

PROVENTION FORUM 2009

Risk and governance: Bridging national enabling environments and local action

May 13-15, 2009, Istanbul

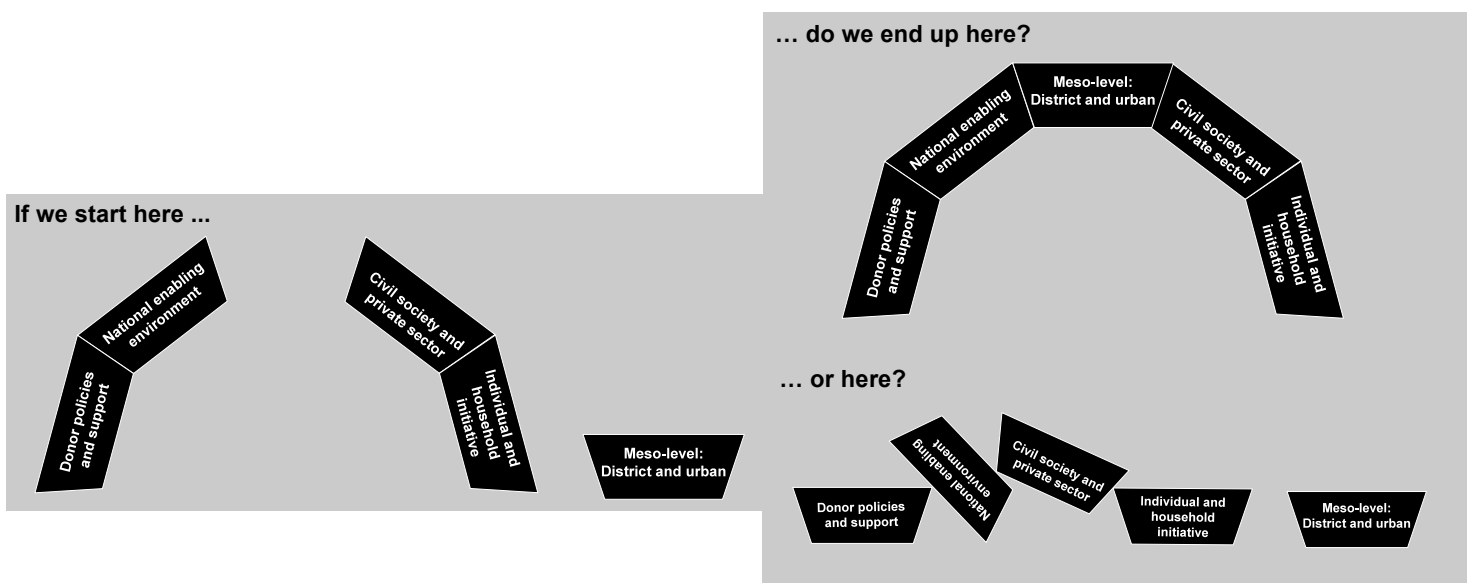
Concept note

While the disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation agendas continue to advance in many respects, significant gaps still remain in linking global initiative and local level action to produce sustainable risk reduction at the scale needed to deal with current and future levels of vulnerability.

In the last several years there have been significant developments related to global commitments for DRR and adaptation, including the adoption of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, the creation or revision of DRR policies among donor agencies and international financial institutions (IFIs), the establishment of the World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), and the adoption of the Bali Action Plan at COP-13. Governments are making important strides in adopting DRR policies, establishing national platforms as coordination bodies, and mainstreaming DRR and climate change mitigation and adaptation into development strategies.

Similarly at the community level, civil society organizations are spearheading local action for DRR and adaptation that builds on communities' own wealth of risk management capacity.

However we need to better strengthen both sides of the equation and make sure that they connect through strong district and urban planning efforts that benefit from a solid legislative enabling environment and donor support and that tap civil society and private sector initiative to provide consistency and sustainability over the long term. Otherwise each individual piece may become stronger but the overall effect can still result in more vulnerability.



ProVention's 2008 Forum in Panama focused on the challenge of translating global commitments into changes on the ground through "people-centered" disaster risk reduction. In particular, that Forum highlighted three substantial flaws in current DRR strategies:

1. the strong focus on system and institution building within the global architecture as opposed to providing support to local capacities to improve the safety and protection levels of at-risk communities.
2. the failure to involve all segments of society in multi-stakeholder, multi-role approaches to DRR.
3. the tendency to focus on physical measures aimed at protecting buildings, infrastructure and critical facilities with only limited attention to "people-centered" social vulnerability and livelihood issues.

The 2008 Forum examined how a people-centered approach to DRR can be applied more broadly as a collective responsibility of all actors in the DRR system and called for a stronger representation of civil society representatives in key decision making bodies, a corresponding shift in current resource flows, and significant investment in DRR capacity building at the local level.

The 2009 Forum to be held in Istanbul in collaboration with the World Bank and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), will explore these issues further in the broader context of risk governance. Here we are concerned with (1) how national governments are creating an enabling environment for successful risk reduction and climate change adaptation, (2) how communities can work together through local and meso-level governance processes, and (3) how inclusive processes can better connect these two levels.

Particularly with the increasing attention to climate change and the development of new mechanisms to support adaptation, countries must begin to prepare a wide variety of stakeholders – including local authorities, civil society organizations, and the private sector – to be active partners in addressing adaptation needs. This means helping stakeholders access available funding but also providing the right regulatory and enforcement environment to support the self initiative of a wide variety of stakeholders. In this way countries can strengthen their foundations for improved resilience both to current and future risks due to climate change and other threats.

The Istanbul Forum will provide an opportunity to advance advocacy and strategy among national governments and other stakeholders for two key events that will take place in 2009. The first is the UNISDR Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction in June 2009, where global progress toward the Hyogo Framework for Action will be reviewed, and which offers a critical opportunity to renew and reaffirm commitments toward increased disaster prevention and resilience at all levels. The second is the COP-15 meeting in Copenhagen at which a new post-Kyoto protocol is expected to be tabled, bringing with it a range of new financing mechanisms and programs to support countries in taking further steps toward both climate change mitigation and adaptation. The months leading up to the COP-15 meeting will provide some of the last opportunities for influencing the ongoing negotiations as well as some of the first opportunities for concrete planning to take advantage of the new post-Kyoto mechanisms.

Format

The Istanbul forum is designed to bring together governments and other key stakeholders to raise and debate these issues in an informal setting – putting a premium on innovative, creative and collaborative problem-solving to prime the pump for further joint action.

The Forum will commence on the evening of 13 May with a cocktail reception and opening remarks.



To start the dialogue with everyone's feet on the ground, the first full day of the Forum will start with a set of field visits around Istanbul to look at current issues of risk reduction and adaptation and the extent to which local communities, the municipality of Istanbul and the nation of Turkey are addressing these issues in their daily development activities.

In the afternoon of the first full day participants will use their experience from the morning field visits and from their own experience elsewhere to review recovery lessons in a town hall style plenary discussion. The session will also engage local leaders and community organizations to provide input. The goal will be to highlight lessons to carry through into the second day of the Forum and to provide guidance for a ProVention-supported Earthquake +10" study in Turkey.



The evening of the first full day of the Forum will feature a movie night to showcase films that capture both the challenges and innovative solutions that are already being developed for risk reduction and adaptation in many places throughout the world.

The second day of the Forum will be dedicated to examining critical issues in risk governance in greater detail. The day will be organized around three workshops which will challenge the participants to collectively detail key agendas to take forward to the critical international policy events planned for 2009, including the UNISDR Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, the various UNFCCC meetings and the COP-15 meeting on climate change. The three workshops will be organized around the following topics :

1. **National enabling environments** – How can policy commitments, regulatory requirements, and incentive structures best be used to guide effective risk reduction and adaptation at all levels?
2. **Supporting local platforms** – How can local initiative for risk reduction and adaptation be supported and sustained in a consistent manner and in integration with National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction and National Adaptation Programs of Action?
3. **Risk financing and DRR investment** – How can tools like insurance, national and local budgets, private sector development, and international support best be combined and applied to the financing of effective risk management?

The day will also include several sessions in plenary to compare initial views and calibrate among the workshop groups. This linked dialogue between the workshops and plenary sessions will also provide an opportunity to explore a range of related topics.

- ▶ **Advocacy** — How can different stakeholders help influence DRR policy and resource commitments?
- ▶ **Education** – What role should universities and other training and learning centers play in raising risk reduction and adaptation in the context of existing curricula?
- ▶ **Investment** – How should regulation be used to better guide private development toward effective risk reduction and adaptation?
- ▶ **Measuring and communicating progress** – How do we recognize and measure safer and resilient countries and communities when we see them?
- ▶ **Disaster-proofing critical services** – How do we ensure that infrastructure such as health facilities and schools are disaster-proof?

As mentioned above the goal is to build consensus on key points for the disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation agendas to take forward into the critical international debates happening this year and into broader planning and implementation at national and local levels. The final plenary sessions of the day will focus on building this consensus and finalizing an advocacy strategy for collective next steps.
