

Opening of DMTP Future Search Meeting

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Monday, 13 February 2006

Hotel Chavannes de Bogis

**Future Search Conference topic: Rethinking Capacity Development for
Disaster Risk Reduction: Action 2005-2015**

- It is my pleasure to welcome all of you to Geneva. I understand we have 85 participants in this meeting from all over the world, representing some 40 countries.
- Allow me to first acknowledge the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the U.S. Government's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance for supporting this event. And we are pleased to host this meeting in partnership with ISDR.

- You are here because you are deeply concerned about natural disasters and are engaged in minimizing the risks they pose to your countries and to development. Each of you in your own way is dedicated to helping to reduce this threat through better risk management and reduction.
- The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), the outcome document from the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, Kobe Japan 2005, was adopted by 168 countries and provides the direction for the next ten years. This meeting has been organized in direct support of the implementation of the HFA since capacity building, or as we have recast it here "capacity development" is crucial to translating the intentions of the Hyogo Framework into viable and sustainable practice.
- And capacity development is absolutely central to UNDP's work in 133 developing countries to address the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Goals. Consequently, UNDP is well situated to provide the leadership for this meeting and to support the DMTP in

launching this initiative - indeed to support the reconfiguration of the DMTP from strictly a training service provider to becoming a global platform for supporting and motivating capacity development for disaster risk reduction. In this emerging role, and with your further involvement, the DMTP will work to maintain momentum after this meeting. This also implies that the DMTP efforts will support you to implement the action commitments generated and ensure that they cascade to benefit the relevant levels.

Purpose and Structure of this meeting

- As you know, this is not a meeting about presentations but one of dialogue in a multi-faceted group. There are no pre-conceived outcomes for this meeting, the outcomes depend on you. The decisions you make and the directions you chart in the next three days have the potential to transform how capacity development for disaster risk reduction is conceived, framed and practiced in the future. Indeed, t your contributions, reflecting both experience and needs, will influence future directions and commitments.
- This meeting is designed to launch a process of dialogue and actions that will continue through 2015 and beyond. Ideally, this meeting will result in a set of change targets for capacity development that can be monitored and measured systematically. So, this is the beginning of a process rather than an end in itself. But it is a crucially important beginning.

Why Focus on Capacity?

- The HFA emphasizes that the focus of attention and action for disaster reduction is with countries and with developing the capacities of individuals and institutions.
- These same principles are also expressed in the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which states that capacity development is an endogenous process, strongly led from within a country, with donors playing a supportive role. However, we know that implementing these respective roles, with countries leading and donors and external actors supporting, is more easily said than done.

- I understand one of the documents you have been given for background reading is the paper of the OECD DAC GOVNET on *The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working Towards Good Practice*. This well researched paper succinctly summarizes many of the challenges related to the “how to” or practice of capacity development. It identifies what has been learned and what needs to be done to move to better practice on the ground. The conclusions of this paper are fundamental to your discussions.
- In closing, as you think about what we need to do in the future to achieve better results from our capacity development efforts and assistance please consider how can each of us can proceed in our own organizational settings in the future, as well as work in extended professional relationships or geographical locations to utilize the abundance of experience and expertise that already exists.

Thank you and I wish you a successful dialogue, leading to the formulation of shared action commitments for disaster reduction for the future.