



Global Platform  
for Disaster Risk Reduction  
Third Session, Geneva, Switzerland  
8-13 May 2011

---

**Name of Event: [Side Event] Investing in Community Leadership for the Local Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action**

**Date of Event: May 11, 2011**

**Reporter: Julia Miller**

**Contact Details: [Julia.miller@huairou.org](mailto:Julia.miller@huairou.org)**

**Organizer: Community Practitioners Platform for Resilience**

## **1) Outline**

The invitation to GROOTS International and Huairou Commission to build a Community Practitioners Platform for Resilience by ISDR is a welcome indication that ISDR is seeing organized groups of poor people living and working in disaster prone communities as and agents of resilience rather than as passive beneficiaries. This decision affirms that the engagement of poor communities is crucial to the effective implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

The session gave the background and overview of the Platform and speakers gave concrete examples of the value added of the Platform. Participants highlighted that although there are notable exceptions, political will and commitment to supporting collaborative, community based resilience initiatives is uneven and often weak; and that protecting & promoting sustainable livelihoods is central to facilitating resilience and reducing vulnerability in poor disaster prone communities but it is a sorely neglected element of DRR and disaster response.

*Disaster and disaster Risk are opportunities to empower affected communities & a chance to set up structures for citizen participation & partnerships with government authorities*

Maite Rodriguez on behalf of CEPREDENAC, a regional disaster management body for Central America, discussed the benefits of pro-poor partnerships under the CPP. CEPREDENAC, which was honored at the Sasagawa Award Ceremony, has formally recognized grassroots women as experts and information holders. They have invited grassroots women's organizations from Nicaragua, Guatemala and Honduras to high-level assessments of Mitch Plus 10, invited them regional planning meetings, and provided links for each group to their national ministries.

*Wealth of evidence from around the world that grassroots women in poor communities organize & lead across relief, recovery and risk reduction.*

Josephine Castillo, a grassroots leader from the Philippines, demonstrated the work her organization (DAMPA) has been able to do under the Platform through the community resilience fund. DAMPA catalyzed a series of negotiations with authorities after they conducted 28 meetings with over 3000 community representatives across three communities and confirmed that access to clean and safe drinking water was a priority. To reduce costs, women leaders organized themselves as a water cooperative to pay for water connections in the neighborhoods. Now all 2000 families in the community are receiving clean water.

Relinda Sosa, a grassroots leader from CONOMOVIDI, which is a national network of community kitchens across Peru, demonstrated that organized groups of grassroots women can go to scale, and discussed the partnerships they have built with national ministries and regional disaster management agencies (INDECI and CAPRADE—both of whom attended the session,) that recognize and resource their local actions (risk mapping, water and sanitation, strengthening embankments, livelihoods etc.)

Prema Goapalan spoke from the Indian context and discussed the way the government has shifted from response to disaster risk reduction using the untapped potential of women's self help groups (which include 50 million women.) Through the Community Resilience Fund, a mechanism of the CPP, India's National Disaster Management Agency and the National Alliance on Disaster Risk Reduction formally acknowledged for the first time women as equal stakeholders and formal actors in building resilience at the community level.

## **2) Key messages, outcomes, recommendations**

*New Approaches Linking Poverty Eradication, Development & Community Empowerment as Central to Resilience through the Community Practitioner's Platform*

The Community Practitioner's Platform recommendations include:

- Incentivizing formal partner of local and national governments with local community based organizations to plan, implement and monitor policies and programs for climate and disaster resilient development.
- Ensuring that representatives of community based organizations and networks are invited to participate in policy making and decision making bodies at local, provincial, national, regional and global levels to influence priorities for resilience policies, plans and programs in the emergency response, development and financial institutions.

- Calling for UN ISDR system to launch a 5 year global campaign to “Build Resilient Communities” in partnership with the Community Practitioner’s Platform to elevate, scale up and strengthen community led action for resilience at global, regional, national, provincial and local levels.
- Establishing a Community Resilience Fund corpus with mutually agreed upon modalities for fundraising, allocation and replenishment of such funds which will be utilized for strengthening and scaling up community resilience by supporting grassroots women’s organizations, community based organizations and civil society organizations.
- Ensuring that at least 10% of budgets for disaster response, recovery and risk reduction are channeled to organized communities to demonstrate practices and priorities in collaboration with local and national governments.

### **3) Conclusions**

Session focused on the Community Practitioner’s Platform as an initiative for community empowerment, examining knowledge, skills, capacities of grassroots actors to take the lead in disaster risk reduction and response and the development, political and financial/aid arrangements (such as the Community Resilience Fund) that are needed to bring a pro-poor participatory local approach to the center. There is a wealth of evidence from members of the Platform that grassroots women in poor communities organize & lead across relief, recovery and risk reduction. There is a need for governments to go further, to facilitate, formalize, and scale up community involvement and turn communities’ practical knowledge into formal roles and responsibilities. Participants were invited to join the Platform by getting in touch with Suranjana Gupta (suranjanagroofs@aol.com).

### **4) Attachments**

The objective of the CPP is to facilitate grassroots, community groups – vulnerable to natural disasters, CC, and resulting deepening poverty and degradation – to demonstrate, teach and build alliances with governments and development institutions, take strategic policy and program action to promote pro-poor, resilient development by:

- Financing community driven pro-poor resilience
- Advocacy and partnering – community-based organizations and local/national government

- Networking – sharing, transferring, aggregating good practice, lessons – for engaging and scaling up community driven resilience processes.