

# Declaration of the advances in the Hyogo Framework for Action and recommendations for the post-2015 period

This initiative is carried out in the framework of the Disaster Preparedness Programme Action Plan 2013-2014, Department of Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection of the European Commission (DIPECHO).

We the 168 signatories of this Declaration, representatives of 154 organizations and institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean, greet the attendants to the “Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas”, and state as follows:

1. Latin America has experienced, throughout its history, high-impact disasters and disembodied destruction due to phenomena such as: the volcanic eruptions which affected the global climate in the nineteenth and twentieth century<sup>1</sup>; earthquakes such as those in Chile (1939 and 2010), Peru (1970), Guatemala (1976), El Salvador (2001), and Haiti (2010); hurricanes which mainly affected Central American and Caribbean countries as in the case of Mitch (1998); and extreme climatic phenomena exacerbated by climatic change and the El Niño and La Niña phenomena, like that of Vargas (Venezuela, 1999), the floods in Colombia and Argentina, and the droughts in northeast Brazil; or more recently in the Bolivian and Paraguayan Chaco.
2. In the 1990-2011 period, 83 thousand disasters were registered in the region, causing at least 42 thousand deaths. 121 million people were affected, more than 1 million houses were destroyed and 5.9 million houses were damaged<sup>2</sup>. The small disasters associated with climatic variability have been much more frequent, damaging the economies of small rural producers.
3. These events have resulted in important economic losses, absorbing investment resources for development, impeding sustainability and the attainment of the of the millennium goal objectives.
4. The disasters reveal the vulnerability and weaknesses of the current forms of development. Their occurrence may serve as an opportunity to introduce necessary changes and transformations in development styles.
5. The processes which generate disaster risks include: failure to fulfil the rights of individuals; weak territorial management, including the degradation of natural resources and ecosystems; informality in the use of land and in construction; social conflicts; limited food safety; inadequate capacity and institutional complementarity.
6. In recent decades the lethality of disasters has diminished due to advances in health systems, improvements in early warning systems and greater efficiency in humanitarian help. In contrast, the exacerbation of individual interest and the weaknesses of certain social ties condition the creation of a cooperative and responsible citizenship, which is the livelihood of risk management.
7. The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) has become a key factor for Latin America and the Caribbean in the sense that in some countries it has inspired positive changes in legislation and institutions, the complementarity of humanitarian aid and the growing articulation of inter-institutional networks which exercise social auditing.
8. Among the weaknesses of some countries in the region, we should note: the insufficient analysis of processes which generate risk conditions when not taking into account the relevance of underlying causes; the limited analysis of the economic and social impacts of the disasters; the emerging capacity building at a local and sub-national level which corresponds to the problematic areas of governance; the scant participation of uni-

1 Among the eruptions which had the greatest impact are Cosiguina in Nicaragua in 1935; Cerros Quemados in El Salvador in 1879; Mont Pellée in Martinica in 1902; Santa María in Guatemala in 1902 and El Arenal in Costa Rica in 1968.

2 UNISDR and OSSO Corporation 2003. . “Impact of the Latin American disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean 1990-2011: tendencies and statistics for 16 countries.”

versities in research over risk and measures to reduce it; the limited participation of vulnerable groups in risk management policies; the lack of community participatory mechanisms in risk management processes and the weak articulation between risk management activities and plans and territorial strategies.

## Proposals for the post-2015 period

1. Link risk management politics with the reduction of poverty, access to basic services and relationships based on equality
2. **Focus on the community in order to strengthen resilience**, emphasizing its role in policy implementation and the evaluation of their advances.
3. Strengthen, in agreement with local governments, the capacity of vulnerable communities considering learning strategies based on their experiences.
4. Recover ancestral knowledge in order to incorporate it in the design and implementation of risk deduction measures, adapt it to climatic change and integrate it in ecosystem management.
5. Institutionalize participation mechanisms of vulnerable communities, businesses and non-governmental institutions in planning processes and territorial and risk management, included in queries about regulations, reconstruction and accountability of authorities.
6. Put emphasis in individual rights and in strategies which allow the inclusion and effective participation of the most vulnerable sectors (children, women, senior citizens, people with special abilities and indigenous villages).
7. **Assure that in the evaluation of risk, one takes into account** the underlying causes and the processes which determine insecure conditions such as poverty and environmental degradation; the tendencies of territorial occupation; climatic change and the vulnerability of livelihoods and local markets; public and private policies which impact risk conditions; perceptions, capacities and local potential; the backgrounds behind large and small disasters and the subsequent response, and relations of gender and generation.
8. Imply, in the monitoring of risks and risk management, the juridical bodies which allow the application of penalties corresponding to and involving citizens in order to assure accountability and transparency.
9. Encourage environmental impact studies that include disaster risk evaluation.
10. **Design and articulate educative proposals** in schools and universities which emphasize valor and civic responsibility.
11. **Institute and/or strengthen national and sub-national platforms of integral risk management** in order to facilitate complementarity between the public sector and civic society (the population, businesses, universities, organizations and institutions).
12. **Engage the private sector to reduce risks which are generated through its activities** and to contribute to the implementation of the risk management plans in its scope and surroundings.
13. 13. Prioritize risk reduction strategies for small businesses based on the recognition of their greater vulnerability and of their importance for generating employment in these countries.
14. **Incorporate a prospective focus which takes into account urban growth dynamics and tendencies**, and the strategies to guide one towards safe available space.
15. Incorporate risk management in integrated planning of the large urban centers and to implement access to adequate housing support programs and rights to the city.
16. Design and implement specific risk management strategies for places with significant concentrations of people.
17. **Encourage the protection and capacity of livelihood recovery programs** of the population in situations of poverty and extreme poverty.
18. Incorporate, in the response to disaster strategies, the recuperation and protection of the local markets, avoiding substitution with external aid.
19. **Incorporate the media in risk management policies**, encouraging agreements which would allow cooperation between this media and specialized institutions.
20. Promote integral intervention in disaster risk reduction which takes into account adaptation to climatic change and the management and restoration of ecosystems.

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