

Fostering Resilience to Crisis

Side-Event to the 69th Session of the General Assembly

United Nations Development Programme



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

24 September 2014 from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm, Conference Room-1, UN Secretariat, New York

UNDP is convening a high-level side event on fostering resilience on the margins of the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly on 24 September 2014. The side event aims to strengthen the place for resilience in ongoing deliberations on the emerging Post-2015 Development and Sustainable Development Goals frameworks, the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Climate Change Summit, among others. The Event will be preceded by an expert group round-table that will deepen discussion on resilience in relation to security, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding.

Introduction

A broad consensus has been reached that fostering the resilience of societies is central to efforts to recover and protect development gains, especially for the most vulnerable. This consensus is reflected in key discussions and inter-governmental efforts to craft the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals; the International Dialogue for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding; the next Hyogo Framework of Action for Disaster Risk Reduction; the policies of many donor governments; and more importantly, of affected countries. It is also recognized that response to conflicts, such as the Syrian crisis and its implications on neighbouring states, particularly Jordan and Lebanon, demands a reset, if our desired outcomes of inclusive, peaceful societies and sustainable development are to be achieved.

Fostering resilience is vital at all stages of development and crisis response, as a preventive measure, to ensure sustainable recovery, and protect development gains. UNDP defines resilience as a transformative process of strengthening the capacity of individuals, communities, and societies at large to anticipate, prevent, recover from and transform in the face of shocks, stresses, and change. Recovery is a critical stage in fostering resilience. It is the time when countries and communities can either return to the status quo, leaving intact the conditions which led to the crisis, or can seize the opportunity to strengthen society's resilience to all hazards, whilst tackling the underlying causes of vulnerability (including poverty, inequality, and fragility).

In crisis settings, particularly during violent conflicts, ensuring that governance institutions and societal systems can cope with the stress is also critical.

A case in point, the Syrian crisis has compromised development gains and the stability of countries in the sub-region and has stretched social and governance institutions. Social tensions between refugees and host communities continue to increase as a result of competition for jobs, land, housing and water. The demographic shock, coupled with insecurity in the region has had a severe fiscal and economic impact on concerned countries. Achieving transformational change requires translating resilience commitments into "practical, operational, and appropriately funded" interventions, which has so far proven to be a major challenge for national and local actors as well as for the international community.

To foster resilience in these contexts (before, during and after a crisis) there are increasing calls for greater consideration for: i) long-range, multi-sectoral, coordinated, and comprehensive strategies with an emphasis on anticipating, preventing, preparing, and transforming in the aftermath of crisis; and ii) risk awareness and risk reduction as key determinants for the resilience of societies to all forms of shock, stresses and change. Some national governments are already systematically placing risk and vulnerability at the heart of their recovery and resilience efforts, and are achieving major progress towards resilience outcomes.

This high-level meeting will provide a platform for a critical examination of successful as well as unsuccessful efforts to strengthen resilience in ongoing and post-crisis settings. It will draw upon important insights that will help the international community re-frame existing and emerging strategies, financing mechanisms, and coordination structures to foster resilience.



Objectives

The high-level event has the following objectives:

- Reflect on the key building blocks for a process of sustainable recovery and their contributions to ensuring resilient, peaceful societies in the aftermath of crises - whether related to conflicts or natural disasters;
- Deepen the understanding and application of a resilience-based development approach to ongoing and recurrent crises (conflict or disaster due to natural hazards), and also in ways that support the prevention of new crises. The Syrian crisis and its impact on the sub-region will be a case in point; and
- Examine why current investments in strengthening resilience in crisis settings (particularly during crises and in the immediate post-crisis early recovery and recovery windows) lag behind the rhetoric and explore what concrete measures can be taken to resolve this issue.

The outcomes of the high-level event will inform the formulation of the next generation of Sustainable Development Goals and related inter-governmental processes—the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding/New Deal, and preparations for the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and the World Humanitarian Summit.

Approach

Using case studies and the experiences of member states, UN agencies, civil society and the private sector, the high-level side event will review the application of efforts to foster resilience in a range of selected disasters and conflicts.

The target audience includes heads of States/ governments with resilience and recovery agendas, government delegations, development partners, civil society and Foundations supporting resilience responses. The event will be open to the media that has accreditation with the UN. It will be preceded by a two-day expert-group roundtable that will focus on resilience vis-à-vis conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and security.

Event format and programme

Introduction:

Jean-Marie Guéhenno, President and CEO, International Crisis Group

Welcome remarks:

Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General

Special statement:

Her Majesty, Queen Rania Al Abdullah, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Keynote address:

Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator

Recovery for resilience: what have we learned so far?

Fostering resilience - experience from Typhoon Haiyan and the Mindanao Peace Process:

His Excellency, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco Aquino III, President of the Republic of the Philippines

Experience from the Balkan region:

His Excellency, Zlatko Lagumdžija, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Fostering resilience to multiple disasters - the Japanese Success Story:

His Excellency, Fumio Kishida, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Japan

Fostering resilience - the Chilean case:

His Excellency, Hernando Muñoz, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chile

Financing recovery for resilience - progress in the donor community:

Rt. Hon. Justine Greening, MP Secretary of State for International Development, United Kingdom

The role of civil society, the private sector, and city governments in fostering resilience

Strengthening resilience in the urban context:

Michael Bloomberg, UN Secretary General Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change

The impact of the digital age on recovery for resilience:

Sheryl Sandberg, Chief Operation Officer, Facebook, INC

The role of insurance in recovery for resilience and its effectiveness in low-income countries:

Cecilia G. Reyes, Zurich Insurance Group

The resilient dividend:

Dr. Judith Rodin, President of the Rockefeller Foundation