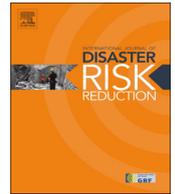




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Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/ijdr

Intensive and extensive disaster risk drivers and interactions with recent trends in the global political economy, with special emphasis on rentier states



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ARTICLE INFO

Available online 22 October 2014

Keywords:

Disaster risk management
Hyogo Framework for Action
Risk governance framework
Disaster losses in the education sector
Global political economy
Drivers for change

ABSTRACT

Internal and external efforts are increasingly being allocated to improve disaster risk reduction capacity on a worldwide scale, especially in developing low and middle income countries. While significant efforts are targeted at improving institutional capacity in disaster risk reduction, this does not always translate into reduced disaster risk as identified in the mid-term review of progress in implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action. Furthermore, the review concluded that while various countries have succeeded in developing national plans, strategies and institutions, this was not always accompanied by progress in allocating resources for the implementation of these plans and for reducing the underlying risk drivers, namely unchecked urban expansion, environmental degradation, weak governance and poverty.

The effect of the political economy on disaster risk reduction may explain this anomaly (e.g. the predominance of financial capital may cause challenges in adopting a wide stakeholder participatory approach in the DRR decision making process; which is particularly essential for addressing “every-day” (extensive) and severe (intensive) risks. The issue of extensive risk is particularly important as it does not receive sufficient and explicit attention in various international frameworks, including the Hyogo Framework for Action monitoring template and the International Risk Governance Council Risk Governance Framework, while global evidence suggest that most damage is caused by everyday extensive risk which remains unreported, uninsured and unaddressed.

Firstly, there is a need to develop a theoretical analysis tool capable of analyzing institutions, structures and processes for managing risks and effecting DRR change within various political economies. To this end, the paper combines an existing analytical political economy analysis tools with a prescriptive risk governance analysis framework thereby developing a tool for assessing the DRR decision making processes, which may inform future efforts to promote incentives and effect DRR change, taking into account the political economy specificities at different stages in the risk governance framework. The tool is applied to analyze the effects of (i) recent trends in the global political economy (including the dominance of rentier economies in certain regions, the increased role of financial capital, and the drive for short-term profit) on the provision of public goods including disaster risk management, (ii) the lack of progress in the implementation of the HFA framework for the education sector in the Arab region characterized by a prevalence of rentier states, and (iii) the imbalanced approach for addressing risks with less emphasis on “every-day” (extensive) risks.

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The above succinct applications demonstrate the effectiveness of the tool in identifying gaps and difficulties in the decision making process related to DRR. As such it allows for the development and assessment of various incentives aimed at addressing the identified gaps.

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1. Introduction

In many low and middle income countries unchecked development is increasing disaster risk and corresponding losses. In turn, this is jeopardizing the achievement of the development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), thereby intensifying poverty, abject poverty and chronic poverty. It is against this background that the Hyogo Framework for Action [1] sets five priorities for disaster risk reduction (DRR) as follows:

1. Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.
2. Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.
3. Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.
4. Reduce the underlying risk factors.
5. Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels. Progress in the implementation of each the above priorities, and average progress in all priorities combined, are measured along a graduated five-point scale, as follows:
 - Score 1: Minor Progress with few signs of forward action in plans or policy.
 - Score 2: Some progress but without systematic policy and/or institutional commitment.
 - Score 3: Institutional commitment attained but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial.
 - Score 4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in capacities and resources.
 - Score 5: Comprehensive achievement with sustained commitment and capacities at all levels.

For the purpose of this paper, it is important to identify the comparative performance and progress in these five priority areas:

- Priority 1: The HFA mid-term review [1] reports clear and documented progress in the achievement of this Priority for Action, particularly in the development of policy and legislation and in strengthening multi-sectoral institutional systems and platforms. However, limited progress was achieved in the decentralization of responsibilities and financial resources for disaster risk reduction (65% of all reporting countries and 80% of lower middle income countries report that local governments have a legal responsibility for disaster risk reduction management, while there are very few examples of budget allocations to local governments). Progress in the systematic involvement of communities in the development of strategic plans for DRR was also limited.
- Priority 2: The mid-term review of the Hyogo Framework for Action [1] reports that only 46 out of 83 countries have multi-hazard risk assessments that could inform planning and development decisions. Furthermore, the review concludes that there are still very few countries reporting on risk assessments in schools and health facilities. Even where these exist, they tend to be at an individual facility level rather than providing an assessment of the sector as a whole.
- Priority 3: The HFA mid-term review [1] indicates little progress in the field of education for disaster risk reduction. According to the interim country reports, 24 out of 70 countries reported substantial progress, whereas 43 indicated weak or average progress. Furthermore, very few countries report on including disaster risk reduction in university and professional training. The mid-term review also identified social learning in communities as an important area overlooked when designing knowledge and education activities in DRR.
- Priority 4: The mid-term HFA review [1] states that many countries report challenges in linking the results of risk assessments to development processes at the national and local levels. This partly explains the HFA conclusion that progress on reducing underlying risk factors has been limited, with only 28% of countries scoring 4 or 5. While the review recognizes progress within some lower-middle income countries in integrating DRR into national development plans, climate change policies, and poverty reduction strategy documents; these seldom lead to effectively mainstreaming DRR into poverty reduction and development plans and rarely succeed in reducing the underlying drivers of risk.
- Priority 5: The mid-term HFA review [1] states that 80% of reporting countries indicated that there are contingency plans and procedures to deal with major disasters and reported the existence of operations and communication centers, search and rescue teams, stockpiling of relief supplies and shelters. However, financial allocations for managing response and well established emergency funding mechanisms, especially at the local level, remain weak.

Indicators for assessing progress in the implementation of the HFA priority areas often employ the term “all hazards” and “all risks” (e.g. “the assessment of schools against all hazards”). Furthermore, HFA priority area 2 refers to the existence of disaster loss databases for collating and analyzing loss data. However, the HFA monitoring template does not explicitly allow

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