



International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Building a “Local Government Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction”

Consultative Meeting

Meeting Report

Barcelona, 22-23 May 2008



United Nations

Background

Local-level implementation of the “Hyogo Framework for Action” remains one of the major challenges to achieve, requiring the active participation and involvement of local government actors both in urban and rural contexts. In view of the above, the UNDP Special Unit for South-South Cooperation (UNDP/SU-SSC) and the UN/ISDR secretariat have forged a strategic partnership to build a “Local Government Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction” (LGA/DRR).

In order to initiate the process, the UN/ISDR secretariat and its partners convened a preliminary “Consultative Meeting” in Barcelona, Spain on 22-23 May 2008. The meeting was co-organized by the UN/ISDR secretariat, UNDP/SU-SSC, and the Advisory Council for Sustainable Development of the Government of Catalonia. It was attended by some 15 representatives of local and regional authorities from Africa, Asia, Europe and the United States, as well as a few UN agencies and civil society organisations (for a full list of participants see Annex III).

Goal and Objectives

The goal of this meeting was to stimulate initial discussions on several issues related to the development of the LGA/DRR, and to do a reality-check with local and regional authorities to better understand their capacities, needs and expectations vis-à-vis disaster risk reduction.

Issues such as the potential scope and added value of the Alliance, its objectives, activities and governance mechanism were among the items proposed in the agenda. The main content questions to be addressed during the meeting had been summarized as follows:

- Why do we need a “Local Government Alliance for DRR”?
- What should be the purpose and added value of the Alliance?
- What should be its objectives and activities?
- What should be the incentives for participation and involvement?
- What should be its structure and governance?
- What mechanisms should be developed to sustain the “Alliance” in the medium and long term?

Major Outcomes

Based on the draft Concept Note prepared by the UN/ISDR secretariat in consultation with UNDP/SU-SSC, the meeting stimulated a constructive debate around a number of issues related to the development of the Alliance. Substantive comments and observations on the LGA/DRR concept were put forward, and initial commitment to the Alliance reached (a summary of working group discussions and roundtable evaluation is provided in Annexes I and II). Next steps and follow-up actions were also discussed and agreed upon, in the lead-up to the next session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP/DRR) in June 2009.

In particular, participants have endorsed the concept of the Local Government Alliance and expressed their keen interest in supporting the development of such a global mechanism in their own capacity. The meeting also provided substantive inputs to the draft Terms of Reference for the LGA/DRR (a copy of which will be circulated in due course), and identified some specific activities to be undertaken by the group in the initial phase:

1. To circulate, review and provide further inputs to the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Alliance.
2. To set up a small “Advisory Group” to guide the development of the LGA/DRR in the coming months.
3. To prepare a compilation of good practices and lessons learned by local and regional authorities in DRR.

By initially focusing on these activities, the Alliance will demonstrate/reinforce its capacity to work towards common objectives, while growing stronger and getting increased external support. This approach will allow the “Advisory Group” to gradually build the ownership of a broader range of representatives from local and regional authorities, with support from the UN/ISDR secretariat.

UN/ISDR secretariat Support

All of the above activities will be facilitated by the UN/ISDR secretariat through a dedicated focal point for local and regional authorities. In addition to facilitating the above-mentioned activities, the UN/ISDR secretariat will support the Alliance by the following means:

- Setting up a mailing list to facilitate online exchange and discussions among local and regional authorities;
- Facilitating access to other online services and resources provided through PreventionWeb – <http://www.preventionweb.net>;
- Facilitating discussion and exchange through other means, such as teleconferences, and so forth;
- Supporting the needs of the “Advisory Group” within its own capacity; and
- Facilitating the organization of follow up meetings and events leading up to the next session of the GP/DRR.

Tentative Timeframe

A tentative timeframe to follow up on the Consultative Meeting is provided below. The table reflects the activities to be undertaken by the group as outlined in the previous sections. At this stage, it is hoped that by the time of the GP/DRR session in June 2009, the LGA/DRR will be ready for its official launch.

1. Finalise Draft ToR for the Local Government Alliance for DRR	
Activity	Deadline
1.1 Prepare and circulate draft ToR for the Local Government Alliance for DRR	<i>5 Sep 2008</i>
1.2 Collect inputs/comments on draft ToR	<i>3 Oct 2008</i>
1.3 Finalise draft ToR based on inputs/comments received	<i>24 Oct 2008</i>
1.4 Reach agreement on the second draft and go through a final round of comments/consultation	<i>WUF IV, 3-6 November 2008</i>

2. Set up small “Advisory Group” to support the development of the LGA/DRR	
Activity	Deadline
2.1 Prepare draft ToR to define roles and responsibilities of the “Advisory Group”	<i>5 Sep 2008</i>
2.2 Collect inputs/comments on draft ToR	<i>3 Oct 2008</i>
2.3 Finalise draft ToR based on inputs/comments received	<i>24 Oct 2008</i>
2.4 Reach agreement on “Advisory Group” membership and final ToR	<i>WUF IV, 3-6 November 2008</i>

3. Compilation of “Good Practices and Lessons Learned” by Local and Regional Authorities in DRR	
Activity	Deadline
3.1 Prepare draft guidelines and template for collection of good practices	<i>5 Sep 2008</i>
3.2 Collect inputs/comments on draft template and guidelines	<i>3 Oct 2008</i>
3.3 Send out official “Call for Contributions” to local and regional authorities (deadline to be discussed)	<i>3-6 Nov 2008</i>
3.4 Collect, review and edit all submissions	<i>Jan – Apr 2009</i>
3.5 Finalize and design publication	<i>May 2009</i>
3.6 Print and disseminate publication	<i>May – Jun 2009</i>

Annex I

Summary of Working Group Discussions

1. Do we need a Local Government Alliance for DRR?

Overwhelmingly yes, we need it.

2. Why do we need a Local Government Alliance for DRR?

- The UN and other International Organisations should hear the voice of local and regional authorities;
- Although increasingly influential, local and regional authorities are still struggling to be heard at the international level;
- The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 is very strong in calling for building disaster resilient communities;
- Local governments are largely involved in DRR, preparedness and emergency response, they are the first line of defence and have the biggest stake in making communities resilient;
- Local and regional authorities are a key actor in DRR since they are “victims”, “survivors”, “clients”, and “partner” at the same time.

3. What would be the purpose, objectives and added value of such an Alliance?

- The Alliance could provide an opportunity for local governments to be heard at the international level;
- It could facilitate the participation of local and regional authorities in international conferences and fora to share information, experiences, good practices and common concerns;
- Would help raising awareness and advocating local governments’ needs at the highest level through a bottom-up approach;
- Mainstreaming of DRR issues can be more appropriate when adapted to local levels (as understood by local officials, not interpreted by national leaders);
- The Alliance can facilitate replication and scaling up of good practices in different contexts;
- Can provide an opportunity for using international meetings to endorse/promote DRR policy recommendations suited to local governments needs;
- Global meetings could serve as a venue for bilateral negotiations and dialogues with central government authorities;
- Local governments can better access existing information, knowledge and resources on DRR;
- Opportunities for matching of resources: presentation of local governments needs on the one hand, and global resources and capacity on the other hand;
- The Alliance can become a positive pressure group and serve as a motivating factor for local governments;
- Possibility of having large and better resourced cities supporting smaller cities, developing twinning programs and so forth;
- The Alliance can facilitate South-South cooperation on DRR: region to region, hemisphere to hemisphere, and so forth;
- The Alliance could provide an opportunity for the North to learn from Southern good practices, as experienced by some of the participants in the meeting.

Annex II

Roundtable Evaluation

Mr. Richard Davies – Leeds City Council, United Kingdom

This meeting has been very useful. It is just the beginning of a process. I appreciate the benefits of networking and will inform my colleagues back home of the good practices I have learned during these days from the South.

Ms. Jolanda Trijselaar – Risk and Crisis Management Rotterdam-Rijnmond, Netherlands

It has been a very useful meeting. This Alliance is needed to facilitate sharing of information and experiences, as we have already done here in Barcelona. We should all work together to improve our understanding and facilitate the implementation of DRR.

Mr. Sam Ebukalin – Bukedea Local Government, Uganda

There is no such a thing as a DRR network for local governments in Africa. This exercise has been very helpful and there is a lot of potential for this initiative.

Ms. Pamela L'Heureux – Emergency Management Agency (EMA), United States

A very useful meeting for sharing knowledge and information. I have learned a lot.

Mr. Stephen Muller – Overstrand Municipality, South Africa

I learned a lot on the subject, and will be an ambassador for DRR when I go back home.

Ms. Blanca Payas (and Ms. Nuria Gasulla) – Civil Protection Office, Catalonia, Spain

From a Civil Protection's perspective, this meeting has been extremely useful. We look forward to following up with the rest of the group on the outcomes of this meeting.

Mr. Nestor Alphonse – Androhibe Antsahadinta, Madagascar

A very valuable meeting.

Mr. Wook Kim – Incheon Metropolitan City, South Korea

Although I am not directly involved in DRR activities myself, I really enjoyed this meeting. Participation in meetings like this is a good opportunity to learn from existing good practices and colleagues. I am looking forward to our forthcoming meeting on DRR in Incheon, South-Korea, next year.

Ms. Alice Voza – ILO/Delnet, Italy

This has been a very good experience. UN/ISDR organised an ambitious meeting, with a few, practical participants, who are motivated to work together. Our task now is to connect with other people, be realistic about what we can achieve, and come up with one or two concrete objectives for the Alliance.

Ms. Feng Min Kan – UN/ISDR, Switzerland

I have really learned a lot from the work of local and regional authorities during these two days, and would like to thank all participants for sharing their rich experience and knowledge on DRR. Your active participation has made this meeting a success. Your commitment to

DRR is what we need. UN/ISDR is here to provide services but also an opportunity to learn. Very importantly, we need to thank the Government of Catalonia for supporting this meeting. Blanca has also been a key person in making this meeting possible. Not only she cares about the subject, but has also served as a bridge between UN/ISDR and the Government of Catalonia.

Ms. Zenaida Willison – Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, UNDP, Thailand

I would like to thank all the UN organisations present, particularly UN/ISDR for initiating this consultation and for inviting the UNDP Special Unit for South-South Cooperation to be part of the organizers. Special thanks also go to the active participation of the representatives of selected local government units and support organizations like ProVention Consortium. The voices of local government authorities and units from the South have been heard by representatives from the North, while the equally rich experiences shared by the North are well appreciated by those from the South. A truly enriching South-South and South-North-South learning! The next step will now be to gather a broader range of stakeholders and discuss with them their possible involvement in the activities of the Alliance.

Mr. Joan Manuel Vilaplana – University of Barcelona, Spain

I would like to express my appreciation for being part of this meeting. The type of discussion that took place here is quite different from the scientific debate I am used to. I have really learned a lot. In general, I am in agreement with the previous comments, especially with regards to sharing of experiences and knowledge transfer. I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of the UN/ISDR staff in Geneva and of Blanca in making this meeting a success. After working with me for the University of Barcelona, Blanca will now start working with the Catalan Civil Protection, which I believe will be very valuable for the work of this group.

Mr. Santosh Kumar – National Institute of Disaster Management, India

Face to face discussions and hearing presentation are always better than just reading. There are many challenges ahead but meetings like this can serve as a starting point. This platform has already allowed us to make new friends and meet colleagues whom we did not know before. The wisdom flows not only from global to local, but also from local to global. Some valuable local solutions have been presented in this forum, which should be replicated and disseminated more widely. Finally, I would like to thank you for giving me this opportunity to share my experience, and to thank the UN/ISDR secretariat for its valuable support.

Mr. Alain Retiere – UNOSAT, Switzerland

My experience shows that the Hyogo Framework for Action is not only relevant to national governments, but most importantly to local and regional authorities. I would like to congratulate colleagues from UN/ISDR for organising this meeting. I am showing support to this initiative and hope that concrete actions will be taken to follow up on this consultation. This meeting provided clear evidence that DRR issues are one area in which South-South and North-South-North cooperation can take place.

Mr. Ian O'Donnell – ProVention Consortium, Switzerland

I appreciated the opportunity to learn from the meeting participants. This meeting was helpful and will provide a venue for more cooperation. Hopefully, we can pull all of our efforts together and carry forward the objectives of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

Mr. Cedric Daep – Albay Public Safety & Emergency Management Office, Philippines

To summarize my thinking, building the Local Government Alliance has no boundaries.

Mr. Michele Cocchiglia – UN/ISDR secretariat, Switzerland

I would like to thank all participants for their contribution to this meeting. I am looking forward to working with you all in making this Alliance a success. I can feel there is a lot of energy in the room. Let us not lose the momentum and move this initiative forward.

Annex III

List of Participants

Name	Organisation	Email	City	Country
Mr. Cedric Daep	Head, Albay Public Safety & Emergency Management Office, Provincial Disaster Operation Center, Philippines	cedricdaep@yahoo.com	Legazpi City	Philippines
Mr. Wook Kim	Advisor for International Relations, Incheon Metropolitan City, Korea	wkim78@mofat.go.kr	Incheon	Korea
Mr. Khang Byung Jin	International Cooperation Division - UN Relations Team, Incheon Metropolitan City, Korea	jbkhang@incheon.go.kr	Incheon	Korea
Mr. Santosh Kumar	Head of Policy, Planning, Community & Cross Cutting Issues Division, National Institute of Disaster Management, Ministry of Home Affairs, India	profsantosh@gmail.com	New Dehli	India
Ms. Rajlaxmi Bhosale	Mayor, Pune Municipal Corporation, Maharashtra, India	mayorpune@vsnl.net	Pune	India
Ms. Pamela L'Heureux	Assistant County Director, Emergency Management Agency, York County, Maine, USA	pampaul@sacoriver.net	York County	United States
Mr. Stephen Muller	Director, Infrastructure and Planning for the Overstrand Municipality, Western Cape Province, South Africa	smuller@overstrand.gov.za	Cape Town	South Africa
Mr. Nestor Alphonse	Mayor of Androhibe Antsahadinta, Madagascar	maire-antsahadinta@hotmail.fr	Androhibe Antsahadinta	Madagascar

Mr. Sam Ebukali	Chairman of Bukedea Local Government, Uganda	lifteso@yahoo.com	Bukedea District	Uganda
Ms. Jolanda Trijselaar	Director, Risk and Crisis Management Rotterdam-Rijnmond, Netherlands	j.trijselaar@veiligheidsregio-rr.nl	Rotterdam	Netherlands
Mr. Richard Davies	Head of Risk and Emergency Planning, Audit and Risk Division, Leeds City Council, UK	richard.davies@leeds.gov.uk	Leeds	United Kingdom
Ms. Nuria Gasulla	Deputy Director, Civil Protection Office, Government of Catalonia, Spain	ngasulla@gencat.cat	Barcelona	Spain
Mr. Joan Manuel Vilaplana	Director - RiskNat, Departament de Geodinàmica i Geofísica, Facultat de Geologia, Universitat de Barcelona, Spain	nue.vilaplana@ub.edu	Barcelona	Spain
Ms. Blanca Payàs	RiskNat, Departament de Geodinàmica i Geofísica, Facultat de Geologia, Universitat de Barcelona, Spain	blancapayas@gmail.com	Barcelona	Spain
Mr. Christophe Nuttall	Director, Hub for Innovative Partnerships, UNDP Geneva	christophe.nuttall@undp.org	Geneva	Switzerland
Mr. Alain Retière	Managing Director, UNOSAT	Alain.retiere@unosat.org	Geneva	Switzerland
Ms. Zenaida Willison	South-South Disaster Risk Reduction Advisor, UNDP/SU-SSC	zenaida.willison@undp.org	Bangkok	Thailand
Ms. Alice Voza	ILO/Delnet, Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Local Development	alice.vozza@delnetitcilo.net	Turin	Italy
Mr. Ian O'Donnell	Senior Officer, ProVention Consortium	ian.O'Donnell@ifrc.org	Geneva	Switzerland
Mr. Salvano Briceno	Director, UN/ISDR secretariat	briceno@un.org	Geneva	Switzerland
Ms. Feng Min Kan	Senior Coordinator, UN/ISDR secretariat	kanf@un.org	Geneva	Switzerland
Mr. Michele Cocchiglia	Programme Officer, UN/ISDR secretariat	cocchiglia@un.org	Geneva	Switzerland