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# Role of Diverse Actors in National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction in West Africa: A Case of Togo and Niger National Platforms

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The **African Leadership Centre** (ALC) was established in Kenya in June 2010 as an initiative of the Conflict, Security & Development Group (CSDG) at King's College London. Its overall goal is to build a new community of leaders generating cutting-edge knowledge for peace, security and development in Africa. To that end, it works to build the capacity of individuals, communities and institutions across Africa which can contribute to peace and stability.

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By IBRAHIM MALAM SOUMAILA

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PLATFORMS FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN  
WEST AFRICA:  
A CASE OF TOGO AND NIGER NATIONAL  
PLATFORMS**

This paper is the product of research conducted during attachment to ECOWAS as part FOREWARN Programme. Any errors contained therein are the fault of the author





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# Abstract

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Given the multitude of hazards that vulnerable populations are exposed to, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is now considered a development challenge that requires political commitment and collaboration of different actors. National platforms that bring together multiple stakeholders (political authorities, civil society, scientists, the private sector, the military, relevant government departments and agencies and the media) are thus created to serve as; the coordinating mechanism for the integration of DRR into development policies, planning and programmes and to enhance synergy of resilience to disaster risk. Additionally, national platforms are multi-sector committees which promote ownership and national leadership in DRR and work towards integrating it in sustainable development programs and projects. The success of a national platform therefore is based on the role of each stakeholder. Pursuant to the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (HFA),<sup>1</sup> the ECOWAS Commission's DRR Division has since 2007 embarked on an aggressive mission of setting up and strengthening national platforms for DRR in the fifteen ECOWAS member states.

With the above in mind, this paper examines the importance of national platforms for DRR in West Africa, with a focus on the status of the national platforms of Togo and Guinea, their operational objectives, issues around coordination, and the roles to be played by each actor in order to meet the expected results. The paper also explores challenges currently faced by ECOWAS DRR Division especially with regard to establishing and strengthening national platforms and make recommendations to ECOWAS on ways to overcome some of the challenges. The research utilises various qualitative methods to gathering data for the research. This includes: secondary sources such as literature review and, web-based resources, as well as primary sources from interviews with relevant ECOWAS and Member State officers; reviewing reports from meetings with national platforms in Niger and Guinea, evaluation of plans and progress of the ECOWAS DRR Division; analysis of the composition and functionality of the national platforms of Togo and Guinea. The paper is divided into five sections. The first section gives the background to national platforms, the context of national platforms in the region and their importance.

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<sup>1</sup>Hyogo framework for action 2005-2015

Sections two and three focus on specific cases; the situation of the National Platforms in Togo and Guinea respectively, with a view to synthesizing the role of diverse actors and how to improve coordination among them. The final section engages in analysis of the cases and proffers recommendations for ECOWAS.



# 1.0 Introduction:

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## 1.1 Background on National Platforms

Facing increasing natural disasters around the world, one hundred and sixty-eight states met in January 2005 in Kobe, Japan and adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) which marks their commitment to disasters risk reduction (DRR).<sup>2</sup> This non-binding policy framework is part of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and among the priorities for 2005-2015 is the support to the creation and strengthening of the National Platforms for DRR. The Global Platform for DRR was established by the UN General Assembly in 2006 as the leading forum for DRR. The platform has since 2007 been sponsored by the UN and is complemented by a system of thematic, regional and national platforms gathering all important stakeholders. It has become the largest gathering of stakeholders (including international organizations, nongovernmental organisations, ministries, departments and agencies in Member States) in reducing disaster risk and sessions are held every two years to assess progress in the implementation of the five priorities of the HFA. A regional strategy for disaster prevention was developed with guidelines for integration of DRR into development programmes by the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The African Regional Platform on DRR was endorsed by the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Africa Ministerial Conference on the Environment in 2004.<sup>3</sup> The aim of the conference was to provide a forum for national platforms and their focal points and also to be the institutional link between the global platform and National Platforms. A comprehensive programme of action (2006-2015) was also adopted to comply with HFA. At the regional level, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with the support of external partners, such as UNISDR are trying to implement the Regional Strategy on DRR and the HFA. Moreover, ECOWAS has adopted guidelines for building national platforms in the

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<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>ECOWAS Policy for Disaster Risk Reduction,

fifteen member states. Currently, National Platforms are being created across the West African region, but the attainment of a sustainable and efficient coordination mechanism among the stakeholders remains a challenge. Some of these platforms were established from the years 2007-2008 (Togo, Senegal), while others were established in 2012 (Niger, Benin) and they are attached in various ministries and institutions. The capacity and level of operationalisation of the National Platforms are not at par. Some are not yet operational either due to lack of political support, leadership in coordination, financial resources, technical capacity or the low representation of non-governmental parties such as civil society, private sector, and the media. Furthermore, those that are operational lack sufficient capacity to carry out or support the activities in their action plans.

The National Platforms are established to create a national arrangement, conducted as a forum, a committee, network, which advocates for DRR at different levels, and also contributes to both the analysis and advice of the DRR action through a coordinated and participatory process. National platforms are important for the integration of DRR into development policies and strategies, advocacy for resource mobilization, public awareness on disaster risk at national, regional and local levels. They create a synergy in actions by different actors; they also create a national leadership and provide a pool of expertise and information to stakeholders in DRR. DRR is a long term process and the National Platform is an ideal framework for planning, information sharing and education to build resilience to disaster risks. With stakeholders such as civil society and the media, national platforms have enormous potential to provide information to the general public and policy makers.

## **1.2 Objectives of the study**

The main objective of this paper is to highlight the roles and potential contributions of diverse actors in a national platform for DRR and how to achieve better coordination of their efforts in promoting DRR. Other objectives include the following:

- Highlight challenges that are encountered by national platforms for DRR in the region;
- Examine how ECOWAS member states can achieve better results working through the DRR national platforms;
- Examine the support of ECOWAS to the creation and strengthening of national platforms in Member States;

- Make recommendations to ECOWAS in its work to establish and strengthen national platforms.

### **1.3 Structure and Methodology**

The research utilises mainly qualitative methods of gathering data which include secondary sources such as literature review, web-based resources, and primary sources like interviews with relevant ECOWAS and Member State officers, meetings with national platforms in Niger and Guinea, evaluation of plans and progress reports of the ECOWAS DRR Division, as well as analysis of the composition and functionality of the national platforms of Togo and Guinea. The paper is divided into five sections. The first section gives the background to national platforms, the context of national platforms in the region and their importance. Sections two and three focus on specific cases: the situation of the National Platforms in Togo and Guinea respectively, with a view to synthesizing the role of diverse actors and how to improve coordination among them. The final section engages in analysis of the cases and proffers recommendations for ECOWAS.

### **1.4 Statement of the Problem**

According to the UNISDR, most disasters can be anticipated and avoided if the authorities work in synergy with key stakeholders including government agencies, lawmakers, the private sector, the media, civil society, NGOs, and community-based organizations to address disaster risk, disseminate relevant information and early warnings, help communities prevent disasters and recover from them, and build resilient infrastructure.<sup>4</sup>

National platforms fill a very important gap. A national platform that brings together actors from various sectors coordinates the implementation of the HFA and as such spearheads the integration of DRR into development policies and strategies and advocate for resource mobilization. The role and potential contribution of each actor in the national platform should be clarified and coordination among them improved. The effective operationality of the National Platforms can increase the success of DRR activities by channelling the coordinated efforts to the areas of most need, leveraging human capacity, technical and

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<sup>4</sup>Nigeria: Vers une Plate-forme nationale pour la réduction des risques de catastrophe. *SIPC Informations*. 5. 6-7.

financial resources in different sectors and leading to greater and wider impact, results in reducing disaster and building resilience.

To reduce the impact of disasters in the region, the ECOWAS Commission has developed guidelines for establishing and strengthening national platforms in Member States and adopted a DRR policy and an action plan (2009-2013). The implementation of this action plan requires the strengthening of National Platforms to provide a basis for effective DRR at national and local levels. Nine countries of the region (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea Conakry, Ivory coast, Liberia, Mali and Sierra Leone) have already benefited from the support of the DRR Division of the ECOWAS Commission in establishing and strengthening of National Platforms on DRR. Accordingly, several workshops organised by the DRR Division gives the opportunity for stakeholders to discuss issues of the functionality of the NPs and to find ways to strengthen coordination.

## 2.0 Togo National Platform

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### 2.1 Organisational set up and coordination

The Togo National Platform for DRR was among the first established in the region. The Platform was created by order of the Minister of Environment and Forest Resources in April 2007 and it brings together representatives of several ministries (Environment, Interior and civil protection social action, health, cooperation, territorial administration and decentralisation, territory engagement, academic research institutions (University of Lome), the private sector and civil society (ONG and Associations). A Technical Secretariat of the National Platform for DRR) has been set under the Ministry of Environment and Forest Resources which is the focal point of the Hyogo Framework for Action. The platform operates on the basis of an annual work plan and meets three times a year in plenary (or when needed) and the board meets once a month.<sup>5</sup> The National Platform has five sub-committees: policy, research and education; communication; information and training; preparation and management of emergencies; and the subcommittee on resource mobilization.

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<sup>5</sup> Togo : Rapport national de suivi sur la mise en œuvre du Cadre d'action de Hyogo (2009-2011)

## **2.2 Operational objectives**

Like other NPs, the mission of Togo's NP is to provide support for the integration of DRR into development plans and programs, advocacy for resources mobilization from national and international partners, and facilitate the synergy of actions between stakeholders.

## **2.3 Opportunities and challenges**

### **2.3.1 Opportunities**

Togo's National Platform has strengthened its technical secretariat with human resource as well as identifying collaborative institutions such as the ministries, academic, meteorological service were identified. Moreover, several studies related to DRR have been undertaken in the country such as the diagnosis of risks at national and local levels accompanied by a national map, the national poverty reduction strategy. In addition, the National Platform has carried out several activities particularly: the integration of DRR into development plans and strategies such as the strategy for poverty reduction, national and regional contingency plans, a national action plan for climate change adaptation (CCA) and a national investment program for the environment and natural resources.<sup>6</sup> Five local platforms have been established and an early warning system set up. A training workshop and networking involving journalists and media operators on communication standards in crisis and emergency was held in November 2011 to the setting up and strengthen the capacity of the National Platform.

With the support of the UNDP, the coordination and response of the National Platform to disasters has significantly improved and a National Strategy for Disaster Management developed. A strategic framework for disaster prevention and management has been articulated and this includes the development of the culture of risk reduction through the integration of the subject in schools' curricula at primary and secondary.<sup>7</sup>

As part of the implementation of programme for prevention and management of crisis and natural disasters, other activities were carried out including the updating of the national contingency awareness of parliamentarians on the integration of DRR and CCA in the

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.  
<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

planning instruments, the establishment of networks of women leaders in DRR, an agreement with the University of Lome for the promotion of research in disasters. The evaluation of damages, losses and post-disaster reconstruction following the 2010 flooding were conducted the government of Togo with the support the World Bank and UNDP.

### **2.3.2 Challenges**

No percentage of the national budgets allocated to DRR and emergency funds do not exist, the activities of the national platform are financed by the Ministry of Environment and Forest Resources and by development partners including UNDP, UNICEF, and Plan International. The rapidity and capacity of the National Platform to respond to disasters depends on fundraising and international aid. Additionally the focal points of the different stakeholders are nominated but the challenges of the national platform are the mobilization of the financial resources, capacity building, building synergy in stakeholders planning and action, and consolidating coordination. For instance, within the government, several departments deal with DRR like the Ministry of Environment and Forest Resources, Ministry of Civil Protection, Ministry of Social Action, and Ministry of Health and the coordination of diverse actors including the civil society becomes a big challenge for the NP. Therefore, In terms of administrative governance, Togo adopted a law on decentralisation. The National Platform has the responsibility to extend its work to or promote the establishment of similar committees to rural communities by integrating DRR into local development plans. The extension of the tools and capacity to respond to emergency at local level remain a challenge for the NP.

The Togo National Platform is yet to benefit from the pilot project of the DRR Division of ECOWAS Commission of supporting the strengthening of NPs within the region to promote more cooperation and effective communication and network between the ECOWAS Commission and focal points of NPs.

## 3.0 Niger National Platform

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### 3.1 Organisational set up and coordination

The National Platform for DRR prevention of Niger is created by Order No.0030/PM of February 9, 2012 and officially launched in 19 July 2012. It is under the institution of the Prime Minister cabinet.

About sixty six members from the different sectors (government, private sector, civil society, women's organisations, traditional leaders and associations of municipalities) make up the National Platform which is has a permanent secretariat ensured by the EWS coordination cell. The NP is composed of an executive bureau, five sub committees and representatives at regional and local level.

The text of the NP creation is under review to add some new structures created by the Government and working on DRR.

In addition to the governmental structures, civil society, private sector, the media, research institutions, the Niger National platform also includes also representatives of opinions leaders such as women's associations; religious and traditional leaders and Association of Municipalities of Niger.

Furthermore, Niger's The National Platform has organized a technical meeting and activities with local NGOs and UNDP as well as with ECOWAS to among other things clarify the key concepts and what is really DRR and its objectives

## 3.2 Objectives

The objective of the Niger NP is to develop with of all the stakeholders a culture of risk prevention and reduction among the people. Among the task of the NP are the development of a national plan for the risk prevention and reduction of natural disaster, access and analyse the probability of the risk and estimate the vulnerability of the population and the environment, set an integrated information and communication system, a data base on disaster prevention and management and maps of risks.

## 3.3 Opportunities

The national budget provides an annual amount of 1, 000,000,000 CFA to the crises and disasters.<sup>8</sup> A disaster recovery plan is being developed and a capacity building program of grassroots communities in DRR has begun.

DRR is managed by the Coordination Cell of the Early Warning System (EWS) and Disaster Prevention) under the supervision of the Office of the Prime Minister. Early warning systems are in place at central, regional, sub-regional, municipal and community level through regional and sub regional committees for the prevention and management of disasters and food crises. The Early Warning System collects process and disseminates information relevant to the risk of food crises that could affect certain areas of the country. It is supported by an interdisciplinary working group of providers and users of information in all areas of prevention and crisis management. For instance, resources are mobilised for the management of food safety but it is not the same for rapid onset disasters such as floods.

The activities of the cell although mostly oriented towards the management of food and nutritional crises, cover part of the objective of a National platform for DRR. Significant results were obtained in the risk reduction and these include: Annual and monthly monitoring of vulnerable areas and national survey on household food security, National Contingency Plan, National platform for disaster risk reduction. Studies have been performed in order to take into account the risks associated with climate change in the system of early warning. Sensitization workshops are organized regularly enough to the attention of populations at risk. Furthermore, a technical committee for prevention and monitoring of floods has been set. This committee's role is to conduct a study on the establishment of an inventory and technical analysis of risk factors for flooding and aims to

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<sup>8</sup>Niger: National progress report on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2011-2013).

provide a mapping of vulnerable areas to flooding and the mitigation measures to reduce their occurrence. The program of prevention and management of crises and natural disasters and recovery implemented by UNDP with the partnership with the Prime Minister's Office has conducted several activities for DRR. Under this program, a contingency plan and five (5) National Comprehensive regional plans have been developed, the national organization of relief updated, a communication strategy in crisis situations distributed and ageo-referenced database implemented. To strengthen the capacity of local elected in DRR, observatories for vulnerability monitoring were implemented at certain towns and villages and this action must continue.<sup>9</sup> A national strategy on DRR is currently in development and the validation workshop is planned to be held in April 2013.

The decentralisation offers also an opportunity for the NP by bringing the administrative authorities close the communities.

The bureau of the NP is compound of the officials at high level of the decision makers which is also an opportunity for the advocacy towards the authorities and others development partners.

### **3.4 Challenges**

The new launched National platform has several constraints including its operationalization, the integration of DRR into development strategies, increased advocacy for adequate national budget, the coordination management and mobilization of human resources and logistics. The financial resource to carry out some activities is the most challenge for the newly NP. The change of members representing some structures during the meeting is another challenge because the members are not named officially in the text but a representative of the structure.

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<sup>9</sup>UNDP. (2012), *Plan de travail Biennal : prévention et gestion des crises et catastrophes naturelles et relèvement*. [En ligne]. United Nations Development Programme. disponible à l'adresse:<http://bit.ly/14c6rBz>. Consulté le: 12 Mars 2013.

## 4.0 Role of different Actors

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### 4.1 Government and Government bodies

The government have the mandate to set the policies, plans and guidelines for DRR as well as to ensure that those policies are implemented. This is largely because DRR is a problem of development. Moreover, the integration of DRR into development policies and strategies, the government has a national commitment to protect populations against natural hazards through legislation and allocation of substantial financial resources. The government has the role of facilitating and encouraging the participation of all stakeholders in the National Platform for DRR and measures for the availability of the information and data set in place for better disaster risk analysis. In addition Regional and local National Platform should be implemented by the government and the resources allocated to their operation.

The legislatives and others regulations on DRR must be applied by the government and a risk profile of the country should be done by risk identification and vulnerability assessment. The vulnerable areas prone to disaster should be listed and known to the public by the government. Opinion leaders should be part of the PN given their influence with local communities. The national weather services should made hydro meteorological information and weather forecasts available to the National Platform and the public. The focal points of the Ministry of Education should integrate DRR into school curricula. The development planners have the responsibility to explain to the decisions makers the linkage between the development, poverty and disaster so that the DRR become a priority in the national planning.

Others structures such as the civil protection and fire services have a role in education and training of people on relief in case of dangers such as fire. Security forces such as the police should monitor the roads traffic to reduce road accidents caused by speeding, organise patrols and raising awareness raising campaigns for reducing the risk of conflict in the rural area.

## **4.2 Research Institutions**

Research and academic institutions have the role of making data available to the National Platform on current and future risk trends and how to be better prepared. These structures raise concerns to the government and all other stakeholders based on the analysis of their findings and their implications in terms of the risks if the necessary measures are not implemented. These results should be giving to the National Platform members and public in a comprehensible manner so that the population remains confident to the information provided. This is particularly relevant to weather forecasts which are issued daily.

## **4.3 Civil Society**

Civil society places an important role in the National Platform for lobbying funding, creating partnership with international agencies, research advocacy and mobilisation, and the creation of network for DRR. Local people trust more the civil society which allows them to infuse a behaviour change and awareness in DRR. Additionally, the civil society also has a role in conducting advocacy campaigns on DRR, challenge the government to put in place measures to prevent and reduce risks rather than responding. Moreover, civil also acts society is the spokesperson of vulnerable populations, and may in this case express the views of the latter at the National Platform. Civil society, great capacity for communication and awareness is very important in the activities of a Platform. She must fight and prevent planning in an area at risk and require environmental impact studies prior to installation of any project or factory to avoid disaster risk. Civil society also has a responsibility for ensuring good governance and transparency in the management of funds allocated to the activities of the National Platform.

## **4.4 Private Sector**

The private sector needs to assist in must help financing DRR not only to protect its business and reduce the cost of recovery. The private sector can also finance training of various capacities building in preventing and responding to emergencies at the local, regional, national. This can improve the quality and effectiveness of interventions emergency disasters and these types of training also strengthen organizational capacity and resilience of local communities in DRR. Moreover the insurance and reinsurance companies involved in the national platform for DRR needs to must make the micro-insurance accessible by the community. The microfinance will in turn reduce the vulnerability of the populations through the microloan and micro savings. Additionally, the private sector, on its activities can reduce the cause of hazards to local populations. Therefore, for this reason, this the environmental management plan and social developed during the environmental impacts studies of establishing a business should be monitored and evaluated so as to reduce the environmental risks that could lead to disaster.

## **4.5 Media**

The media role in the NP disaster management is extremely important, because the information must be available before, during and after the crisis. Journalists can help raise awareness about disasters through the production and dissemination of reports and spots to people. Journalists' members of the NP must prepare and disseminate the NP programs on the prevention of disaster in local languages through the community radio and this bring so the message of the PN at the community level. The media should play a prominent role in a transparent management of the NP by denouncing any act or activity that is not included in the annual work plan of the National Platform.

## **4.6 Women Association**

During disasters, women (children and elderly) are most vulnerable. Women's groups involved in National Platforms play a crucial role in raising awareness among the population. Women associations have the capacity of people mobilisation and advocacy for the implementation of the action plan.

## **4.7 Opinion Leaders**

The opinions leaders have significant big influence in the community life and for this they can disseminate the objectives and activities of the NP to the community level. Their presence in the National Platform can enhance the awareness campaign through the mobilization of the populations.

The municipalities are the closest to government administration to the people through which the councillors can raise awareness on DRR. The opinions leaders can draw the community and volunteers participation on DRR activities and have an information network which can help the NP.

## **4.8 Regional Organisation**

The ECOWAS Commission have the role to ensure that the NPs are set in the member States following the guidelines on DRR NP, the ECOWAS Policy and plan of action and the Hyogo framework 2005-2015. Training workshops where the institutional framework, national strategies and policies on DRR are presented and discussed should be organised by the DRR Division of ECOWAS. Participants must be also built on the regional and sub-regional policies and ECOWAS guidelines for NP.

Such workshops provide an opportunity for capacity building of the members of the PN, exchange of experience through the presentation of the activities on DRR by each NP members and also share tasks among committees considering the number stakeholders.

## **4.9 International agencies**

The international agencies such as the International Secretariat for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and the Global Facility for Disaster Risk Prevention and Recovery (GFDRR) have to support the member States through the training of members of NP in capacity building and disaster prevention, vulnerability reduction and building resilience of the communities.

## 5.0 Analyses and Recommendations

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### 5.1 Analyses

Despite some achievements, there is a similar constraint for both the two National Platforms. The main ones include: challenges in the integration of DRR into policies and development programs, and to make the culture of risk as an integral part of population's life; as well as ensuring for the effective functionality of the National Platforms. Additionally, the National Platforms lack sufficient data for the prevention and management of disasters as well as application of the legislatives texts. Furthermore, there is also a lack of sufficient human, financial, technical and logistical resources. In addition, relying entirely on external funding reduces the operational effectiveness of National Platforms by blocking the implementation of the national strategy on DRR as well as national and regional action plans. Nevertheless, insufficient financial resources for DRR in the national budget show that DRR is not a national priority and the National Platforms has enormous work of developing advocacy campaigns towards the decisions makers. The percentage for DRR in the national budget is inadequate considering the needs for building disaster resilient populations. Emergency funds for disaster management are not implemented (but Niger which is facing annual recurrent food crisis provides funds for food security) this and shows the dependence of the NP and the country to the partners support in case of disasters. An additional challenge is that as several institutions conduct disaster management in their area, this may often results to problem in coordination at the national platform. Moreover, some parties see the functionality of the not as a synergy of actions rather than a withdrawal of their duties, and this undermines the activities of the National Platforms and its operations.

The major difference between the Togo and Niger National Platforms is that, the Niger National Platform includes the opinions leaders such as traditional rulers and religious associations, and is under the supervision of the Prime Minister. The Togo National Platform on the other hand is in the ministry of Environment and Forest Resources. Furthermore, the Niger National Platform includes also a representative of general directorate of Insurance which can offer a many opportunities to include the culture of insurance in risk reduction in the National Platform's work plan.

Nonetheless, a great deal advocacy work with policy makers and legislators needs to be conducted by the National Platforms for a better consideration of DRR in the national budget, strategies and programmes. Additionally creating of Subcommittees in the National Platform is a good idea especially for sharing the responsibility and looking for the efficiency of all members. The Sub-committees on political and resource mobilisation are in particular responsible for this task and also the establishment of an emergency fund for an immediate and effective response in case of a disaster. Furthermore the subcommittee Communication toned to develop and disseminate tools for advocacy and awareness against policymakers at all levels as well as organising training sessions for opinion leaders and local authorities. Dependency of international aid in a crisis not only increases the extent of the disaster but also the number of victims and reconstruction costs.

The availability and reliability of data on risk prevention and reduction is also an important element in DRR, and planning activities of the NP and the NP members have an insufficient capacity for this. Training sessions need to be organised regularly by the National Platforms and other development partners. There is also need for sharing of information, identify priorities and also updating the focal points on regional and international guidelines on DRR. Furthermore better coordination and collaboration of all members of the National Platforms is necessary in order to respond effectively to disasters. Moreover, the synergy of all actors is needed so as to strengthen national capacity to respond to a crisis's, which at the moment is insufficient. . To make this role effective, integration of DRR in development activities, the supporting to the local platforms has to be enhanced by the National Platforms as well as the local authorities. This will contribute to increasing resilience among local communities.

Decentralising National Platforms will also create a culture of disaster prevention at the local level through the sharing of information and transfer of knowledge. Additionally it can also serve as a DRR tool for reducing vulnerability to disasters.

Training of journalists by DRR specialists is required for better sharing information on disasters and early warning in order to bring awareness and behaviour change at the population level

But training workshops sessions on DRR and its objectives of these subcommittees have to be organised.

To carry out this action plan, National Platforms also require substantial financial resources. Consequently the resource mobilisation subcommittee should diversify sources for funds for their National budgets by soliciting support from diverse sources like development partners and the private sector. The national budget and international aid are mostly used in issues such as education, health, employment, food security and the DRR is left.

The collaboration of all the members of the NP is one of the key elements for the achievement of the objectives of DRR especially in building the resilience of communities. The expertise of diverse actor's is an added value which is necessary for the synergy of activities of the National Platform. Additionally to facilitate collaboration between various structures of the government and others stakeholders, the coordination of the National Platforms should be under the presidency or the prime minister. Strengthening capacity for training of key actors on DRR is currently infrequent and the duration insufficient and they are always funded by development partners.

There is a need to build the capacity of National Platforms largely because most of them are nominated by their respective institutions and they are not necessarily specialists in DRR. Therefore, trainings are needed to assist them internalise principles, legal and policies instruments on DRR and their role.

## 5.2 Recommendations

To build resilience communities, the following recommendations could be adopted by different stakeholders of DRR:

### **Members of National Platforms could consider**

- Working in synergy and collaboration.
- Developing a culture of risk prevention around its environment.
- Sharing data and experiences on the risks identified in its field.
- Consider engaging volunteers.
- Developing advocacy campaigns for resource mobilisation.

### **National Platform could consider the following**

- Coordinating the collection, management and dissemination of data and information on disaster risk.
- Organising regular training sessions on DRR for the members both at local and national levels.
- Working towards the culture of risk prevention at the population level,
- Developing partnerships for the exchange of experience and source of funding,
- Producing maps and master plans of areas at risk such as, those on flood forecasting and floods. These maps can be made available to various users.
- Enhancing transparency in its management.

### **National Government could consider**

- Legitimatising the National Platform to give it a solid foundation in order to fulfil its mission.
- Allocating adequate financial resources for the activities of the National Platform.

- Legislating integration of DRR into policies and development programs. Strengthening the coordinating capacity of the National Platforms
- Enforcing compliance with regional and international commitments in the field of DRR particularly the ECOWAS DRR policy, AU DRR policy and HFA (2005-2015).

### **5.2.1 ECOWAS Commission**

The DRR Division of the Directorate of Humanitarian and Social Affairs could consider;

- Organising training sessions for National Platform members in the Members States as well as building the capacity of DRR to enhance the functionality of National Platforms.
- Developing projects on DRR for National Platforms of the members States based on the strategic axes of their National Strategy on DRR.
- Regularly informing member States in National Platforms on funding opportunities on DRR,
- Setting policies towards the financing of National Platforms by member States.
- Focusing more on preparedness and prevention of disasters through simulation exercises.
- Setting up a regional platform which could coordinate the National Platforms at regional level.
- Organising study tours between different National Platforms in the region to enable exchanges in experiences on disaster management.
- Maintain the collaboration with the WAEMU on DRR activities to avoid duplication of the actions

### **5.2.2 International Agencies**

- Assist National Platforms in acquisition of specific equipment and materials.
- Provide experts on DRR to assist in building the capacity of National Platforms building capacity,
- Assist in funds raising.

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