

Discussions on the Post HFA

The Third Expert Group Meeting: On the Great East Japan Earthquake ~ Applying Lessons on Recovery to Reduce Impacts of Future Disasters ~

3rd July 2012 at Sendai International Center, Sendai City, Japan

The panel discussion, moderated by Mr. Sanjaya Bhatia of IRP Secretariat/UNISDR, was aimed at addressing two key questions: How lessons on governance, health, and environment can be applied to reduce the impact of future disasters, specifically what more needs to be done to ensure better compliance with HFA? How to make the agenda of recovery and reconstruction stronger and more explicit in post-HFA?

Broad recommendations on the first question include, promoting pre-disaster planning, strengthening capacity building programs, broaden partnerships, building on existing solutions done locally, enhancing mechanisms for effective information sharing, and putting systems in place that help ensure human security.

Regarding the second question, suggestions for more explicit provisions for recovery in post-HFA include:

- Post HFA should be linked up with post-MDGs (which also end in 2015) and Sustainable Development (Rio +20 discussions) as recovery stakeholders are the same across these agendas.
- It should aim at strengthening the links between national and local governments, as a weak link here means less resilient recovery. Often communication gaps between national and local governments' means lost opportunities. Information and data on disaster should be strengthened and widely be made available in the public domain.
- A greater emphasis should be placed on human security as a foundation for disaster resiliency. Hence, it should aim at increasing individual awareness of disaster risk reduction. It is also important to engage communities in the recovery process – noting some unique cultural practices such as “self-help”, “mutual help”, or “community help”.
- It should strengthen the capacity and support for recovery planning, specifically at regional, national, and local levels.
- It should further explore the use of new communication tools, including social media and open data, as well as develop applications for recovery.
- It should explore ways for donors to become more aware of the financing needs for recovery. Currently, donors' attention is more focused on response and assessment. Donors need to also pay more attention to the post assessment phase when the recovery planning and implementation take place.

- It should treat resilient recovery as a basic human right. The governments and international organizations have an obligation to ensure safety of the citizens from the impacts of future disasters.
- It should promote and strengthen actions of putting in place legal frameworks for recovery. Otherwise recovery will continue to be an *ad hoc* exercise.
- It should advocate for pre-disaster recovery planning as tool to further reduce risks, which may be further linked up with new economic development concerns.
- It should explore a system of monitoring and evaluating recovery by peers. Indicators for good recovery and an autonomous monitoring mechanism are needed to put up the system.
- It should set clear targets rather than policy statements. In particular, it should put more emphasis on actions at the local governments.
- It should enhance a global cooperation system so that countries affected by disaster can be assisted at the initial phase of recovery.
- It should design a mechanism that recognizes local solutions, including provision of long term support to local solutions that work.

In his wrap up, Mr. Shun-ichi Murata, Deputy Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific, reiterated the importance of aligning post-HFA framework for disaster risk reduction with other global frameworks such as the post-MDGs framework on sustainable development, outcome of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, and climate change adaptation. Mr. Murata emphasized that one critical element for ensuring success of the post-HFA framework will be setting measurable goals and targets for disaster risk reduction. Strengthening resilience of disaster-prone countries will reduce vulnerabilities of populations at risk, and will complement efforts in achieving the MDGs. In this regard, a critical need for reliable disaster statistics based on official sources exists in the region and globally, together with the capacity of national authorities to collect data before, during and after disasters. Reliable statistics are essential for all stages of disaster management, and will provide a foundation for promoting investment in disaster risk reduction.

Attachment: Guiding note for discussion

For Panel Discussion EGM3

The **Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)** discusses recovery and reconstruction in Strategic goal (c) and in Priority 4. Relevant extracts are below:

Strategic goal

(c) The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and **recovery programmes in the reconstruction** of affected communities.

Priority Action 4: Reduce the underlying risk factors

19. Disaster risks related to changing social, economic, environmental conditions are addressed in sector development planning and programmes as well as in **post-disaster situations**.

Key activities:

(i) Environmental and natural resource management

(a) (b) (c) Three activities for the sustainable use and management of ecosystems, including through better land-use planning and development activities to reduce risk and vulnerabilities are mentioned.

(ii) Social and economic development practices

(d)

(e) Integrate disaster risk reduction planning into the **health sector**; promote the goal of “hospitals safe from disaster” by ensuring that all new hospitals are built with a level of resilience that strengthens their capacity to remain functional in disaster situations and implement mitigation measures to reinforce existing health facilities, particularly those providing primary health care.

(f) Protect and strengthen critical public facilities and physical infrastructure, particularly **schools, clinics, hospitals**, water and power plants, communications through proper design, retrofitting and re-building, in order to render them adequately resilient to hazards.

(g)

(h) **Incorporate disaster risk reduction measures into post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes¹⁵ and use opportunities during the recovery phase to develop capacities that reduce disaster risk in the long term, including through the sharing of expertise, knowledge and lessons learned.**

(i) to (r)

The question is, considering the presentations of this morning, (a) **what more needs to be done to ensure better compliance with the HFA**, and (b) what would you **recommend for post HFA after 2015, to make the agenda of recovery and reconstruction stronger and more explicit than in the HFA?**