

People-Centred Governance

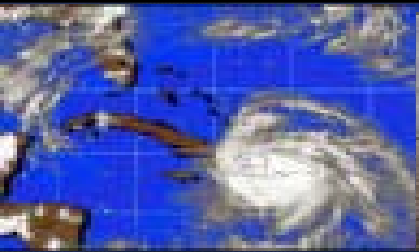
Reducing Risk for People who are Poor and Excluded

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WCDR Kobe January 2005**



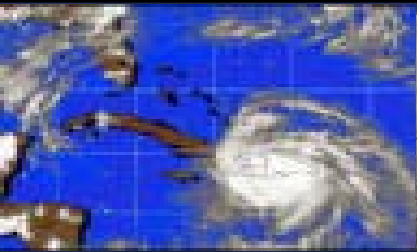
Governance is key

- Disaster risks are highest for poor people
- Invisibility, discrimination, denial of human rights is behind poverty
- The failure of governance that results in poverty is mirrored in disaster risk reduction and response



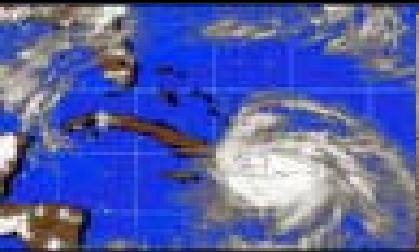
People-Centred Governance challenges conventional 'Good' Governance

- 'Good' Governance agenda has been captured by market and capital friendly governance advocates
- People-Centred Governance has a bias and responsiveness to the poor and marginalised
- A decent floor of social protection, insurance and income



Governance Failures Kill

- The 'good governance' of structural adjustment in Malawi and Honduras left people more vulnerable to disaster
- Problems compounded by weak, unaccountable and corrupt states
- Poor excluded from risk reduction measures, lose social protection, benefits captured by powerful and promises broken



8 Policies to Promote People-Centred Governance

1. Participation
2. Accountability
3. Decentralisation
4. Freedom of, and access to information
5. Legally enforceable obligations
6. Access to justice
7. National cooperation and coordination
8. International cooperation and coordination



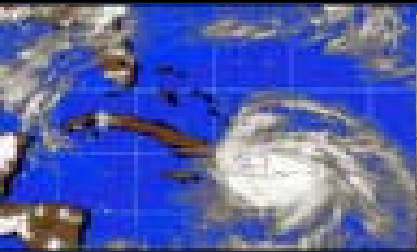
Participation

- Migrant workers, ethnic minorities, lower castes, people with disability, women, girls, children, elderly, are examples of groups that unfailingly suffer the most in disasters
- Participation ensures that development policies and programmes reduce risk, and that risk reduction policies addresses the priorities of those most at risk



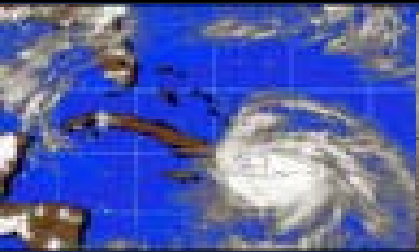
Accountability

- Governments are the ultimate duty holders for human rights and protection of citizens
- Threatened or affected people need to be able to hold decision-makers to account
- No single mechanism delivers accountability
- All actors involved in disaster reduction are responsible for strengthening accountability



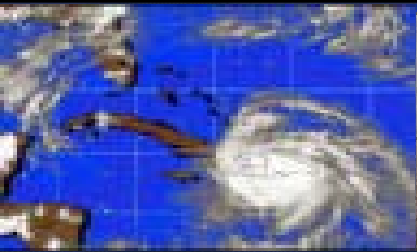
Decentralisation

- Accountability mechanisms can be at a level removed from the lives of poor people
- Need to devolve power and decisions from centre to local
- Devolution needs to be accompanied by power sharing and legal action against discrimination and exclusion



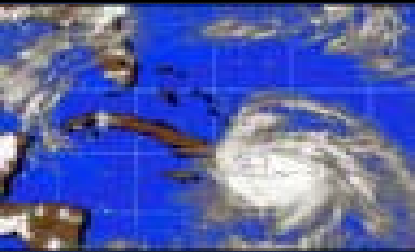
Access to Information

- A pre-requisite for participation in public decisions, for decisions to protect those you love, and to hold others to account
- But information is often withheld, placing people at risk
- People must be appropriately informed of risks, actions to take, and future changes
- The political culture must encourage debate and challenging of official claims



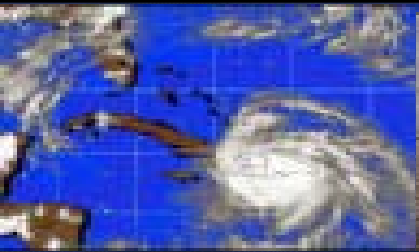
Legal obligations for disaster reduction

- The most vulnerable need to be empowered and supported to seek justice when duty holders fail in their responsibilities
- Legal obligations lead to clearer understanding and hence securing of entitlements



Access to Justice

- Laws and legal systems need to be accessible to poor people
- A new approach to safety, security and accessible justice is needed in relation to disaster risk reduction
- Legal recourse for disaster affected people saves lives



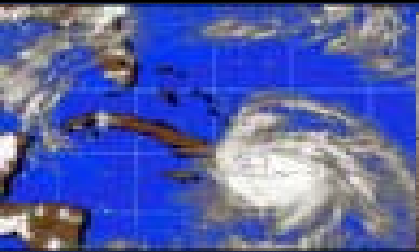
National Cooperation

- National policy incoherence, programme duplication and contradiction ends up harming the poor
- Coordination is critical, but particularly to ensure the integration of disaster risk reduction into development and economic policies – to build resilience, not increase vulnerability



International Cooperation

- Disasters don't respect national boundaries
- Countries have very different approaches to risk management which can lead to tension and conflict
- Region-wide institutions are needed to promote cooperation and arbitration in an open and transparent way



Priorities for WCED

- People-centred governance should be at the core of disaster risk reduction and for the translation of the framework for action 2005-2015
- The eight key policies for people-centred governance should be incorporated into the conference outcome

