



Reading the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 - 2030

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1. Introduction

1. The purpose of this paper is to offer a reading of the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* (Sendai Framework), the new global instrument to manage disaster risk, adopted by the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015¹. The consultations and negotiations were very rich and the final text, expected to be “concise”², was not necessarily suited to explicitly contain all the details, explanations and rationales. While not an exhaustive reading and interpretation, this reading aims at “unpacking” some aspects and stimulating further reflections to support, and be considered, in the work ahead.

2. Indeed, the implementation of the Sendai Framework will require the adoption of policies, strategies and plans and the further review and development of normative instruments at local, national, regional and global levels as well as quality standards and practical guidelines. The latter will include the “Words into Action”, guidance material developed by practitioners, with the support of UNISDR, on specific areas and issues³. In addition, the Sendai Framework provides ideas for questions to be placed on the agendas of local, national, regional and global meetings.

3. This paper addresses the characteristics of the Sendai Framework in sections 2 and 3. Sections 4 and 5 are dedicated to the question of accountability and focus areas for the further development of normative instruments at national level which received particular attention during the negotiations. Section 6 focuses on key aspects concerning the transition in implementation from the Hyogo Framework to the Sendai Framework.

2. General Considerations

a) New elements in the Sendai Framework

4. The Sendai Framework was developed to build on and ensure continuity with the work carried out by countries and other stakeholders under the aegis of the Hyogo Framework for Action and previous instruments such as the *International Strategy for Disaster Reduction* of 1999, the *Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World* of 1994, and the *International Framework of Action for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction* of 1989.

¹ The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Sendai, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015. The Sendai Framework was subsequently endorsed by consensus by the UN General Assembly¹ with resolution A/RES/69/283 on 3 June 2015. The Sendai Framework is the successor to the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015* and was developed through all-stakeholders consultations from March 2012 to July 2015 and intergovernmental negotiations from July 2014 until the closing of the WCDRR. The preparatory process included the deliberations of 4th Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and regional platforms for disaster risk reduction and their ministerial segments.

² See UN General Assembly resolution 68/211, 20 December 2013.

³ www.preventionweb.net/drr-framework/sendai-framework/wordintoaction.

5. At the same time, the Sendai Framework introduces new elements, aspects and characteristics which are summarized in the table below for easy reference.

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Ref. (Not exhaustive)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong emphasis on disaster risk based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clear shift in focus from disaster management to integrated and anticipatory disaster risk management based on trends and losses; from managing events to managing the processes which create risk - disaster risk management is not to be considered a “sector” in itself, but a practice to be applied across sectors 	16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide “scope” which includes risk of small-scale and slow-onset disasters as well as man-made, technological, environmental and bio hazards 	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An “expected outcome” focused on disaster risk and not only on reduced losses 	16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A renewed “goal” focused on preventing the creation of risk, reducing existing risk and strengthening resilience 	17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven “global targets” to measure progress against the expected outcome 	18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of “guiding principles” 	19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A proposition of “disaster risk” 	23, 24(b),(n)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of national and local strategies and plans 	27(a),(b)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance on a phased approach to disaster risk management planning based on hazard mapping, risk assessment, definition of baselines, and the adoption of national policies and plans by 2020 	18 24 27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A structure that specifies the focus of action at local and national level versus regional and global levels. 	Section IV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four priority areas with emphasis on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding disaster risk drivers - Governance to manage disaster risk, including strengthened national and local platforms for disaster risk reduction - Coherence in implementation across sectors - Investments in economic, social and cultural resilience through structural and non-structural measures - Preparedness to “build back better” before the disaster strikes 	Section IV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on definition of responsibilities across actors for strengthened accountability and transparency in for disaster risk management 	27(a)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific guidance for legislative reviews and reforms 	19(e),(f); 25(h); 27(a),(d),(f),(g), (h),(k); 28(d); 30(g),(h),(l),(m), (n); 33(h),(j), (k),(m) (p); 34(b); 36; 47(d)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of stakeholders and description of their roles, including their shared responsibility in policy development and implementation 	Section V
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on means of implementation, including risk-informed bilateral and multilateral development assistance programs and loans 	Section VI 47(d),48(d)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particular relevance given to the local level in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institutions - Communities - Knowledge - Risk assessments - Strategies, plans, and monitoring systems - Advocacy, awareness 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural heritage and work places 	30(d),(e)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disaster risk-related human mobility, relocation, evacuation and displacement 	30(l)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilization of risk-sensitive investment by public and private sectors 	19(f) 30(c)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At all levels, including university - Professional education - Civic education - Formal and non-formal 	24(l)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Systems - Workers - Programs - International Health Regulations 	30(i),(f)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livelihoods 	30(j),(o),(p) 31(f),(p)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility and disability 	19(d),(g) 24(e),(f) 30(c) 32
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disaster risk services 	25(c),(e) 32(c)

• Culture of maintenance	30(c) 33(b)
• Recognition of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and regional platforms for disaster risk reduction as mechanisms to: drive coherence in managing disaster risk across international agendas; monitor and carry out periodic reviews; and support UN Governance bodies' deliberations	28(c), 49

6. It is also important to mention what the Sendai Framework does not include: a list of terminological definitions and indicators to measure progress against the set global targets, which were indeed left, as per paragraph 50, to an open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction. The working group, established by the General Assembly through resolution A/RES/69/284 in June 2015, commenced its work in September 2015 and is expected to complete it by December 2016, if not earlier.

b) The Sendai Framework: an interpretative tool

7. Disaster risk needs to, and can only, be managed through the processes which create it, and disaster risk management is not a sector in and of itself. Therefore, the Sendai Framework puts forward a disaster risk management paradigm to be applied across international and national agendas and sectors. Disaster risk will be reduced through the application of the Sendai Framework guidance in the implementation of relevant sector instruments at all levels.

8. As such, the Sendai Framework does not, and could not, aim at regulating how each single sector or area – relevant to the sustainability of development, the environment, climate and, overall, the safety and security of human beings and their assets, and the ecosystem – need to manage disaster risk. The sector instruments, such as on water, agriculture, tourism, continue to be the main regulators of the sector work at national and international levels, but, in their implementation, the guidance agreed to in the Sendai Framework needs to be applied by all stakeholders. For the same reason, the Sendai Framework cannot be expected to fill the gaps of sector regulatory instruments.

9. Against this backdrop, the Sendai Framework may be seen as an interpretative tool on how sector instruments, including of a legally binding nature, can be read and implemented in order to manage disaster risk in the sectors that they regulate. Therefore, the Sendai Framework cannot be read and implemented in isolation from sector instruments. It is for policy makers and practitioners to develop and implement sector instruments, policies, programmes, guidelines, standards as well as business practices, which with goodwill and in good faith take into account and apply the Sendai Framework.

10. In light of the cross-cutting nature of disaster risk reduction, the Sendai Framework transcends traditional dichotomies between development and humanitarian relief or developed and developing countries or conflict/fragile and

peace situations. Indeed, every single investment and measure, whether for development or relief, can reduce disaster risk or increase it depending on whether it is risk-informed. Moreover, the Sendai Framework is a universal framework that applies to all countries without any distinction; at the same time, international cooperation, a key principle and obligation in international relations, remains essential. Finally, disaster risk reduction cannot be neglected in any situation and what may need to be adapted is the approach and the way the work is carried out.

11. Overall, the Sendai Framework has its roots in local, national, regional and global practice and legal obligations and it articulates the content of the recognized states' responsibility to prevent and reduce disaster risk.

3. Specific Considerations

12. This section focuses on and articulates specific characteristics of the Sendai Framework and touches upon the structure, scope, purpose, expected outcome, global targets, guiding principles, priority areas for action, role of stakeholders, and international cooperation and global partnership

a) Structure

13. The Sendai Framework requires an integrated reading of its parts to appreciate in full scale its guidance. Sections I and II define foundation, motivation, purpose, scope, outcome and goal of the framework. Sections III, IV and V are about actions and actors for implementation. Section VI concerns necessary "enablers".

14. Section I (Preamble) provides important elements to guide the reader in interpreting the Sendai Framework. Paragraph 6 indicates disaster risk drivers and compounding factors. Paragraphs 9 and 14 include the rationale of the Sendai Framework and recall that action has to be taken by both governments and stakeholders. Paragraphs 11, 12 and 13 concern the coherence across agendas and areas of work, in particular sustainable development and climate change, which needs to be achieved to effectively reduce disaster risk and ensure the sustainability of development; a clear link is recognized between climate change and disaster risk reduction, as is the case in the 2010 Cancun Adaptation Framework⁴. Paragraph 15 is most important as it defines the scope and purpose of the Sendai Framework.

15. Section II (Expected Outcome and goal) defines the timeframe of the Sendai Framework implementation over 15 years, recognizing that disaster risk reduction requires persistent determination over a sustained number of years to introduce and apply the necessary measures, and actually achieve the set objectives. It also includes the expected outcome (Paragraph 16), the goal (Paragraph 17) and the 7 global targets (Paragraph 17).

⁴ FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, paragraph 14 (e).

16. Sections III, IV and V are closely interlinked and define what needs to be done by whom and how. In particular, section IV identifies priority actions which are the responsibility of states to implement. In the discharge of such responsibilities, states can expect, mobilize and utilize the contribution of stakeholders, as articulated in section V. Both states and all other stakeholders are required to implement the priority areas in line with the guiding principles of section III. In other words, the content of the priority areas needs to be expanded and interpreted in light of the guiding principles.

17. Section IV articulates the priority areas along two lines: actions that need to be carried out by each state within national boundaries, and actions that need to be carried out internationally in cooperation with other states and stakeholders. This articulation is meant to clarify at what level certain actions need to be executed and, in so doing, it supports a clearer definition of responsibilities and thus accountability.

18. Section VI focuses on “enablers”, in particular international cooperation and means of implementation. This section articulates the responsibilities of international partners in supporting states and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Sendai Framework. The section concludes with immediate actions to be considered by the General Assembly to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework, namely the inclusion of an assessment of progress in its implementation as part of relevant follow-up processes, the definition of global indicators to measure progress against the seven global targets, and revision of disaster risk reduction terminology.

b) Scope

19. The Sendai Framework explicitly defines the scope of its application in the first sentence of paragraph 15. It helps clarify questions which were left open under the Hyogo Framework for Action and the preceding disaster risk reduction instruments, such as the inclusion of man-made hazards.

20. In particular, paragraph 15 indicates that the Sendai Framework applies to the risk of all disasters caused by natural and man-made hazards, as well as other “related” hazards of an environmental, technological and biological nature. The oft underestimated and not fully modelled risk of slow-onset disasters and of small-scale and frequent disasters have been given due recognition and attention.

21. The scope refers to both “natural hazards” and “man-made hazards”. Whereas “natural hazards” may be of easier identification and definition, “man-made hazards” are the subject of wide debates. One way to help focus the discussions and circumscribe what constitutes “man-made” in the context of the implementation of the Sendai Framework is to consider the reference to “related environmental, technological and biological” as providing guiding elements and criteria for interpretation.

22. The wide formulation of the scope reinforces the need for “coherence” in managing disaster risk across sectors. It also suggests, that a fragmentation of

disaster risk management systems based on types of hazards and sector instruments may create gaps which would render each state's disaster risk strategy and action ineffective. The portrayed scope implies that disaster risk reduction needs to be part of a broader and coherent national and, as appropriate, international disaster risk management system which integrates, as relevant, security-related hazards.

23. The scope does not suggest that the Sendai Framework is the primary regulatory instrument defining how to manage specific disaster risk over the competence of sector instruments; rather it indicates that sector instruments related to environment, technological hazards and bio hazards need to apply the Sendai Framework paradigm and that disaster risk reduction needs to take place in a holistic manner, regardless of the nature of the hazards, and that there has to be coherence in disaster risk management policies and practices across sectors. In this context, the role of the treaty bodies in ensuring coherence in implementation and in the application of the Sendai Framework paradigm through their respective instruments is key.

24. It is important to note that the ongoing discussions and future outcome of the work of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction⁵ will define with more precisions the scope of application of the Sendai Framework, especially in relation to "man-made" hazards.

25. During the negotiations it was debated whether conflict had to be addressed in the text. Whereas the Sendai Framework does not refer to conflict, this does not exclude that disaster risk needs to be managed even in conflict situations, including, for instance, in situations where the population needs to flee or relocate.

c) Purpose

26. The second sentence of paragraph 15 defines the purpose of the Sendai Framework which is "to guide the multi-hazard management of disaster risk in development at all levels as well as within and across all sectors".

27. This formulation, when read in conjunction with other paragraphs of the Sendai Framework, takes "mainstreaming" to a different level. It implies that development cannot be really considered "sustainable development" if it generates undue, unwanted and unmanaged risk. And it further reinforces the call for "coherence" in implementation across agendas and the three dimensions of sustainable development, i.e. environmental, economic and social.

28. The clear focus on "sustainable development", which is pursued through human action, confirms the need to manage the risk related to man-made hazards, i.e. those hazards generated by mankind in the pursuit of its progress and development.

⁵ See paragraph 6.

29. The purpose also helps understand “disaster risk reduction” as a policy objective, and “disaster risk management” as encompassing the measures needed to achieve that policy objective.

30. It may be worth indicating that “purpose”, “expected outcome” and “goal” are not interchangeable terms, nor simply three alternative representations of the same point; indeed, they are different and have a precise functional relation. In particular, the “purpose” of the Sendai Framework concerns the *raison d’être* of disaster risk reduction, the motivation and intention to address the root causes of disaster risk, and thus make development sustainable; the “expected outcome” concerns the change, effects and impact on reality that disaster risk reduction policies, programs and actions are expected to generate; the “goal”, in its three-fold dimension of preventing new and reducing existing risk and strengthening resilience, represents the focus and direction that the implementation of the priority areas for action needs to maintain.

d) Expected Outcome

31. The expected outcome represents a significant innovation. By explicitly referring to the “substantial reduction of disaster risk...” it represents a shift from managing disasters to managing risk, from focusing on disasters to focusing on risk, initiated with the vision formulated in the 1999 International Strategy for Disaster Reduction⁶. The expected outcome, i.e. the expected changes generated by the implementation of the Sendai Framework, are not only reduced disasters, i.e. losses and impact, but also reduced risk.

32. Risk is thus considered in and of itself and not only through its materialization in a disaster. If disaster risk exists action needs to be taken; the very existence of risk requires that action be taken to reduce it and, at the same time, to ensure that new risk is not created.

33. The success of the Sendai Framework will be measured against whether both risk in, and of, itself and the impact of hazards, i.e. losses, are reduced substantially from the current levels. This requires working on three synergic tracks: preventing the creation of new risk, reducing existing risk, and strengthening resilience.

34. The expected outcome appears even more significant when looked at from the combined perspective of the “scope”, i.e. all hazards, including man-made, and the provision in paragraphs 23 and 24(b) and 24(n) that implicitly offer a definition of disaster risk built on three variables: i.e. disaster risk as the result of vulnerability and capacity, exposure to hazards, and hazards’ characteristics. From this perspective, the reduction of disaster risk can be achieved through a combined action on: reducing exposure of people and assets to hazards; reducing their vulnerability and augmenting their capacity; as well as, specifically in the case of

⁶ See “Vision”: “To proceed from protection against hazards to the management of risk through the integration of risk prevention into sustainable development”.

man-made hazards, modifying the hazard's characteristics by reducing their hazardousness (for example, toxicity, pollution capacity).

35. The balance of focused action on the three variables may differ depending on the circumstances. Yet, it further confirms that "man-made" hazards need to definitely be within the scope of effective disaster risk management.

e) Goal

36. The Sendai Framework has a three-fold goal: preventing the creation of risk, the reduction of existing risk, and the strengthening of resilience of people and assets to withstand residual risk.

37. The formulation of the goal is innovative. It shifts from the Hyogo Framework for Action's dichotomy of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction, on one hand, in development and, on the other hand, in disaster management, to focusing on the adoption of measures which address the three variables of disaster risk (exposure to hazards; vulnerability and capacity; and hazard's characteristics) in order to prevent the creation of new risk, reduce the existing risk and increase resilience to withstand the residual risk, hence enhancing both development and disaster management.

f) Global targets

38. The Sendai Framework introduces seven global targets to assess global progress toward the expected outcome. The seven global targets represent a means to quantify and qualify the "substantial reduction" indicated in the expected outcome.

39. They represent an important innovation compared to the Hyogo Framework for Action and also contribute to strengthening accountability in disaster risk management.

40. The global targets may be clustered in two groups: targets from (a) to (d) concern specific outcomes; targets from (e) to (g) concern inputs or enablers. Together, they allow to assess progress toward both achieving the Sendai Framework's expected outcome and developing the necessary tools and means to achieve it.

41. The global targets also serve as guidance for developing national and local strategies and plans of action. Indeed, the achievement in 2020 of the global target on national and local strategies requires that other measures be undertaken in advance to understand the existing levels of disaster risk and trends, so that the strategies can be developed on a sound understanding of the challenges at hand, and thus with clear priorities. These measures include the establishment or enhancement of systems to record disaster losses, the definition of risk baselines, hazard mapping and disaster risk assessments. The global target on national and local strategies was set for 2020 with the understanding that having strategies in place was instrumental to achieve the remaining global targets set for 2030.

42. Furthermore, the system of indicators to be developed by the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction represents an important means to drive and assess coherence in implementation across agendas, including sustainable development and climate change.

g) Guiding principles

43. The Sendai Framework introduces a set of thirteen principles to guide states and all other stakeholders. These principles are essential to interpret and integrate what needs to be done in accordance to the priority areas. Six principles may be understood as constituting the “backbone”: (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (h). The remaining seven expand on related specific core questions, such as: (f) empowerment of local level, (g) risk information, (i) local nature of risk, (j) risk-informed investments, (k) Building Back Better, and (l) global partnership and international cooperation, including (m) means of implementation.

44. The six “backbone” principles concern:

- Primary responsibility of states to prevent and reduce disaster risk, including through cooperation - 19(a).

This principle articulates the primacy of the state and its institutions in discharging the responsibility to focus on risk, understanding it and taking the necessary measures with the purpose of preventing its creation, reducing it and strengthening resilience by addressing exposure, vulnerability and, when applicable, hazards’ characteristics. It implies that the activities necessary to discharge such “primary” responsibility are fundamental, expected and required. It points to the fact that preventing and reducing disaster risk is a priority for the state and as such it needs to be reflected in legislation, policies, strategies, plans, programs, investments and organizational measures. It also indicates that this responsibility includes the duty to cooperate and seek the cooperation of other states in order to take the necessary measures to prevent and reduce disaster risk.

This principle may be complemented by 19 (g), (i), (j), (k), (l) and (m).

- Shared responsibility between central and local authorities, sectors and stakeholders – 19(b).

This principle complements 19(a) by recognizing that the state and its institutions cannot act alone in managing disaster risk. All stakeholders, including of a private nature, be they physical or juridical persons, have the responsibility to prevent and reduce disaster risk and have to play their part. In this respect, the state and its institutions have the responsibility to enable others to take action. As a consequence, it is for the state to attribute responsibilities, and thus implicitly powers and resources, across institutions and, as appropriate, other stakeholders in order to manage disaster risk effectively. Finally, it indicates that every sector is required to manage the risk

related to its business area and needs to do so in collaboration with other sectors in order to jointly manage potential and cumulative disaster risk.

This principle may be complemented by 19 (f), (g), (i), and (j).

- Protection of persons and their assets, while promoting and protecting all human rights including the right to development – 19(c).

This principle requires that in taking all the necessary measures to prevent and reduce disaster risk, states and all other stakeholders promote and protect all human rights. The recognition of the link between disaster risk reduction and the promotion and protection of human rights is important. It renders explicit the fact that preventing and reducing disaster risk are in, and of, themselves means to protect and promote human rights, and also that the application of the human rights standards can strengthen disaster risk management. Civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights, elimination of racial discrimination and discrimination against women, children and persons with disabilities' rights, to mention just a few, have a direct bearing on participation, capabilities, vulnerabilities, resilience, possibility of taking risk-informed decision, accountability, etc. and thus on disaster risk reduction.

- Engagement by all of society – 19 (d).

This principle complements and further articulates principles 19(b) and (c). It requires the participation of all of society and the full empowerment of its members with no discrimination or exclusion. It states that disaster risk reduction is everybody's business, and no one can be left out or behind. This principle is instrumental to ensure the full understanding of disaster risk at the local level and the adoption of measures that are tailored to the need of people at risk. It also highlights that voluntary work has not been fully utilized in to the implementation of the four priority areas, and that its organization is an important element in disaster risk reduction governance.

- Full engagement of all state institutions of an executive and legislative nature at national and local levels – 19(e).

This principle articulates the core of disaster risk reduction governance. It states that all institutions have a role to play in their domain and in coordination with each other. Disaster risk reduction is not a responsibility of the executive only. The legislative power is called upon to play an active role, not only in legislating, but also in exercising oversight and scrutiny over implementation and progress toward stated policy objectives, strategies, plans and targets. In this context, coordination across institutions is essential not only for operational necessities, but also for a full understanding of disaster risk and the review and adoption of sector policies, strategies, plans and measures that in their pursuit of sector objectives be coherent and consistent in preventing the creation of and reducing disaster risk.

This principle implicitly recalls the role of the judiciary and other relevant independent authorities in adjudicating cases and applying the principle of "due diligence", taking into account the strengthened paradigm concerning disaster risk understanding set in priority area I.

An important role is also implicitly recognized for national audit institutions in assessing whether public expenditures and investments have been made in a risk-informed manner.

This principle reinforces accountability in disaster risk management, which indeed can only be ensured if roles and responsibilities across institutions are clearly defined through appropriate regulatory instruments.

This principle may be complemented by 19 (f), (g), and (i).

- Coherence of policies, plans, practices and mechanisms across different sectors and agendas – 19(h).

This principle requires coherence across strategies, policies, plans, mechanisms and political agendas, such as those related to development, growth, environment, climate, food security, health and safety. The “coherence” in question concerns sectors’ objectives and capacity to prevent and reduce disaster risk both in their respective business and in their combined and cumulative implementation. As a consequence it also concerns the sectors’ ability to adopt compatible and suitable measures and implementation mechanisms. The required coherence also demands to expand the scope of the efforts aimed at understanding disaster risk, as it requires the understanding of the potential rebounding impacts of sector policies and programs. In this connection, disaster risk management needs to be not only multi-hazard, but also multi-sector.

h) Priority areas for action

45. The Sendai Framework, while building on the Hyogo Framework for Action, shifts the emphasis to managing the underlying drivers of disaster risk through enhancing understanding of disaster risk, governance for disaster risk reduction, investment and measures to strengthen resilience, and preparing for recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

46. It is important to highlight that the four priorities define areas where action is needed, and are not an exhaustive list of measures. In practice, it means that the implementation of the four priority areas may require the elaboration and planning of additional specific measures at national and local levels, and hence the relevance of the adoption of national strategies by 2020 (target (e)) and plans (27(b)).

i. Priority 1: Understanding Disaster Risk

47. Understanding disaster risk in its extent and genesis, including its drivers, is particularly critical in light of the major shift in emphasis on risk present in the expected outcome, and, accordingly, the need to manage risk in and of itself.

48. The Sendai Framework introduces a new understanding of risk based not only on past losses but also on evolving trends and dynamics. Therefore, disaster risk management needs to be appreciated for its anticipatory nature and capacity to create new business opportunities. The Sendai Framework recognizes that while an increase in knowledge is necessary, there is already a lot of knowledge across

stakeholders that needs to be managed effectively and leveraged, hence partnerships as bedrock of disaster risk management.

49. In particular, priority area I places importance on: assessments and their necessary periodicity; baselines determination; management of information; development of disaster risk services and transformation of data and scientific information into usable information for decision-making; free availability and accessibility of data and information; systematically accounting for disaster losses, including their longer term implications from a social, educational, health and cultural perspectives; and investments in research and the development of methodology and models for disaster risk assessment. In this context, sharing and learning become even more important as instruments to maximize understanding.

50. Understanding disaster risk depends also on a shared understanding of terms. Whereas the Sendai Framework does not define terms, it does call for the development of a science-based terminology. It also implicitly puts forward in paragraphs 23 and 24(b) and 24(n) a proposition of risk as the result of vulnerability and capacity, exposure to hazard, and hazards' characteristics.

51. The Sendai Framework calls for a balanced use of traditional, indigenous and local knowledge with scientific knowledge, and, implicitly, their respective value for cross-validation and integration. In this context, the Sendai Framework's encouragement for more investments in science and technology and mobilization of scientific networks is notable and is instrumental to stimulate coherence in action across agendas through a sound understanding of their interdependences and reciprocal impacts and implications, including in the long term. Paragraph 25 includes a number of objectives that scientific work would need to focus on.

52. The Sendai Framework recognizes that the availability of science and technology as well as data and information for disaster risk reduction is dependent, among others, on intellectual property rights and calls for the development of formulas which can facilitate such availability. This is an area for further development, especially in consideration of the expected expanded engagement and contribution of the private sector.

53. Priority area I attaches significant importance to formal and non-formal education, public information and awareness. Of particular relevance is the link with civic education which goes hand in hand with the principle of disaster risk reduction as a shared responsibility, and thus a mark of responsible citizenship.

ii. Priority 2: Disaster Risk Governance

54. The Sendai Framework introduces a number of significant elements to strengthen disaster risk reduction governance in its institutional and participatory aspects at national and local levels. While restating the mainstreaming and integration of disaster risk reduction across all sectors, it puts forward a renewed paradigm to achieve it, which includes:

- Definition of roles and responsibilities as well as incentives to ensure and facilitate active participation by all stakeholders, including institutions, through appropriate regulatory instruments of a binding and voluntary nature.
- An enhancement of coordination in disaster risk management across institutions which is instrumental to stimulate coherence in implementation across agendas and foster a multi-hazard and multi-sector understanding of disaster risk. This includes the establishment and strengthening of disaster risk reduction coordination mechanisms, such as national and local platforms for disaster risk reduction, which be endowed by law with the necessary powers to ensure a coordinated approach to, and reporting on, disaster risk reduction across institutions and other stakeholders and thus allowing for proper accounting in disaster risk management – paragraph 27(g) identifies some core functions.
- The recognition of the need to establish or strengthen the institutional framework at national and local levels, including compliance mechanisms. This may also include considerations for national independent authorities for disaster risk reduction or chief risk officers.
- The adoption of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies and plans and public reporting on their implementation. Such strategies and plans do not necessarily need to be stand-alone policies and plans, and can actually be sector strategies and plans for development, growth, environmental and natural resources management, climate, etc. which, if based on an understanding of risk and related drivers, also prevent and reduce disaster risk.
- The further strengthening of action at local level through the continued empowerment of local authorities and enhanced partnerships among institutions, the private sector and civil society, including volunteers.
- The institutionalization of debates within relevant executive and legislative institutions concerning the development and implementation of strategies, plans and laws and aimed at exercising oversight, monitoring and reporting on progress. The public nature of such debates would allow for public scrutiny and transparency, also called for in the Sendai Framework.

55. The Sendai Framework gives guidance on how to strengthen the international cooperation mechanisms for disaster risk reduction. In particular, it recognizes the importance of the existing regional and subregional strategies and plans and implicitly recommends that in their further implementation and future reviews its provisions be taken into account. It also builds on the positive experience of the initial voluntary peer reviews among countries as an important mechanism for global and regional cooperation, including transboundary cooperation.

56. In pursuing coherence across agendas, the Sendai Framework calls for more collaboration across mechanisms and institutions in the implementation of relevant international instruments. This approach further confirms that the Sendai

Framework should be used in the interpretation and implementation, including programming and funding, of relevant sector instruments of legally and non-legally binding nature. This call for coherence and collaboration across mechanisms includes also treaty bodies.

57. For the same purpose, the Sendai Framework recognizes the potential of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and the regional platforms for disaster risk reduction as mechanisms for the sharing of practices and the development of policy guidance in disaster risk management and to drive the coherence across agendas and sectors through practical action. It also recognizes these platforms as mechanisms for monitoring progress on the implementation of the Sendai Framework and for providing contributions for the deliberations of the UN governance bodies and mechanisms, especially related to sustainable development. The latter is important in so far it allows the UN's deliberations on development, environment, climate and relief questions to be risk-informed.

iii. Priority 3: Investing in Resilience

58. Priority area III is particularly dependent on strong coordination and coherence in the development and implementation of sector policies and programs as well as the implementation of international instruments such as those concerning sustainable development, climate change and variability, and financing.

59. In this connection, this is the priority area where the Sendai Framework, while identifying some core questions to be addressed, does not enter into the details and indeed counts on the existence and implementation of numerous specific sector instruments, including new ones such as the Sustainable Development Goals or financing for development. Therefore, it rather plays a role as an instrument for interpreting the implementation of sector instruments. The Sendai Framework is not a suitable instrument to determine national or international social, environmental, economic, financial or climate policies, rather the instrument to highlight that economic, social and cultural measures to strengthen resilience are critical to address disaster risk. This is the area where the test of effective mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction will be carried out and whether practitioners across sectors will be able to integrate the management of disaster risk in their specific practices and businesses, while also integrating considerations on hazards coming from other sectors. In this respect, the practitioners' development of future guidance, such as "Words into Action: Implementation Guides for the Sendai Framework" will be particularly important.

60. At the same time, the Sendai Framework brings new important elements which requires due attention to be further unpacked and implemented. It makes a strong call for investing more resources in resilience and ensuring that risk-informed investments be made by both the public and the private sectors, and that disaster risk reduction considerations and measures be integrated in financial and fiscal instruments.

61. The Sendai Framework brings emphasis on: the need to build critical infrastructures “better from the start” which includes the strengthening and enforcement of building codes and building above code; culture of maintenance for services and infrastructures; protection of cultural and collecting institutions, such as museums and foundations, as well as sites of historical, cultural heritage and religious interest; resilience of work places; the adoption of non-structural measures; resilience of health systems. Natural resource and ecosystem management, as well as land use and planning in urban and rural areas continue to be a key area of action. Human mobility is also considered along side with host communities.

62. The Sendai Framework is explicit in terms of strengthening the resilience and protection of livelihoods and productive assets. This includes also the resilience of the business and industry sectors through a strengthened understanding of disaster risk management throughout the supply chain as well as specific considerations on tourism industry, which is of particular relevance for small island developing States. It also calls for assessment and anticipation of the economic and social dimension of disasters, which, especially in the medium and long term, is not fully understood yet and more studies, research and modeling are necessary.

iv. Priority 4: Preparedness to “Build Back Better”

63. Priority area IV represents an important mix of continuity and innovation. The continuity aspect is focused on the need to further improve preparedness for response, including through a renewed commitment toward early warning systems, which be multi-hazards and multi-sectoral, and the preservation of the functioning of critical infrastructures for the continued provision of essential services. It also includes the anticipation of “cascading disasters”, i.e. disasters which are magnified by multiple, sequential and interconnected hazards. Attention is also given to evacuation and displacement.

64. The innovation aspect of the Sendai Framework concerns the introduction of the concept of preparing for recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction before the disaster happens. Such approach requires that preparation for recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction be part of the longer term development plans, given their socio-economic implications. In addition, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction require strong institutional coordination across sectors and levels of administration and therefore have important implications for governance.

65. The Sendai Framework further reinforces the call to introduce disaster risk reduction measures in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction in order to “Build Back Better”. A lot of experience, both positive and less positive, has matured in this field over the decades and needs to be further assessed and translated into policies and programs.

i) Role of Stakeholders

66. In line with the guiding principles on inclusivity and shared responsibility, the Sendai Framework recognizes and describes the critical role of all stakeholders, beyond states, in light of their competence and resources and thus potential contribution toward disaster risk management. The “holders” do not passively hold their “stake” and wait for action to be undertaken by the authorities, but rather take a proactive approach, actively engaging with the authorities and bringing their skills and resources to bear on the development and implementation of national and local strategies and plans for disaster risk reduction.

67. The stakeholders are expected to contribute to the implementation of the four priorities, and to do so through, among others, the actions recognized and ascribed to them in section V paragraph 36. It is key to recall that these actions were included in the text as a result of proposals from the stakeholders during the negotiations, and were not “imposed” by states. The stakeholders’ contribution will be critical in the development and implementation of the “Words into Action”.

68. In this context, the voluntary commitments of stakeholders will need to be specific, time-bound and accompanied by targets, indicators, and verifications so to enable a proper integration in the national and local systems for monitoring of progress on national and local plans. They also need to be made public for accountability and predictability purposes. The commitments in this context become important opportunity for partnerships development with public institutions at local and national levels.

69. Private sector investments represent the vast majority of total investments made in countries. Ensuring that these are risk-informed is critical and this is the commitment undertaken in Sendai. Building on this and in recognition of the role that the private sector can and need to play to manage disaster risk, the Sendai Framework also offers practical indications, opportunities and ventures for innovative public-private-partnerships in research and innovation, risk-modeling, knowledge management and information sharing, development of normative instruments and quality standards, policies and plans, awareness raising and education, and resilience of critical services, facilities and infrastructures.

70. Overall, the description of roles and actions of stakeholders in the Sendai Framework is an innovation in international instruments of this nature. This will open new opportunities for partnership and the strengthening of governance mechanisms to efficiently and effectively manage disaster risk. It is important that forums, coordinating bodies, institutions and mechanisms at national level as well as international bodies and platforms for disaster risk reduction and other international organizations take into account and programme in their work and agendas the engagement of stakeholders along the suggested lines of the Sendai Framework.

j) International cooperation and global partnership

71. The section on international cooperation and global partnership is critical and derives directly from the guiding principles enshrined in the Sendai Framework. Developing countries need external support to strengthen their capacity to prevent and reduce disaster risk, support that needs to contribute to and complement national efforts.

72. The 2009 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction already proposed some target funding for disaster risk reduction, namely the equivalent of 10% of humanitarian relief funds, 10% as a target share of post-disaster reconstruction and recovery projects and national preparedness and response plans, and at least 1% of all national development funding and all development assistance funding. In light of the commitment undertaken through the adoption of the Sendai Framework, it may be worth considering these targets further.

73. In the enhanced provision of coordinated, sustained, and adequate international support called for by the Sendai Framework, it is important for donors to continue developing ways and means to incorporate disaster risk reduction measures into multilateral and bilateral development assistance programs within and across all sectors. In this context, international financial institutions and development banks have a critical role to play through the provision of risk-informed financial support and loans which support the Sendai Framework's integrated vision of disaster risk management across sectors and the full engagement of institutions and stakeholders.

74. International cooperation encompasses various means of implementation in addition to financial support. Technical cooperation, capacity building, and technology transfer are as instrumental to disaster risk reduction as financing. The emphasis of the Sendai Framework on science makes technical cooperation, technology transfer, and exchange of experts particularly important.

75. Given that disaster risk affects all countries, all modalities of cooperation are necessary, i.e. bilateral, multi-lateral, north-south, south-south, and triangular. At the same time, certain hazards affect more countries than others and therefore specific modalities and schemes may also be identified. In this context, an evolving mechanism that has been looked at favorably is voluntary peer reviews, i.e. a country invites experts from other countries to share experience and possibly provide advice on how to manage disaster risk taking into account the specific circumstances of that country. This approach may become particularly beneficial also for the further development of trans-boundary cooperation.

76. The Sendai Framework also exhorts the continuation of cooperation among cities and local governments in general, building on the positive experience developed thus far. Local governments have led important initiatives in terms of transforming international frameworks into local action, identifying priorities, exchanges of information and good practices, and development of systems to measure progress in reducing disaster risk.

77. Cooperation among Members of Parliament at global and regional levels is further encouraged, and it is expected to play a significant role in supporting the development and adoption of normative instruments along the lines indicated in the Sendai Framework.

78. The United Nations system is expected to adjust its policies, programmes and work practices in line with the Sendai Framework, starting from the revision of the UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience. Important guidance is also expected to come from the upcoming Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR).

79. The periodic review of the Sendai Framework by the UN governance bodies and mechanisms, like ECOSOC and the High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development, will enable risk-informed deliberations on sustainable development, climate and environmental issues.

4. Accountability

80. Accountability in disaster risk management was a much demanded and debated issue during the consultations and negotiations of the Sendai Framework and it may be useful to highlight how such an important question has been addressed in the text.

81. Generally speaking, prerequisites for accountability include the definition of roles and responsibilities, the granting of adequate powers to discharge such responsibilities, the existence of adequate means and resources and, finally, relevant mechanisms which can bring people and institutions to account.

82. While the Sendai Framework is not an instrument that has been endowed with the power to “ensure” accountability, and was indeed never conceived as such, it addresses the question of accountability in multiple forms, and includes many elements which contribute to accountability in disaster risk management, starting with the definition of the states’ primary responsibility to prevent and reduce disaster risk among the guiding principles. Therefore, the implementation of the Sendai Framework’s elements would certainly foster and enhance accountability in disaster risk management.

83. In particular, at the national level, the Sendai Framework calls for:

<i>Elements</i>	<i>Ref. (Not exhaustive)</i>
• The definition of responsibilities of public and private actors.	19(a),(b),(e),(f) 27(a), (g) 35-36
• The review and further development of normative frameworks	27(a),(d)

• The establishment of national strategies and plans with targets, indicators and timeframes as well as mechanisms for follow-up and reporting	27(b)
• Institutionalization of regular debates within executive and legislative institutions on the progress on national plans implementation	27(e)
• Definition of baselines and periodic assessment of disaster risk to verify increase or decrease	24(b)
• The establishment and enhancement of mechanisms for compliance	27(d)
• The establishment of mechanisms for transparency, including risk disclosure, monitoring and reporting requirements	25(a) 27(a),(b),(e),(g) 33(b) 48(c)
• Public accounting for disaster losses	24(d)
• Free availability and accessibility of disaggregated information concerning hazard exposure, vulnerability, risk, disasters and losses	19(g) 24(e),(f)
• The strengthening of public awareness which in turn determines stronger public scrutiny	27(a), (g) 33(d)
• The adoption of voluntary standards and certifications	25(g) 27(d),(g),(f) 36(c) 48(c)
• The revision and enforcement of building codes	27(d) 30(h)
• The standardization of building materials	30(c)
• The use of principles of universal design	30(c)
• A strengthened disaster risk understanding which implies consequences when the exercise of due diligence, negligence, gross negligence need to be verified	24

84. At the international level, further measures have been adopted to complement the commitment to national accountability, including:

<i>Elements</i>	<i>Ref. (Not exhaustive)</i>
• The adoption of indicators to monitor progress on the adopted global targets	50
• The promotion of voluntary peer reviews which are instrumental to transparency and quality control	28(e)
• The monitoring of progress, including through the Global Platform and regional platforms	27(f)
• The establishment of a periodic review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework by the UN governance bodies	49
• Access to information and data	25(a),(c)

85. In addition, the Sendai Framework’s structure itself is aimed to support the definition and clarification of responsibilities and identification of the responsible actors through an explicit articulation of actions for:

- countries and their authorities to carry out under the four priority areas, which are clustered around whether such action needs to be carried out at national and local or regional and global levels, through cooperation;
- stakeholders, including the call for their commitments to be specific and time-bound;
- states and international organizations in the context of international cooperation and global partnership.

5. Some questions on disaster risk reduction in law

86. The Sendai Framework’s focus on, and framing of, disaster risk bring in important elements for further considerations concerning disaster risk reduction in law at international and national levels. Such elements will be relevant in the context of the strengthening of normative instruments and frameworks called for by the Sendai Framework, and include:

<i>Elements</i>	<i>Ref. (Not exhaustive)</i>
• An explicit focus on disaster risk in itself	15
• The primary responsibility of each state to prevent and reduce disaster risk, including through cooperation.	19(a)
• Disaster risk reduction requires that responsibilities be shared by central Governments and relevant national authorities, sectors and stakeholders	19(b) 35
• Managing the risk of disasters is aimed at protecting persons and their property, health, livelihoods and productive assets, as well as cultural and environmental assets, while promoting and protecting all human rights, including the right to development	19(c)
• Understanding disaster risk as a priority	23, 24, 25
• Adoption and implementation of national and local strategies and plans	27(b)
• Integration of disaster risk reduction and coherence across sector agendas in implementation	19(h) 27(a)
• Guidance on issues for legislative reviews and reforms	19(e),(f) 25(h) 27(a),(d),(f),(g), (h),(k), 28(d) 30(g),(h),(l),(m), (n) 33(h),(j), (k),(m) (p) 34(b)

	36 47(d)
• Treaty bodies to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework, in coordination with other relevant frameworks	48 (e)

a) Disaster risk reduction in international instruments

87. The Sendai Framework considers disaster risk in, and of, itself and not in connection with, or as an accessory to, an event which causes the materialization and transformation of the risk, totally or partially, into a new form, i.e. the disaster. In other words, the Sendai Framework considers risk as an intangible and immaterial good in its own right to be managed, i.e. prevented and reduced, through actions and measures which fall squarely within the responsibility of the state and its institutions.

88. The Sendai Framework states that “each State has the primary responsibility to prevent and reduce disaster risk, including through... cooperation”. While the Sendai Framework does not specify the nature – legal, moral, etc – of such responsibility, it does affirm that it is “primary”, and that such responsibility needs to be discharged, amongst others, by the means of law and other normative instruments. It also clarifies that it is not a collective responsibility, rather one that each state has.

89. Such an approach confirms an existing trend. A review of states’ practice at national and international levels conducted by the UN International Law Commission in the context of its work on the “Protection of persons in the event of disasters” indicates a solid and consistent use of the law for disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management⁷. Also, the 4th Session of Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction recognized that the prevention and reduction of disaster risk are a legal obligation⁸.

90. Disaster risk reduction, in the considerations of the UN International Law Commission, as expressed through draft article 11⁹ and its commentary¹⁰, is a legal duty of states under international law, with the consequence that those states which have not yet taken appropriate measures, including of a legal nature, are expected to do so. Moreover, it is important to note that the legal duty concerns risk and its reduction, therefore risk creation and lack of its reduction would be a breach of such duty.

91. This legal duty derives also from the international human rights treaties, including the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic,

⁷ See the Special Rapporteur report A/CN.4/662 of 3 May 2013.

⁸ www.preventionweb.net/files/33306_finalchairsummaryoffourthsessionof.pdf (checked on 8 Oct. 2015)

⁹ Article 11 [16] - Duty to reduce the risk of disasters.

1. Each State shall reduce the risk of disasters by taking the necessary and appropriate measures, including through legislation and regulations, to prevent, mitigate, and prepare for disasters.

2. Disaster risk reduction measures include the conduct of risk assessments, the collection and dissemination of risk and past loss information, and the installation and operation of early warning systems.

¹⁰ See the Report of the International Law Commission, A/69/10, 2014, chap. V, paras 46–56.

Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Such instruments address a number of core issues, including participation, equality, and non-discrimination, access to resources which are core to disaster risk management and are enshrined in the Sendai Framework's Guiding Principles.

92. It is worth noting that the Sendai Framework explicitly refers to the role that treaty bodies can play to support countries in its implementation. In this context, the human rights treaty bodies can contribute to the integration of disaster risk reduction in national practice through the provision of useful guidance through general discussions, general comments, general recommendations, list of issues, concluding observations, etc. In turn, the reduction of disaster risk will mean in practice the promotion and protection of human rights.

b) Due diligence, negligence and *force majeure*

93. The application of the Sendai Framework paradigm has important implications in the determination of due diligence, negligence and *force majeure* – hence for liability and, overall, accountability – as it touches on key issues to be considered when making such determination. In particular, the Sendai Framework indicates what disaster risk is, what its determinants – i.e. exposure, vulnerability, and hazard characteristics – are, and what measures are needed to understand and manage it.

94. In this context, priority area I is particularly relevant as it sets the basis to understand cause and effect, hence the correlation between knowledge and action or omission. In addition, through the call for applied science to disaster risk reduction, the development of methodologies for risk assessment, and the creation of opportunities for sharing information, experience and mutual learning, priority area I has important implications for the identification of the “state of the art”, hence for the determination of accountability.

c) *De lege ferenda* – considerations for normative reforms

95. Since the adoption of the Hyogo Framework for Action, many countries have adopted new normative instruments; yet many instruments continue to have a pronounced focus on disaster management and less on prevention and reduction of disaster risk. And at the same time, disaster risk is on the rise.

96. While it is definitely necessary to continue strengthening normative frameworks at national and international levels for disaster management purposes, the continued increase of disaster risk raises the question of whether disaster risk reduction is a clearly and sufficiently articulated obligation under national law across all countries.

97. In addition, there is a growing common understanding that disaster management laws are not suitable to regulate the full scope of questions to be addressed in disaster risk reduction. Different and multiple normative instruments are necessary.

98. The Sendai Framework goes beyond the dichotomy between disaster risk reduction laws versus other laws, in that laws in and of themselves need to guide and contribute to disaster risk management within their respective subject and area.

99. Laws, regulations, and public policies together with strategies and plans as well as standards are instrumental to interpret and translate into national and local contexts the Sendai Framework's guidance, and thus enable its implementation.

100. The Sendai Framework calls for countries to review and develop national and local frameworks of laws, regulations and public policies. It highlights and points to areas where further normative action with a clear focus on disaster risk management may be necessary. Some of areas will be briefly referred to and described in the following sub-sections.

101. It is also expected that the "Words into Action" will shed light on further aspects and questions to be considered by countries when reviewing and developing normative frameworks and instruments.

i. Definition and articulation of responsibility

102. The definition and articulation of responsibilities of institutions, together with the determination of who the stakeholders are and what responsibility they are expected to bear, are fundamental elements for legal certainty, the predictability of actions and the definition of disaster risk management systems based on the principle of accountability. It is important that such definition and articulation, which have important consequences for governance and accountability, be made by law.

103. Para 27(a) of the Sendai Framework is central in providing guidance vis-à-vis definition and articulation of responsibility and indicates as priority to:

1. mainstream and integrate disaster risk reduction within and across all sectors;
2. review and promote the coherence and further development of national and local frameworks of laws, regulations and public policies, which guide the public and private sectors in:
 - (i) addressing disaster risk in publically owned, managed or regulated services and infrastructures;
 - (ii) promoting and providing incentives, as relevant, for actions by persons, households, communities and businesses;
 - (iii) enhancing relevant mechanisms and initiatives for disaster risk transparency, which may include financial incentives, public awareness-raising and training initiatives, reporting requirements and legal and administrative measures;
 - (iv) putting in place coordination and organizational structures.

104. Point 1 above indicates that the scope of legislative reviews is to be as comprehensive as possible, based on sound hazard and risk assessments, and needs to look into the aspects touched upon by the Sendai Framework. Indeed, a piecemeal or too a narrow approach would not be sufficient and may lead to further

areas of uncertainty with decrease in accountability and further risk increase. It also implicitly suggests that hazard and risk assessments need to be conducted before undertaking any legislative review, which would be then part of an action plan undertaken by a country to manage disaster risk. Governance and administrative reforms, if required, needs to be based on a sound understanding of disaster risk, as also hinted by the order in which the priority areas are presented in the Sendai Framework.

105. Point 2 indicates a qualitative element to be applied in the legislative reviews: coherence. Albeit a rather generic term, still it points to the fact that under scrutiny it is the sum total of the potential consequences and reciprocal impacts of activities carried out under each sector, i.e. the potential sum total of risk. Weak policy coherence is a disaster risk driver. Striving for coherence becomes a strategic approach which aims at managing disaster risk in a comprehensive manner and anticipating and preventing unintended negative consequences of actions across sectors, while making good use of the available resources. Point (b) also stresses that the guidance needs to be for both the public and private sector, given the strong interdependency in risk creation, and thus also reduction, between the actions of the public and private sectors.

106. Furthermore, points (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) suggest specific areas for normative review, including:

- services and infrastructures of public interest, regardless whether they are publicly or privately owned, which are essential for economic and social resilience;
- incentives to stimulate positive action and assumption of responsibility by the private sector at large, including families and households, which in turn also have positive repercussions on economic and social resilience;
- enhancement of transparency, including disclosure, in transactions and operations by public and private actors;
- enhancement of coordination across public institutions and between public and private actors with the possible creation of organizational mechanisms and structures where necessary.

107. Also para 27(b) implicitly calls for the definition of responsibilities across public and private stakeholders since such responsibilities need to be an integral part of national and local strategies and plans in which it is key to know who does what by when.

108. The Sendai Framework recognizes that the responsibility for disaster risk reduction concerns not only state institutions, but also other stakeholders. Therefore, it builds the overall approach to disaster risk reduction counting on the competence, capacity and actions of such stakeholders. In this spirit, normative instruments are key to translate the guidance on the roles of stakeholders expressed by the Sendai Framework into the domestic governance systems and a practical and focused mobilization of the capacities and resources available in each country.

ii. Enhancing national coordination

109. The Sendai Framework places particular emphasis on coordination, and especially on the role of national and local coordination multi-stakeholder forums, such as national and local platforms for disaster risk reduction. In particular, paragraph 27(g) details out the key characteristics, functions and powers these bodies need to have in the area of risk identification; building knowledge and awareness, including through campaigns; management, including sharing and dissemination of disaster risk information and data; reporting on status of disaster risk and progress toward implementation of strategies, plans and policies; and facilitating multi-sector cooperation. It is explicit in highlighting that the responsibilities of such bodies should be established through normative instruments in order to grant them the necessary gravitas to influence and guide other institutions and actors.

iii. Public-private partnerships

110. The Sendai Framework places particular importance on public-private partnerships, and therefore on the further development of normative instruments which enable new forms and modalities of ventures between private sector and public institutions at all levels to manage disaster risk.

iv. Empowerment of local authorities and communities

111. Another area where normative intervention continues to be a priority concerns the empowerment of local authorities and communities. Such empowerment needs to include: resources, such as financial and human; incentives, such as fiscal, financial; decision-making responsibilities, which needs to concern the powers to manage disaster risk locally, participate in and have a say in the national discussions concerning the development of national disaster risk reduction policies, plans and legislation; and provisions for the engagement of representatives of communities in the work of relevant institutions and processes. Important work has started under the Hyogo Framework for Action and needs further efforts.

112. It is important to note that the Sendai Framework does not suggest a specific model or form – such as decentralization, delegation, devolution or deconcentration and the like – as this is a choice that countries need to make on the basis of their form of state and government and political situation. Yet, the Sendai Framework is quite clear in indicating that risk is local in nature and therefore local action is essential and needs to be enabled and empowered where necessary.

v. Local normative instruments

113. The Sendai Framework takes into full account the variety of forms of state and government as well as governance systems at large. At the same time, it recognizes that risk needs to be managed where it exists: at the local level (paragraph 19(i)). In this context, the continued development of normative instruments at local level remains an important instrument to guide and empower local actors.

vi. Ecosystems services, land use and natural resource management

114. Land use, urban planning, and building codes as well as ecosystem services, river basins and natural resources management are central to disaster risk management and a key determinant of vulnerability and exposure to hazards. Albeit not a new subject of normative instruments, their further regulation, including by law, definitely needs to continue with a special attention.

vii. Human mobility, displacement, evacuation, relocation and disaster risk

115. The Sendai Framework includes a number of measures related to human mobility, displacement, evacuation and relocation in the context of strengthening disaster risk governance, investing in resilience and enhancing preparedness. In recognising the importance of national legislation, the Sendai Framework suggests human mobility, displacement, evacuation and relocation as priority questions in the further development of normative instruments.

viii. Planning for recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction

116. The Sendai Framework recognises the need for and gives priority to planning for recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction ahead of disasters. Such initiatives require the engagement of executive and legislative institutions and stakeholders at local and national levels in light of the socio, economic, and political complexities and the coordination requirements. Normative provisions which anticipate and regulate recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction through a “Build Back Better” approach are essential.

ix. Control and compliance

117. Motivating compliance with normative instruments is essential and the review of existing enforcement mechanisms and available incentives need to become an integral part of disaster risk reduction governance and strategies. This includes also considerations concerning national regulatory agencies on disaster risk reduction and the integration of disaster risk reduction in the works of existing regulatory agencies.

118. The compulsory disclosure of risk information and the definition of related legal liabilities are important stimuli to adherence to standards, especially in the context of property and infrastructure-related transactions, and to prevent that risk is transferred to unaware recipients.

119. Furthermore, it is important that normative instruments provide for the monitoring of progress and the verification of compliance as well as enquiries in “near miss incidents” which can provide important information on compliance and necessary corrective and pre-emptive measures to adopt.

120. In this context, the continued fight against corruption is necessary and as it has a direct bearing on the efficiency and effectiveness of disaster risk management measures. Indeed, corruption negatively impacts on the three variables of risk – i.e. exposure, vulnerability, and hazard’s characteristics – by, for instance, weakening controls on pollutants, influencing land use planning and the application of building codes.

x. Disaster loss and access to risk information

121. The standardization and systematic collection of risk and loss information, especially at local levels, and the establishment of open-access and open-source data platforms is still limited and needs to be stimulated and enhanced through norms. A clear articulation of the right to access risk information is instrumental to, and an enabler of, disaster risk management. Accessibility requires to take into account various categories of users and their needs.

xi. Fiscal and financial instruments

122. The Sendai Framework considers the importance of fiscal and financial instruments in the context of investments for resilience and the integration of disaster risk consideration therein. Normative guidance is necessary in light of the nature of the fiscal and financial instruments and their development processes.

xii. Intellectual property rights and patents

123. In the context of the priority concerning understanding disaster risk, the Sendai Framework identifies the importance of encouraging the availability of copyrighted and patented materials, including through negotiated concessions. This is certainly an area where normative work is of importance.

xiii. DRR-informed development assistance

124. International cooperation is essential in managing disaster risk. The Sendai Framework indicates the need to incorporate disaster risk reduction measures into multilateral and bilateral development assistance programmes within and across all sectors. This is another important area where domestic normative instruments can set standards for national policies and practices in international cooperation.

xiv. Accession to and development of international agreements

125. Accession to disaster risk reduction-related international legal agreements of transboundary, regional and global nature remains important to enhance the predictability of cooperation and accountability.

126. Through its call for coherence across agendas, the Sendai Framework also indicates that states need to take the provisions and approach of the Sendai Framework in due account in the further codification and development of

international bilateral and multilateral agreements which may have a bearing on disaster risk.

xv. Early warning and disaster response

127. Given that disaster risk is on the rise, the continued strengthening of normative frameworks for early warning and disaster response remains of primary importance. Various dimensions would need to be taken into account, such as accessibility, multi-hazard and multi-sector approach, attribution of powers and resources for local action.

xvi. Nature of normative instruments

128. Finally, normative frameworks need to be composed of a variety of legislative and regulatory instruments of both legally binding and non-legally binding nature to effectively manage disaster risk. Sometimes, more flexible instruments such as policies and voluntary standards may be preferable for practical and political reasons. Whereas there is no golden rule on how normative instruments need to be conceived, it appears that they need to be more agile and adaptive where tailored responses are needed. The choice of the appropriate normative instrument is also dependent on its quick adaptability to reflect and incorporate the progress made by, and the knowledge acquired through, science and practice. Given the fact that risk changes over time, normative instruments and standards need to be anticipatory in nature and fast adaptive. Accommodating science and technology is key in their development and continued review and application.

d) Standards development

129. The Sendai Framework takes into account the existing, and places particular importance on the further development of, standards for disaster risk management. It explicitly refers to standards for risk assessments, disaster risk modelling and the collection and use of data; environmental and resource management and health and safety standards; standards related to the discharge of responsibilities by national and local platforms for disaster risk reduction; quality standards, such as certifications and awards for disaster risk management; the use of the principles of universal design and the standardization of building materials; and the revision of existing or the development of new building codes and structural standards.

130. Other types of standards are also indirectly recalled, such as on accounting, reporting, and disclosure. Standards need to be developed in different fields, including economic, fiscal, financial, and across industry sectors. The continued development of cross-industry standards are particularly important and instrumental to manage disaster risk across sectors, and to do that in a coherent manner.

131. The Sendai Framework values the development of legally binding standards and voluntary standards. Standards need to have a strong foundation in disaster risk reduction principles, including those enshrined in the Sendai Framework itself.

132. The Sendai Framework also calls for multi-stakeholder approach and the participation of the private sector, civil society, professional associations, scientific organizations and the United Nations in the development of such standards.

133. Finally, it is expected that the “Words into action” provide support to the further development of standards.

6. The transition from the Hyogo Framework for Action to the Sendai Framework

134. The Sendai Framework was built on the basis of the experience matured in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and other relevant international frameworks. During the preparatory process, it was recognized that the work initiated under the Hyogo Framework for Action needed to continue, and in fact enhanced, under the Sendai Framework. This continuity is to be reflected in and ensured through the transition from the Hyogo Framework for Action to the Sendai Framework.

135. Countries have already started assessing risk to determine baselines for measurement purposes and reviewing their governance mechanisms and practices to ascertain whether new measures need to be adopted in line with the guidance contained in the Sendai Framework. At the international level, regions have started the review of regional strategies and plans to ensure alignment with the Sendai Framework.

136. An area of work which needs particular attention during the transition is how to enhance existing mechanisms and tools to measure progress in disaster risk reduction at national and international levels. At the national level, the adoption of disaster risk baselines, disaster loss database, risk maps, national policies, targets and indicators will be instrumental to the further enhancement of measurement systems. In this respect, the engagement of national statistics offices will be very important.

137. At the international level, the revision and update of the existing HFA Monitor tool will be required in order to monitor the implementation of the Sendai Framework. The new monitor system – the Sendai Monitor – will enter into existence as from 2016 in a phased manner. As from 2017, it will also include the measurement of progress on the seven global targets once the indicators proposed by the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction are adopted by the UN General Assembly.

138. In particular, concerning the measurement against the global targets, the first step will be the definition of risk baselines to be presented by and discussed at the next session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2017. Once the baselines are defined and indicators are adopted, it will be possible to start measuring progress vis-à-vis the seven global targets and a first global assessment report may be expected in 2019.

139. The transition will also concern the refocusing of the agendas of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and the regional platforms for disaster risk reduction as well as of their preparatory processes, in light of the Sendai Framework's guidance, especially paragraph 28 (a) and (c). In particular, some aspects which will need to be developed are the practical role of such platforms in the monitoring of progress in implementation, and the formulation of deliberations for continued support and guidance in implementation, including on coherence across agendas. Moreover, the parts of the priority areas concerning "Global and regional levels" provide important guidance on questions for which international cooperation is necessary, and therefore which would need to be the subject of considerations during international meetings, including the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and the regional platforms for disaster risk reduction.

140. Finally, the UN Secretary-General report¹¹ on disaster risk reduction formally presented to the UN General Assembly on 19 October 2015 provides a number of recommendations for work to be undertaken over the next few years, and thus issues to be considered in the context of international meetings. Such issues include: carrying out stocktaking on disaster risk management practices and give priority to the assessment of disaster risk and the development of baselines to assess disaster risk trends over the next three years; giving priority to the development of national and local disaster risk reduction policies, strategies and plans over the next five years with the participation of all stakeholders; giving due consideration to the establishment or strengthening of national mechanisms for disaster risk reduction, such as national platforms for disaster risk reduction, in the light of the characteristics indicated in the Sendai Framework; and enhancing international cooperation and the provision of means of implementation to support developing countries in the implementation of the Sendai Framework, in particular the assessment of disaster risk and the development of baselines to assess disaster risk trends, and in that context make bilateral and multilateral development assistance programmes risk-informed.

141. This "reading guide" may be updated in 2016, based on feedback and the conclusion of the work of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction.

¹¹ See UN General Assembly document A/70/282, of 4 August 2015.

In support of the implementation of the
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9-11 Rue de Varembé
CH 1202, Geneva
Switzerland
www.unisdr.org