

Thematic Session 2

**Policy and
Governance
Landscape for DRI**

14:45 – 16:30

Tuesday, 19th March 2019

Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi

IWDRI 2019

The Panel

Moderator

- National Disaster Management Authority, India

Speakers

- *Introduction to the session*, National Disaster Management Authority, India
- *Urbanization and infrastructure*, Amit Prothi and Katrin Bruebach, 100 Resilient Cities

Discussants

- Chairs and moderators of breakout sessions.

Session Format

This session will begin with two overview presentations and then breakout into 3 parallel sessions to discuss different contexts.

Each breakout session will have presentations by speakers of 10 minutes each highlighting the key challenges and opportunities for their context, followed by a moderated discussion.

Overview

Infrastructure has the power to enable smooth functioning of economies. This session will present the big picture of the policy discourse and governance mechanisms that are aiding and ailing decision making for key infrastructure sectors, mainstreaming disaster risk management and harmonization of related policies. The session will advance thinking on these issues for a specific typologies of economies with particular geographical and socio-economic characteristics. The joint panel discussion will reflect on gaps and opportunities for knowledge exchange between the groups.

Questions to be addressed in each grouping and context

1. What are good examples where leadership of the national or regional government is providing a coherent basis for decision-making to inform investment in risk-informed investments in developing and maintaining infrastructure?
2. How is resilience to infrastructure approached in different economic and geographical contexts? What are the critical issues in governance systems that drive this decision?
3. What are the potential areas of partnerships between countries that may be forged under the CDRI to address these issues and improve practices?

Background and context

Given the government's central role in planning, funding and providing infrastructure, they must aim to have an accurate estimation of the risks faced by their infrastructure, implement clear standards and policies at the time of construction and have a plan for the recovery and reconstruction of critical infrastructure.

There is a growing realisation that infrastructure resilience needs to be looked at in a system of systems perspective. National governments will have to provide the institutional basis for the implementation of a systems approach. Governments will have to consider mechanisms for mainstreaming of disaster risk management considerations at all levels and a harmonisation of policies to build national resilience.

Three typologies of development contexts have been identified to help unpack the issues and challenges faced by countries that have different levels of infrastructure growth, economic development, and geographical characteristics. While these contexts present a large diversity of challenges, the typologies attempt to bring together countries with similar contexts so as to help identify the institutional arrangements required to build disaster resilient infrastructure in their context.

The three typologies that have been identified are:

1. Large incoming investment in new infrastructure stock

This session addresses economies where a large amount of investment is expected in building new infrastructure. The focus in these contexts is on putting in place the regulatory and governance structures that would be required to ensure the construction and maintenance of resilient infrastructure.

2. Focus on refurbishment and replacement of existing infrastructure stock

This session addresses economies where there is a heavy focus on refurbishment and replacement of existing infrastructure stock and relatively lower low levels of new investment. The focus in these contexts is on the challenge of reinforcing, protecting and upgrading existing infrastructure, and putting in place risk financing measures.

3. Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Landlocked Countries (LLC)

This session addresses economies that are isolated from the global supply chain by land, as is the case for Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), or by sea, as is the case for small island developing states (SDIS). Countries that depend on single ports, airports, pipelines, or highways, are severely constrained in their economic and social development. The challenge for these nations is not only protection and reduction of

domestic vulnerability, but also diversification and creating redundancy in their infrastructure systems.

Challenges to building infrastructure resilience

The Institute for Government, UK published a report titled *How to design an infrastructure strategy for the UK* in 2017.¹ It identified three main problems with the system of decision making about infrastructure in the country. The report also sets out recommendations to tackling these problems.

While the report addresses the entire infrastructure decision making process, building resilient infrastructure would also require similar arrangements. Thus, the problems and recommendations have been restated in generalised terms below, to serve as discussion points for this session.

Problem 1:

Without a credible evidence base and long-term approach, infrastructure decision making is subject to continuous and disruptive policy change.

Regular changes in political leadership lead to regular changes in national infrastructure policies and priorities, with a focus on short-term objectives. Building infrastructure resilience requires decisions to be evidence-based and focussed on the long term future. Infrastructure projects, particularly large ones, can take years to build and often have lifetimes of several decades or more. Constant policy change disrupts this process, resulting in delays, additional expense and poorly co-ordinated projects.

Recommendations for mitigation:

- Develop an independent national body that assesses long term infrastructure needs and makes recommendations to the government.
- Such a body should provide clear evidence for its recommendations and public statements.
- The general public must be made aware of the work done by this body. This would provide citizens and the private sector a rational basis for decision making. It will also help them to align their expectations regarding future developments.

¹ <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publications/how-design-infrastructure-strategy-uk>

Problem 2:

The lack of an overarching strategy to guide decision making leads to poor co-ordination between government departments and levels of government

Government departments building various types of infrastructure usually work in silos. The lack of an overarching strategy for resilience building leads to a lack of coordination between the departments and across levels of government. The systems of systems approach points to the need for a national level strategy that understands the interactions between various infrastructure systems and harmonises policies and plans for national resilience building.

Recommendations for mitigation:

- Governments should develop a cross-governmental national strategy for infrastructure resilience based on a comprehensive assessment of risks to national infrastructure.
- Such a strategy will act as a decision making framework for delivery of projects in line with building national resilience.
- This strategy should be under the scrutiny of the political leadership of the country.

Problem 3:

The lack of forums for productive and structured public debates on infrastructure policy options

Infrastructure resilience is intrinsically linked to the resilience of local communities. These communities need to be engaged at all stages of infrastructure development to ensure the long-term climate and disaster resilience. Not only are local communities a rich source of data required for designing resilient infrastructure, they also form an integral component of the functional continuity of an infrastructure asset.

Recommendations for mitigation:

- Governments should establish mechanisms for public engagement and facilitate in-depth deliberations as part of infrastructure decision making.
- Governments should leverage local capacities to increase the resilience of infrastructure assets.