INTERINSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS, NETWORKS AND NATIONAL PLATFORMS

Although the session started with a brief presentation on the concept of National Platforms and key questions to guide the discussion, the conversation evolved very open which was enriching but did not allow identifying key information about priorities, results, action points, main actors, etc.

Representatives from Jamaica, El Salvador and Peru presented the experiences of their National Platforms which with the experiences that arise from other countries, helped to guide discussions.

Key ideas:

Main focus should be on National Platforms: despite the opportunity and pertinence of a Regional Platform, efforts should be focused on the establishment and real functionality of NP. A Priority for the Regional Platform.

Definition of what a National Platform is: Need to invest time defining what the National Platform is, what participation is desired and feasible… before starting to create the Platform. Concrete set up, mechanism and working methods would be different from country to country but basic recommendations established in the Guidelines should be followed: the platform should open a space for information and knowledge sharing, coordination of different initiatives, establishing priorities, etc, without overruling decision making competencies of local and national authorities.

High-level governmental commitment: Strong leadership from government is needed. Influence to have National Platforms should come from different levels, By June the study should offer input to further influence at national level. Advocacy, awareness, support and pressure should have a down – top approach (from local authorities and networks, from civil society, from public technical agencies, etc to the national level) and a top – down approach (from international and regional organisations and mechanisms to the national level).

Relationship with other mechanisms and structures in country: When establishing a National Platform, it is an advantage to look at institutions the country has in place (analysing structure, their functions, the type of participation…) to assess if the Platform should be started from zero or could be built on other structures and processes. However a balance is needed, as the risk is that the National Platform might be merged on an existing structure that might be able to try to address the functions of a NP but might have some weaknesses to do so. Common potential weaknesses can be:
- Merging in mechanisms and structures oriented in disaster response and preparedness and do not have a development approach towards risk management / disaster risk reduction.
- Lack of participation of key stakeholders

Legal framework has to assessed and respect in case by case basis, but there is a risk of confusing legal frameworks intended to regulate mechanism and structures for certain purposes with the possibilities to create a more open forum.

Participatory National Platforms: The involvement of different stakeholders is key: different public authorities and administrations, civil society, Red Cross, private sector, media, academic sector... Concern that in some cases the representation might not be as participatory as it could be, which challenges the real functionality of the platform.

In some cases, it seems countries find challenges in identifying key stakeholders. Need to disseminate and consider the inventory of partnerships of ISDR.

Mainstreaming different sectors in DRR: NP should mainstream different sectors, assessing the needs and capacities in each country.

Lack of empowerment of DRR in development actors: key development stakeholders are not empowered and thus not integrating DRR in development interventions as it is still seen as a response / preparedness issue.
DRR and NP should be approached as a development issue.