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Integrated Disaster Risk Management

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Just the first one and one-half decades of this new century have witnessed a series of large-scale, unprecedented disasters in different regions of the globe, both natural and human-triggered, some quite new and others conventional. Unfortunately, this adds to the evidence of the urgent need to address such crises as time passes. It is now commonly accepted that disaster risk reduction (DRR) requires tackling the various factors that influence a society's vulnerability to disasters in an integrated and comprehensive way, and with due attention to the limited resources at our disposal. Thus, integrated disaster risk management (IDRiM) is essential. Success will require integration of disciplines, stakeholders, different levels of government, and of global, regional, national, local, and individual efforts. In any particular disaster-prone area, integration is also crucial in the long-enduring processes of managing risks and critical events before, during, and after disasters.

Although the need for integrated disaster risk management is widely recognized, there are still considerable gaps between theory and practice. Civil protection authorities; government agencies in charge of delineating economic, social, urban, or environmental policies; city planning, water and waste-disposal departments; health departments, and others often work independently and without consideration of the hazards in their own and adjacent territories or the risk to which they may be unintentionally subjecting their citizens. Typically, disaster and development tend to be in mutual conflict but should, and could, be creatively governed to harmonize both, thanks to technological innovation as well as the design of new institutions.

Thus, many questions on how to implement integrated disaster risk management in different contexts, across different hazards, and interrelated issues remain. Furthermore, the need to document and learn from successfully applied risk reduction initiatives, including the methodologies or processes used, the resources, the context, and other aspects are imperative to avoid duplication and the repetition of mistakes. With a view to addressing the above concerns and issues, the International Society of Integrated Disaster Risk Management (IDRiM) was established in October 2009.

The main aim of the IDRiM Book Series is to promote knowledge transfer and dissemination of information on all aspects of IDRiM. This series will provide comprehensive coverage of topics and themes including dissemination of successful models for implementation of IDRiM and comparative case studies, innovative countermeasures for disaster risk reduction, and interdisciplinary research and education in real-world contexts in various geographic, climatic, political, cultural, and social systems.

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