

**Statement from:  
The Disaster and Development Centre (DDC)  
Northumbria University**

The Disaster and Development Centre (DDC) aims to contribute to sustained human wellbeing in contexts of short and long-term crises, getting development out of disaster and disaster reduction through development. In order to progress this goal, the DDC responds to the need for international centres of research and integrated approaches to learning, for the combined field of disaster reduction and sustainable development. The DDC has throughout the current decade demonstrated the utility of higher education groups in making a contribution to disaster and development research and through teaching and learning grounded in diverse experience. This is driven by the age old knowledge that influence and change in key issues of our times is very possible through the education sector. In the interests of upholding the spirit of Hyogo we in particular recognise the need for a consolidated focus of activity that progresses current international policy drives that promote *community based disaster reduction, health centred disaster risk reduction, social resilience, disaster response and sustainable development*. These have been a focus of our work and will remain a dedicated commitment for as long as there is demand from people willing to invest in taking this forward as a crucial aspect of proactive disaster reduction. At the time of the Second Session Global Platform for DRR we in particular reemphasise our contributions in this field with a need for greater investment in technology, justice, and recognition of human values in bringing about wellbeing. This is a way in which disaster impacts can be offset, using a people centred approach. As a global community, we are now in a position to build on wide experiences of disaster and development research, policy and practice. This is an approach that in particular promotes recognition of the particular needs of women, children, disabled, elderly and forcibly displaced people, across diverse cultures.

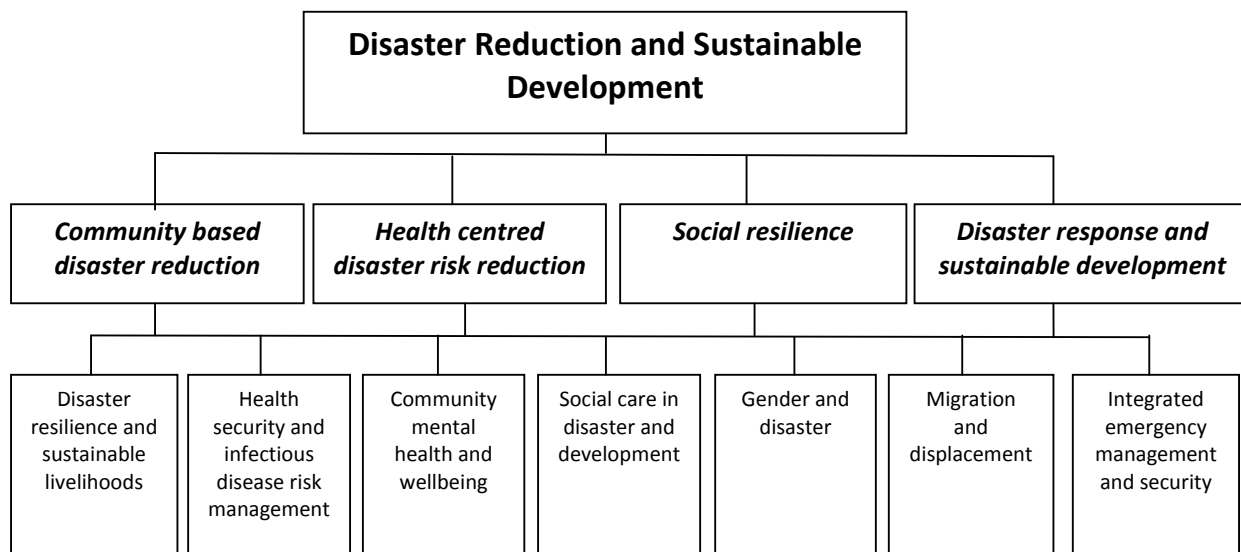
As we move forward in the HFA we should examine through practice based learning those successful approaches and activities that may be more rapidly scaled up. This will depend on an expanded programme of research to support more effective and sustainable policy guidance. The link between sustainable development and human security is emphasised in our contribution to this work including through; disaster avoidance, risk management, disaster response systems, post disaster recovery strategies, human coping and capacity building, trauma management, advocacy, and all theoretical and practical ways in which resilience is achieved at the personal and institutional levels. These are also themes that comprise DDC related MSc Disaster Management and Sustainable Development and Community Wellbeing in Disaster and Development Programmes at Northumbria University for which 148 MSc students have already been registered in recent years. Teaching and learning programmes such as these are in themselves a reflection of the growing interest in disaster reduction studies within as well as without of the academy. We are currently also examining other aspects of the wider disaster reduction curricula, for schools and community level education.

A strategic research and development objective of the disaster and development agenda is therefore to identify and apply;

*“optimal theoretical, methodological, policy and practice investments that enable disaster risk reduction and development strategies to achieve sustainable human security, resilience and wellbeing”*

There are many indications of how we can move forward in implementing this within the context of the call given by the Second Session Global Platform for DRR. Of fundamental importance at this juncture is that resources are provided to facilitate actions initiated, particularly those that are worked out on a daily basis at the grass roots level of the subject with our partners in Africa, Asia and elsewhere. Much of the progress to date has been achieved through learning that is interlinked with

close friendships and collaborations in this field, in all directions around this planet. Education based approaches facilitate this, reaching and connecting the young and bridging learning with the realities on the ground. The following is the simple breakdown of interrelated fields we would love to continue to expand with both current and new partners:



**Community based disaster reduction:**

This engages how communities can manage disaster, including through resilience building, sustainable livelihoods, appropriate governance, advocacy and adaptation strategies.

**Health centred disaster risk reduction:**

This brings the central importance of health to the heart of the disaster and development approach, including through health security, infectious disease risk reduction, mental health and wellbeing, displacement mitigation, social and self care.

**Social resilience:**

This promotes the implications and applications of socially orientated disaster reduction including through understanding of the interrelationships of disasters with society, marginalised groups, gender, children and the social aspects of disaster intervention strategies.

**Disaster response and sustainable development:**

This supports the identification of how emergency services, humanitarian agencies, state structures and other stakeholder groups can respond to and build recovery out of crises.

The Disaster and Development Centre thanks the United Nations ISDR and all of our partners for the opportunity to input to the Second Session Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.