

**Second Africa Regional Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction  
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**The Institutional Basis for Disaster Risk Reduction in  
Africa: Progress, Challenges and Opportunities**

**By: Seth Doe Vordzorgbe**

**Snr. Regional Disaster Reduction Advisor, Africa  
UNDP Africa Sub-Regional Office  
East and Southern Africa, Johannesburg**

## **Presentation Plan**

- 1. Progress in developing the institutional base for DRR in Africa – some trends**
  - 1.1 Key features**
  - 1.2 Legislation**
  - 1.3 Programmes**
  - 1.4 Regional and sub-regional levels**
  - 1.5 Diversity of institutional homes for DRR units at national and sub-regional levels**
  
- 2. Challenges**
  - 2.1 Development of institutional mechanisms, instruments, processes**
  - 2.2 Improving effectiveness and efficiency of institutional mechanisms**
  - 2.3 Regionalism**
  
- 3. Opportunities**

# 1. Progress in developing the institutional base for DRR in Africa – some trends

## 1.1 Key features

- Uneven progress in institutional landscape: policy/strategy, legislation, plans/programmes
- Few countries have full complement of institutional instruments
- Diversity of institutional homes for DRR units at national and sub-regional levels
- **Most progress:** national disaster management organizations (including mechanisms that function as National Platforms):
  - government institutions with low multi-stakeholders involvement
  - more focused on response
  - most lack policies and programmes
  - weak capacity and low resources
- **Least progress:** policies/strategies and legislation

## 1.2 Legislation

- all countries have some existing legislation that contain issues relating to disaster management
- legislation is scattered over many pieces of law in different sectors
- most are establishment legislations
- most of the existing legislation covers mainly disaster response and emergency management
- most lack/ have inadequate:
  - provisions of clear responsibilities, entitlements, sanctions and remedies for DRR actions by different actors and various levels
  - provisions for coordinated implementation across sectors and location
  - benchmarks for action
  - procedures/systems for feedback and evidence-based monitoring and assessment.

## 1.3 Programmes

- recognize roles of non-state entities and communities
- limited devolution of responsibilities, authority, competencies resources
- programme management relies on command and control and authoritarianism instead of self-consent and appeal to personal interests

## 1.4 Regional and sub-regional levels

- AUC making progress in integrating DRR in programme of NRM, agriculture and rural development, climate change
- AU, AMCEN, AMCOW have DRR as themes for Ministerial Conferences.
- Regional Platform established
- RECs have/are developing sub-regional DRR strategies/policies, programmes and mechanisms, including staffing DRR units

## 1.5 Diversity of institutional homes for DRR units at national and sub-regional levels

*National level:* location of the national disaster management authority within the administrative structure of government

- Office of the President/Prime Minister
- Statutory establishments or departmental agencies under ministries
  - the most common: interior/home affairs – DRR as issue of national security
  - defence
  - social affairs
  - local government
  - agriculture and food security
- Autonomous statutory bodies
- Civil protection department

**Gabon: only country with ministry created specifically and exclusively for DRR.**

*Sub-regional level:*

- ECOWAS: Humanitarian and social affairs
- ECCAS: Economic sphere
- SADC: Political and defence affairs

## 2. Challenges

### 2.1 Development of institutional mechanisms, instruments, processes

- Developing comprehensive policy frameworks that establish an integrated and multi sectoral approach to addressing risks from multiple hazards
- Transforming/orienting civil protection Acts into disaster reduction legislation
- Making DRM plans follow formats/ structures of conventional management plans: objectives, strategic focus, resources, activities, responsibilities, timeframe, plan risks, and, monitoring and evaluation
- Ensuring national platforms are
  - multi-sectoral and inter-disciplinary
  - providing policy guidance for national disaster risk reduction.
  - actively and effectively coordinating DRM actions at all levels of the national territory

## 2.2 Improving effectiveness and efficiency of institutional mechanisms

### 2.2.1 Cognition and conviction

- Knowledge/understanding of DRR: by policy makers, planners, expenditure managers, legislators, educationists, private sector, civil society

### 2.2.2 Capacity

(a) Growing human and institutional skills, competencies and capabilities

(b) Physical and financial resources

(c) Developing the community of practice

(d) Making a convincing case for investing in DRR mechanisms/programmes

- beyond the evidence of cost of disasters and value of DRR to decision-making on funding of DRR

(e) Leveraging complementary opportunities, resources and capacities

- harnessing/strengthening traditional and local resources
- integrating DRR and CRM

### 2.2.3 Governance

- Emphasizing rights, responsibilities, enforcement, accountabilities
- Recognizing the centrality, responsibility and role of the individual in reducing risk
- Re-orienting top-down institutional approach and agency-centered/implemented DM programmes:
- decentralized multi-stakeholder partnerships that balances institutional roles and capacities with those of the individual and groups

## 2.3 Regionalism

- inter-country risk information exchange
- common resource management (e.g. riverbasin/watershed management)
- cross-border pandemic control coordination
- sub-regional institutional roles/support
- development of sub-regional disaster reduction centres

### 3. Opportunities

- Expanded knowledge base with increasing accessibility
- Increasing national awareness of DRR and need to invest
- Improving regional milieu (AUC; RECs;)
- International supportive environment; including GFDRR; Track II support focus countries; EU DRR Strategy; UN system, bilaterals
- Climate change and CRM opportunities (awareness; risk knowledge; capacities and resources)