

The Antalya Statement

February 13, 2015

Antalya, Turkey

An Expert Forum (EF) on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in a Changing Climate: Lessons Learned on Lessons Learned, was convened in Antalya, Turkey from 10 to 13 February 2015 by USAID, CCB/CU, WMO and TSMS with the support of NOAA and GFDRR. The Forum was attended by 90 participants from 43 countries, drawn from government agencies, humanitarian organizations, NGOs, academic and applied science researchers, practitioners and youth & young professionals.**

Why the Forum Participants are Concerned

Disaster Risk Reduction Lessons come from our own experiences and the experiences of others. Decades of studies of hazards and disasters contain a wealth of lessons that had previously been identified but had in many instances not been implemented only to be “re-discovered” during the next similar disaster...even when it occurred in the same location. A key lesson about lessons learned is that a lesson identified is not the same as a lesson learned.

Possible Ramifications

The following calls to action are of great concern to forum participants. These calls are representative of a larger set of concerns that must be acknowledged and addressed.

Not to do so will enable the DRR community and societies-at-risk to continue along with their “business as usual” mindsets and models of response.

This may be the greatest challenge to moving forward in this time of rising DRR response costs and an increase in demands on DRR budgets, especially as disaster impacts increase in this time of growing climate uncertainties.

Not to address these calls to action will have obvious as well unintended, mostly adverse ramifications. A pollution-related adage is of relevance here:

“Pay now or pay later.” Now is the proverbial “later”.

NINE DRR CALLS-to-ACTION

1. “Lessons Learning” Process

Governments, donors, and lending institutions must realize the necessity of a transparent, inclusive process to identify, verify, archive, transfer and share DRR-related lessons identified during their previous and current interventions and prepare to do so more effectively in the future.

2. Clearing House for Lessons Identified

The EF calls for the establishment of a freely available, user-friendly innovative DRR knowledge clearinghouse/pathway to facilitate collecting, sharing and re-using of positive as well as adverse lessons identified as a result of project/program evaluations and other sources.

3. Blend and Integrate DRR & CCA: Fund “Orange”

DRR (color red) and CCA (color yellow) communities must meaningfully blend their overlapping (“orange”) DRR-related interventions in mutually supportive ways for longer-term sustainability. Demands on DRR and CCA funding are likely to increase with climate change. Their window of opportunity to act alone appears to be closing.

4. Incentives For Learning

The EF highlights the urgent need to identify, examine, document and then create and adjust economic, financial and regulatory incentives to support people and institutions in applying the lessons identified and learned in previous DRR interventions, both successful and unsuccessful.

5. Lessons from Pilot Projects

Perceiving a risk of a lack of coordination; “irreproducibility”, and wasting of scarce resources, the Expert Forum recommends that DRR and CCA related pilot projects must take into account past experiences and be linked to long-term sustainability strategies. Pilot projects need to be designed, selected, and implemented through coordinated processes among donors, government authorities and concerned communities to assure common expectations of responsibilities in order to generate added value.

6. Recognition of Limits

Developers of Early Warning Systems (EWS) must also pay attention to lessons identified but not learned over decades about building an effective EWS. For example, they must focus on the weak links in the system by assuring that the warning feedback loop is closed to reassure that the concerned people and communities understand the value, use and limitations of the science of climate, water, and weather early warnings. There are constant reminders that the communities are in need of active involvement in EWS. EWS operators must pay attention--- at outset of developing hydro-met systems--- to local knowledge about their understanding of local and regional environmental hazards.

7. Role for the Next Generation (Youth & Young Professionals)

Governments, donors and lending institutions have a responsibility to increasingly recognize, foster and support the active involvement of youth and young professionals as critical partners, acknowledging their key role in the DRR lessons learning process and as the next generation of society’s decision makers.

8. People-Centered Development

Governments, donors and lending institutions must prioritize people-centered development that highlights resilience and reduces vulnerability, by building capacity at the community level.

9. Governments, Donors, and Lending Institutions Coordination

DRR financing must match its interventions with the recipients’ absorptive capacity to ensure as well as enhance efficient and effective coordination and use of limited resources and to achieve sustainability. In addition, improved coordination among donors and lending institutions is a must! Not to do so, they run the risk of unwittingly overwhelming recipients with technological and other assistance they are unable to use to achieve the intended goals of either the lending institutions or the recipients.

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