



Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction Fourth Session - Invest Today for a Safer Tomorrow

Geneva, Switzerland, 19-23 May 2013

Note: This document will be updated as more information becomes available on the agenda and programme.

Briefing and guidance note for session organisers and speakers

Background

The Fourth Session of the Global Platform for Disaster risk Reduction aims to continue the momentum of the prior Global Platform meetings, into a durable and sustained effort from all actors (governments, NGOs and civil society, international agencies and organisations, academic and technical institutions, and the private sector) to take shared responsibility in reducing risks and reinforcing resilience in our communities. The Fourth Session will also be an opportunity to progress and consult on the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA).

The Fourth Session of the Global Platform will be held in Geneva at the International Conference Centre from Sunday 19 May to Thursday 23 May 2013. Sunday 19 May will be reserved for a preparation day. Monday 20 May will be a day for innovative dialogue. The official agenda will be from Tuesday 21 to Thursday 23 May.

The main events will include:

- Opening and closing sessions
- Official plenary statements
- Informal plenary discussions on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction
- A targeted set of featured and side events
- A market place
- An Ignite Stage

Key outcomes to achieve during the Fourth Session

- A stronger and more sustainable disaster risk reduction and resilience movement world-wide that leads to increased responsibility for reinforcing resilience to disasters.
- A dynamic and trend-setting forum for decision makers, partners, experts and practitioners to announce initiatives, launch products, share information, promote campaigns, and provide evidence around disaster risk reduction.
- Directions and new alliances for the development and use of new tools and methodologies aimed at understanding and applying the economics and investment in disaster risk reduction; building resilience in communities; and, climate change adaptation.



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- A forum to discuss progress and consult over a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction (post-HFA), including on issues raised in consultations.
- Events that follow-up and progress on the 2011 Global Platform (e.g. update on disaster loss in schools and hospitals, accounting for disaster losses, the status of National Platforms, and the Children's Charter for Disaster Risk Reduction).
- Priorities and directions reflected in the outcome document - the Chair's Summary.

Sessions

On the basis of the successful experience in organising the last Global Platform in 2011, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) is soliciting the contribution of partners to substantially prepare segments of the Fourth Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (19-23 May 2013) that will take place at the International Conference Centre in Geneva (CICG).

For all prior sessions of the Global Platform (in 2007, 2009 and 2011), partners have played a very important role in helping to organise conference segments and workshops. Given the positive experience and the impact of a fully participatory approach, we are seeking to replicate the approach for this Fourth Session of the Global Platform in 2013.

This briefing and guidance note provides advice to partners and member agencies on what is expected in preparing and organising a session at the Global Platform.

The Global Platform programme

The Global Platform programme becomes available in early 2013. In order to ensure space in the programme, we request partner organisations to indicate with sufficient anticipation what session(s) (featured events, segments, workshops, meetings and discussions) they would like to help organise.

At this stage we are planning:

- A high-level event.
- Official plenary statements of delegates.
- Several (three) plenary type sessions focused on the main topics of the Global Platform.
- Interactive (or informal) dialogue sessions on the main topics of the Global Platform.
- Featured events (to be confirmed) related to the themes of children; the role of the private sector in disaster risk reduction; the Post-HFA (post-2015 DRR framework); gaps of HFA and what to do to fill them; how to increase resilience; increase of practical political commitment; the role of science to help guide an ongoing dialogue on linking risk assessment, disaster risk reduction methodologies, and new technological developments.



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- Sessions for parliamentarians, mayors and regional groups.
- Meetings of national and regional platforms for disaster risk reduction.
- Events, releases and promotional activities, including the launch of the Global Assessment Report for Disaster Reduction (GAR), the Sasakawa Award ceremony, and promotion of the 'Making Cities Resilient' Campaign.
- Discussion on the follow-up of the Chair's Summary of the Third Global Platform.
- Ignite stage (space for around 100 short -15 minute- presentations at a highly visible public area of the conference centre), market stalls (30), open meeting space for discussion and a social media component.

Roles and responsibilities of session organisers

Partners are encouraged to come forward to volunteer for the substantive organisation of a session. In case several partners are interested, they are welcome to jointly organise the event. Session organisers take the responsibility to plan, prepare, implement and follow up for their particular session. In order to make sure the session is up to the highest standards, session organisers should adhere to the following activities and principles while closely collaborate with UNISDR, which provides the necessary logistical, administrative and substantive advice.

Activities expected from session organisers:

- *Identify speakers and participants* at the appropriate level depending on the type of segment and aligned to the envisaged outcome.
- *Prepare a concise background paper* to introduce the topic of session to participants (see the related practical guidance section below).
- *Prepare a short abstract of no more than 250 words* on the basis of the background paper, so that participants and other interested parties can have a quick peek at the content of the session. This abstract may also be used for the official programme to be disseminated before the Global Platform.
- *Provide a short written personal bio (max 150 words)* of the session speakers so that this information can be used where appropriate.
- *Identify examples* that help to illustrate disaster risk reduction principles, practices or accomplishments in implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action's key activities and/or other presentations of initiatives to pinpoint key aspects related to the particular theme of the session workshop. Case studies should have the potential to be easily replicated. Although successful examples are frequently preferred, sometimes feedback about failures can be equally instructive and serve learning purposes.
- *Liaise with related focal points and speakers and substantially and coordinate the preparation for their presentation* at the session. This usually will also involve a review of related PowerPoint presentations and provide overall guidance to harmonize the different presentations to ensure the coherence and good flow of the session.
- *Lead discussions and manage* the implementation of the session.



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- *Compile a summary of discussions and main outcomes or recommendations of the session.* These will inform the Chair's Summary of the Global Platform. They will also be included in a publication on the proceedings of the meeting.

Other important aspects to take into account in organising a session:

- Work in organising the session is on a *pro bono basis* to organise and implement the session, as the budget for the Global Platform comes from voluntary funding. Provision is being made to cover travel expenses from a limited number of participants from least developed countries included in official country delegations.
- Be available to *participate in preparatory meetings* of session organisers convened by UNISDR. This may include virtual (via tele-conference or online) meetings, but principally refers to one or more preparatory meetings during the conference before the session takes place.

Principles to follow when organising a session workshop:

- Where feasible, if case studies are used these should be drawn from a *maximum of geographical regions*, while focusing on good quality.
- Examples will mainly illustrate *new developments* since the last meeting of the Global Platform in 2011.
- Session organisers will endeavour to identify first examples from countries, whose *experiences were not presented in a similar session workshop* during the 2011 Global Platform.
- Case studies should be *linked to existing ISDR system mechanisms* at the regional or national level, i.e. stakeholder networks and platforms, HFA focal point institutions, national or regional Platforms. The link to the HFA will be highlighted in the presentations.
- Case study *presentations* should be *made by national or regional representatives* (with the exception of introductory remarks highlighting major global and regional developments in the subject area, which may be introduced by the organising agency).
- Where possible, initiatives will be introduced with that show *involvement of the official HFA focal points* and, where relevant and applicable, other *national platform members* representing NGOs, universities, private sector, etc. Session workshop organisers will seek to showcase examples, which *highlight productive collaboration among multiple stakeholders*.
- Session organisers endeavour to promote *gender balance*.

Practical guidance for session organisers

Background paper

In order to inform participants on the theme, scope and objectives of the session, a concise background paper will be prepared by the session organisers. This applies for all types of sessions (featured events, plenaries, informal plenaries, side events). For all sessions, the background papers will have a similar layout and format. The background paper should follow the proposed



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outline and not exceed three pages (single spaced, font size 12, Times New Roman or equivalent). In due course, the background paper will be placed on the global platform website and shared with the Chairs, speakers/panelists and other participants at the session.

As listed above, a short abstract of no more than 250 words should be made available by the session organiser, so that participants and other interested parties can have a quick overview of the content of the session. This abstract may also be used for the official programme to be disseminated before the Global Platform.

The deadline for submitting a first draft of a short, one page concept note of the session to UNISDR is *15 December 2012*.

The deadline for submitting the background paper to the Secretariat is *1 February 2013* to allow for sufficient time for dissemination to participants. The session abstract should be submitted at the same time as the background paper

Please send to Neil McFarlane (mcfarlane2@un.org) and Christel Rose (rosec@un.org).

Proposed outline of the background papers

1. *Introduction*

- How is the session linked to the Hyogo Framework for Action and disaster risk reduction?
- How is the Session linked to the lead theme and to the main topics of the Global Platform 2013?
- What are the main objectives of these discussions? We suggest two or three as a maximum.
- What concrete outcome of the Session is expected?

2. *Status of Progress*

- What is the current status and progress in your working group topic?
- What are the critical factors and lessons learned related to this topic?

3. *Key points for discussion*

Discussion points and/ or recommendations to trigger debate by the panel members and the audience:

- What are the outstanding issues and challenges to advance the topic of your working group?
- Is any follow-up suggested? If so, what and how can that be accomplished?
- What should the Global Platform consider as crucial activities and priorities for the next two years



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4. Additional information (where appropriate)

- What tools and guidance notes are available for other partners related to the topic?
- Which documents, reviews, case studies, websites, etc. can be considered useful for partners to learn more about the subject and progress future action
- Please provide web links if this helps the discussion.

A special note on featured events

The activities and responsibilities pointed out above also apply to featured events, some of which may be modelled after a roundtable-style of setting. As featured events are formal settings of the Fourth Session of the Global Platform, we will provide additional guidance in order to make it easier for organisers to plan. Featured events examine one specific topic in depth, related to the main focus of the Global Platform. The purpose of the featured event's discussions is to contribute with significant insights, while introducing provocative and innovative suggestions on how to ensure effective disaster risk reduction strategies and their implementation in a particular thematic area.

The organisation of a featured event, including those that are modelled on a roundtable-type of setting, from the substantive through the logistical arrangements is the joint responsibility of partner agencies and UNISDR. Individual focal points within UNISDR are assigned and will maintain contact with you directly to guide the featured event formulation and assist in identifying speakers. We also suggest that you take into consideration the following aspects for effective planning:

The objective of a featured event

The outcome report of the featured event will be integrated into the Chair's summary of the Global Platform. In due course, a format for the short report will be shared. As in other types of sessions, featured event organisers are encouraged to convene a preparatory meeting or telephone conferences with panelists and key stakeholders (or in the case of VIP's, with their technical staff) in advance of the Global Platform to stimulate greater ownership of the outcomes.

Abstract

For featured events the same deadlines apply as mentioned above. The abstract will be included in the printed Global Platform programme as well as on line. It is best to consider a brief, but informative and attractive title. Please submit abstract directly to your UNISDR focal point in copy to Christel Rose (rosec@un.org). In addition to the 250 word abstract, please indicate the name of the organising partners. You may also choose to provide a hyperlink to one or more documents as recommended reading.



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Invited speakers

The UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), in consultation with governments is working to identify senior representatives to play an active role in thematic and plenary discussions. Based on the strategic aims of each featured event, organisers are encouraged to identify additional speakers. SRSG Margareta Wahlstrom is available to sign additional invitations as needed.

Please note that, given the limited number of speaking slots, session organisers are reminded that speakers may only speak in **one** session.

Finally, organisers of featured events are encouraged to include a good balance of speakers from stakeholder groups (Government sectors, NGO's, private sector and community leaders). UN organisations, as customary, are encouraged to give visibility to government counterparts. In all sessions, organisers are especially encouraged to reflect gender considerations in the issues addressed and in the speakers selected.

Format of the featured events

To make it easier for the participants to take part in the discussion, organisers are encouraged to make background information available to the public on the Global Platform page and agenda. Ideally, a new reader should be able to read the information within a few minutes and be able to take part in the discussion. To reach this aim, make that all background information is clear, structured, concise, and attractive. Please submit the following to your UNISDR focal point no later than 1 March 2013.

- A one-sided 250-word abstract of the subject of the featured event, using paper size A4.
- **Title:** Short and informative.
- **Chair and discussants:** Each featured event has a Chair and discussants (up to 6) with the precise number to be determined by the incumbent session organisers.
- **Action statement and desired outcome:** The issues that you want to present to your audience. Depending on the issues raised, certain illustrations or numbers might be added to clarify the issues at hand.
- **Featured event questions to be addressed:** Please indicate the methodology you wish to use. One methodology is to prepare the questions in advance and provide them to the participants. If this is the chosen methodology, identify the key topics the featured event is to address. Then develop thought-provoking, open-ended questions to get at and discuss the issues surrounding these topics. Another methodology is to have the audience present questions to the featured event discussants for spontaneous response. Both methodologies can even be used simultaneously, assigning time to each methodology segment accordingly.



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Planning and preparation of materials

- Featured events are intended to be interactive, so power point presentations by discussants are discouraged. Each room will have an LCD projector and screen in case an introductory visual aid is required.
- The date and time will be allocated in the program in due course.
- The exact room allocation will be communicated to you in April 2013.