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GP2022 Highlights: Wednesday, 25 May 2022

The main segment of the seventh Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction 2022 (GP2022) began its deliberations on Wednesday, 25 March, in Bali, Indonesia. GP2022 is organized by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and hosted by the Government of Indonesia. The day included the opening ceremony, two high-level dialogues, a ministerial roundtable, five thematic discussions as well as learning labs, side events, and an award ceremony.

Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony of GP2022 began with a traditional dance performance to express gratitude for life and appreciate participants' presence at the conference. In the same spirit, Sudanese poet Emtithal Mahmoud, UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador, called for meaningful collaboration and presented her poem "Our Land," illustrating the toll humanity takes on our Earth.

Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for DRR and Head of UNDRR, moderated the ceremony and appealed for leaving no one behind when human vulnerability is at an all-time high.

Amina J. Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General, expressed gratitude to Indonesia as the host and a leader in DRR, saying almost 80% of the 7,000 registered participants are present in person in Bali. Referring to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, she urged for greater coherence in addressing people's vulnerability before, during, and after overlapping



Joko Widodo, President of Indonesia

crises. She pleaded for the best policy options to break the cycle of risk creation outpacing risk reduction, and called for better governance frameworks, further investment in data capabilities, and a greater focus on Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and vulnerable people.

Joko Widodo, President of Indonesia, emphasized his country is vulnerable to various natural hazards, including earthquakes and tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, and forest fires. He highlighted the COVID-19 pandemic as the largest global disaster, and outlined Indonesia's efforts to control its spread and maintain economic growth. He called for strengthening disaster risk governance as well as "the culture of responsibility" at the global level; investing in science, technology, and innovation; and sharing lessons learned to mitigate disaster risk.



High-level dignitaries strike the traditional Balinese kulkul drum to officially open GP2022.



Amina J. Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General

Noting that GP2022 takes place amid global recovery from COVID-19, Abdulla Shahid, President of the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly, stressed that “those that are furthest behind suffer the hardest, wait the longest, and are deprived of development gains.” He emphasized that: “resilience must be our mantra”; everything must be seen through a precautionary lens; and a whole-of-society approach is of paramount importance in our joint efforts to “build back better and make our world safer and more prosperous for all.”

Closing the ceremony, high-level participants collectively stroke the kulkul, a traditional medium of communication in the form of a musical instrument, made of wood or bamboo.

High-Level Dialogues

Malini Mehra, Chief Executive, Globe International, moderated the session, which focused on creating an enabling environment to achieve the Sendai Framework goals and catalyze synergies, offering global and regional perspectives on implementation. Mehra introduced the panel and framed the discussion with questions on: where we stand in terms of implementation; how we can get on track and accelerate action; and key actions on commitments to achieve the necessary transformative change.

Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, highlighted Sendai Framework Priorities 1 (understanding disaster risk) and 3 (investing in DRR for resilience). She stressed that, for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), “systemic risk is not an academic concept but a reality.” To accelerate action, she suggested we need to better understand, quantify, and act on systemic risks; transform the level of investment into DRR; and create leadership and political will.

Keitaro Ohno, State Minister for Cabinet Affairs in charge of Economic Security and Disaster Management, Japan, highlighted the importance of monitoring and reporting to assess overall progress. He offered insights from national experience on tackling natural disasters, underscoring the importance of compiling data from all sources, and coordination among sectors. On accelerating action, he illustrated heightened DRR efforts in Japan after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, and held that planning, strategy, and investment are key for DRR.

Mitiku Kassa Gutile, Commissioner for Ethiopia Disaster Risk Management Commission, discussed challenges at the national level related to Sendai Framework implementation, including droughts, climate conflict and internal displacement, and silos between humanitarian and development capacities. To make progress, he urged for a multi-factorial, multi-sectoral implementation of DRR, using synergies with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and including all stakeholders.

Katrina Sarah Milne, World Farmers Organization, called for moving towards a cross-sectoral approach with greater engagement of local communities, including farmers. She suggested scaling up successful initiatives as well as investments in research and development, and capacity building; and disseminating disaggregated data. She further pleaded for an integration of overlapping policies, including for DRR, climate change, water storage, food security, and international conflicts.

Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Member of Bangladesh Parliament and Honorary President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, focused on the national experience and shift from responding to disasters to trying to prevent them. Addressing multi-hazard events, he emphasized that resilience concerns the ability to bounce back in addition to absorbing shocks. To accelerate action, he referred to the experiences with the pandemic, and urged breaking down silos between UN agencies, and mutually reinforcing overlapping strategies, especially regarding human health.

The second high-level dialogue showcased how integrated climate and disaster risk governance can be achieved, and considered how to ‘build back better’ in the remaining period of the Sendai Framework for DRR. Andini Effendi, independent journalist, moderated the session.

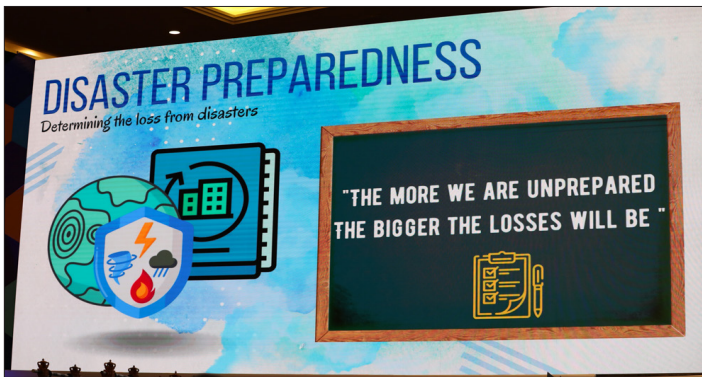
Selwin Charles Hart, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Climate Action, called for supporting the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in spearheading efforts to achieve the UN Secretary-General’s accelerated goal on early warning systems (EWS). He urged collaboration and coordination so the goal can be delivered at speed with maximum impact.

Mark Howden, Director, Institute for Climate, Energy and Disaster Solutions, Australian National University, said DRR is a systemic problem requiring a systemic response. He noted this can be achieved through creating frameworks to accelerate adaptation, including through garnering political commitment, mobilizing financial resources, creating enabling environments, and allowing inclusive governance processes.

Filimon Manoni, Deputy Secretary General, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, called for a shared vision of resilience owned by everyone and backed with political will. He advised establishing continually adaptive processes and systems for DRR so the burden on continuity and sustainability is easier to bear.

Jochen Steinhilber, Director General for Displacement, Crisis Prevention and Civil Society, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany, called for breaking down silos to ensure comprehensive risk management. He stressed the benefits of prevention, suggesting creating incentives for disaster risk prevention and preparedness.

Natalia Gómez Solano, President, Costa Rican Youth and Climate Change Network, noted confusion regarding silos created by tackling DRR and climate adaptation as separate



issues. Reiterating youth expectations, she highlighted that “nothing about youth should be planned without youth!”

During the ensuing discussions, participants and panelists noted, *inter alia*, that: SIDS are working on a regional 2030 agenda to capture their own priorities; governments need to actively seek youth involvement based on their expectations; a multi-hazard approach is required to deal with disaster and climate risk governance; and there is a need for local level promotion of transformational change in support of sustainable resilience.

Ministerial Roundtable

Ministers, other high-level government representatives, and officials from intergovernmental organizations offered national perspectives, including success stories, from programmes and initiatives on DRR, climate change, and their interlinkages; discussed how DRR can be accelerated to address the climate emergency and align with climate change adaptation goals while leaving no one behind; and deliberated on financing opportunities both at national and international levels to scale up investment in climate change and disaster risk management.

Ministers said the only way to address the imminent challenges is via unity and collective responses, underscoring that engagement of all stakeholders is of paramount importance and urging for a whole-of-society approach; highlighting the role of civil society and the need to further engage the private sector; and calling for further investing in local capacity building and empowerment.

Many pointed to the need to ensure that all citizens worldwide are protected by EWS against extreme weather and climate change by 2027. Some participants called for targeted approaches, including for displaced persons, noting that disasters affect people in different ways. Several speakers emphasized the need for anticipatory action before events turn into disasters, with some pointing to the need for pre-disaster financing mechanisms.

Some stressed that climate change and DRR should be addressed jointly and comprehensively. They suggested expediting international inter-ministerial cooperation on DRR and improving coordination between actions to address DRR and climate change. Others pointed to DRR in national adaptation plans as a point of entry for further interlinking DRR and climate initiatives. Yet others highlighted response, rehabilitation, and recovery as areas offering opportunities for further synergies between the climate adaptation and DRR communities.

A few participants noted that DRR binds together all our actions required to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement. Most agreed that the window of opportunity is closing fast and inaction is not an option.

Thematic Sessions

Improved Understanding and Governance of Systemic Risk: Irasema Alcantara Ayala, National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), moderated the session. She said this is the beginning of the rollout of the 2022 Global Assessment Report (GAR) recommendations and provides an opportunity to understand how to implement the report’s findings and capacitate where necessary.

Aromar Revi, Director, Indian Institute for Human Settlements, said the 2022 GAR is the bedrock on which certainty and resilience can be built in these uncertain times. He urged breaking down silo thinking, using a whole-of-society and whole-of-economy approach.

Ibrahima Cheikh Diong, Director-General, African Risk Capacity Group, called for building capacity to develop early warning and modelling systems to better understand climate change. He urged for climate financing to support African countries’ capacity building.

Conor Seyle, One Earth Future Foundation, observed disaster risk decision making is a multi-step process, but lamented it does not always take Indigenous and local knowledge into account. He advised a collaborative approach to developing DRR plans.

Mandisa Kalako-Williams, Independent Consultant, South Africa, emphasized the importance of communities regarding decision making, saying disaster risk cannot be separated from inequality and other structural issues in the economy. She called for practitioners to learn from communities to inform disaster risk responses.

Claudia Herrera Melgar, Executive Secretary, The Coordination Center for Natural Disaster Prevention, Central America, called for integrating climate change governance into response processes, recovery, reconstruction, and development. She said the 2022 GAR can help ensure disaster risk is included in development plans.

During the discussion, participants: deliberated on understanding the intrinsic link between risk and development processes, and the impact they have on communities; said that



Selwin Charles Hart, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Climate Action

while successful, sustainable interventions to disaster risk do exist, the challenge is to make these interventions systemic over time; and suggested using the 2022 GAR to exert influence at the highest levels and to also use it in early recovery analysis and other frameworks to help build the secure, resilient recovery that is required.

Diversity in Disaster Risk Reduction Leadership: Diversity in DRR leadership is a key component of risk-informed development and resilience. This session, co-moderated by Amal Riden, Youth Climate Change Negotiator, and Abel Walekhwa, Deputy Secretary General, Africa Youth Advisory Board on DRR, focused on how to achieve transformative impacts in this area.

Lizra Fabien, Executive Director, ARISE Dominica, said the private sector is innovative and flexible, and thus well placed to champion diversity in DRR leadership. She noted the need for cognizance and courage to tackle all relevant biases.

Elham Youssefian, International Disability Alliance, said persons with disabilities are isolated from leadership due to attitudinal barriers, which leaves them perceived as dysfunctional and requiring repair to live better lives. She urged change through policies and mindset change.

David Zambrano Maya, President, Community Risk Management Committee of Olón, Ecuador, urged financing for small community organizations. He reported on successes of the Olón Committee along the Santa Elena Peninsula for disaster rescue operations.

Noelene Nabulivou, Executive Director, Diverse Voices and Action for Equality, highlighted the need to employ the diverse knowledge skills of Indigenous Peoples, LGBTQI, women, and youth, and eliminate biases and violence they face.

Sarah Knibbs, Asia-Pacific UN Women Regional Office for Asia, said women should not be regarded as victims but rather as agents of change and leadership. She urged building women's leadership capacity.

Manuel Bessler, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Switzerland, said the highly diverse population of the world merits diverse leadership in DRR, recognizing the voices of all. He further discussed the One Million Youth Action Challenge that aims to contribute to a more sustainable planet.

Discussions with participants through questions and answers, and polls focused on, among others: the importance of a human rights approach to ensure inclusion; ways of getting youth a seat at the table with policymakers; whether emergency reaction can have full-scale participation and diversity inclusion; and raising the next generation of diverse DRR leaders.

Building a Better Future: Investing in Resilient Infrastructure for All: In a thematic session on building disaster resilient infrastructure, five panelists discussed recently developed global principles and questions from onsite and online participants. The session was moderated by Kamal Kishore, National Disaster Management Authority, India. The discussion revolved around adequate efforts to reach Sendai Framework Target D on reducing disaster damage to critical infrastructure, transitioning risks, private sector engagement, building regulations, and how to balance short- and long-term financial considerations.



Mami Mizutori, Head, UNDRR

Esther Anyakun Davinia, Minister of State for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, Uganda, illustrated how risk-based land-use planning serves as a basis to fulfil the state's obligation to protect its citizens in Uganda.

Beata Janowczyk, Head of Risk Assessment and Emergency Planning Unit, Government Centre for Security, Poland, stressed how integrated infrastructure planning needs to include physical, technical, social, and legal aspects as well as challenges such as cyber vulnerability, migration, and military intervention.

Dena Assaf, UN Resident Coordinator for United Arab Emirates (UAE), stressed that awareness raising and advocacy was key to improving disaster resilience of infrastructure, and highlighted the upcoming 27th Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 27) in Egypt and COP 28 in UAE as important opportunities for engagement.

Hossam Elgamal, Co-Chair, ARISE Egypt, exemplified Egypt's efforts to integrate information and communication technologies in infrastructure resilience.

Rob Wesseling, President and CEO, Co-operators Group Ltd, referred to the global USD 80-100 trillion pipeline of infrastructure to be built by 2040, and the need to include long-term DRR in infrastructure planning and design if we don't want to burden future generations with externalized costs.

Two further thematic sessions were held. A session on "Breaking the Silos" showcased good practice examples of multi-hazard and multi-sector risk assessments, which helped address systemic risks under improved governance. A session on "Early Warning and Early Action" took stock of progress towards achieving Sendai Framework Target G (on access to early warning systems) through inclusive, effective, and multi-hazard approaches that enable early action.

Side events, Learning Labs, and Award Ceremony

The following events were held on the margins of the third day of GP2022:

- nine side events, discussing, *inter alia*, building resilience in complex emergencies, examples of inclusive local action, and the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge;
- five learning labs which mainly focused on disability-inclusive standards, disruptive technologies, budgeting, monitoring, and reporting; and
- the Sasakawa Award Ceremony 2022 for building resilience through a multi-hazard approach.