

Meeting of Local Authorities

This two-day meeting served to promote a blossoming strategic alliance among the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) secretariat's regional unit for the Americas, UNOSAT, the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ITC/ILO)'s Local Economic Development Network (DELNET) Programme, and the Federation of Central American Municipalities (FEMICA) in their efforts towards facilitating disaster risk reduction within the agenda of local sustainable development among local authorities in Latin America.

Participants in this meeting included mayors, local authorities and representatives of State ministries as well as municipal agglomerations and municipal federations from throughout Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Among other things, participants were presented with the possibilities for cooperation to promote DDR in local sustainable development planning and policies through the support that each of these four organizations could provide: ISDR and a strong international framework to promote local initiatives, UNOSAT in the way of technological inputs and tools in the form of satellite imagery and GIS related products; ITC/ILO/DELNET in terms of capacity-building, and FEMICA through coordination, convocation and political representation.

Issues discussed include safety and security as a necessary element for the social, economic, political and environmental well-being of our habitats, communities and societies; governance, land-use regulations and building norms, adaptation to climate change, urban-rural pressures, public investment in DRR and public-private partnerships, as well as territorial planning based on common realities. Of great focus was how to bring international agreements and frameworks (HFA, MDGs PPRS and others) to the local level while simultaneously developing schemes for local advocacy within broader national and international policies and planning.

One of the major outcomes of this meeting was a participative analysis of the situation in the region in terms of disaster risk reduction within the framework of local sustainable development; which in turn led to the development of a participatory work and action plan for 2008-09.