High-level Partnership Dialogue "Inclusive Disaster Risk Management – Governments, Communities and Groups Acting Together" – SUMMARY REPORT FOR PLENARY MEETING ON 18 MARCH

Session: High level Multi-stakeholder Partnership Dialogue "Inclusive Disaster Risk Management – Governments, Communities and Groups Acting Together"

Chair: H.E. Noel Arscott, Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Jamaica

Time and Date: 10.00 – 13.00 hours, 17 March 2015

President of the Conference,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

It is essential to *understand individual perspectives on inclusiveness and resilience. No one should be left behind*. For many people in the Pacific islands and other small island developing states, for instance, inclusiveness means addressing disaster and climate change risks in an integrated manner. For many disaster survivors, it is about building back better, even after many years of disasters. For people with disabilities, inclusiveness is about taking away the invisibility and getting them involve in the decision making process or DRR. Progress has been achieved through the HFA implementation in this respect, but a lot remains to be done.

The discussion highlighted that inclusiveness requires a *true spirit of solidarity*. Inclusiveness will only become a reality when the needs of different groups and individuals are genuinely taken into account, regardless of their background, conditions, attitudes and beliefs.

The *specific and differentiated needs* of groups that are disproportionately affected by disasters, such as the poor, children, women, people with disabilities, refugees and others must be clearly addressed if safety, security and dignity are to be ensured. *Disaggregated statistics, data and information are crucial* to understand the needs of different groups.

Communities, with their unique knowledge and capacities must be engaged, not only as implementers, but also in the planning, monitoring, and decision making stages. Where communities work with local and national governments and other actors, fast and better recovery has been observed in the aftermath of disasters. There are success stories of child-centred disaster risk management which can

be scaled up. Grassroots women's organizations who work for the benefit of their community, also benefit government policies and programmes.

Where the political will of national and local governments translates into policies, institutional arrangements and collaborative partnerships involving the academia, the private sector, media and others, a meaningful participation of communities and vulnerable groups has been observed.

All of the above examples point to some *common critical success factors of inclusive disaster risk management*: (i) the acknowledgement of the needs, but also unique and complementary added value of all stakeholders; (ii) strong political commitment resulting in policies and programmes that incorporate the perspectives and priorities of vulnerable groups and foster their leadership in disaster risk management; and (iii) innovative partnerships that build the capacity of communities and support their initiatives, as well as learning and knowledge sharing.

Inclusiveness requires each individual and organization to *think beyond their individual mandate and responsibilities to work together*.

Participants welcomed the post-2015 framework for its inclusive approach, recognizing that disaster risk reduction is a shared responsibility between Governments and relevant stakeholders. It is important that the richness and authenticity of this dialogue be reflected into the framework and translated into concrete action and implementation.

We should also use the latest communication technology available, including social media, to keep this dialogue alive and to build on the existing momentum.

The following opportunities and commitments for actions were presented during the dialogue:

- *Enhance the engagement of communities.* Addressing the needs of communities has proved effective both before and in the aftermath of disasters, where there is clear understanding of roles and responsibilities and acknowledgement of people's experience.

- *Strengthen institutions and partnerships* that recognize the capacities and contribution of all stakeholders and ensure their meaningful engagement.

- *Develop technical standards to effectively engage people with disabilities.* Networks are committed to work together to develop such standards, for

which support from the private sector and other organizations is also required.

- *Strengthen the role of the media.* As an immediate step, media stakeholders announced their willingness to launch global warning and disaster risk reduction communication campaign to prepare the media to communicate more effectively on disaster risk reduction.

- *Ensure that data collected by the scientific and academic communities is usable.* Data must not only be collected from communities but must also be transmitted back and made relevant and useful.

- *Engage the private sector* through initiatives such as developing integrated information system and business continuity planning.