ENHANCING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR MAKING CITIES RESILIENT AND ROLE OF SUPREME AUDIT INSTITUTIONS

KENTLERİ DAYANIKLI YAPMAK İÇİN HESAP VERİLEBİLİRLİĞİN ARTTIRILMASI VE YÜKSEK DENETLEME KURULLARININ ROLÜ

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Abstract

Currently, more and more people are settling in cities, located in disaster prone areas. Therefore, building resilient community has recently become more prominent in the disaster risk reduction policies. Although the activities required for making urban areas resilient are mainly planned and conducted at the local level, private sector, citizens, and even the international community are directly involved and interested in these activities. The achievement of goals related to making cities resilient depends on well-planned, well-managed activities/efforts and well-coordinated stakeholders.

As known, the programs and projects related to making cities resilient are mostly long- term and require big budgets. Implementing the long-term programs and projects requiring a big budget financed by multi-stakeholders can be carried out in a transparent manner*. Furthermore, giving assurance to all stakeholders necessitates accountability. The existing accountability framework in this respect does not cover all stakeholders. Therefore, special attention has to be paid to enhancing accountability.

In this research, we revealed the shortcomings of approaches towards making cities resilient, and proposed to strengthen accountability to overcome them. We sought answers to the following questions;

- *How can we create good governance for making cities resilient at local, national and international levels that is effective, sustainable, and accountable?*

- *How can we strengthen the transparency and accountability in the field of making cities resilient?*

- *How can Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs)' contribution be increased to enhance the transparency, accountability and effectiveness of the activities concerning making cities resilient?*

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As expected, the answers to these questions revealed the principle factors in need of strengthening and gave us the scope of redrawing accountability. Undoubtedly, this study involved citizens as well as international community. In conclusion, in this paper we tried to emphasize the importance of strengthening performance accountability in the process of building resilient community and, to attract attention to the role of Supreme Audit Institutions within this context.

Keywords: Performance Accountability, Good Governance, Supreme Audit Institution (SAIs), Disaster Risk, Resilient

Öz

Günümüzde, kentlerde daha fazla insan afet eğilimli alanlara yerleşiyor. Bu nedenle, son zamanlarda afet riskini azaltma politikası olarak dayanıklı yapı toplulukları oluşturulmaya başlamıştır. Kentsel alanları esnek kılmak için gerekli faaliyetler genellikle yerel düzeyde planlanıp yürütülmekte olsa da, özel sektör, vatandaşlar ve hatta uluslararası topluluk doğrudan bu faaliyetlerle ilgilenmektedir. Kentlerin esnek hale getirilmesi ile ilgili hedeflerin başarılması, iyi planlanmış, iyi yönetilen etkinliklere/çabalara ve iyi koordine edilmiş paydaşlara bağlıdır.

Bilindiği üzere, kentleri dayanıklı hale getiren program ve projeler çoğunlukla uzun süreli ve büyük bütçeler gerektirmektedir. Çoklu paydaşlar tarafından finanse edilen, büyük bir bütçe gerektiren uzun vadeli programları ve projeleri uygulamak, şeffaf bir şekilde yapılabilir. Ayrıca, tüm menfaat sahiplerine güvence vermek hesap verebilirliği gerekli kılmaktadır. Bu açıdan var olan hesap verebilirlik çerçevesi tüm menfaat sahiplerini kapsamamaktadır. Bu nedenle, hesap verebilirliğin arttırılması için özel dikkat gösterilmelidir.

Bu çalışmada, kentlerin dayanıklı hale gelmesine yönelik yaklaşımların eksiklikleri ortaya çıkarılmış ve üstesinden gelmek için hesap verebilirliğin güçlendirilmesi önerilmiştir. Aşağıdaki soruların yanıtları bulunmaya çalışılmıştır;

- *Kentleri etkili, sürdürülebilir ve hesap verebilir olan yerel, ulusal ve uluslararası düzeyde dayanıklı kılmak için iyi yönetişim nasıl oluşturabiliriz?*
- *Kentlerin dayanıklı hale getirilmesi için şeffaflığı ve hesap verebilirliği nasıl güçlendirebiliriz?*
- *Kentleri dayanıklı kılma konusundaki faaliyetlerin şeffaflığını, hesap verebilirliğini ve verimliliğini artırmak için Yüksek Denetleme Kurulları (YDK) 'nın katkısı nasıl arttırılabilir?*

Beklendiği gibi, bu soruların cevapları, güçlendirilmeye ihtiyaç duyulan temel unsurları ortaya çıkarmak ve hesap verebilirliğin kapsamını yeniden belirleme imkanı vermiştir. Kuşkusuz, bu çalışma vatandaşları ve uluslararası toplumu içermektedir. Sonuç olarak bu çalışmada dayanıklı topluluk oluşturma sürecinde performans hesap verebilirliğinin güçlendirilmesinin önemini vurgulamaya ve bu bağlamda Yüksek Denetleme Kurullarının rolüne dikkat çekmek amaçlanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Performans Hesap Verebilirliği, İyi Yönetim, Yüksek Denetleme Kurulu (YDK), Afet Riski, Dayanıklı

1. INTRODUCTION

The disaster risks have been etched into our memories by the disasters that occurred recently, principally the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami 2004. Every year, disasters related to meteorological, hydrological and climate hazards such as the flood in Pakistan (2010), the Earthquake in Van-Turkey (2011), the Typhoon Haiyan in Philippines (2013) and the like, caused significant loss of life and set back economic and social development for years. Recognizing the growing impact of major disasters, and taking into account the fact that the world's population mostly lives in cities that are located in disaster prone areas, the worldwide community under the leadership of the UN has focused on the most significant disaster risk drivers and assessment of possible strategies to reduce their large-scale damaging effects.

New disaster policies and strategies oriented towards building resilient community require substantial change in the governance and accountability structures of the whole society including that of local governments, nongovernmental organizations, and even individuals. We claim that an effective governance structure and a sufficient accountability framework which cover all involved/required stakeholders, from individuals to international community, has not been proposed so far. In this respect, the main goal of this paper is to provide a feedback on the existing governance and accountability frameworks, and to point out the importance of strengthening the public performance accountability for making cities resilient. To do this, we will handle the issues in three separate parts:

- Firstly, we will seek an answer to the question of how we can create good governance for making cities resilient at local, national, and international levels that is effective, sustainable, and accountable.

- Secondly, we will examine how to strengthen the transparency and accountability in the field of making cities resilient.

- Later, we will emphasize the contribution of supreme audit institutions towards enhancing the transparency, accountability and effectiveness in the activities for making cities resilient.

In the first section, the key issues of making cities more resilient, such as preparation of hazard maps, microzonation of major cities, and upgrading critical infrastructure and public buildings etc. will be highlighted. we will also try to provide information about the progress in this domain under the light of the international parallel/coordinated audit results which was carried out by supreme audit institutions (SAIs) within the INTOSAI Working Group on Accountability for and the Audit of Disaster-related Aid (AADA). By illustrating the existing governance structure, we will attempt to address its shortcomings.

In section 2, assessment of the sufficiency of existing accountability framework for making cities resilient will be discussed. For this purpose, the existing accountability framework is illustrated and analyzed, and the deficiencies of the accountability framework are tried to be revealed. We have tried to draw attention on the importance of ensuring accountability in a broader sense, principally enhancing "performance" accountability.

Later, we will address the contribution of auditing of SAIs to enhance accountability and transparency in the field of making cities resilient. Particularly, we will draw attention to fostering the cooperation among audit institutions and implementing the citizen oriented audit approach in the SAIs' audit studies.

Finally, we will bring forward the need for a broader performance accountability framework in the field of making cities resilient.

1.1. Historical Background

Natural hazards such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis have occurred throughout the human history. These kinds of events are not generally described as disasters unless they lead significant losses in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities. However, over the last few decades, many natural events have turned into destructive disasters and the global impact of them has considerably increased due to social, demographic, political, environmental and climatic factors. Principally rapid urbanization has stimulated the degree of vulnerability and exposure.

Recently, the major devastating disasters such as the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami (2004), Fukushima nuclear disaster (2011), Typhoon Haiyan (2013) have once again attracted the international community's attention on reducing the large-scale damaging effects of disasters and building resilient community at every turn.

Correspondingly, the international policy concerning disasters has been changed gradually and has been popularized by the UN (UN, 2010). This shift has been reflected on the international strategies prepared through the global platform and conferences such as Yokohama and Kobe, Hyogo under the leadership of UNISDR.

In the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (UNISDR, 2005), Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, governance and reducing underlying risk factors were identified as important specific issues and challenges, and were specified as key priorities for actions. Taking into consideration that more and more people are settling in the disaster prone areas such as earthquake faults, volcanic flanks, flood plains, and etc., making cities resilient to disasters become more and more important today. Urban risk, city planning and the role of local governments in dealing with risk reduction have been recognized as key factors to build resilient communities and some of prominent components of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (UNISDR, 2005). The new international policies for making cities resilient to disasters require a new governance structure and an accountability framework in a manner that cover all stakeholders, from individuals to international community, which get involved in the corresponding efforts/activities.

Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) will be one of the important stakeholders assuming a vital role during the transition of the existing accountability framework. Especially after the recent major disasters, the disaster issues including building resilient community have awakened the interest of external government

audit community which turned into action under the leadership of the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), which operates as an umbrella organization for the external government audit community. In 2007, the INTOSAI Working Group on Accountability for and the Audit of Disaster-related Aid (AADA) was set up with the aim of preparing guidelines and good practices on auditing disaster risk reduction and proposing steps to improve the transparency and accountability of disaster–related and other humanitarian aid (INTOSAI-AADA, 2007). In this context, ISSAI 5510 audit of disaster risk reduction was prepared and endorsed so as to provide guidance on the SAIs and improve their auditing of disasters; and besides, the international parallel/coordinated audit on disaster risk reduction that cover the issues related to making cities resilient was carried out with the participation of SAIs of ten countries (WGAADA, 2013).

To allocate a greater part of scarce resources for making cities resilient against the disasters is mostly difficult to achieve for national and local governments, and even for individuals within a foreseeable timeframe. For that reason, especially in times of economic hardship and uncertainty, the effective and economic use of the financial resources while making cities resilient gain much more importance than ever, and even become imperative. In this framework, ensuring good governance and enhancing accountability and as a natural consequence of them, auditing of SAIs in this regard has a great importance.

1.2. Conceptual framework

As it is well-known, a disaster risk arises when hazards interact with physical, social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities. Therefore, the international policy oriented towards disaster risk reduction has recently focused on reducing the underlying risk factors and building resilient communities. Naturally, rapidly growing cities have pulled attention. In this framework, the significant disaster risk drivers are specified as follows (UNISDR, 2010);

- Rising urban populations and increased density,
- Weak urban governance,
- Unplanned urban development,
- Lack of available land for low-income citizens,
- Inappropriate construction,
- Concentration of economic assets, and
- Ecosystems decline.

It is clear that governance and accountability can be recognized as critical factors for the implementation of activities concerning making cities resilient. The European governance white paper provides a good definition of governance to understand a set of relationships among different levels of government and also stakeholders (UNISDR, 2010);

"*Rules, processes and behavior that affect the way in which powers are exercised at any level, particularly as regards openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence.*"

As for the accountability, the most well-known and concise description is that: "*the obligation to explain and justify conduct*" (EC, 2001). The accountability of the government, bureaucracy and politicians to the public and to parliaments is generally named as public accountability, which includes political and administrative accountabilities as its subcomponents.

Political accountability covers all public resources and affairs and all stakeholders from citizens to bureaucracy. The administrative accountability is a mechanism to hold civil servants within the administration of government accountable. The existing and well-functioning accountability framework covers both political and administrative accountabilities. In the accountability framework, the supreme audit institutions (SAIs) have an important role for scrutinizing and holding institutions accountable and fostering the efficient and effective use of public resources. Therefore, the SAIs is one of the important stakeholders in supporting the implementation of activities required for making cities resilient of making cities resilient.

2. CREATE GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR MAKING CITIES RESILIENT

At present, more than half of the world's population lives in cities and urban centers, located in disaster prone and poorly-constructed areas. As known, one of the most significant risk drivers is rising urban populations with increasing density, especially in places where the quality of housing, infrastructure and services are poor. The other one is the weak urban governance. In cases of poor urban governance, weak local governments/authorities or municipalities are not engaged in participatory and strategic urban and spatial planning. Because of the lack of their capacity and resources, the local governments/authorities cannot prevent unplanned urban development, inappropriate constructions and even illegal or non-engineered constructions.

As a matter of fact, in many rapidly growing cities much of the urban expansion takes place outside the official legal building codes, land use regulations and land transactions. Since this has been pointed out among the goals of Yokohama strategy, 1994, constructions which are able to withstand the force of disasters and sound urban planning for well-built cities are primary concerns of international community in disaster prone areas. In this framework, it is observed that some projects and studies have been conducted to address this issue in most of the disaster-prone countries within the last decade. Such projects/studies concentrate on related issues such as stress preparation of hazard maps, micro-zonation of major cities, and upgrading critical infrastructure and public buildings including education and health facilities.

Issues such as vulnerability analysis, hazard maps, micro-zonation of major cities and urban transformation projects, commencing from whether construction plans are prepared and adjustments to them

are made by giving due regard to disaster risks, are examined in the scope of international parallel/coordinated audit on disaster risk reduction (Bovens, 2007). Some results of this study can be summarized as follows;

- Construction plans are not designed and revised taking into account the risks of disaster sufficiently in the participating countries although there is a legal obligation.

- The authority and the responsibility of more than one entity such as Housing Development Administration, Ministry of Environment and Urban Development, Disaster Management Authority, Municipalities etc. overlap for a certain field. This hinders making an integrated planning and impairs their disaster responsiveness.

- Studies related to hazard map and micro-zoning, have still being conducted in almost all countries since the beginning of 2000's, however they have not finalized yet.

- Activities concerning retrofitting, reconstruction and urban transformation have been conducted as individual projects, not part of an overall urban transformation strategy that took key risk considerations into account and integrated all efforts related to urban development.

In nearly all the countries, participated in this international parallel/coordinated audit, the studies concerning vulnerability atlases, hazard maps, ground studies and micro-zonation and specification the existing building stock and the number of buildings in need of retrofitting that created the infrastructure of urban transformation have not been completed for the last decade. More importantly, decisions as to reinforcement and reconstruction are not based on reliable information and the financial costs thereof cannot be calculated precisely. For these activities, no sufficient appropriation is allocated within the budget and rather financed through external resources. It appears that financial sustainability as a concern will be arisen in near future as well. All these concerns are to point out the importance of ensuring good governance and enhancing accountability.

The policies and objectives for making cities resilient are generally specified at national and international levels, but are put into practice at a local level with the participation of a broad range of community. So far, the participation of local governments to pre-disaster activities has remained limited. The local governments have only dealt with emergency response activities which are specified by national governments and tried to fulfill the responsibilities in emergency situation. For that reason, their capacity for planning, sustaining and monitoring the activities for building resilient cities is extremely weak.

In Figure 1, the main stakeholders of the existing governance structure concerning making cities resilient are shown. As it can be seen, the structure covers only national and local governments and the accountability is formed in accordance with this governance structure. The international community and national NGOs are neutral elements of this structure. On the other hand, the realization of large-scale infrastructure projects and programs related to making cities resilient will take a long time. The implementation of those projects in an effective manner and their sustainability depends on the consistent interest and long-term commitment of all stakeholders. Therefore, all relevant and important stakeholders out of public institutions should be sufficiently incorporated into the existing governance structure and

accountability framework. To attract the interest of all stakeholders and preserve its continuity, the whole process should be managed in a transparent and participatory manner giving assurance to all stakeholders. This will help increase all stakeholders' participation. For this purpose, accountability framework for programs and projects making cities resilient should be handled in a broader sense.

Figure 1. Governance Structure for Making Cities
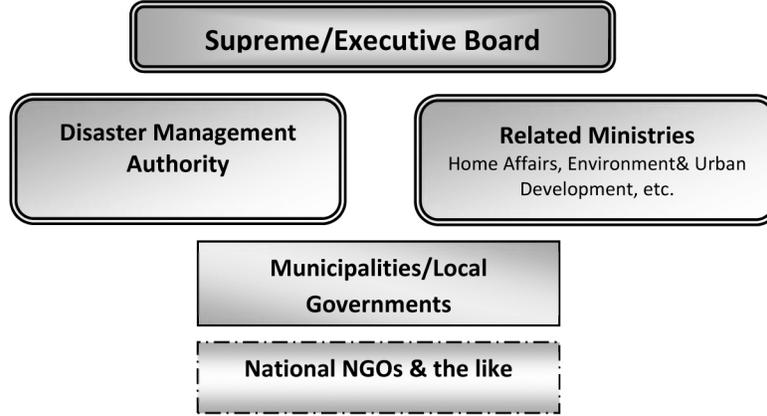
3. STRENGTHEN THE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

For making cities resilient to disasters, many stakeholders, ranging from individuals to international community, should get involved in the required efforts/activities. Among the stakeholders, governments have a more significant role with regard to specifying policies, taking measures, leading the stakeholders and ensuring coordination among them. Other important stakeholders are undoubtedly local governments and municipalities as they are the implementing agencies. In this kind of environment, it is obvious that good governance is the most prominent factor for the success of policies and implementation of international strategies for building resilient communities.

Accountability is known to be one of the prominent components of good governance. In Figure 2, the existing accountability framework is illustrated. As seen in the figure, to what extent governments, municipalities and NGOs can be held accountable is not sufficiently clear in this structure. Moreover, the accountability relations among citizens, government and bureaucracy have not well-defined and frequently loose in many countries. Mainly for that reason, the activities concerning making cities resilient have not conducted in an efficient, accountable and participatory manner.

Figure 2. Accountability Framework for Making Cities Resilient
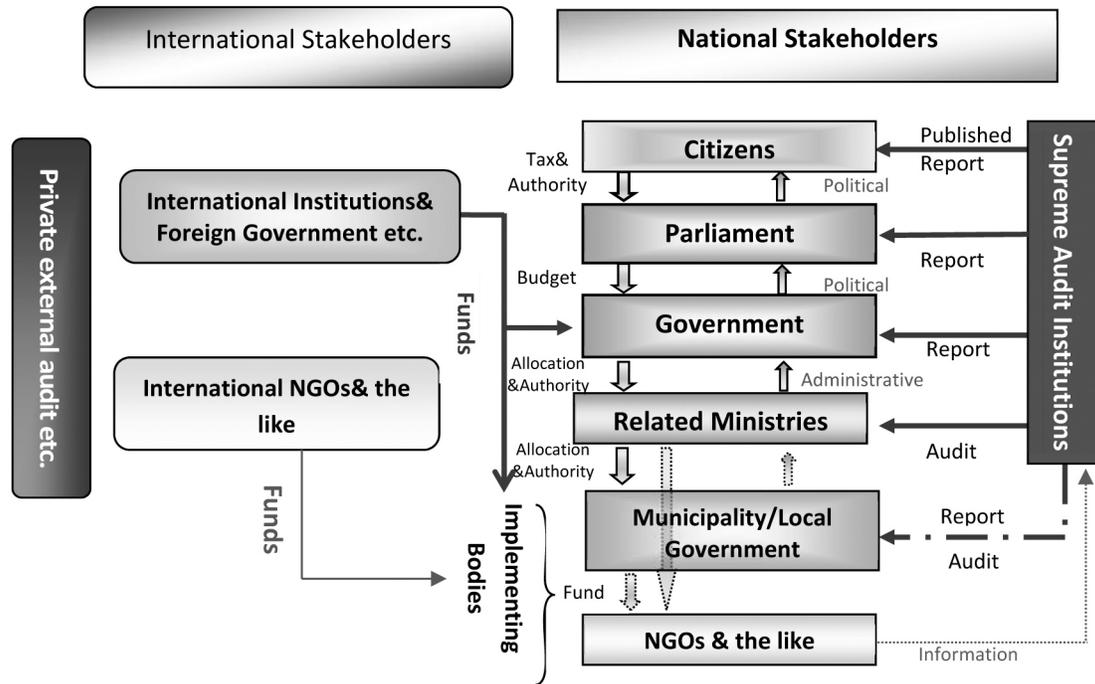
In the international parallel/coordinated audit, some audit findings related to urban transformation projects reveal that (INTOSAI-AADA, 2014);

- Transformation areas were identified without knowing how such detections will be made, which criteria will be used; if any, and what are the requirements for prioritization.

- The consolidation of the buildings is a very slow process. It is estimated that the program would be implemented in about 100 years.

- The norms do not provide for the measures, steps and actions to take in case owners refuse consolidation works, which would results in the blocking or indefinite postponement of the Program completion.

- Dwellers are generally not satisfied with the finishing works.

- Owners considered that the consolidation takes too much time. Besides, the amount of the consolidation activities was modified in all instances; it reaches over 40% as compared to the initial value, which is unsatisfactory.

- Though informative campaigns were conducted, they did not attain their target. It is noticed that a large share of the population is not aware of the danger involved by not taking the measures to diminish seismic risk of existing constructions.

These audit findings point out that ensuring good governance and enhancing accountability and increasing participation are vital for the sustainability of programs and projects for making cities resilient. In the proposed framework, the major characteristics of good governance participation, accountability, effectiveness, and openness/transparency should carry fundamental priority. For this purpose, we should focus on the formal and informal participants, involved in decision-making and implementing the decisions. And besides, the accountability framework, especially for performance accountability should be restructured and expanded in a manner that covers the formal and informal participants.

It is clear that ensuring good governance and strengthening accountability at national, local and international levels are the main concerns for building community resilience to and/or ensuring the sustainability of communities' efforts to withstand disasters. With the aim of fulfilling this purpose and giving assurance to all stakeholders, the milestones in the implementing process of making city resilient programs and projects should be specified and the reporting obligation related to all stakeholders' activities should be enforced. Correspondingly, all activities and stakeholders should be audited and audit reports should be easy accessible to all relevant parties.

4. SUPREME AUDIT INSTITUTIONS' CONTRIBUTION TO ENHANCING THE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Supreme Audit Institutions have a critical role within the governance structure and accountability framework. Well-functioning SAIs are uniquely placed to contribute to building and sustaining stronger and more effective accountability between governments and their citizens (OECD, 2014). As seen in Figure 2, SAIs help to enhance the public and administrative accountability through their audit reports which is made accessible to all stakeholders including the international community. By this way, SAIs concurrently contribute to be made actions more transparent related to making cities resilient for all stakeholders.

However, local governments and municipalities are exempt for many of supreme audit institutions. Also, their audit mandates do not cover NGOs, and SAIs can get only relevant information from NGOs in the audit studies. In addition to this, the reality is that SAIs do not well-function in many countries due to lack of authority, skills and resources. However undoubtedly, to enhance performance accountability are not necessary to enlarge SAIs' mandates in a manner that comprises of a whole range of public and private stakeholders, formal and informal organizations at local, national and international levels.

In this field, there are different audit institutions as well as lots of different implementing institutions. The financial audits are demanded by financial providers. Within the scope of financial audit, the expenditures concerning making cities resilient are audited as a part of annual financial accounts of relevant

institutions. In a financial audit, only the expectations of financial providers are met. As mentioned above, the implementation of programs/projects concerning making cities resilient would be continuing for many years. To address specific aspects of the multi-annual activities and to meet the needs of stakeholders, financial audit will remain inadequate; on the contrary performance audit would be more suitable for providing a good overview of overall activities. Therefore, it is important for all stakeholders because performance of one stakeholder will directly affect the decisions and works of others.

To meet the expectations of citizens and international community which supported this process, SAIs should adopt "a client/citizen oriented perspective" (UN/INTOSAI, 2011) in the audit of making cities resilient. This will help to promote public awareness as well as to enhance the accountability. Besides, as it is well-known, many different stakeholders have to work in tandem with each other in this area. This working understanding can be embedded into the audit process of making cities resilient. In this context, to give assurance to all parties and to make activities transparent for national and international communities, the constructive collaboration among audit institutions may be fostered. Depending on the importance of programs/projects, they may audit and report the audit results jointly or separately under the leadership of SAIs because of their broad audit mandate which covers all government institutions and their activities.

5. A BROADER PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

New policies concerning making cities resilient have been realized by a multinational and multi-stakeholders structure which requires a stronger planning and coordination capacity. This calls for a new governance structure enforcing participation of all parties and accountability framework which is more transparent. In reality, each stakeholder is accountable to only its funder although there is a multipartite accountability framework in this area. In fact, each step and action is of particular concern to all parties while building resilience community. For that reason, by broadening the scope of governance structure and accountability framework, performance accountability should be enhanced at local, national and international levels in a manner that covers all stakeholders; and the new structure should be reflected into specific arrangements such as strategic plans.

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