for human development. Since 1992, when the international community first met to discuss sustainable development at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, more than 4.4 billion people have been affected in internationally reported disasters, a total of US \$2 trillion has been incurred in damages (equivalent to 25 years of total overseas development aid), and over 1.3 million lives have been lost. For the first time globally, annual economic losses from disasters exceeded US \$100 billion for three consecutive years and reached an estimated US \$157 billion for the period of July 2012 and July 2103. Risk of economic loss is growing as exposure of economic assets increases, outstripping efforts achieved for the reduction of vulnerability. In the Americas, damages associated with Hurricane Sandy in the United States of America, Canada and across the Caribbean exceeded US \$65 billion. This trend is likely to continue if we do not take urgent actions to ensure that development is done in a way that reduces risk to natural hazards rather than contributes to increase vulnerabilities. Incorporating disaster risk reduction (DRR) into the sustainable development framework is probably one of the most cost-effective measures to guarantee that development gains are maintained and enhanced. It is therefore essential that disaster risk reduction be integrated at all levels and sectors of development, including particularly into planning, public infrastructure investments, agriculture, health, education and urbanization.

The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) is the international instrument that can help make this possible and it is the function of the UNISDR regional office of the Americas to promote it, support national DRR efforts, advocate for greater investment and the integration of DRR into policies and programmes and inform and connect people by providing practical tools and analytical information surrounding disaster risk.

To fulfill this mandate, during 2012 and 2013, the UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas, continued working with governments, inter-governmental and international organizations, parliamentarians, representatives of local governments, UN agencies, NGOs, civil society and the academic and private sectors. The important and diverse number of activities that we have carried-out throughout the year has been supported by the active network of partner organizations that are the backbone of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

2012 and 2013 have also been years in which closer and stronger collaboration was achieved with several partners allowing to implement common activities and achieve significant outcomes as well as to advance in the HFA commitments at the country and regional level, by building upon the exchange of existing initiatives and successful experiences in the Region. As the outcome document of Rio +20 "The Future we Want" states, "there is a need for disaster risk reduction and the building of resilience to disasters to be addressed with a renewed sense of urgency in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication and, as appropriate, to be integrated into policies, plans, programmes and budgets at all levels and considered within relevant future frameworks". Based on the experiences and successes of that last two years, UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas considers that the balance of advancing towards the goal of reducing risk of disasters and building the resilience of societies in the Americas is positive. Continuing with advances in this path will require to further the joint collaborative efforts of countries, civil society, intergovernmental organizations, local communities and committed leaders at the national and local level.



Photo : UNISDR. SRSR at the Regional Platform High Level Panel. Santiago, Chile, November 2012.

1. UNISDR Strategic Framework

UNISDR's Strategic Framework looks to the year 2025 to realize its vision of "a world in which nations and communities are resilient to the risks of natural disasters and climate change, enabling them to develop and prosper sustainably." It sets the organization's direction, outlining outcomes and targets until 2015.

The development of the Strategic Framework was informed by the HFA Mid-Term Review, Regional Ministerial meetings, UNISDR partner consultations, the outcomes of the 2011 and 2013 Global Platforms on Disaster Risk Reduction, and the findings of the 2009, 2011 and 2013 Global Assessment Reports, as well as the UN General Assembly Thematic Debate on Disaster Risk Reduction. The Strategic Framework also takes into account the need for continued advocacy and to apply the practice of disaster risk reduction in the context of the UN Framework Convention for Climate Change and its Cancun Adaptation Framework, the MDGs and the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012.

Towards 2025

Our **VISION** is a world in which nations and communities are resilient to the risks of disasters and climate change, enabling them to develop and prosper sustainably.

Our **MISSION** is to mobilize and engage countries and all stakeholders to achieve the goals of the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) and its successor; and to strengthen decision-making through the generation and dissemination of evidence for disaster risk reduction (DRR).

2012-2015 Strategic Objectives and Results: "Connect and Convince"

SO1: Lead and Coordinate

Effective support for the HFA implementation and coordination of the consultations for a post-2015 HFA; and improved coherence between DRR, climate risk management and the sustainable development agenda.

Results:

- 1.1 Coherent and collective actions agreed to promote the implementation of HFA by 2015.
- 1.2 Post-2015 global framework for DRR negotiated and endorsed.
- 1.3 Improved recognition of DRR as integral to planning on climate risk management and sustainable development.

SO2: Credible Evidence

Strengthened decision-making at local, national and regional levels in support of DRR, climate risk management and achievement of the MDGs, through the production and dissemination of credible evidence.

Results:

- 2.1 National priority-setting and planning for DRR informed by accessible and organized information, in particular produced through the government-led monitoring and the peer review of HFA implementation.
- 2.2 DRR and climate risk management reflected in national planning instruments and business strategies based on improved risk information, including on hazards, exposure and vulnerabilities.

SO3: Advocacy and Outreach

Greater political commitment and social demand for increased public and private sector investment in DRR and resilience.

Results:

- 3.1 Increased awareness and actions mobilized by national and local governments to reduce risk and build resilience.
- 3.2 Broad range of stakeholders demanding and investing efforts to build the resilience of communities.

SO4: Deliver and communicate results

Enhanced programme and organizational performance for more effective UNISDR in carrying out its Mission.

Results:

- 4.1 Communications and knowledge management tools effectively support UNISDR objectives.
- 4.2 Enlarged, sustainable and predictable resource base.
- 4.3 Results-focused implementation, monitoring and reporting of UNISDR strategic priorities.
- 4.4 Gender-sensitive DRR promoted.

Summary of Activities and Outputs for 2012-2015

SO1: Lead and Coordinate

1. Facilitate participatory consultations on a post-2015 global framework on DRR.
2. Convene GP in 2013 and World Conference on DRR in 2015, and six Regional Platforms. (Target: 1 GP, 1 WC and 6 regional platforms)
3. Policy guidance on follow-up of GP Chair's Summary, on relevant GA processes and resolutions, as well as to six Regional Platforms.
4. Guidance to National Platforms to improve quality of policy dialogue and review the role of national coordination bodies.
5. Lead the development of UN Strategic Plan of Action to improve UN system coherence for disaster risk reduction.
6. Provide guidance and training on integration of DRR in climate risk management policies, national adaptation plans and sustainable development strategies.

SO2: Credible Evidence

7. Update the HFA Monitor online tool.
8. Develop a report on ten years of HFA implementation.
9. Provide advice and support to countries to implement national disaster loss databases, for loss and damage accounting. (Target: 75 countries by 2015)
10. Support the development of methodologies to incorporate and track DRR in national planning and public investments. (Target: Methodology tested in 10 countries)
11. Produce Global Assessment Reports (GAR) in 2013 and 2015.

SO3: Advocacy and Outreach

12. Implement Making Cities Resilient Campaign. (Target: 2,500 local governments)
13. Promote Global Platform targets for safe schools and health facilities. (Target: 400,000 pledges)
14. Support for ISDR Champions and other key "opinion makers" to scale-up advocacy for disaster risk reduction. (Target: 30 Champions)
15. Engage with business community and private sector to promote DRR resilience.

SO4: Deliver and communicate results

16. Implement UNISDR external communications strategy.
17. Enhance UNISDR knowledge management tools, including PreventionWeb.
18. Engage systematically with donors.
19. Implement a Results Based Management System.
20. Awareness-raising activities to advocate for gender-sensitive approach within post-2015 HFA.

3. Disaster risk reduction in the context of the Americas



Evidence of recent decades collected by the Global Assessment Report (GAR 2013) notes that although significant progress by Governments has taken place in the countries of the Americas for reducing the vulnerability, the increase in the exposure of populations to natural hazards has generated an increasing trend both in the risk of economic loss and mortality due to hydro-meteorological hazards such as hurricanes and flood phenomena.

In 2012 and 2013, UNISDR through statistical analysis of damages and losses, updated databases for 16 countries in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean for the period 1990 to 2011. The analysis of the databases shows that losses due to destroyed and damaged housing, as well as people affected, are growing in time and are expanding geographically. The expansion of the losses has been observed in the region in general and in each country in particular, and has been especially associated with extensive risks¹ due mainly to hydro-meteorological phenomena and climate. Out of the 83,000 records of disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean for this period, more than half of the loss of life (50%), housing (86%) and people (90%) were due to extensive disasters triggered by events of hydro-meteorological and climate type.

It is clear then, that phenomena associated with the climate and the effects of climate change have a growing impact in the region. Patterns of human settlement, the dynamics of the degradation of the environment and the concentration of physical assets in high-risk areas, have contributed to increase the exposure of countries in the Americas to natural hazards. According to the International Disaster Database of the University of Louvain, in 2011 five countries of the Americas were in the list of the top ten in terms of highest number of

¹ According to the definition of the 2011 GAR, intensive phenomena are those whose impact causes 25 or more human lives lost and/or 300 or more destroyed homes in a geographical unit. Extensive phenomena are those of greater recurrence but smaller-scale below this threshold.

disasters : United States (19), Mexico (10), Brazil (7), Guatemala (6), and Peru (5). In 2011 the floods in Brazil were the deadliest in the country's history (900 deaths). By the end of the year, Tropical Depression 12E caused serious damages in Central America where more than 1 million people were affected in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Honduras. In 2010 and 2011, Colombia suffered one of the most severe floods in decades affecting an estimated four million Colombians (9% of the total population) and causing economic losses of approximately US \$7.8 billion in infrastructure, flooding of agricultural lands and payment of government subsidies². The raising trend continued in 2012 with Hurricane Sandy, snowstorms and extreme cold spell in Peru (2012), two waves of severe storms and the widest record tornadoes in Oklahoma USA (July 2013), and recently the simultaneous storms Ingrid and Manuel in Mexico (September 013).

What the data and information on disaster trends in the region reaffirm, is the fact that although much progress has been made to improve disaster risk reduction capacities, the Americas remain as one of the most vulnerable regions to natural hazards around the world. For addressing these raising trends of disaster risks, UNISDR and its partners have continued working the last two years towards building "a culture of prevention" in society as an integral part of sustainable development. The international document guiding these efforts is the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) 2005-2015.

The HFA Monitor³, the instrument that allows to follow up advances in the HFA priorities, has allowed to identify important advances in the development of governance instruments for DRR in the Americas. The last two years, eight countries have put in place new legislative frameworks to address DRR. Countries have also advanced in the identification of risks and the development of loss and damage databases in order to measure the costs and impact of disasters in their economies. There have been also advances in the implementation of early warning systems and in the improvement of national system preparedness and response capacities. It has also been important the engagement of the Private Sector through the establishment of the regional chapter of the "Private Sector Partnership" (PSP) in the Americas in 2013. The PSP will be crucial to bring private sector capacities to support the regional agenda towards disaster risk reduction.

For addressing the vulnerability in the Americas, however, a joint effort is still needed to further integrating disaster risk reduction in the process of development planning. Reducing disaster risk constitutes one of the biggest challenges ahead for the region and rapid progress will only be possible if governments, civil society and the private sector integrate disaster risk reduction as a key element of development planning and economic investment.

4. UNISDR in the Americas

For supporting the joint action to achieve high-level engagement, public awareness and increased political and financial commitment to DRR as an essential aspect for safer and more resilient living conditions throughout the region, UNISDR maintains an expanded network of key partners, including the United Nations system and international community, regional intergovernmental organizations, high-level government decision-makers from all development sectors, parliamentarians, local governments, the academic sector, NGOs and the private

² Applied Geography 39 (2013) Impact of the 2010-2011 La Niña phenomenon in Colombia, South America: The human toll of an extreme weather event , N. Hoyos , J. Escobar , J.C. Restrepo , A.M. Arango , J.C. Ortiz.

³ 'National HFA Monitor' is an online tool to capture the information on progress in HFA, generated through the multi-stakeholder review process. The primary purpose of the tool is to assist countries to monitor and review their progress and challenges in the implementation of disaster risk reduction and recovery actions undertaken at the national level, in accordance with the Hyogo Framework's priorities.

sector. The 17 National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and the network of national HFA Focal Points, ensure that further advances are achieved in the incoming years.

UNISDR also counts with the invaluable financial contributions of different partners for the implementation of its activities in the region. Approximately half of the total funding for the regional office was contributed by different donor countries to the UNISDR Trust fund for Disaster Risk Reduction. Other donors such as DG ECHO, GFDRR, USAID/OFDA, AusAid, Spain, Argentina supported specific projects that are reflected in the highlights section.

5. Highlights in 2012-2013

Strategic Objective 1 : Support to regional Intergovernmental Organisations specialised agencies for DRR

- Throughout 2012 and 2013, the UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas mobilized and coordinated the promotion of regional alliances with intergovernmental organizations such as CAPRADE, CEPREDENAC, CDEMA and REHU/MERCOSUR ⁴. Several regional organizations had a critical role in fostering the HFA priorities either by the development of relevant strategies to support country efforts towards the accomplishment of HFA priorities, or by becoming active advocates for addressing regional priorities within the context of the IV Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- The Organization of American States (OAS) launched the Inter-American Plan for Disaster Prevention and Response. The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) reviewed the Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy (CDM) beyond 2012, establishing goals aligned to HFA priorities for a new ten year period thus furthering the contribution of SIDS perspective in the advancement of DRR. In addition, the presidents of member countries of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), approved the Plan of Action of Petion Ville, prioritizing the integration of Disaster Risk reduction in national plans and implementation of sub-regional risk management policies.
- In South America, the representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), approved the creation of a High-Level Working Group to develop a work plan to support member countries on Integrated Disaster Risk Management.
- The support provided to CEPREDENAC, led to improved cooperation among CEPREDENAC and the Central American Integration System (SICA) bodies and Secretariats in linking the Central American Policy for Integral Risk Management (PCGIR) in their respective sectoral plans⁵. As part of this effort and with the support of the Government of Australia, in 2012 and 2013, UNISDR facilitated the process for formulating National Recovery Frameworks in 5 countries of Central America.

⁴ The Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Response (CAPRADE), Central America Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Disasters (CEPREDENAC), Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), Socio-natural Disaster Risk Reduction, Civil Defence, Civil Protection and Humanitarian Assistance of the MERCOSUR (REHU).

⁵ For example, CEPREDENAC defined jointly with the Central American Educational and Culture Coordination (CECC) (for its acronym in Spanish) and the University Council of Central America (CSUCA) (for its acronym in Spanish) as well as SICA agencies, the baselines for basic and secondary education in respect of the incorporation of education and training on Comprehensive Management of Climate Risk.

- At the country level the years 2012 and 2013, have continued witnessing advances in the establishment of new National Platforms (Canada, Chile) and in the approval or drafting of new legislative frameworks for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change such as in Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Guatemala and Brazil. For the period 2010-2013, 8 countries had already reviewed or formulated new DRR legislative frameworks with stronger emphasis in disaster risk reduction.

Regional Platforms (RP)

- The 3rd session of the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction of the Americas was held in Santiago de Chile, from 26-28 of November 2012. During the three day session, close to 400 representatives from inter-governmental organizations, NGO's, civil society, grassroots organizations, private and academic sector, from 43 countries and territories attended six thematic sessions, one high level panel and four parallel sessions organized to identify experiences, achievements and define the main priorities for advancing the DRR agenda in the Region. The Regional Platform has been recognized by the participants as the main regional space to discuss how we can continue fostering disaster risk reduction and its integration in policies and development planning. The growing interest generated by the Regional Platform can also be measured by the number of organizations and experts, a total of 43, that presented their experiences in the "Ignite Stage" during the three days of the RP.

As a result of the RP, an outcome document "The communique of Santiago" (http://www.eird.org/pr12-eng/documents/RP12_Communique_Santiago_ENG_101212.pdf) was adopted in which the main points agreed by the participants are as follows:

- a) There is a need to strengthen political commitment and foster collaboration of all sectors to continue to integrate policies of disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change in the context of development planning.
 - b) There is a need to recognize and enhance the role and capacity of the various members of civil society and guarantee that communities and grassroots organizations participate in decision-making processes regarding the disaster risk reduction and resilience building in the Americas.
 - c) It is necessary to recognize and consolidate the link between the public and private sectors as a key factor to develop disaster resilient societies and to support the integration of private sector efforts in an agenda for disaster risk reduction in the region.
 - d) It is also necessary to continue strengthening the procedures and instruments, including those of a financial nature, to monitor progress and to ensure the integration of risk management and adaptation to climate change in the processes of planning, knowledge management, development practices and public investment.
- An additional result of the Regional Platform (RP) is the consolidation of the Advisory Council of the Regional Platform for the Americas, as a regional instance for the priority setting and follow up, with support of UNISDR, of the advances of the regional commitments achieved in the RP. The Advisory Council of the Regional Platform for the Americas is formed by regional intergovernmental organizations—CAPRADE, CDEMA, CEPREDENAC, REHU and OAS; and key partners such as the World Bank, IADB, UNDP, OCHA, PAHO; IFRC, the Donor organizations in the Americas, Civil Society, Private Sector, the Scientific and Academic Community, as well as the past and next host country of the RP.

The Post 2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (HFA2)

- The active engagement of the DRR stakeholders in 2012 and 2013 set the ground for assessing HFA implementation and for discussing the post 2015 HFA framework through consultations. The post-2015 discussion and consultation process has been organized with four different groups of stakeholders including representatives of Intergovernmental Organizations, national governments, local governments and civil society in South America, the Caribbean and Central America. The consultation has served to identify and consolidate the key trends and main concerns of the different groups of stakeholders in relation of DRR and what should be included from their perspective in a new global framework for DRR (<http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/trainings-events/events/v.php?id=27700>).

Capacity building and support to National Platforms

The UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas promotes and supports various capacity building activities and initiatives in the area of disaster risk reduction (DRR). The wide capacity building activities carried out in the region, show the strong collaboration and active interest of donor countries and organizations in reinforcing the partnerships for advancing in the HFA priorities :

- Since 2010, in association with ILO/DELNET, the UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas has been promoting the training course on local sustainable development, DRR and climate change adaptation. This eight-month-long course is offered under a virtual platform and includes a two-week residential segment at the UN Training Centre in Turin. Since the beginning of this initiative, 250 professionals from Latin America have been trained thus far. The course has been adapted and is currently available in Spanish and Portuguese . The possibility of organizing future residential segments of this course in the region to reduce its cost was discussed with ILO officials and will be further explored.
- UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas jointly with UN-Habitat, developed a training course “Resilience and Sustainable Territorial Development ” addressing DRR policies and the 10 campaign essentials oriented to local authorities. The module was tested in Chile where 22 municipalities in the basin of the Bio Bio river participated. The module is being translated into English in association with the UNISDR Global Education and Training Institute for Disaster Risk Reduction at Incheon (GETI) to be used in other regions.
- **DIPECHO project South America**

A project titled “Strengthened Disaster Risk Reduction in South America through greater fostering of the Hyogo Framework for Action priorities for action at the local, national and regional levels 2013-2014” is being implemented by UNISDR’s Regional Office for the Americas within the framework of DIPECHO’s 2013-2014 Action Plan for South America. The regional project began in May, 2013 and will finalize in 2014. The project involves three main strategic lines of action: (i) Overall coordination, articulation and dialogue among regional, national and local authorities, partners and other key actors reinforces a common vision of DRR (ii) Strengthening disaster resilience at the local level through regional adaptation and implementation of the Global Campaign "Disaster Resilient Cities: My City is Getting Ready!" in coordination with regional DIPECHO partners IFRC and Practical Action; and (iii) Substantive support surrounding the communications strategy and operational guidelines developed based on the systematization of tools, strategies and knowledge produced in previous Action Plans.

- **DIPECHO Caribbean**

The 2013-2014 DIPECHO project titled “Strengthened Disaster Risk Reduction in the Caribbean through greater fostering of the Hyogo Framework for Action priorities (DIPECHO Caribe 2013-2014)” has the objective of providing key decision-makers at the regional, national and local levels with key information and tools for achieving meaningful advances towards DRR and disaster resilience. The project aims to provide access to and disseminate appropriate and adapted tools, guidance and information for facilitating informed decision-making for DRR as an integral component of policies and planning in the Caribbean. The main components of the project are :

1. Overall coordination, orientation, articulation and guidance on Disaster Risk Reduction in the Caribbean region.
2. Strengthened communication and information management on DRR through the development of a communication and dissemination strategy for DIPECHO and other DRR partners in the Caribbean in order to share experiences and strengthen capacities for knowledge management.

- **DIPECHO Central America**

The 2012-2013 DIPECHO project titled “Strengthened Disaster Risk Reduction in Central America through greater fostering of the Hyogo Framework for Action priorities and the Central American Policy for Integral Risk Management (PCGIR)” aims at strengthening disaster risk reduction and Climate change adaptation integration into regional, national and local development priorities. The main components of the project are :

1. Strengthening regional and DRR National Platform-NP/mechanisms for an enhanced implementation of HFA and the Central American Policy of Integral Risk Management (PCGIR)
2. Strengthened local capacities to support the building of disaster resilient cities through the implementation of the Global Campaign "Disaster Resilient Cities: My City is Getting Ready!".
3. Provide guidance to the consultative process for DIPECHO in Central America for the development and/or updating of the National Country Documents-NCD and ECHO Regional Strategy with strong ownership of participating local and national authorities and DIPECHO partners.

- **AUSAID**

With support of AusAid UNISDR is implementing the project “Capacity building for reconstruction in Central America (jointly with the International Recovery Platform-UNISDR)”. The project has the following objectives :

1. Strengthen the capacities of CEPREDENAC’s National Commissions and its Executive Secretariat, to support proper planning and management process of recovery in areas in Central America affected by hazards of hydro meteorological origin.
2. Develop, produce and promote information and knowledge, based on registration of impacts and losses caused by disasters, to support the prioritization of actions for reconstruction and rehabilitation of affected areas and to strengthen national capacities for registration of loss and damage data bases at national and sub-regional level.

3. Support the process of formulating the Regional and National Recovery Frameworks of CEPREDENAC and SICA⁶ member countries and identify the support required for recovery actions in the sub region.

Among its main results, the project has allowed to carry out training in the six countries of the Central American sub-region for the preparation of National Recovery Frameworks based on a guideline elaborated for the preparation of the recovery Plans. Through this contribution, UNISDR also coordinated with the six member countries for the updating of the loss and damage databases. In a joint effort with CEPREDENAC, the updated databases will serve for the preparation of a Regional Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction for Central America. The Regional Assessment Report, has the objective of deepening the analysis provided in the Global Assessment Report 013 with a more detailed and disaggregated information needed to support decision and policy making in the sub-region.

- **USAID/OFDA**

With support of USAID/OFDA, UNISDR is implementing the initiative “Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters throughout the Americas Region” which has as objectives :

1. Obtaining Commitment from Public Authorities through the promotion of the Urban Risk thematic platform to support the development of local risk management strategies of Municipalities participating in the Global Campaign for “Making Cities Resilient” and the 10 essentials.
2. Increasing Public Awareness by promoting discussions among key cities in the region with the involvement of municipal officers in charge of implementing local policies for DRR.
3. Stimulating Inter-disciplinary and Multi-sector Partnerships.

Among its main results, the contribution has allowed that 90 cities from 8 countries to join the making Cities Resilient Campaign, committing to implement at least one of the 10 essentials in their planning and development processes. 28 local governments have conducted a self-evaluation using the Local Government Self-Assessment Tool (Local HFA/LG-SAT) and a network of local governments with special emphasis on the 10 essentials for disaster resilient cities has been created for the analysis of common problems and the sharing of experiences and knowledge through a city-to-city-learning initiative.

The DRR Centre of Excellence – Brazil

- In 2012, jointly with the Government of Brazil, UNISDR started the operation of the DRR Centre of Excellence in Rio de Janeiro. With the support of a Senior Programme Adviser of UNISDR and a multi-stakeholder Advisory Committee, the DRR Centre of Excellence in Brazil, focuses its activities around the Hyogo Framework for Action and its strategic objectives and five priority areas for action. In this sense, the Centre of Excellence advocates for greater synergies of relevant ministries, technical and academic organizations, civil society and the private sector to ensure that DRR is appropriately considered within the national development agenda; promotes the global campaign “Making Cities Resilient: My City is getting Ready!” and related safe schools and hospitals initiative throughout Brazil; ensures the adaptation of relevant DRR-related materials to the Brazilian context and local language; and promotes synergies and coordination among sectors and with actors at the national, state and local levels that include government

⁶ Central American System for Integration (SICA)

agencies and ministries, NGOs, academia and research institutions, civil society and community organizations, the private sector and others.

Support UN coordinated action for DRR

- As focal point within the UN system for the coordination of DRR and to ensure synergies among the disaster reduction activities of the UN system and regional organizations and activities in socio-economic and humanitarian fields, the UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas has supported the revision of UNDAF documents prepared in the region by roll out countries for the period 2013-2014 (Mexico, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Guatemala, Venezuela, Chile) and provided direct support to UN Country Teams of Venezuela and Chile on integrating DRR into the UN planning instruments of the Common Country Assessments (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).
- The UNISDR RO-the Americas jointly with the United Nations Development Group for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDG-LAC) has fostered the establishment of a working group for implementing the UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience, endorsed by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination, and the High Level Committee on Programmes (CEB/HLCP) in April 2013. The plan of Action will be a key instrument for mainstreaming and integrating Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change into the programmes of UN Agencies in the region.

Strategic Objective 2 : Providing credible evidence on impact of Disasters

Hyogo Framework for Action Progress Review 2012-2013

- UNISDR provided substantive support to governments surrounding 2011-2013 HFA progress monitoring and reviews resulting in the finalization of 25 national level reports from the Americas. In the present period of reporting, UNISDR concentrated its support in countries in the Caribbean that had not reported in the previous period, having managed to increase the number of reporting countries in this subregion by 20%. A synthesized report of Americas national HFA progress reviews for the period 2011-2013 focusing on HFA priorities was prepared by UNISDR Regional Office prior to the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2013 as a supporting document for the contributions of Americas Representatives in the post HFA discussions in the context of the GP. The 2011-2013 self-evaluations on the implementation of disaster risk reduction, provide invaluable insight into the advances being made in terms of DRR. For example, the report shows that at least 20% of reporting countries have reviewed their legal framework in the last two years expanding the concept from the emergency and response towards a more comprehensive approach of DRR, while over 30% of countries indicate having a policy or strategy addressing DRR. 81% of countries (20 out of 25) report that DRR is included in development plans and strategies, while 57 % of countries (14 out of 25) report having a specific allocation of budget for DRR within the national budget. Investment tracking and common standards or mechanisms for identifying allocations to DRR in public investment is perceived as one of the main challenges among 84% of the countries analyzed, as well as not being able to report on all the investment channeled by the countries in DRR or investment tracking at other administrative or federal levels.

Local Government Self-Assessment Tool

- The Local Hyogo Framework for Action review process was developed to enhance the understanding of the status and progress of disaster risk reduction efforts at the local level. One of the main objectives is to provide a self-assessment tool and a feedback mechanism for local and city governments and facilitate the understanding of gaps and challenges in disaster risk reduction at the local level. The second objective is to complement the national HFA monitoring and multi-stakeholder engagement process by providing information and an assessment of the situation from the local level. A third objective is to provide a baseline for local governments participating in the Making Cities Resilient Campaign. Since its launching in 2012, 28 local governments in the Americas have conducted a self-evaluation using the Local Government Self-Assessment Tool (Local HFA/LG-SAT), which provides key questions and measurements against the Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient and builds upon the priorities and national indicators of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

Loss and damage databases

- In 2012 and 2013, UNISDR coordinated the updating of 16 loss and damage databases that were used as inputs for the estimation of direct economic losses due to disasters in the region in support of policy decision making and the preparation of country risk profiles, as well as an input for the preparation of a Regional Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction for Central America, to be finalized by December 2013. The database maintenance has been institutionalized with national organizations in 14 out of the 35 countries in the Region.
- In 2013, the RO initiated the preparation of a Regional Assessment Report (RAR) on the status of disaster risk reduction in Central America. The report is being formulated in association with the Central American Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Disasters (CEPRENAC). The RAR aims to bring a closer look to the trends and impact of disasters in the Central American region. This initiative will allow to provide countries in the region with consolidated information on DRR at the country level in order to facilitate decision making and policy design.

Disaster Risk Reduction in Investment Planning

- The Americas is one of the leading regions in implementing methodologies for the integration of disaster risk reduction in public investment planning and disaster risk reduction investment tracking in public budgets. Countries such as Peru, Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Colombia and Panama, are applying disaster risk assessments to public investment projects and implementing investment tracking methodologies. Based on this advances and with the objective to disseminate these experiences in the region, UNISDR led the preparation of case studies of 6 countries in the Americas.
- In 2012, UNISDR jointly with the Government of Mexico, the World Bank and GIZ, organized in San Cristobal de Las Casas, Mexico, the regional meeting “Understanding Investment for Disaster Risk Reduction”. Based on the study cases prepared, representatives from the financial and planning ministries of the countries from the Region and a representative from Asia Pacific, reviewed and exchanged their views on how to further advance in the integration of DRR in investment planning and tracking of DRR investments in national budgets. The meeting finalized with the agreement of the “San Cristobal Roadmap”, a 3 years plan supported by the government of Mexico, to complement and develop the existing studies on DRR investment tracking and planning as well as disseminate the methodologies that can serve to countries in the region. These studies and advances were presented in the GAR13 and during the Global Platform 2013.

Strategic Objective 3 : Connect and convince : Advocacy and outreach

Making Cities Resilient: My City is Getting Ready

- The global campaign has continued with a steady growth during 2012 and 2013 in the Americas. In 2012, 2013, nearly 150 cities have joined the making Cities Resilient Campaign, committing to implement at least one of the 10 essentials in their planning and development processes, bringing the total number of cities participating in the campaign in the Americas to 350. Among them, it is worth highlighting the cities of San Francisco, Hoboken, Mexico DF, Bogotá, Medellín (nominated in 2013 as the most innovative city in the world and host of the World Urban Forum in 2014), Rio, Quito, Lima ; and the role model City of Santa Fe, Argentina. El Salvador and Honduras are the countries that hold the highest number of municipalities signed on to the campaign. In addition, as a result of the collaborative efforts with the Government of Brazil, through the Excellence Centre for DRR established jointly with UNISDR, 12 additional cities have joined the campaign in 2013, among them the municipality of Campinas, that has been recognized as a Campaign “Role Model” city as well as the city of Belo Horizonte, awarded with the Sasakawa Award 2013 for its commitment towards the advancement in DRR.
- Besides local governments, campaign partners are crucial for the successful promotion of the campaign and even more importantly the implementation of the 10 essentials. The UNISDR office for the Americas is working closely together with 23 regional partner organizations and with national associations of municipalities. UNISDR has signed cooperation agreements with the Latin American Federation of Cities, Municipalities and Associations of Local Governments (FLACMA) which represents 16.132 local governments throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Federation of Municipalities of the Central American Isthmus (FEMICA). UNISDR has also signed collaboration agreements with the Dominican Republic Federation of Municipalities (FEDOMU), the Colombian Federation of Municipalities (FCM), the Argentinean Federation of Municipalities (FAM) and the Chilean Association of Municipalities (ACM). In Chile also three sub-regional associations joined the campaign: Association of Municipalities of Bío-Bío, O'Higgins and Maule. In 2013 UNISDR signed a collaboration agreement with the association of municipalities of Panama (AMUPA), with the Association of Municipalities of Peru (AMPE), with the Ministry of Local Government & Community Development, Office of Disaster Preparedness Emergency Management ODPEM in Jamaica, and the network of municipalities of Mercosur (MERCOCIUDADES) which comprises 261 cities with a total population of 80 million.
- As part of the efforts to foster collaborative actions in support of knowledge sharing, in 2012 and 2013, UNISDR started a process to promote the exchange of experiences on DRR and CCA among municipalities. By September of 2013, nearly 12 cities had participated in the exchanges : role model city of Santa Tecla (El Salvador) provided support to Anse-à-Galets (Haiti). Lampa (led by the Campaign Champion Graciela Ortuzar in Chile) exchanged experiences with La Paz (Bolivia), the city of Cartago (Colombia) exchanged with the role model city of Santa Fe (Argentina), Portmore (Jamaica) with Town of View Royal (Canada), Pasto (Colombia) with the city of Tegucigalpa (Honduras), Wiwilli (Nicaragua) with the municipality of Livingston (Guatemala) and Cantarranas (Honduras).
- The campaign is further supported by political leaders. Seven campaign Champions are representing four of the 5 sub-regions in the Americas: Ms Graziela Ortúzar, Mayoress of Lampa, Chile; Mr. Oscar Ortiz, Mayor of Santa Tecla, El Salvador; Mr. Marcelo Ebrard, former mayor of Mexico City, Mexico, Mr. Keith Hinds, former Mayor of Portmore, Jamaica, Mr. Emilio Grateron, Mayor of Chacao in Venezuela, and Aura Saldaña Mayoress of Sabana del Mar in Dominican Republic. In addition, UNISDR has nominated 6 campaign “advocates” (local leaders from different sectors that are recognized for its commitment with DRR) for the Americas.

Private Sector Partnerships

- The DRR-PSP is a global partnership between UNISDR and members of the private sector for mobilizing resources and engaging the private sector for reducing the risk of disaster. DRR-PSP members include partners in financial services, telecommunications, construction and materials, and support services. In 2013, UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas, jointly with the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), the Government of Colombia and USAID/OFDA, promoted the establishment of the Americas section of the Public–Private Partnerships for Disaster Risk Reduction. For this purpose, a core group of private sector representatives of leading companies was identified and is championing the agenda of the PSP for the Americas. The objective of the PSP for the Americas is to engage the private sector in the region to advance in five commitments :
 1. Promote and develop public-private partnerships for disaster risk reduction to analyze the root causes of continued non-resilient activity.
 2. Leverage private sector expertise and strengths to advance disaster risk reduction and mitigation activities, including enhanced resilience and effective response.
 3. Foster a collaborative exchange and dissemination of data: Share information on assessment, monitoring, prediction, forecasting and early warning purposes and action between the public and private sectors.
 4. Support national and local risk assessments and socio-economic cost-benefit analyses and capacity-building, and demonstrate opportunities where resilience building and disaster risk reduction is a sound economic strategy, with attractive returns and competitive advantages.
 5. Support the development and strengthening of national and local laws, regulations, policies and programmes that enhance disaster risk reduction and improve resilience.

Parliamentarians

- In 2012, UNISDR has developed an active advocacy work with parliamentarians as key leaders for advancing the DRR agenda in the region. In November 2012, UNISDR participated in the EuroLat Assembly held in Cadiz as well as in the Economic Commission of the Parlatino in Buenos Aires (2012). In 2013, UNISDR participated in the establishment of the Regional Advisory Group for LAC and in the EuroLat Assembly in Chile (2013). Substantive support was given to the Environmental Committee of Parlatino prior to the first reading of the Protocol held in Caracas (July 2013) and then to the joint review meeting of the Environmental and Economic Committees in Panama (August 2013). On the 18 October will be the ceremony in the presence of the Head of States from the 22 Ibero-American countries where it is expected the adoption of the Protocol for Management Disaster Risk. The adoption of the Protocol will be the culmination of the joint efforts of UNISDR and the parliamentarians of the region and will support the national debates of new legislation on DRR in different countries in the context of the global campaign on making nations and communities resilient to disasters and climate change.

6. Focus themes for 2014

UNISDR regional Office for the Americas defines its regional strategy around the corporate mission to mobilize and connect governments and partners to achieve the goals of the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) and its successor; and to influence policy through the generation and dissemination of evidence for disaster risk reduction (DRR) towards 2015. In this context, the Regional Office for the Americas has defined the following objectives and results :

1. **Effective support for the coordination of HFA implementation and the consultations for its successor; and improved coherence between DRR practices, climate change adaptation and sustainable development agenda.**
- 1.1. **Guidance to National Platforms to improve quality of policy dialogue and review the role of national coordination bodies**
 - Support the development of action plans for the implementation of a set of common standards for national platforms in Central America.
 - Support countries in the application of tools such as country document formats and criteria for prioritizing DRR in South America before 2015.
 - Criteria for Prioritizing DRR at the National Level incorporated in at least 1 new Country Document, 8 countries update DRR Country Documents in the Caribbean.
 - Through the Excellence Centre for DRR in Brazil, provide support as needed for the consolidation of a multi-sectorial and inter-disciplinary National Platform for DRR and the development of a National Strategy for DRR.
- 1.2. Convene the Third World Conference on DRR in 2015 and Regional Platforms over 2014
 - **4th Session of the Global Platform Guayaquil 27-29 May 2014**

Coordination for the organization of the 4th Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas to be hosted by the Government of Ecuador in May 2014 is underway. The platform will be an opportunity to consolidate the views, perspectives and contributions of the Americas towards the new framework for disaster risk reduction to be discussed in the context of the Third World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction. The platform will be an opportunity to review advancements and further share country experiences around building resilience and guiding national authorities in the development of public policies for disaster risk management as well as to continue supporting the regional advancements achieved at the last Regional Platform. The Regional Platform for 2014 will have as main topic "Towards leadership in disaster risk reduction for the construction of a sustainable development agenda" and will address the following areas :

Thematic sessions in the RP 2014:

- a. Thematic session 1: reducing the risk in special groups of the society:
 - Children and youth
 - People with disabilities.
 - Indigenous communities knowledge.

b. Thematic session 2: disaster risk reduction and development agenda:

- Building vulnerabilities in the region
- Public investment policies for DRR
- The progress of DRR in urban environments: towards the construction of resilience.
- Inequality and its impact on the resilience of societies

c. Thematic session 3: governance and public policies for the reduction of risk.

- National platforms: its progress and impact for disaster risk reduction.
- Regional platform and regional strategies

d. Thematic session 4: regional consultation of the new framework for reducing the risk of disasters post 2015 - Post HFA2015

As a cross cutting theme, the Thematic Sessions will reflect and celebrate on the achievements of the HFA.

Parallel sessions in the RP 2014:

- Experiences of integration of gender in disaster risk reduction
- Land use planning as a basis for DRR
- South-South and triangular cooperation and the RRD
- The private sector for reducing the risk of disasters for resilience
- The integration of scientific research in support of the construction of resilience.



1.3. Lead the development and monitor implementation of UN Strategic Plan of Action to improve UN system coherence for disaster risk reduction

- UNISDR will support the UN Country Teams in the review of the UNDAF documents and provide training to at least 2 UN Country Teams (UNCT) on DRR guidelines for the incorporation of DRR in CCA and UNDAF.
- UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas, will continue contributing to the work of UNCT and the implementation of the UNDAF strengthening the need to integrate DRR in the work UN agencies carry out. Promote the UN Plan of Action of Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience

1.4. Facilitate participatory consultations on a post-2015 global framework on DRR

- In 2014, UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will conduct one regional and two national multi-stakeholder post-2015 HFA2 consultations with involvement of relevant parties from the regional, national and local levels in South America, and one regional and two national consultations in the Caribbean reflecting main and distinctive priorities from the SIDS.

- UNISDR will carry out national thematic consultations (El Salvador / Honduras) with Ministries of Environment / CCAD on DRR and CCA in the context of the formulation of the new post-2015 framework (HFA2)
- The Excellence Centre for Disaster Risk Reduction in Brazil, will support a multi-stakeholder consultation to enable Brazil to have a position paper to present at the 4th Regional Platform meeting for LAC
- The DRR Excellence Centre for Disaster Risk Reduction in Brazil will also support a consultation involving BRICS countries prior to the BRICS summit to be held in Brazil in 2014.

1.5. Provide guidance on integration of DRR in climate risk management and sustainable development plans, policies and strategies at all levels

- UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will promote participation of DRR regional champions in COP 20 in Peru
- With the support of CEPREDENAC and the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development (COSUDE), UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will develop guidelines for integrating CCA and DRR in Central America and facilitate its application in two pilot municipalities in Honduras and Nicaragua. This pilot will contribute to the preparation of a position paper on DRR and CCA in Central America as input for the COP 2014.

2. Strengthened decision-making at local, national and regional levels in support of DRR, climate change adaptation and achievement of the MDGs, through the production and dissemination of credible evidence.

2.1. Produce national risk profiles through support for the establishment of national disaster loss databases and enhanced global risk modeling

- UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will prepare a synthesis report of the 10 years of HFA in the Americas
- With the support of the Government of Spain, UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will provide advice to countries to implement national disaster loss databases, for loss and damage accounting through the updating of databases of 16 countries in the region and the preparation of a regional customized "statistics report on DRR trends" based on databases to support informed policy decision making .
- With the support of the Government of Mexico and USAID/OFDA, UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will support the implementation of the "San Cristobal Roadmap" for deepening regional exchanges on investment tracking methodologies and methodologies for the integration of DRR in investment planning.
- UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will organize multi-stakeholder DRR dialogues on the integration of disaster risk reduction in investment planning and in the recovery processes.
- The DRR Centre of Excellence in Brazil will continue the dissemination of GAR13, engaging Brazil in the elaboration of GAR15 and the development of a study summarizing data needs for DRR in Brazil : existing information that could be relevant, methodological approach used in each set of available information, and a strategy for implementing a national disaster loss database.
- The DRR Centre of Excellence in Brazil will also assist the development of a DRR research agenda with academic institutions and the FIOCRUZ foundation.

3. Increased political commitment and social demand for public and private sector investment in DRR and resilience.

3.1 Implement Making Cities Resilient Campaign

- With the support of USAID/OFDA, the UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will expand a program of city-to-city learning among with cities participating in the Global Campaign and support the development of local level action plans on DRR in collaboration with association of local governments.
- With the support of USAID/OFDA, the UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will continue expanding the HFA self-assessment tool in at least 100 municipalities participating in the global campaign.
- With the support of the European Commission (EC) DIPECHO Action Plan 2013-2014 , the UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will support the systematization of existing tools and experiences relevant to urban risk and the dissemination of materials and tools for DRR in local governments - Handbook for local government leaders
- The UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will continue supporting cities signed on to the Global Campaign through technical guidance.
- With the support of the European Commission (EC) DIPECHO Action Plan 2013-2014, the UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will continue to promote of the International Day for Disaster Reduction in coordination with regional partners (IFRC, Practical Action and UNESCO) in 6 countries of the Caribbean and South America.

3.2 Promote Global Platform targets for safe education and health facilities

- UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will develop a regional call for good regional practices in the safe school and hospitals initiative and support the Regional Coalition “Youth and Children and DRR” in the Americas.

3.3 Engage with business community and private sector to promote DRR and resilience

- UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas will further the engagement of the business community and private sector to promote DRR resilience to accelerate the implementation of DRR. UNISDR will reinforce its collaboration with the Private Sector working with members who are taking the lead in ensuring the safety of long-term investments and planning ahead to protect industry and society from disasters, economic disruptions while ensuring business continuity. In this sense, UNISDR will continue its support the Private Sector Partnership (PSP) in the Americas and its engagement in the organization of a thematic Session in the context of the IV Regional Platform for DRR of the Americas in 2014.

SAVE THE DATE:

Fourth Session of the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

27-29 May 2014, Guayaquil, Ecuador

United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR)

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