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# **DRR Application in the Urban and Political Economic Context**

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# Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) Overview

- The framework provides guidance for implementing DRR:
  - “All Hazards” approach, for all natural and man made disasters, with focus on underlying vulnerability and root causes of community vulnerability
  - Risk assessment addressing vulnerability parallels the prevention approach of public health professionals
  - Clearer mandate for inclusion of bottom-up as well as top-down action
  - Incorporating local scientific and technical knowledge
  - Draw synergies from health, climate change, and sustainable development fields

# Sendai Framework for Risk Reduction

## Guiding Principles

- Primary responsibility of States to prevent and reduce disaster risk, including through cooperation
- Engagement from all of society
- Full engagement of all State institutions of an executive and legislative nature at national and local levels
- Empowerment of local authorities and communities through resources, incentives and decision-making responsibilities as appropriate
- Decision-making to be inclusive and risk-informed while using a multi-hazard approach
- Accounting of local and specific characteristics of disaster risks when determining measures to reduce risk
- Addressing underlying risk factors cost-effectively through investment versus relying primarily on post-disaster response and recovery
- “Build back better” for preventing the creation of, and reducing existing disaster risk

# In Context of the Political Economy

- Idea of “resilience” as a term to mean a return to a normal state or condition (Alexander, 2013)
- Path to an acceptable discourse where more extreme criticisms on global consumption patterns, energy use, and pollution generation is not uncomfortable or provocative (Hornborg, 2009)
- Potentially evades political discussion of a neoliberal system characterized by structural problems of power, conflicts of interest, and unequal distribution of wealth (Hornborg, 2009)
- Resilience incorporate knowledge of “resource management science,” where traditionally it contrasts with local management (Hornborg, 2009)

# Urban Perspective

- Urbanization Problems
  - Role of urban areas in exacerbating hazards
- Local Governance within DRR
  - DRR focuses on identifying the contributing factors to vulnerability at the community level
  - DRR examines the experience on disasters at the community level
- Problems with Implementing Engagements Aspects of SFDRR
  - Work stills need to be done by researchers to develop better methods to serve the needs of practitioners in relaying information at the community level
  - Approaches and methods for community engagement influencing bottom-up information also need to be improved

# Urban Perspective – Houston Case Study

- Urbanization's Role in Exacerbating Effects of Hurricane Harvey in 2017 (Zhang, Villarini, Vecchi, & Smith, 2018)
  - Positive correlation between urban growth and increased flood risk
  - Increased flooding due to urban growth and increases in asphalt and concrete that reduce the amount of water the ground can absorb
  - Increased effect on rainfall due to surface drag and surface warming
- Raises potential political questions on private development on flood zone areas, use of cheap but impermeable materials, and overdevelopment (Brody, 2017 )

# Urban Perspective – Houston Case Study

- Potential Resolutions (Brody, 2017)
  - Stop development in floodplain area. Increase buyout and relocation strategies (planning)
  - Adoption of permeable surfaces that absorb water better than asphalt (engineering)
  - Programs for ensuring local drain clean of debris. Consumer knowledge of purchasing homes in flood risk zones (community involvement)

# Political Economy – Venezuelan Migration Crisis

- Economic and political turmoil essentially a man-made disaster
- 3.4 Million Venezuelans estimated have left home country since 2015
- Health condition of migrants as they arrive to other countries
  - Suffering from severe malnutrition, fewer vaccinations, lack of prenatal care
  - Roraima, Brazil reported 2,576 malaria cases imported from Venezuela
  - Roraima, Brazil reported 4 out of 10 pregnancies are to Venezuelan mothers
- Political climate: In Colombia, citizenship given to children with at least one Colombian parent resulting in the risk of an “invisible generation” of Venezuelans that do not legally exist in either country
  - 4,000 births in Colombia from Venezuelan parents

# Political Economy – Venezuelan Migration Crisis

- Disaster Risk Reduction and migration (Osorio, 2019)
  - Medical aid missions to border countries of Venezuela
  - Inclusion of Venezuelan diaspora as spokespeople in humanitarian initiatives
- Brazil (Stein, 2019)
  - Relocation strategies of migrants from border areas to cities
- Peru (Stein, 2019)
  - Access to the Temporary Stay Permit (PTP) that allows access to work
  - As of November 2018, 350,000 obtained or were in process of obtaining the PTP
- Access to territory, documentation, asylum (Stein, 2019)

# Overview

- Examine issue of resilience and “building back better”
  - What can local governments and communities do to act on disaster risk reduction without falling into political inaction and conflicting political interests?
- SFDRR allows for more comprehensive view of disaster risk reduction, bottom-up, and local engagement but methods need to be refined
- What processes for bottom-up knowledge are most effective?
  - Oral history
  - Inclusion of local public spaces as resources for education convening



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**Thank You**