



VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean (RP21)

Building Resilient Economies in the Americas and the Caribbean

1 to 4 November 2021, Virtual Event



Summary Day 3

Day 3 of the Regional Platform continued with highly interactive sessions and the sharing of ideas and best practices in the region. There were three Parallel Sessions, one Learning Lab and four side events. The focus of the sessions was on social protection, disaster risk financing, impact-based forecasting and early warning systems, all in the context of building resilience.

The third High-level Session, covering social protection and inclusion to strengthen community resilience, identified concrete and feasible recommendations to enhance intersectoral synergies among social protection and disaster risk management policies. Relevant lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic point towards amplifying the inclusivity of social protection and prioritizing contributions from historically marginalized groups in decision-making as vehicles for significant improvements in system-wide disaster risk management and governance, particularly in the context of complex and interconnected disaster risks.

Parallel Session 5 emphasized the disparity between climate change adaptation strategies and the effects of climate change on vulnerable populations. Many people are still left behind during emergency response. Civil protection systems, disaster risk management systems, and social protection systems should evolve into comprehensive, redistributive, and universal protection systems that promote a resilience approach, allowing inclusive and rapid recoveries in the aftermath of crises or shocks.

The challenges of governance structures in optimizing risk management solutions at the local level and in achieving policy alignment were the focus of Parallel session 6. It was expressed that without policy and action at the local level and greater coherence with the national level, societies may fall behind in preparing to face risk. There was a call for a shift in mindset about the management of risk and for the establishment of synergies between DRM, CCA and development. The protection of the natural environment needs to be at the heart of economic growth and sustainable development. There needs to be risk-informed, climate-smart development policies that reflect this required shift in mindset. A multi-stakeholder approach that includes citizens as key stakeholders is to be used to strengthen partnerships and accountability in the performance of authorities.

Acting before a disaster or crisis hits protects the lives and livelihoods of those affected by disaster and reduces suffering. In fact, if 50% of the emergencies are predictable and 20% of them are highly predictable, only 1% of the funds allocated for response is channelled through Anticipatory Financing. Parallel Session 7 focused on Anticipatory Action or Anticipatory Financing mechanisms, sharing experiences and lessons learned from pilot projects across the globe. These mechanisms take time to install, but it is necessary to include them into emergency action plans, clearly identifying



VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean (RP21)

Building Resilient Economies in the Americas and the Caribbean

1 to 4 November 2021, Virtual Event



the triggers and the forecast data on which to make decisions. Anticipatory Financing mechanisms must be developed using a multi-stakeholder approach where communities, local government and humanitarian actors work together to ensure that the systems in place are sustainable.

Learning Lab 3 was an interactive session with contributions made on the challenges and opportunities of impact-based forecasting and for the strengthening of Early Warning Systems (EWS) in the Caribbean Region. Common challenges include the lack of data sharing across critical sectors and institutions and the limited access to hydrometeorological datasets. EWS tend to be centred around the science and infrastructure and less around a fundamental aspect for their effectiveness, which is the communication of messages to the people that will use the systems and information they provide. Sustainable forecasting and EWS should be integrated into local DRR strategies. Finally, opportunities were identified to capitalize on existing regional partnerships.

The side events of the third day were four in total. The MCR2030 side event provided participants with an opportunity to share country experiences and best practices in building disaster resilient cities. The need to strengthen knowledge and action on climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction considering the systemic nature risk was underlined. The lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and the current climate challenge should inform not only short- and medium-term thinking, but also our vision for development of societies beyond the 2030 global landmarks. The side event on Energy & Water highlighted the need to ensure business continuity and accessibility of safe water supplies after the impact of a hazard. The feasibility and advantages of geothermal energy supply for the Caribbean region were discussed, as well as the need to perceive wastewater as a secondary resource for water supply through treatment and the importance of making early warnings for drought sector specific. Finally, the side event on Resilient Tourism examined the lessons learned in the management of tourism facilities as shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic. While experiences on the tactics and procedures that worked or failed were shared, key recommendations and observations for post Covid-19 tourism were discussed.

A Ministerial and High-Level Authorities meeting, with representatives of 29 countries of the region, culminated with the adoption of a declaration that includes commitments on critical aspects that need to be addressed in the face of the complexity of the pandemic recovery, the climate challenge and the need for a higher ambition in the implementation of the Sendai Framework in tandem with the 2030 Agenda. Strengthening multi-sectorial, multi-stakeholder and multi-level risk governance and boosting the investments in building resilience become fundamental to achieve those goals. Social contracts that collectively manage risk are required, and these must be anchored in universal social protection systems. The Ministerial Meeting was attended by the Prime Minister of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and other ten (10) Ministers of different countries, holding different portfolios, signalling the importance of these discussions for the social, political and economic future of our region.