



VI Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas

June, 20th – 22nd, 2018. Cartagena, Colombia



GOBIERNO DE COLOMBIA



Chair's Summary

The Colombian government hosted the Sixth Session of the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia from June 20th to 22nd, 2018. The Platform brought together more than 1,300 participants from the Americas and the Caribbean representing local and national governments, inter-government organizations, non-government organizations, municipal councils, parliamentarians, local communities, indigenous peoples, business leaders, academics, people from the fields of science and technology and civil society representatives.

Over the three days, there were four (4) plenary sessions, eighteen (18) parallel sessions, eight (8) cross-cutting sessions, fifty-seven (57) official statements, seventy-one (71) live presentations, a special event on the Caribbean, multiple bilateral meetings, a technical session to formulate the Regional Action Plan (PAR) and a Ministerial Meeting. Additionally, there was a demonstration by search and rescue teams, an interactive museum, a trade fair and an artistic exhibition on inclusion in disaster risk reduction.

Awards were given to the winners of the competitions for Video Challenge for Youth in the Americas and Best Practices in the Private Sector. This is a demonstration of the region's commitment to promoting less vulnerable and more resilient communities.

The Platform also facilitated dialogue between the region's senior officials who agreed on the future of the implementation and dissemination of the Regional Action Plan (PAR) for the implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015-2030 in the Americas. The progress to date was shared during the Platform in order to jointly build an instrument that incorporates the implementation of the plan, continues generating spaces to exchange experiences and knowledge in the framework of future regional platforms and to sign agreements made during the technical sessions for the Regional Action Plan (PAR) that will be implemented in the future.

A consensus was reached on the Cartagena Declaration in the Ministerial session which highlights the commitment to continue with the implementation of the Regional Action Plan, encouraging Member States to actively participate in the 2019 Global Platform and accepts the nomination of Jamaica to host the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2020, which will specifically include the Caribbean region in its name.

The implementation of the thematic agenda is summarized in the following points associated with achieving the initiatives contained in the Regional Action Plan (PAR) and the priorities of the Sendai Framework:

The first day focused on the first priority of the Sendai Framework (understanding disaster risk), the importance of understanding disaster risk reduction as a continuous process, highlighting the fundamental role of community work and political will.

Integrated risk management with a differential approach, strengthening institutional and community capacities and necessary coordination between academia and the public sector were considered key actions for making progress on the fulfilment of this priority. Additionally, the need to ensure the adoption of gender equality perspectives and the inclusion of vulnerable people, including people with disabilities, was highlighted to promote understanding disaster risk in the Americas.

The parallel sessions incorporated discussions on early alert systems, hydrological risk management, resilient cities and the monitoring of the Sendai Framework and its coordination with Sustainable Development and Climate Change Goals. The sessions incorporated the region's progress in monitoring threats resulting from strengthening capacities for analysis, modelling, and forecasting. Additionally, the importance of coordinating early alert systems with National Risk Management Systems was highlighted.

The importance of the information generated by technical-scientific institutions was highlighted as the basis for making informed decisions about risk in the region. To achieve this there is a need to coordinate the work of statistical offices, design financing mechanisms that promote public-private co-responsibility for the implementation of monitoring and alert systems and support technical-scientific institutions.

At the local level, the importance of implementing long-term policies, promoting partnerships, coordinating actions at the national level and sharing knowledge was highlighted in order to build resilient citizens that incorporate sustainable development and risk management in their development approach.

In the framework of the second day, which was focused on the second priority of the Sendai Framework (strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk), the coordination of global agendas in regional, sub-regional, national and local planning was discussed. Regional examples were presented, in which the

formulation of national plans and monitoring mechanisms has been incorporated into the different development planning agendas. Political will is essential for consolidating institutional arrangements that facilitate a comprehensive approach for the different agendas.

The parallel sessions focused on this second priority, which were related to national plans, legal frameworks and planning instruments, highlighted the importance of having a disaster risk reduction policy accompanied by planning and financing instruments that operate as governance mechanisms to manage risk reduction. The importance of implementing an inclusive social approach for development planning was also focused on during the second day.

The discussion of the third priority of the Sendai Framework (investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience) helped recognize the main progress, challenges and recommendations that exist in relation to disaster risk management, as well as investment and financial protection strategies that provide resilient infrastructure and guarantee the continuity of essential services.

The parallel sessions associated with this priority discussed around incentives and instruments that promote resilient investments, public management to transfer financial risk for assistance for disasters, human mobility and displacement, strengthening of international cooperation mechanisms and public management for transferring financial risk.

Participants also discussed the importance of regulatory frameworks that make it necessary to incorporate disaster risk reduction in public investment and include it as a crosscutting theme in different planning instruments to help reduce and manage this risk. The need to ensure access to funds immediately after disasters was also highlighted. This will help analyze the cost-effectiveness of interventions, identify alternative and permanent sources of resources and reduce pressure on the public resources.

On Thursday afternoon participants discussed the importance of implementing dynamic cooperation models that facilitate effective collaboration between the region's stakeholders and incorporate disaster risk reduction in the formulation of national frameworks and policies that use a sustainable development approach based on principles of solidarity, sovereignty, respect and cooperation.

Legal frameworks are required in the Americas region to facilitate the participation of the science and technology sectors in national disaster risk reduction systems and facilitate their active participation in the formulation of public policies for territorial advocacy.

The special session for the Caribbean demonstrated the need to establish a Caribbean Resilience Mechanism as a collective action that helps promote the resilience of island countries.

On the **third day**, discussions focused on the fourth priority of the Sendai Framework (enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to «Build Back Better» in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction). The importance of planning for recovery was highlighted, taking into account long-term risks and the analysis of risk and capacities in order to inform response planning and to improve interventions.

The parallel sessions associated with this priority were focused on the issues of gender, empowerment, women and resilience, preparation and implementation of the recovery: collaboration and public-private partnerships, plans and projects to mitigate risks, social leadership and community resilience.

The importance of an inclusive and participatory approach in which women and girls have access to information and risk data was highlighted. There is also a need to implement disaster risk reduction policies, plans and programs that have a gender equality perspective.

The need to strengthen partnerships between the public and private sector was also highlighted as a strategic action that effectively integrates the criteria and principles of risk reduction in decision making about investment in development at local, community and national levels.

Aspects were analyzed that substantially contribute to reducing disaster risk and that generate complementary territorial transformation processes in order to improve quality of life and build community resilience.

After this intense but productive session, the commitment of countries, organizations and communities from the Americas and Caribbean region to the voluntary implementation of the Sendai Framework continued to be reaffirmed along with the goal of consolidating a less vulnerable region that has more resilient communities.