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## SDC Disaster Risk Reduction Network



### GPDRR 2019 from a Swiss Perspective

Dear SDC DRR Network members, dear colleagues

In May this year Switzerland hosted the 6th Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP) – and co-chaired this important global event together with UNDRR. The GP was a place to take stock on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, to demonstrate the world community's will to implement risk reduction policies for truly inclusive development, and to make a case for risk-informed development and a genuine cooperation between the public and the private sector. We wish to extend a very warm Thank You to UNDRR for the excellent organization, and co-chairing of this years' GP!

Switzerland is strongly committed to support DRR internationally and in its bilateral cooperation. Domestically, Switzerland promotes the cooperation between relevant offices to face present and future natural risks.



Jacqueline Schmid, SDC DRR Thematic Network

The present newsletter sheds a Swiss view on the Platform – enjoy the interviews with members of the Swiss Delegation.

Jacqueline Schmid

September 2019

## CONTENTS

[Lead article: Interviews from the Global Platform for DRR](#)

[The GP in a nutshell](#)

[Who is who: new faces in the DRR team](#)

[Interesting publications and events](#)

### **Lead article: Interviews from the GPDRR 2019**

***Regina Gujan, Deputy Head [Multilateral Affairs Division / Team Lead DRR at SDC.](#)***

**Regina, you have been the main driving force in the Swiss organizing team. Please give us some impressions about the planning and the final result of this major event.**



"The GP is much more than a onetime event – the GP is the most relevant international meeting on DRR, where key actors discuss achievements, progress and challenges related to the Sendai Framework for DRR. This process required preparations that started already one and half years before the GP, linking Swiss institutions through the Swiss DRR Consultative and Working Groups, setting up the GP program together with UNDRR, preparing the official Swiss statements and the ministerial round tables and high-level dialogues. Switzerland worked closely with UNDRR as the organizer and co-chair of the conference. Further, SDC contributed to the co-chair summary, which is the key outcome document of the event that will also feed into other multilateral processes. Based on our shared Swiss experience we could make the case that DRR pays off and builds resilience. Switzerland called for i) alignment between the three post-2015 frameworks, ii) risk-informed development investments,

iii) implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR, mainly Target E on national DRR strategies. It was worthwhile bringing people from 182 nations, from different sectors and various stakeholder groups together to exchange on needs and views and to develop new ideas for joint efforts." [\\*Read more\\*](#)

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**Dagmar Vogel, Head Infrastructure Financing Division at the [State Secretariat for Economic Affairs/SECO](#).**

**Dagmar, which were the highlights of the GP from the perspective of Infrastructure Financing?**

"I strongly noticed that DRR gained in importance and is increasingly integrated into public finance, through strategic budgeting analysis and layered options for DRR financing. SECO co-chaired the ministerial round table on risk-informed public and private investments which was an excellent opportunity to showcase the importance of DRR for governments, and the private sector, but also civil society – and the need for local-level implementation of national concepts. There was a broad consensus on the relevance of risk-informed infrastructure investments, and the integration of local needs. Furthermore, we were able to share our experience related to urban resilience, infrastructure and disaster risk financing in international economic development." [\\*Read more\\*](#)

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**Michael Szoenyi, Program Lead Flood Resilience at [Zurich Insurance](#).**



**Michael, why is the presence of the Private Sector at the GP so important?**

"The GP underlined the dual importance of DRR for the private sector: to support with adaptation, e.g. through risk reduction and insurance products, and with climate change mitigation on one hand. On the other hand as an exposed sector, which has to consider disaster risks to protect its own investments. One private sector representative at the GP gave a very strong statement: *You have to realize that 50-60% of micro, small and medium-size enterprises do not recover after disaster, and there*

*is strong correlation with the approx. 60-70% of businesses who do not have contingency plans in place.*

Yet, private sector representation was rather narrowly limited to the products and services of the insurance sector. Actors related to construction, management of infrastructure, food processing industry, agriculture and other highly relevant and concerned sectors were missing.

As a private sector actor we have to stay engaged beyond single GP events. Based on a solid collaboration between governments and other partners, the private sector involvement needs to be based on complementarities and supported by conducive policies, which was clearly expressed by some of the proponents in the ministerial sessions.” [\\*Read more\\*](#)

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***Beat von Däniken, Director for International Cooperation at [Swiss Red Cross](#)/Member of the [Swiss NGO DRR Platform](#).***

**Beat, how did the GP contribute to Leave no one behind (LNOB)?**

*“Compared to earlier GPs, the focus shifted from coordination towards collaboration and actively involving the Civil Society. The joint stakeholder declaration stated this clearly: *When people work together, they thrive together. Our lives are entirely interdependent and disasters, perhaps more than any other events, demonstrate this reality in stark relief.**

The event underlined the need for alignment between the Sendai Framework, the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development, and the Paris Climate Agreement, as well as Civil Society Organisations (CSO) initiatives such as the LNOB. The role of CSO’s has become well recognized by government actors, and strong international CSO movements have engaged to decentralize DRR capacities towards localizing aid, which supports an inclusive development.

Yet, advocacy for people-centered DRR requires a continuous effort beyond project level. The GP did not get sufficient attention in the media. A good communication strategy is required to showcase local level experience with fact-based results, to be boosted in collaboration between Civil Societies, Research and Media Institutions. The Swiss NGO’s have a lot to share!”

[\\*Read more\\*](#)

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***Carlo Scapoza, Head of the Flood Protection Section in the Hazard Prevention Division at the [Federal Office for the Environment/FOEN](#).***



**Carlo, how can the Swiss domestic experience with nature-based solutions enrich the dialogue of the global DRR community?**

“Eco-DRR measures generally have multi-purpose functions including risk reduction, improved biodiversity, and increased ecosystem services.

The working session on green, gray and blue infrastructure was a great opportunity to share Swiss learnings on the subsidiarity of central, cantonal and local levels, as well as requirements with respect to the legal basis and cost sharing.

To promote ECO-DRR on a big scale requires a wide consensus of different stakeholders, and measurable effectiveness indicators should be developed.

The experience in Switzerland shows that, for instance, avalanche protection forests are well accepted, whereas more extended riverbed restoration measures are often difficult to promote because of conflicting interests of agriculture, industry and settlement developers or other actors.”

**[\\*Read more\\*](#)**

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***Saskia Willemse, Head of Emergency Management and Warning Strategy at [MeteoSwiss](#), Member [Steering Committee on Intervention in Natural Hazards/LAINAT](#).***

**Saskia, the LAINAT coordinates the early warning activities of concerned units of the Swiss federal administration and continuously optimizes the multi hazards warning system that you have presented in an innovation booth at the GP. Which were your most precious insights?**

“The main challenge related to the Early Warning Systems (EWS) is not so much a technical one – it is about reaching out to the end-user, and to support the decision making process of the authorities including the needs of the population who are part of the so-called last mile. Therefore, we have to integrate better the end-users' perspective and to collaborate with the private sector for innovations beyond technical aspects. We aimed to share the Swiss multi-hazard EWS experience at the Swiss innovation booth: it is

based on a close collaboration between actors and responsible offices. Interactions at the GP and the EWS conference helped to understand how other countries are organized, for instance, in close collaboration with private service providers. Switzerland wishes to share its experience in the international cooperation, such as the CREWS initiative (Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems). Talking about Climate Change: in our interactions we also aimed to broaden our understanding on the integration of short and longer term impacts of climate change into the Swiss EWS, and potential for collaboration across borders.” [\\*Read more\\*](#)

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*Markus Wyss, member of the [Swiss National Platform for Natural Hazards/PLANAT](#), Chief Engineer at the [Cantonal Office of Roads and Rivers](#).*



**Markus, PLANAT as an extra-parliamentary and interdisciplinary commission is a pioneering multi-stakeholder Platform even at a global level. What experience were you able to share, and what were your learnings at the GP?**

“PLANAT is a body for consultation, strategic support, communication and knowledge dissemination related to natural hazards, representing several tiers of the federal governmental system, the academia, and practitioners from the private sector and professional associations; PLANAT is also responsible for the Sendai Framework reporting for Switzerland – although we considered the reporting to be too rigid to reflect countries’ local particularities, the task occurred to be an excellent opportunity for interaction between the various governmental entities within Switzerland.

PLANAT shared its DRR Strategy (2018) at the GP. In general, the discussions on DRR strategies remained on very generic levels. I wish to emphasize that defining action-related pathways would be needed to achieve progress. Yet, interesting statements were raised: many countries now acknowledge the need for national strategies as requested by Target E of the Sendai Framework, and that progress cannot be made without involvement of the local level. To make progress also includes learning from disasters and building back better, which is also relevant for Switzerland. The strong presence of women, and people particularly at risk, put emphasis

on their special needs to be explicitly integrated in DRR plans. Switzerland so far mainly addresses such issues implicitly." [\\*Read more\\*](#)

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*Stefan Brem, Head of Section Risk Analysis and Research Coordination at the [Federal Office for Civil Protection/FOCP](#).*

**Stefan, Switzerland has considerable experience in DRR related to FOCP's tools for critical infrastructure and the decentralized preparedness system. Which experience could you share at the**

**GP?**

"Indeed, in an OECD workshop we shared our experience related to the protection of critical infrastructure (CIP). Based on our methodology we identified the national critical infrastructures, relevant risks and the appropriate measures to protect critical infrastructure. Our Swiss risk management is based on a culture of risk. In a Learning Lab session, we highlighted our decentralized preparedness system with strong capacities at the local level, reinforced by a close collaboration with cantonal and national authorities including the private sector and academia. The Kataplan methodology developed by the FOCP provides an excellent guidance for joint risk assessment and action planning.

At the GP, I could learn from other countries how they tackle the issue at the national level. With our risk analysis and preparedness system, Switzerland is on track, following the principles of the Sendai Framework. However, a stronger involvement of other sectors of the federal administration is paramount in order to reflect not only the natural hazards, but also risks pertaining to pandemics, radioactivity, societal risks, for instance." [\\*Read more\\*](#)

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## **The GP 2019 in a nutshell**

The 6th session of the GP was co-chaired by Mr. Manuel Sager, State Secretary, Government of Switzerland, and Ms. Mami Mizutori, the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk

Reduction (UNDRR). Progress towards gender parity and accessibility was evident, although further work is needed. Half of the panelists, and 40% of participants were women; amplifying the voice of women leaders. The GP was also the most accessible to-date with more than 120 persons with disabilities in attendance.

- **Participants:** over 3'800 people from 182 countries
- **Venue:** 12-17 May 2019 in Geneva
- **Event formats:** 2 ministerial round tables, 5 high-level dialogues, 16 working sessions, 16 side events and one special session
- **Outcome documents:** [Co-chair summary](#), [summary of the meeting](#), [joint stakeholder declaration](#)
- **Publications:** [Global Assessment Report \(GAR\)](#), [selected publications](#), [all featured publications](#)
- **Pre-events:** [World Reconstruction Conference](#), [Multi-Hazard Early Warning Conference](#), [Science and Policy Forum](#), [Stakeholder Forum](#)
- **SFDRR progress:** 116 countries submitted a report of the implementation through the Sendai Framework Monitoring system, 91 countries developed DRR strategies (target E).
- **Swiss Engagement:** [Various events](#)
- **Further information:** [UNDRR website of GP](#)

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## Who is who - new faces in the DRR team



Julien Grunder,  
DRR Network  
moderator at  
SDC

### **Julien Grunder - DRR network moderator**

Julien Grunder is an SHA member, and joined the DRR Team in May 2019. He is responsible for M&E and supporting the DRR network and Shareweb.

Julien is an agronomist (MSc) specialized in food and resource economics. He worked at the Swiss Mission in Rome and at SDC in Bern. Before joining our team, Julien worked as a scientist at CABI. His main projects brought him to West Africa, the Mekong region and to Southern Europe, where he supported farmers and local communities, and promoted sustainable agricultural practices. Julien is also a

practicing farmer, and follows a training in toxicology.



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## Interesting publications and upcoming events

**SDC:** [Independent Evaluation of the Linkage of Humanitarian Aid and Development Cooperation at SDC \(nexus\).](#)

**SDC:** [Managing disaster risks and water under climate change in Central Asia and Caucasus](#) (by the SDC Thematic Networks Climate Change and Environment, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Water)

**ODI, UNDP, SDC:** [Risk-informed development - from crisis to resilience.](#)

**Swiss NGO DRR Platform:** Various useful [guidance notes](#):

- Towards climate and disaster resilient development, a packing list for your advocacy journey,
- Inclusive DRR Hands-on Tool,
- DRR / CCA Mainstreaming Guidance,
- Evaluation of Cost-Benefit Analysis Tools for DRR.

### **CSS - ETH:**

Two new [Risk and Resilience Reports](#) on the Swiss Civil Protection System.

**Two Brown Bag Lunch Events at SDC Bern:** further information and registration online:

- 18 Sep 2019 in Bern: [Risk-informed development](#) - from crisis to resilience, based on above ODI/UNDP/SDC report.
- 25 Sep 2019 in Bern: [Resilient cities](#): what can we do in practice? With inputs from Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance, Save the Children EBP.



[on the SDC DRR Shareweb.](#)

Next newsletter to be published in November 2019.

**Further publications, news and events**

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