

MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE HYOGO FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

AN INTERNAL ANALYSIS OF KEY FINDINGS
SUBMITTED TO THE UN ISDR
BY WORLD VISION INTERNATIONAL



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THE HYOGO FRAMEWORK – ARE WE ON TRACK?

Report to the ISDR on Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An internal review was conducted in World Vision with the view to providing input to the ISDR Mid-Term Review of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

The aim of Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) – now at its mid-term – is to build the resilience of nations and communities through substantial reduction in disaster losses by 2015. To achieve this aim, disaster risk reduction (DRR) needs greater integration into country and global-level governance mechanisms¹ across the private, public and not-for-profit sectors, substantial increases in investment according to internationally agreed targets set in the 2009 Global Platform for DRR, and strengthened direct engagement of the communities where vulnerable people are living. Youth and children as key agents of change must be involved at all levels and at every step. Strong accountability is needed for the effective implementation of the HFA in order to measure progress towards objectives.²

Continued investment into the ISDR system to sustain momentum of progress in HFA implementation has been noted as essential, along with increased investment in capacity development at all levels, strengthened international coordination mechanism, reform of the humanitarian aid system, expanded bilateral policy influence, and emphasizing the need to build strong relationships between actors in the HFA system.

The report concludes with a series of recommendations to the ISDR. These include enhancing the focus on capacity building, advocating for increased financing to DRR, emphasizing youth engagement and safe schools as frontline centers of excellence in DRR in local communities, continued partnership with key coalitions, expanding opportunities for networking, and development of municipal technical assistance and innovations centers.

FOREWARD

This paper provides a summary of findings from an internal review of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) and its influence in World Vision in policy and practice.³ It has been written to support the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) Mid-Term Review for the purposes of reflection to improve understanding of how the HFA and ISDR system may be strengthened to more effectively engage with large international NGOs like⁴ World Vision in building the resilience of communities and nations. The paper begins with high-level findings, followed by a snapshot into how the HFA has worked in the

¹ Included in this are legal and regulatory frameworks, integration into overseas assistance, policies and planning and mainstreaming into all aspects of organizational structures.

² Maalouf Sanaa, *Views from the Frontline Country Report for Lebanon*. Beirut: World Vision Lebanon, 2009, 4.

³ The review and findings expressed in this report reflect consultations with key climate change and DRR staff in Asia, Africa, Latin America, North America and Middle East/Eastern Europe.

Asia Pacific, Africa and Latin America regions, and concludes with a summary and proposed way forward.

Key accompanying processes must be in place for the mechanism to continue to be effective within a changing global context, and for implementation to be stimulated and scaled up in the years ahead. It is these processes that are areas of greatest 'concern' hence they define the scope of the bulk of the paper as they are seen as critical to the success of the HFA in years to come.

HIGH-LEVEL FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP

Whereas the ultimate nexus of the HFA system must be local, affected communities, the HFA has been successful thus far to a large degree through the leadership and supporting functions provided by the ISDR system. Indeed leadership is the most remarkable of all functions provided by ISDR to the international community and, without this, until countries fully own and mainstream DRR into development frameworks the HFA will not be able to fulfill its mandate in the coming five years. Disasters are common to all, but until the HFA came into existence there was no one coordinating framework to address risk from within both humanitarian and development contexts; and the ISDR system's convening role is indispensable to the international system's mandate and ability to implement risk reduction, from local to global.

In the past two years, the quality of this leadership has been extraordinary in engaging both state and non-state actors. This is especially the case in how the ISDR staff, leadership and Special Advisor to the Secretary General have convened a dynamic forum within which civil society can express itself and influence the overall direction of the HFA and discussions around its implementation according to local perspectives and experience. This has served to create an open space wherein partnerships can more readily occur between UN and non-UN actors. It has to some degree elevated the importance of civil society in global and national DRR processes; promoting it as a valued, if not essential, partner. This quality of leadership has established an environment of trust and cooperation that can be the foundation of paradigmatic change that is sought in the very aim of the HFA – to build resilient communities and nations. To accomplish this, there must be continuity in leadership, expansion of space for collaboration, including increased engagement from a greater variety of civil society institutions, particularly and affected local-level community members, children and youth. There must be tangible outcomes of partnerships, accompanied by an increasing emphasis on amplifying learning and messages through social networking as well as traditional communication and media channels.

Without this leadership of the ISDR and the sustained investment of Governments, donors and the UN system that supports it, engagement of the ISDR system partners in HFA implementation could be seriously jeopardized. Recent growth in the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for DRR strengthens engagement of affected communities in HFA implementation and national DRR decision-making. Its continued support and strong linkages to the ISDR system will be key in driving the HFA forward towards its goal of building resilient nations.

⁴ World Vision, together with microfinance subsidiary VisionFund International, is a leading humanitarian organisation. Established in 1950, some 40,000 staff members (including part time and temporary staff and employees of microfinance institutions) implement programmes of community development, emergency relief and promotion of justice in nearly 100 countries. World Vision consists of numerous national entities around the world, grouped in what is informally referred to as the World Vision "partnership."

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

A second point must be made on what is needed to complement this leadership: commensurate levels of investment in capacity development for DRR and mobilisation of non-state actors in delivery of related technical assistance services. The need for capacity development at all levels – and most particularly at the local level – cannot be underestimated; the topic dominated consultations with programming staff. Capacity Development for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) has provided an effective launching pad to begin to address national government capacity gaps and requires more financial and human support to expand its reach and uptake; a civil society alternate to CADRI needs to be launched to raise broad level of engagement in this topic. Civil society actors need to be guided and mobilized to engage in more effectively coordinated provision of capacity development services to and with national actors at all levels. Weak capacities are widely recognized as a systemic issue in NGO circles but extremely few collaborative solutions are being generated. A proliferation of tools, models, and trainings on agency-specific modalities are delivered at field level, exacerbating the problem of weak capacities. More specific reference needs to be made in the HFA itself of capacity as a critical issue, on the ownership of capacity process; how core capacity gaps are to be identified developed at all levels, with corresponding roles and responsibilities of actors set forth and how this process may be coordinated. For as it has been seen, risk must be everyone's business, and the same goes for capacity – strong capacities at all levels must be the underlying foundation of the HFA, or it will remain in the realm of the theoretical. The process can be further enhanced by specific guidance on capacity issues according to each priority for action.

CENTRAL COORDINATION MECHANISM ON IMPLEMENTATION

Regarding international cooperation in DRR, much work needs to be done to develop a system of accountability to monitor and report on ebbs and flows in HFA implementation in accordance with changing global and national contexts. Though the central organ for coordination of HFA implementation is ISDR, it is not yet clear to many NGOs where DRR sits within the respective UN agencies otherwise engaged in DRR such as UNESCO, UNICEF, WFP and even UNDP; nor how these focal points collaborate with non-UN actors. Yet many of these agencies struggle with similar issues as World Vision, trying to bring together humanitarian and development realms – including actors with varying viewpoints and interests around a common platform of building resilience. This challenge has been complicated by current attempts to sort out how climate change and DRR can be combined into a holistic approach within their institutions, with common understanding and practice from global to local. The challenges internally in such large, complex institutions are immense, and there is no commonly known policy forum for sharing learning and practice on these topics, nor raise the profile of the issue to its rightful context: that undertaking DRR is essentially a demonstration of good governance. This is not a lack of effective information sharing on what works in mainstreaming amongst agencies. If deaths from disease and hunger can be all but stopped for about \$195 billion⁵ per year, a higher degree of cooperation and coordination will be required to achieve this. The situation is far more urgent where humanitarian emergencies are concerned. Where institutions that provide such significant resources fail to cooperate, communities nearly always bear the brunt. As DRR is, as spelled out in the HFA, a cross-cutting issue and approach, a supporting mechanism to the HFA must be clearly mandated within the next iteration to raise the level of accountability for international cooperation to deliver the outcome of the HFA.

⁵ <http://www.poverty.com/internationalaid.html>

INVESTMENT

The question of investment has been raised at the 2009 Global Platform for DRR and will be explored in depth during the upcoming 2011 Global Platform; it will not be addressed at length in this paper. A lesson from history can be useful here to provide perspective on how the HFA may advance the question of investment within context of national policy objectives and international cooperation. After the recession in the early 1990s, a series of high-profile international conferences boosted ODA flows. In 2002, the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico, set firm targets for each donor and marked the upturn of ODA after a decade of decline.⁶ A similar approach can be undertaken with the HFA, in setting firm targets commensurate with ODA goals and degree of risk, and laying out a mechanism for accountability for these goals. Without this level of guidance, countries will not be able to measure progress and institutions that provide aid will have no benchmarks.

POLICY INFLUENCE

Historically for World Vision, the HFA has had major policy influence; in shaping how the organisation envisions and puts into practice risk reduction at field levels. The concept of community resilience has had more acceptance internally than DRR per se, across sectors and departments. At the policy level, though DRR is integrated into documents and strategic intents across the organization, it can appear that DRR may not yet play a leading role in guiding investment decisions and operational realities. However a view beyond stated policy objectives into what the organisation actually does at local, sub-national, national and in some cases regional levels provides an entirely different picture. From 2006 to the present day, DRR has progressed from being a largely unknown area to being now incorporated into nearly half of all country programmes to some degree of prominence. In this sense DRR has the potential to drive institutional change from the ground up. Recent establishment of several communities of practice – community resilience, and climate change and the natural environment – will likely speed these changes as people share knowledge, learning and practice.

One important yet untapped area of potential support to HFA implementation is the degree to which World Vision could influence the policies of governments within its Support Office (SO)⁷ structure. This is an area of work that may require some investment in technical assistance and networking. Key SOs expressed interest in scaling up advocacy and policy influencing activities with donor governments and the private sector in DRR. As SOs are already in close working relations with a number of these governments (i.e. Japan, Australia and New Zealand for instance), this is an area which would potentially yield a high degree of upstream impact for HFA implementation.

NETWORKING, CONSULTATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

A meeting organized in 2006 by Joanne Burke, former head of Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI), was a critical entry point for DRR in the organisation. A number of key relationships were forged which later developed into partnerships of influence. These type venues should not be underestimated for their potential to influence the internal workings of an organization. Regular multi-sectoral collaboration spaces prescribed in the guiding documentation on HFA delivery mechanisms would go far in building networks that will sustain needed changes in behavior. Networking meetings should be regular, both formal

⁶ http://www.oecd.org/document/41/0,3746,en_2649_34447_46195625_1_1_1_1,00.html

⁷ Support Offices provide technical and financial support to National Office programming.

and informal, and any outcomes fed into the formal reporting processes within the HFA and ISDR system.

The impetus towards utilizing social media and other means to build awareness on DRR is encouraging in terms of expanding public engagement in the HFA. The partnerships being forged with the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for DRR⁸, the Children in a Changing Climate Coalition⁹ and civil society coalitions to engage local communities, children and youth, in DRR and HFA implementation hold much promise. Recent movements to transform restrictive regimes in the Middle East demonstrate yet again the power of the young generation to achieve great change against all odds. Through an intentional focus on engaging children and youth in the HFA through developing interactive dialogues using social media and other creative means, the power of youth to build a more resilient future can be unleashed. This needs to be complemented by commensurate education and awareness raising measures that move beyond inclusion into formal educational systems into spaces where youth live and work. Then, as long as there is space for child and youth voices to be heard and reflected in national and global-level DRR decision-making processes, the HFA will continue to move towards its aim.

GOVERNANCE

Due to the intrinsically cross-sectoral, all-inclusive nature of disasters, DRR as a primary means to reduce disaster risk has the potential to significantly impact the transformation of a political and/or economic culture, advancing sustainable development. For DRR to work, stakeholders from all levels of society and all three sectors, must work together to combat risks common to both the powerful and the poor. Successful implementation of DRR necessitates open dialogue about, and commonly structured solutions to underlying vulnerabilities – which may be structural/physical, environmental, social, economic or political, or due to any combination of complex factors. Because disasters are eroding development gains and transcending the current national and global systems constructed to manage them, DRR must be deeply embedded within, and have a dynamic relation with, the governance systems of a country – and of international humanitarian and development assistance. The ISDR system must continue to use its convening role to raise levels of awareness of this issue at all levels, and advocate for increased public accountability for funds dedicated and allocated both for humanitarian and development aims – whether they exacerbate or reduce risk. The inter-relationships between good governance, governance systems and DRR must be more closely explored within various venues, and findings institutionalized within the revised HFA, post-mid-term review.

HFA AT MID-TERM: A CRITICAL REVIEW

This next section provides an overview of the current status of implementation of the HFA in World Vision based on consultations with DRR and climate change staff at global, regional, national and local levels. Included in this section is a reflection on three countries in the Asia Pacific region – the Philippines, Indonesia and Cambodia, showing how the HFA been instrumental over the past five years, as well as areas it can be strengthened. The reflection follows the order and content of the Mid-Term Review conceptual framework and key questions.

⁸ See <http://www.globalnetwork-dr.org/>

⁹ See <http://www.childreninachangingclimate.org/>

In 2007 World Vision initiated a three year regional Community Resilience Project (CRP) in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The project aimed to promote community resilience through the introduction of DRR activities. Moreover, the project sought to promote DRR mainstreaming and scaling up objectives. The CRP has been a key vehicle for moving forward HFA implementation in a number of key areas, in particularly priorities 5 and 3. Findings from a desk study on the CRP have been incorporated.¹⁰

KEY QUESTIONS 1 & 2 – REDUCTION OF DISASTER LOSSES AND INFLUENCE ON DECISION-MAKING

From the perspective of World Vision Asia Pacific office, Philippines, Indonesia and Cambodia have benefited significantly from the implementation of HFA. Significant breakthroughs in DRR work at the national level have been observed over the past two to three years. All of these developments have been spurred by the huge push by international organizations and ISDR to help governments of these countries comply with their commitments to implement the HFA.

Philippines

In the Philippines, the passage of a new law on disaster management has notably brought important changes in priorities, focus, structure and systems of the country's disaster management landscape. The Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act passed into law in May 2010 provides for a legal framework in institutionalizing the nation's disaster risk reduction and management plan including allocation of funds from the national government. As a result, the Philippine government has renamed the national and local disaster bodies from disaster coordinating councils to disaster risk reduction & management councils underscoring the shift from response-focused to the broader disaster management process particularly prevention, mitigation and preparedness. The law has also provided national and local government a basis for funding and the provision of funding mechanisms to support DRR implementation throughout the country. One good example is the broadening of the usage of the calamity fund¹¹ of the local government units to cover DRR activities. Moreover, the national development and planning agency has started to institutionalize a mechanism that requires local government units to integrate risk reduction plans in their midterm and long-term plans.

On achievements contributing to disaster losses, the most notable were the creation of a national DRR platform that mobilizes different stakeholders (i.e. government, civil society groups, academia, etc.) towards the promotion and implementation of DRR initiatives throughout the country, passage of the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act, and funding from the national government to local DRR plans at the provincial, municipal and village levels. Finally, the Philippines witnessed growth in the strength of networking at all levels. The passing of the bill into law was an enormous milestone and collective achievement

¹⁰ Allan Lavell: World Vision Regional Community Resilience Project: Lessons Learned Survey (October 2010).

¹¹ Calamity fund is a standard emergency fund allocation of local government units in the Philippines intended to be used in cases of disaster events. The amount constitutes 5% of the annual revenue received by local governments from the national government. Use of the fund is restricted to emergency preparedness and response and local governments can access this fund only in circumstances where a declaration of emergency has been made in their respective localities.

of the DRR Network¹² of the Philippines, which World Vision currently leads. World Vision staff advocated for this bill for seventeen years, showing the longevity of commitment to DRR. The call of the DRR Network is to “*institutionalize disaster risk reduction and management through partnerships with national and local government units and communities in reducing vulnerabilities and enhancing capacities for disaster resiliency in the Philippines.*” Where networks like this one are strong, there is often a more clear connection between national policy and local level action.

Indonesia

In Indonesia, an overhaul of the country’s national disaster management system was done in 2008 as part of the implementation of their national DRR platform. As a result, the National Disaster Management Coordinating Board was renamed into the Indonesian National Board for Disaster Management which has a wider mandate, scope and jurisdiction. There is currently an ongoing process within the Indonesian National Parliament for the passage of a law on disaster management. Important achievements contributing to disaster losses in Indonesia were strengthening of the national disaster management unit which has created ripple effects throughout the country as local government units have also started to become much more intentional in establishing disaster management capacity on the ground. Second, strong demand and interests have been generated from local government and communities in building their capacities on DRR and integrating it into programming. Finally, there is ongoing work to strengthen legislation on DRR and a disaster management law for the country.

Cambodia

In Cambodia, national and international NGOs have helped the Cambodian government formulate the National DRR Platform and the establishment of the National Committee on Disaster Management (NCDM). The NCDM is the primary national disaster management unit in the country and oversees the implementation of disaster management activities at the local level through the local committees on disaster management. In Cambodia, the most important achievements in DRR contributing to disaster losses were the creation of a disaster management unit at the national level that provided support and guidance to local disaster management counterparts; the establishment of a national DRR network composed of government offices, local and international NGOs, academia, regional institutions, UN agencies, etc. The DRR network pursues implementation of the DRR agenda on the ground and at the national level and the formulation of the national DRR platform.

In terms of how the HFA has informed decision-making in the three countries of Asia, the development of national DRR platforms (essentially driven by the HFA) has enabled countries to set their priorities on DRR through a structured approach with high-level political support. This is the case for Philippines and Indonesia where the national platforms have become the bases for a range of DRR priorities set by governments and civil society organizations in the country. However this is not the case across the other countries considered.

The national DRR networks in which civil society groups are actively involved have been strengthened organically as they primed themselves for implementation and monitoring of DRR activities either initiated by the government or NGOs in accordance with HFA priorities

¹² <http://www.aksyonklima.com/members/drrnetphils/>

for action. These networks have played an important role in influencing the government's decisions and priorities in DRR.

On HFA reporting mechanisms supporting its implementation, the strong involvement of civil society in Philippines, Indonesia and Cambodia through the national DRR networks has pushed governments to deliver on their commitment to implement the HFA. Being part in the monitoring has enabled the networks to provide timely and appropriate feedback to the national government on certain gaps and issues in the implementation and that corrective measures have to be immediately put in place. Most often, members of the network have acted primarily as fiscal and policy monitors of the government's efforts in complying with HFA commitments. Other countries have noted a marked lack of involvement of civil society by government in the national-level monitoring and reporting processes.

Southern Africa

In Southern Africa region, progress has been noted but is sporadic. For instance, on HFA priority 1:

“Many of these policies being reviewed and aligned with DRR are not finalized – they are still in draft stages, going through Parliament and Cabinet for approval... getting stuck in political processes. I have yet to hear of one country that carried out a full and completed policy review under the HFA 1. In Kenya – WV employed a consultant to work on the policy and it was sent to Cabinet but is still under review. In Swaziland, there is the same situation. Uganda and Lesotho have not developed complete policies that are in operation.”

According to a number of key opinion holders, priority 1 is weakest due to a lack of coordination in the humanitarian system:

““The humanitarian industry needs stronger ability to coordinate effectively when there is a rapid onset disaster. There is no common architecture¹³ for collecting and sharing data. When the Haiti earthquake happened, other than face to face with a chalkboard, there was no immediate way to find such basic information such as where are the camps? Where were people gathering? Where were they setting up spontaneous refugee camps... surely we can do better than this.”

On HFA priority 2, various mechanisms in the Southern Africa region are being established for early warning systems, but these are not well coordinated within existing humanitarian systems. On HFA priority 3, there are a number of initiatives in progress but again very few countries have actually completed the process and by and large the view is that these are donor-driven initiatives (such as incorporation of DRR into educational curriculum) and not fully owned by the government. Some awareness has been created at community levels but this has not been translated into outcomes. On HFA priority 4, there needs to be more systematic focus on environmental issues. Regarding HFA priority 5, much work has been done to put in place joint response framework, with OCHA leading this process. It would be

¹³ World Vision proposed an information architecture solution “Project Archangel” during the Haiti response as a potential solution to this problem. It has been proposed that the same architecture could be used to identify and monitor where resources exist, where they are needed, and levels of vulnerability, thus preventing future disasters and reducing disaster risk.

important to see national governments taking more of a lead role in this work, supported by a UN-coordinated response system.

Funding is a critical issue, with the African Union and a number of governments beginning to take part in setting policy goals of 1% of development and 10% of humanitarian funding to DRR. The second challenge as mentioned is the systemic issue of capacity for DRR programming which remains very low. Within the region, there is the perspective that even supporting bodies such as the UN itself – lack capacity to support DRR, and the necessary tools that are intended to assist in integrating DRR into programming, informing practitioners.

“Some people in official offices would argue – how different is DRR from traditional DM? If the technical people not able to articulate value add to people who are supposed to implement programming, we have a serious problem.”

Coordination at project and programme level remains a huge challenge as well for Southern Africa. The ACCRA project, and various other DRR and adaptation learning programmes are not well connected. There are real challenges in trying to bring cohesion to these initiatives, as well:

“When you try to engage the driver for these processes and programmes, each person will tell you how different they are from the other, that their outcome is better than the other.”

Further, in Southern Africa region, coordination between actors – NGOs, government and with the UN remains a barrier. Each country has to complete its own reporting framework to submit to the UN. Many of these are overdue and again, not well coordinated or consultative. This was noted in a number of countries.

“The people who were supposed to coordinate with NGOs and integrate civil society perspectives have not linked with us; for instance, the DRR Platform. They are not consulting with NGOs.”

What about in the developed world? How is HFA influencing decision-making?

“The HFA calls for different layers and levels within governments to be informed and engaged in DRR and climate change. We speak often of this in the developing world but we need to equally apply this in the developed world. Top government officials in developed countries do not have an understanding of the HFA. Further HFA needs to move beyond executive functions to the legislative parts of government. In many cases the Prime Minister is not holding it up, but Parliament.”

KEY QUESTION 3 – AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

The following is a summary of limitations applying to various contexts. Overall, in all countries engaged in the consultation, there are inadequate funding commitments and opportunities for DRR implementation due to weak resource base. Governments are still

slow in allocating financial resources to effectively carry out DRR in communities. Many potential donors are still reluctant to invest in DRR. A traditional response-oriented mindset of some communities and governments present further barriers. The paradigm shift in mindset in communities from reactive to proactive is a tedious process. However, a sustained, focused and appropriate capacity building approach that includes a strong public awareness component for communities and governments would help this issue. As one local Indonesian expert explained:

“If communities are to be first responders during a disaster, it is necessary to strengthen their confidence and abilities to use their local knowledge to reduce risk in their respective living areas. For instance in Java traditional early warning systems can be used to warn of oncoming floods.”

An inability of governments, international organizations and civil society groups to effectively communicate HFA on the ground (i.e. actually translating HFA to local languages, finding the right messaging approach so that people from local communities understand the key concepts and principles of HFA and they are not seen as something imposed from outside, etc.) exacerbates this issue of capacity building. According to Salina Dharamsi, a World Vision youth representative who spoke at the UN General Assembly Thematic Debate side event on 9 February, youth want to engage, *“but the huge subject of DRR needs to be broken down into concrete concepts in simple terms”* that can bring them into the dialogue.

In a number of countries, while progress may have occurred at one level – whether that be local or national or somewhere in between – this progress and dissemination of learning has not been transferred consistently to the other levels within a country.

“Further, it is clear that dissemination to the various levels has not worked well. The HFA can only work well if it is applied widely...”

In terms of other elements of the HFA that have worked less well in reducing disaster risk in the three Asian contexts, based on a recent survey by ISDR, risk assessment and analysis is a key area identified that governments and international organizations have not adequately invested into. This finding is not inconsistent with the findings of the Views from the Frontline survey. Results of the Asia Pacific survey showed that of the five priorities for actions of Hyogo, the second priority action was the lowest. The finding raises questions and a critical concern over the quality of DRR work that the region has been engaged in. Why are organisations and governments investing less in risk assessment? Do they immediately proceed into project implementation without critical information provided through thorough baseline risk assessment and analysis? These questions remain unanswered.

From the Asia region, the three most critical factors that prevented effectiveness in the areas identified above are as follows:

- Limited capacity of governments and international organizations in undertaking macro (regional & national level) risk assessments – needed expertise and the appropriate financial and technical resources to effectively carry these out.
- Funding priorities are geared towards implementation on DRR projects with tangible short-term outputs and impacts. As risk assessment built in process in programming, donors/program implementers don't see it as a separate investment area, though it often needs to be for reasons stated above.

- Finally, risk assessment is an underappreciated process within DRR. Many governments and organizations have not accorded risk assessment and analysis their due weight due to a lack of understanding of their foundational significance in the entire DRR discussion. Risk analysis is also bogged down by lack of capacity and expertise in incorporating the results of the analysis into programming.

From countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region, critical barriers identified were:

- Too much emphasis is still being placed on curative versus preventative approaches, i.e., a disproportionate emphasis on preparedness and response measures versus prevention, mitigation and adaptation approaches.
- Existing structures at the national and local levels are still based on civil defense versus risk management committees.

On investment, specific constraints to initiate or increase investment in DRR in the Asia Pacific in the countries of mention, obstacles in building momentum are primarily attributed to the following factors:

- Investments made in DRR do not always show concrete short-term outputs and impacts, particularly if a disaster has not yet occurred. This is a challenge as DRR is often a longer-term investment.
- A culture of ‘reacting’ versus ‘preventing’ prevails in many local communities, presenting enormous challenges for organizations that advocate for a “culture of preparedness”.

DRR is a function of human behavior. When being reactionary has become almost normative, as mentioned above, changing the paradigm requires long-term investment and sustained education of communities on the value of prevention, mitigation and preparedness. Moreover, being proactive requires leaving the comfort zone of individuals, groups and communities. It has associated costs and pushes people to take types of risks they are likely unfamiliar with. Senator Teofista “TG” Guingona of the Philippines the lead advocate of the DRRM Bill, described the challenge aptly, as a central aim of the Bill, which is now law:

“The bill seeks to cultivate a culture of preparedness by integrating DRRM into the mindset of each and every Filipino through proper education. We cannot always anticipate disasters but we can always be prepared for them...”

“The rains last Saturday have certified the DRRM bill as urgent. The DRRM bill seeks to institutionalize disaster preparedness in all levels of government and Philippine society, beginning with those on the front lines of any disaster—the communities themselves.”¹⁴

To complement these governance investments, at the UN General Assembly Thematic Debate on DRR on 9 February, 2011, Senator Teofista advocated increased attention and focus to the role of children and youth as key change agents in the monumental social shifts which must take place to build a culture of resilience.¹⁵ Arnel Alipao, a youth leader from Mindanao region, said that building awareness is key for youth, through mainstreaming of child-focused DRR into school curricula and development programming.

¹⁴ See <http://bit.ly/eojjQ2>

¹⁵ World Vision Save the Children, UNDP and UNICEF organized a side event “Taking Collective Action in DRR: Investing in Our Children’s Future” at the UN General Assembly Thematic Debate on 9 February, 2011. The webcast of the side event and thematic debate is available at <http://bit.ly/hTvpVP>.

KEY QUESTION 4 – LOCAL-LEVEL ACTION

As to how the HFA encourages community participation and the utilization of local knowledge to reduce disaster risk, as the 2009 Views from the Frontline survey concludes, local-level action is the critical missing link in current HFA implementation. The conclusion of this review echoes the first recommendation of the VFL, that HFA implementation strategies be reoriented to “*support a proactive and systematic deepening of engagement with at-risk communities, including participation of most vulnerable groups.*”¹⁶

DRR programs encompass many kinds of activities, but they must share the fundamental outcome of enhancing the capacity of vulnerable communities to identify, reduce and manage risk, whether it be at the local, regional or national level.¹⁷ Across all regions, the issues of weak capacities and lack of adequate investment in capacity development present systemic barriers to local-level action and hence effective implementation of the HFA.

Even in countries where significant progress has been made in DRR, such as the Philippines, Bangladesh, China and Indonesia, local government authorities and communities still lack knowledge and capacities to implement DRR within their respective contexts. In Southern Africa, community participation in DRR is gradually being led by civil society; though this is not yet happening *en masse*. Capacities of local authorities must be built to understand DRR and help communities plan and implement local solutions Further exacerbating this problem is the “Samaritan’s dilemma”, which has been documented widely in the Southern African region.

“... Agencies were trying to help communities but in the process dependency was created. How can this be addressed? Where humanitarian aid has become part of a community’s livelihood, the ‘commercialization of humanitarian processes’ presents serious barriers for local level resilience...”

This comment points to a critical issue not particular to Africa alone, and is one of the most glaring omissions in the DRR community’s focus and an underlying issue encumbering HFA implementation: that of reform of the humanitarian system. The 2009 Views from the Frontline Survey confirmed this perspective, and its importance cannot be stressed enough here, that the humanitarian system itself must foster resilience, and not create new vulnerabilities. To do this, it must become “...*one committed to engaging with and strengthening local and national preparedness and response / recovery capacities, and one that bases programme interventions on assessments of people’s own perceived priority needs in relation to their capacities and vulnerabilities.*”

In terms of how the central government has communicated HFA suggestions and commitments to local government, and whether local governments have been empowered through ad hoc legislation and budget allocations to implement DRR plans, in the case of the Philippines, the newly established National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Council has worked effectively with its local DRRM councils. However, local governments and local disaster management units do not often clearly understand that the DRR work that they do in their communities is actually an essential part of the broader DRR commitment of the

¹⁶ See <http://www.globalnetwork-dr.org/vfl-2009.html>

¹⁷ Daniel Maxwell, et al, *Africa Community Resilience Programme - Tsaeda Amba Woreda, Eastern Tigray, Ethiopia: Research Program on Livelihoods Change Over Time — Final Report.* (Medford: Feinstein International Center, 2010).

national government, including the contribution it is making to global DRR efforts through the HFA.

This is an important point and opportunity for influence through campaigns such as “My City is Getting Ready” – in making the clear linkage that what happens at the local level does in fact support national policy and impact broader DRR processes. The question of validation here is important: as ISDR leadership has expanded space within the UN and in some cases state systems for civil society voices to be heard, national and international actors need to endorse and promote local DRR champions as they are key actors in HFA implementation. Despite this lack of cohesion in DRR between local and national levels, though, local government units are nonetheless in many cases empowered to enact local ordinances and laws that support further the implementation of the national DRR platform within their respective contexts.

Organisations such as World Vision provide important resources in capacity building processes, and in helping build linkages in DRR within the various levels, from local to national. These resources are not being adequately harnessed for HFA implementation. They include broad range of experience in various types of capacity building with communities and local government in all regions. They can share learning on what works, and have developed or have access to a variety of:

“...Capacity development modules at the local level for community and local authorities. These modules and experiences help build an enabling environment wherein community participation and the use of local knowledge for DRR to build resilience of the community and the state is institutionalized.”

Referring to World Vision’s major DRR programme in Africa, the Africa Community Resilience Programme (ACRP), the Feinstein International Center concludes in their review of the programme in Ethiopia: “The major impact of ACRP has been in the area of capacity building—at both the woreda and kebele level, particularly in analytical skills. Kebele Disaster Preparedness Committees (KDPCs) have been formed in all cooperating kebeles, most of which also have disaster preparedness plans.” This programme and others like it, particularly those with children, are fertile learning ground for understanding what works when it comes to building local-level capacities.

In the images below, Bolivian school children in the Choro region learn to assess risk in their schoolyards and communities, and present to their peers on risk, vulnerability and capacity.¹⁸



¹⁸ Emergency Capacity Building Project, November 2010. Photo: Melisa Bodenhamer



KEY QUESTION 5 – CULTURE OF SAFETY AND RESILIENCE

While there are instances where local communities and the general public have gained awareness of DRR this remains one of the weakest areas of the HFA. At this critical juncture, with many actors now engaged in the HFA, much can be done to catalyze the international community towards fostering a culture of resilience within respective national contexts and coalitions. Following are some basic elements for this to occur:

- Mobilization of large-scale awareness-raising to countries and communities¹⁹ on the value and benefits of DRR including all five priorities; promotion of citizen action through volunteerism.

¹⁹ Information and awareness campaigns could be disaggregated to various communities and institutions within a society, such as academia, children, youth, business owners, families, etc.

- Political commitment of national and local leadership to good governance and DRR; developing DRR champions among local chief executives through targeted capacity building and other means.
- Substantially increased investment and alternate funding mechanisms for DRR activities at the community level.
- Promotion of safe schools as entry points for building resilience at community levels.

How risk is perceived and communicated, as well as the problem of language describing DRR concepts, remain barriers to building a culture of resilience.

“There is a disconnect in how communities perceive risk versus a ‘scientific’ or perspective on risk and how this information is communicated in communities. One barrier to cross is the knowledge gap and another is how to incorporate more local understanding into models being used for DRR in a given context.”

In terms of broad scale public awareness and the scale of changes needed to build resilience, it is important to draw on the wisdom of rewarding desired behavior through creating incentives for policy and decision makers to adopt proactive positions. A critical aspect must be to engage with media to find ways of communicating about resilience and DRR that will raise levels of media attention and engagement. Finally, in terms of creating macro-level change from small investments, one key decision maker described potential for partnering that has yet been untapped:

“What is needed are simple solutions at key critical points to unlock that potential in people for building resilience. For instance, weather index insurance could be provided for smallholder farmers in food-insecure contexts. World Vision has a VSAT system for all its area development programmes (ADPs) that could be a basis for such a scheme. Encompassing a radius of 30 miles from all ADPs, small-scale stations could be put into place. This would provide the ability to give weather insurance to the population in the given area – 180 square miles of farmland – who could in turn access high quality seeds and inputs to increase their production. These small-scale weather stations could then feed into global networks. In this way ISDR and national governments could foster investment in critical infrastructure needed to make large scale changes with partners like World Vision and others.”

KEY QUESTION 6 – ADDRESSING UNDERLYING RISK FACTORS

Much progress needs to be done to assist communities, governments and organizations working with them in addressing underlying risk factors: this was viewed as one of the weakest areas of the HFA in the review. To accelerate the reduction of underlying drivers of risk at a large scale, far more emphasis needs to be placed on building capacities of communities and local governments, and local disaster management units in risk assessment and analysis – and how to feed this information into local development planning and decision making. Continuous capacity development in local communities to undertake community-based disaster risk management and DRR work is likewise important. Organisations such as World Vision with a history of strong humanitarian and development work do not change quickly, to adopt an approach based on addressing underlying factors. Yet development paradigms do need to change at a fundamental level, and this is a highly complex process. Within development communities, it is still difficult to view risk as a comprehensive notion, versus a function of natural disaster belonging to the humanitarian realm.

On addressing underlying risks within a chronically insecure context, the Feinstein International Center study found that, referring back to the ACRP in Northern Ethiopia, "... A number of institutional factors constrain efforts to reduce risk and overcome food insecurity, including land access, credit, traditional practices, and access to the Productive Safety Net programme."²⁰ Access to market should also be included in this list along with fluctuations in the national policy context. These factors are frequently cited in reference to reducing underlying risks particularly in areas of chronic vulnerability such as many communities in Africa. Multiple hazards exacerbate livelihoods contexts, further complicating efforts to address risk.

Organisations seeking to address risk must systematically integrate these factors into development interventions. Yet not all organisations have experience working in these areas (i.e., credit). Hence, HFA can be strengthened through proactive policy guidance and technical assistance to further more widespread utilization of integrated livelihoods approaches that are suited to address institutional and environmental factors. These could include livelihoods diversification, introducing improved technologies, training on these new techniques, networking between communities and traders, risk transfer schemes and continued emphasis on community capacity building. Much more needs to be done to link DRR to livelihoods strategies aimed at increasing community coping capacities, and to integrate DRR into national agricultural policies and programmes aimed at the most vulnerable.²¹ Finally, there needs to be a greater degree of harmonization amongst agencies working in these areas. Within high-risk contexts, networks and coalitions can be supported and encouraged to work together on common issues, reporting into National and Regional Platform structures.

KEY QUESTION 7 – TOP THREE PROSPECTIVE BENEFITS

In furthering the implementation of the HFA at the national and local level, the three most important things now that the countries discussed would benefit from, are:

- Investing in and documenting progress towards development programming that has integrated DRR including:
 - Microfinance and micro-insurance including access credit, savings, and various types of insurance including for loss of agricultural crops, etc.
 - Expanded use of financial instruments described as above but at the small and meso-level, to build a stronger enabling environment for small and medium size enterprises to support DRR and environmental sustainability in the longer term.
- A shift of funding priorities towards a measurable increase in international and national-level investments in DRR and local-level resilience in accordance with targets set in the Chair's Summary at the 2009 Global Platform.
- Sustained investment at all levels in the integration of climate change issues with DRR so that the HFA would become a platform by which governments, civil society organizations and communities mitigate and adapt to climate change. This would entail appropriate levels of technical and human resources and investment in coordination mechanisms currently in place to carry out this work in conjunction with the relevant institutional arrangements set forth by the UNFCCC at global and national levels.

²⁰ Daniel Maxwell, et al, *Africa Community Resilience Programme - Tsaeda Amba Woreda, Eastern Tigray, Ethiopia: Research Program on Livelihoods Change Over Time — Final Report*. (Medford: Feinstein International Center, 2010).

²¹ Antonina Nepessova, *Agriculture, Food Security and Child Wellbeing: A World Vision Africa Position Paper* (Johannesburg: World Vision, 2009), 16.

On the subject of international structures of DRR that would help accelerate the implementation of the HFA, the most important single factor would be *en masse* development of local-level DRR platforms that could be driven through funding incentives from financial institutions and international organizations. These platforms could be amongst those mobilized through the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations' Views from the Frontline survey for instance, those proposed by national governments or self-identifying local communities engaged in DRR activities which bring local-level resilience.

Financial instruments, such as the Calamity Fund in the Philippines could be established at a wider scale through legislation at the national level in high-risk countries, and monitored by local DRR platforms, or coalitions of these platforms. Through social networking messages could be shared across regions about the learning and progress of these initiatives. In addition to this or as an alternate, local government could manage a DRR fund as part of its development budget, with local community coalitions monitoring the allocation funding and implementation and impact of DRR initiatives.

KEY QUESTION 8 – INTEGRATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE

The HFA already provides the necessary platform on how communities and governments engage with and confront risk issues. This then should be a core mechanism by which climate risk issues should be addressed. However, in order for climate change adaptation (CCA) to be effectively integrated into future HFA implementation one priority is to bridge the gap between the experts (many are from academia and research institutions) and field practitioners. Through the HFA, mechanisms can be set forth to help support dialogue between the two communities and ensure exchange of learning is maximized towards more effective DRR programming to address climate risks.

Further work needs to be done to strengthen climate adaptation characteristics into the HFA, towards a truly integrated framework for addressing risk. Even within World Vision bringing together DRR and CCA strategies and programming is a complex task; there is no simple solution. National DRR and climate change coordination processes present further complications and require a concerted, systematic approach to achieving integration on a country-by-country basis. There needs to be stronger coordination and cohesion between UNFCCC and UNISDR, guidance to the international community identifying areas where partnership would strengthen HFA implementation.

KEY QUESTION 9 – 2015 AND BEYOND

In moving forward, it would be important to integrate a multi-hazards approach, instruments and tools that support risk reduction and resilience moving beyond natural hazards including consideration of social and other types of hazards, utilizing a multi-hazards approach. This may include such issues as social violence, gang culture, cross-boundary conflicts, pandemics, and greater focus on climate and environmental hazards.

To accelerate and support risk reduction work, a combination of expanding on structures such as the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction and the use of indicators that Views from the Frontline is developing on local and national level HFA implementation would be effective. This can be complemented with appropriate use of GIS at the local, national and regional levels to improve targeting of interventions. With these initiatives, capacity development regimes can be strengthened, and HFA priorities that are weakest at the local, sub-national and national level can be prioritized.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following are recommendations to the ISDR based on the internal review:

1. Advocate through coalitions for increased financial investment in DRR in all humanitarian and overseas development assistance according to 2009 Global Platform targets
2. Promote safe schools as frontline community-level centers of excellence in DRR
 - a. Towards strengthened public accountability
 - i. Strengthen incorporation of DRR in the national school curriculum
 - ii. Promote adoption of resilient building codes and community monitoring
 - b. Increasing child and youth engagement in HFA at all levels, focusing on engaging the most vulnerable
 - c. Strengthen partnership with coalitions working with children and youth such as Children in a Changing Climate
3. Continue close partnership with Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for DRR focusing on findings from Views from the Frontline and increased resources to local level
4. Continued focus on integration through agreed programme of action with partners, of the HFA with
 - a. Millennium Development Goals, including follow-up and planning for
 - i. UN General Assembly Thematic Debate on DRR, Feb 2011
 - ii. UN General Assembly MDG Summit, September 2010
 - iii. Rio + 20
 - iv. Other significant international development venues
 - b. DRR and climate change
 - i. Focusing on improving national coordination processes
 - ii. Emphasizing livelihoods needs and strategies benefiting the most vulnerable especially in chronically insecure contexts
5. Facilitate development of centers for guidance, information and capacity building on DRR within municipalities particularly in high-risk countries²²
6. Convene coalition of international NGOs²³ and private sector to increase accountability for DRR implementation and coordination/harmonisation, host development & DRR integration policy think tanks to design collaborative, context-specific interventions
 - a. Provide guidance on key areas of HFA implementation needing leadership and investment according to Global Platform Chair's Summaries and other high-level mandates
 - b. Prioritise high-risk areas with high levels of poverty and vulnerability²⁴
 - c. Formalise commitments through partnership agreements, MoU, etc.
7. Enhance focus on and investment in capacity development at all levels, targeted affected communities and local governments, through a common framework for capacity development and training
8. Reinvigorate efforts to stimulate adoption of systematic risk assessment as the foundation for risk-sensitive programming, so that risk reduction would be routine in all development investment, planning and programming
9. Invest in networks and strengthened multi-stakeholder partnerships at all levels

²² NGOs and academia can be recruited to support this process.

²³ Joint programmes of action can be explored with key agencies, for DRR work in specific geographic areas, for instance, or to provide leadership on a particular issue. These can be formalized through memorandums of understanding, for increased accountability to agreed outcomes.

²⁴ This could refer to institutional barriers mentioned in Key Question 6, for instance, or complex cross-border issues, etc.

- a. Expand both formal and informal networking opportunities; help facilitate greater coordination in civil society
 - b. Strengthen relations between ISDR global/regional offices, international organisations and civil society
 - i. Co-host learning forums to share good practice and know-how
 - ii. Provide targeted guidance on barriers to internal DRR mainstreaming processes
 - c. Increased dialogue and collaboration between state and non-state actors
10. Expand social networking and public media campaigns, exploring innovative means to engage larger segments of societies – particularly youth and families – in creative dialogue on building resilient futures