



To whom it may concern

Sasakawa Prize.

It is a pleasure to offer this letter of recommendation in support of the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction's postulation for the 2011 Sasakawa Prize. The notions and criteria I offer are from a mainstream academic with professional experience in conceptual development and on the ground technical application of concepts and methods in the disaster risk reduction theme. I also have a prior back ground (Ph.D., teaching and research experience) in urban and regional development and development studies.

The criteria for selection of a Sasakawa laureate are clearly laid out and responded to in the Global Networks application. There can be no doubt as to the ways the efforts of this very young, but dynamic organization, contribute to the achievement of the priorities of the Hyogo Framework, the Millenium Development Goals, Urban Resilience needs and the promotion of such an important matter as disaster risk governance.

As an academic, particularly interested in conceptual development and research methodology, in the search to promote practical application of ideas and paradigms, the work of the Network is particularly praiseworthy given the ways it has actively involved so many stakeholders and achieved a very great deal of coordination, collaboration, joint reflection, discussion and acceptance of the importance of the local level for disaster risk reduction and local actors working in harmony or coordination with extra local actors. The social networking achievements of the Network can not be underestimated, having brought into play more than 600 organizations and many thousands of individuals, either as Project promoters or as informants.



Beyond the scientific product of the work undertaken and the constant improvement sought in method and process with the Views from the Frontline Project, this particular effort is highly praiseworthy due to the process it has followed, the debates it generates, the actors it touches, both rural and urban, and the realization it creates that only through collaboration and certain homogeneity of ideas and concepts will advance be achieved. As one pursues this area of enquiry and work more and more one realizes that it is in the educational and cultural aspects, in the ability to participate and inspire collective reflection and commitment to change that the essence of advance may be found. This Views from the Front Line type initiative is a major coagulator of this type of effort and advance.

Of course the approach from below is such a very important aspect to emphasise, adding a new dimension to the already wide-scale arguments for local and community based disaster risk management. The VFL Project is probably the largest single effort in the area of local level management promotion and a binder of other more localised or specific efforts. The mere job of getting this done and organised, with all the collateral support mechanisms and participation is truly admirable and a recognition of the organizational skills and commitment of the central steering group.

Beyond the central role of the VFL Project in the consolidation and articulation of the GNDR, the type of work this has promoted and the discussions it has elicited, all contribute directly or indirectly to a specific objective such as increases in urban resilience and improvements in urban governance.

Finally, overall, the current state of organic development and organization of the Network allows one to believe that it offers a permanent opportunity for articulation, coordination, coherence, amongst the multiple civil society organizations that play such an important role in DRR promotion and innovation in the world today. That in its self would be no insignificant achievement.



For the above and other reasons I am very happy to be able to offer my support and encouragement for the postulation of the Global Network for the prestigious Sasakawa prize this year, 2011.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Allan Lavell", is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

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