



## **CCOUC Statement for 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction**

### **- By the Collaborating Centre for Oxford University and The Chinese University of Hong Kong for Disaster and Medical Humanitarian Response (CCOUC)**

*The following is the Statement that CCOUC makes in attending the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Cancun, Mexico. CCOUC is committed to invest in research, education and knowledge transfer in the field of Health Emergency and Disaster Risk Management (Health-EDRM)."*

Positive physical, mental and social health and wellbeing is an important outcome of all disaster risk reduction activities, which ultimately aim to reduce mortality, morbidity and other losses caused by hazards. Too often, efforts to integrate health into disaster risk reduction (DRR) programmes are hidden within social, economic and environmental outcomes. Meanwhile, the health sector has tended to retain a narrower focus on infectious disease and emergency response. As Member States and other stakeholders focus on developing comprehensive implementation plans for the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, we urge stakeholders of all sectors to prioritise and mainstream health within these programmes, clearly delineating the roles by which the health sector can contribute to this work. This requires clear targets and goals to benchmark and galvanise these contributions.

The current status of health and DRR research is fragmented across multiple fields, including disaster and emergency medicine, health systems strengthening, community resilience, DRR, humanitarian response, and more. To develop a more coherent and comprehensive approach to this complex field, we advocate the World Health Organization's framing of this field as the "Health-Emergency and Disaster Risk Management", or "Health-EDRM" field. This provides a useful framework to view and address the management of health risks posed by emergencies and disasters in a systematic, comprehensive and unifying manner.

The role of academia and researchers in building the evidence base for the implementation of the Sendai Framework has to be reiterated. The technical expertise can and is already enabling the development of robust DRR research, which can provide the best practices and innovative interventions which may be translated into effective and scalable DRR activities. To this end, the WHO Thematic Platform for Health Emergency and Disaster Risk Management Research Group was established in September 2016 and provides an international and multi-stakeholder platform to strengthen and accelerate the development of the health-EDRM research field. With a focus on developing research partnerships and providing technical advice to UN agencies, this group will use the guiding principles in



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Paragraph 19 of the Sendai Framework to guide the research development in this health-DRR nexus.

CCOUC would like to reaffirm our commitment as an academic stakeholder to implement the health aspects of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction by bridging the gap between science, policy and practice. We will do this through continuing to undertake critical cross-cutting and multi-disciplinary research to enhance the knowledge and build the evidence base in the health-EDRM arena. We will continue to advocate for health and the development of the health-EDRM research field, particularly in our capacity as Secretariat of the WHO Thematic Platform for Health-EDRM Research Group. We will uphold our belief and effort to translate scientific evidence into practice, to enhance the building up of community disaster literacy and empower the community on the enhancement of bottom-up resilience. We will continue to invest on the training of human resources to inject ideas and innovation in the field of health-EDRM from research to application.