



The Role of National Platforms as part of a Sustainable Institutional Structure

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Mandate of National Platform

According to the **Hyogo Framework for Action** the expression “national platform” is a generic term used for **national mechanisms** for **coordination** and **policy guidance** on disaster risk reduction that need to be **multi-sectoral and inter-disciplinary** in nature, with **public, private and civil society participation** involving all concerned entities within a country.



Importance of this mandated role and composition

Policy guidance:

- It enables the government to **integrate DRR into development policy** and strengthen its institutional basis for implementation

Coordination:

- It helps to **avoid duplication** of efforts made by different actors engaged in the DRR practice

Multi-sectoral and inter-disciplinary:

- It allows other civil society and other **non - governmental stakeholders to influence policy formulation in different sectors**

National mechanisms:

- It ensures **national ownership** vis-à-vis adherence to global guidelines and approaches



Hence given this mandate, NATIONAL PLATFORMS can play an **important role for national level DRR**

To do this most effectively, utmost attention should be paid to **their relationship with other country level institutions of DRR**



UNDP's experience in institutional capacity development

UNDP has a **long experience** in helping government **in building institutional structures** on different spheres of development including for DRR

During 2004-2006 UNDP carried out a **global review** on its **support to the development of national Institutional and Legislative Systems (ILS) for Disaster Reduction**

The study covered **nineteen countries of UNDP's engagement** and we would like to share some of **the important lessons** it draws for **all elements of institutional strengthening** including **National Platforms**



The fundamentals of a national institutional structure for DRR

UNDP's Global ILS Review for DRR identifies the following:

- Ensuring National Ownership
- Engaging Champions of Policy
- Making use of existing national processes, structures and planning cycles
- Sustained engagement
- Implementation



Ensuring National Ownership

- There is **no blue print** for institutional building
- National structures have to be spear headed/led by **national stakeholders**
- **Institutionalization takes time** and it cannot be rushed



Engaging Champions of Policy

- **Disasters make pressures for policy change** but that may not be sufficient
- Working within **changing political circumstances**
- **Political commitment, financial resources and engagement are pre-requisites**
- It requires **identification of responsibility** for action
- Need for high level **political and / or administrative champions**



Process and planning cycles

- Process of policy formulation can offer **opportunities to build ownership** among stakeholders and foster learnings
- Any DRR institutional structures must fit into **existing government planning cycles and procedures** for better implementation and monitoring
- **Pre-existing sectoral policies** must be built on in order for to avoid DRR being seen as a costly add on, competing for resources



Sustainable engagement

- **Along with government, civil society, donors and other stakeholders** should have a sustained engagement with the policy making process
- Participatory approaches are important for DRR and must include **stakeholders from different administrative levels**
- As far as possible, **the most poor and vulnerable** must be involved in the decision making process



Implementation

- **Most challenging** area of work
- Important to link risk reduction to **MDGs and PRSPs** and the latter can **raise the profile of DRR policy**
- **Codes and provision** to regulate construction may be available but not **assignment of responsibility of enforcement**
- **Incentive structure** and feasibility of **acceptance by poorer / vulnerable sections** must be assessed



Hence any institutional structure at the national level must be built on these principles

And **NATIONAL PLATFORMS** are an important part of this structure



However as with any institutional structures, some **Outstanding issues and challenges** remain with one for DRR

Some of these are:

- How to generate the political will for reform?
- How to achieve participation in and ownership of the legislative and policy process by a wide-range of stakeholders?
- What capacities and financial resources are required for implementation at local level?



So can national platforms help to address these challenges?

Yes but in order for them to do so,

NATIONAL PLATFORMS must represent a **nationally owned mechanism** of how a country addresses disaster risk reduction in a participatory manner

NATIONAL PLATFORMS must be based on **demand** and any pre-existing institutional set up could take on this role

NATIONAL PLATFORMS must **not be a stand alone mechanism** but a part of a **broader institutional framework**

The UN/ISDR secretariat's latest publication *Towards National Resilience: Best Practices of National Platforms for DRR* highlights some illustrative country cases



In conclusion

National Platforms support **effective coordination** and enable governments to **address DRR in a broad based manner**

National Platforms are not a stand alone mechanism but a **part of a larger institutional framework**

National Platforms should be supported in a way that they are grounded in the **country context**



Thank you