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Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in Government Institutions

Session 4.3: Effective leadership and coordination in disaster risk management and climate change

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Session Objectives:

At the end of the session, you should have been able to:

- Share coordination experiences with different ministries, government
- Identify challenges and difficulties faced in coordinating disaster risk management and climate change efforts
- Discuss appropriate actions and steps to meet these challenges and how leadership plays a critical role

Context for Discussion

More **frequent and intense drought, storms, heat waves, rising sea levels, melting glaciers and warming oceans** can directly harm animals, destroy the places they live, and wreak havoc on people's livelihoods and communities. As climate change worsens, **dangerous weather events are becoming more frequent or severe.**

Source: Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

Discussion and Experience Sharing (15 minutes)

- Share your coordination experiences with different government ministries and institutions including non-government and international organizations; and
- Identify challenges and difficulties faced in coordinating disaster risk management and climate change efforts

(Common) Obstacles and challenges in disaster risk management and climate change coordination efforts



- Lack of a coordinated prevention, mitigation, preparedness efforts (often sector specific)
- Refusal to share information and resources (climate change affects all sectors. One affected sector often affects the other)
- Unwillingness to subordinate particular national or institutional goals to an overriding agenda

Coordination Level Challenges



- Community level
- Agency level
- Individual level

Community Level Challenges

- In non-disaster situations, organizations work independently of each other making it difficult to work quickly with other organizations when disaster occurs
- Functioning of the organizations involved depends not only on their internal interactions, but on the interactions with other agencies as well
- There may be no central coordinating authority across all level. Instead, the agencies involved are coordinated by several, pre-agreed agency leaders at various response levels
- Many inter-organizational dependencies may not always be clearly visible.

Agency Level Challenges

- Preparing and responding to an extreme event requires collaboration and transparency on the part of various agencies with different cultures and organizational structures
- Under normal circumstances, the organizational structures of the separate agencies pose no major problems. However, when disaster strikes, coordination becomes much more difficult, simply because a **disaster is more than merely a big emergency**

Individual Level Challenges

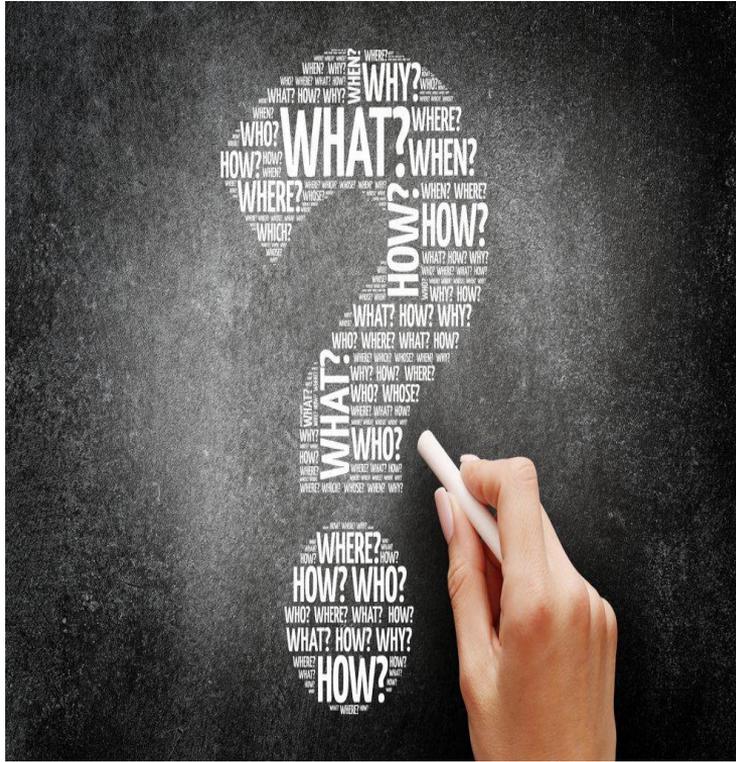


- Everyone is faced with severe time-pressure and a flood of information that may be inaccurate or outdated by the time a decision or action takes place
- Intense and information-rich environment can easily result in cognitive overload
- Technical capacity of individuals to undertake the task

Recommendations for Improving Coordination: Good Practices

- Integrating coordination into the work-planning process / SOPs
- Ensuring sector/cluster awareness of their responsibilities
- Designating focal points / EOC
- Monitoring sector or cluster-specific reports and information management products / Situation Room
- Ensuring participation of beneficiaries in preparedness planning and response
- Meeting sector/cluster leads
- Sharing information with partners (transparency)

Reflection...



How does leadership play a big role in effective coordination?

What needs to be done differently?

As leaders, what are the things we need to do differently to make disaster risk management and climate change coordination work? (i)

1. Catalytic sector or ministry: steering rather than rowing (i.e. focus on achieving the objectives rather than thinking the state has to do it all directly itself)
2. Community-owned government: empowering rather than serving
3. Competitive government: injecting competition into service delivery
4. Mission driven sector or ministry: transforming rule-driven organizations (*“Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what you want to achieve and they will surprise you with their ingenuity”*)

(Inspired by the book **Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector**, David Osborne and Ted Gaebler)



As leaders, what are the things we need to do differently to make disaster risk management and climate change coordination work? (ii)

5. Customer-driven sector or ministry: meeting the needs of the customers (e.g., vulnerable individuals and communities exposed to hazards, entities affected by impacts of climate change) and not the bureaucracy
6. Anticipatory sector or ministry: prevention rather than cure
7. Decentralized government: from hierarchy to participation and teamwork

*(Inspired by the book **Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector**, David Osborne and Ted Gaebler)*



Session Take-Aways

Partnership for it to work requires coordination. Coordination on the other hand is a manifestation of evolving or strongly established partnership. Given this, the following principles must be adhered to and constantly practised:

- Equality
- Transparency
- Result-oriented approach
- Responsibility
- Complementarity



In ending...

The present problems we are now facing (i.e. disaster and climate change impacts) can never be solved using the same level of thinking we had at the time those problems were created.

Therefore, **we need to have a new level of thinking.**

Q&A



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