

**Summary Report**  
**Post-HFA Mayors' and Local Government Consultation**  
**Bonn, Germany, 14 May 2012**

**Introduction**

UNISDR held the first Consultation with Local Governments on the post-2015 Hyogo Framework for Action during the ICLEI ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability 3rd Global Forum on Urban Resilience & Adaptation in Bonn, Germany, 12-15 May 2012. The Consultation was facilitated by Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction. This is the first of a series of local level consultations UNISDR will lead throughout 2012.

The key recommendations of this initial consultation include:

- Further engagement with local level governments and other municipal representatives.
- Clearer and more consistent dissemination of disaster risk information, including national policy decisions that impact local level decision making.
- UNISDR expand and improve its role as a knowledge-broker by facilitating city-to-city learning workshops and fostering local level partnerships with multiple-stakeholders, including private sector, academia, non-governmental organizations, national government representatives and other professional bodies and institutions dedicated to advancing disaster risk reduction objectives and solutions.
- UNISDR, through the Making Cities Resilient Campaign, enable local governments with the tools and knowledge they need to build capacity and better educate and prepare their communities about disaster risk.
- Work with local level to ensure that a future international framework on disaster risk reduction includes language that reflects local needs and challenges.
- Recognizing that cities will be home to nearly three-quarters of the global population by 2050, with the vast majority of urban growth occurring in developing nations in Africa and Asia, UNISDR should advocate for the integration of local level disaster risk reduction into national and international sustainable development and climate change adaptation policies to ensure that the most vulnerable communities are protected and help protect these areas' socio-economic progress.

## **Participants**

Margareta Wahlström, SRSG, UNISDR- Facilitator

Andreas Koler, Tyrol Region, Chief Risk Analyst, alpS Centre for Climate Change, Austria

Yelgy Verley, Mayor of Siquirres, Cost Rica

Marco Cardinaletti, City of Ancona, Italy

Alfredo Arquilano, Vice Mayor, San Francisco, Cebu, Philippines

Violeta Seva, City of Makati, Philippines

Steve Gawler, ICLEI- Oceania (based in Indonesia)

David Jackson, UN Capital Development Fund

*(UNISDR: Helena Molin Valdés, Luna Abu-Swaireh, Dizery Salim, Patricia Holly-Davis)*

## **Background**

The 'Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters' expires in 2015. UNISDR undertook a very broad based mid-term review last year. UNISDR is now starting to consult with a number of stakeholders and constituencies for the post-2015 agreement and would like to see much more leadership and inputs from local governments in defining the next phase of this global framework that national governments are expected to adopt at the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015 in Japan.

## **Scope of Consultation**

Modalities to engage and motivate more local governments to participate in the discussions on the impact of national disaster risk reduction legislation and policy on the building resilience to disasters at local level and in undertaking multi-stakeholder local dialogue and discussion on development of the post-2015 framework on DRR.

## **Questions**

- What were the changes made in reducing disaster risk and building resilience at city and community levels, as result of the implementation of the HFA?
- How effectively have the national policies on disaster risk reduction been implemented at local levels? And why?
- What are major challenges in investing in disaster risk reduction at local level? And what are the underlying factors contributed to the challenges?
- What are the top three issues, imperative to building of local resilience to disasters, that need to be further addressed in the Post-2015 Framework for DRR?

## **What were the changes made in reducing disaster risk and building resilience at city and community levels, as result of the implementation of the HFA?**

All participants in the Bonn Consultation acknowledged that it is not national governments that led their ambitions and desires to pursue DRR activities, but rather their own experiences and contact with their communities. In this way, participants equally acknowledged that the Campaign and its network and resources are meeting a demand from local governments and community leaders.

*“Community groups get things done. They know what is affecting them, and they pressure local government to have an exchange. But scientific knowledge is not available to them. If they had this, things could change even more. Also, the city council, the political board that takes decisions, does not have the knowledge. They are humble people who reached their positions because of who they know. They are not interested in climate change. They say, “I’m here to solve the regular things, how to pick up the garbage, how to collect taxes. Climate change is something that others take care of.”*

*-- Yelgy Verley, Mayor of Siquirres, Cost Rica*

### **How effectively have the national policies on disaster risk reduction been implemented at local levels?**

Views are mixed. Implementing HFA at national level is not the case in Austria, for example, but left to the nine provinces to manage. This means there are nine different approaches. And not all of them know about the HFA, they simply learn by trial and error. They launch projects to enable municipalities to work on DRR and assess their own risk.

Adaptation and DRR measures should be developed with the intention of helping people to move out of poverty and accelerate their socio-economic progress. Integrated strategies in planning and sustainable development are critical to achieving this goal. Right now, development, adaptation and DRR are treated as separate challenges, with stakeholder engagement and solutions developing in silos. Policies on emergency response and preparedness must be developed in concert with longer-term frameworks that consider how to accelerate a city’s or a nation’s social and economic progress. Adaptation and DRR must be about Planning for Progress.

### **What are major challenges in investing in disaster risk reduction at local level? And what are the underlying factors contributed to the challenges?**

**Language is too high-level:** The language of the HFA must be formulated with local leaders in mind: There is a dearth of literature aimed at helping local leaders understand the importance of disaster risk reduction and how to implement successful strategies, build their capacities and leverage their existing resources in the most effective way.

*“Mayors look for information at a different level than we do. They use Google. They’re not part of a professional network that knows about the instruments. The HFA language needs to be written in such a way that it is accessible and meaningful at a local level.”*

*-- Andreas Koler, Tyrol Region, Chief Risk Analyst, alpS Centre for Climate Change, Austria*

**Insufficient dissemination of DRR at local level:** National governments must consider that most mayors or city councils/local governments are not familiar with the HFA and, therefore, wouldn’t consider consulting the HFA for guidance on DRR. Mayors and city managers are searching for advice and guidance on DRR planning and interventions at more localized levels, through peer interactions, community

groups, and other city-to-city learning events and online forums. It is therefore vital to consider how current technology platforms and solutions can be made available to local governments.

**Alarming lack of understanding amongst local leaders and communities about the impacts of Climate Change and how Adaptation fits within DRR:** The gap between CC adaptation and DRR must be closed through an Integrated Strategy that mainstreams Adaptation and DRR into broader socio-economic discussions and policies.

*“Our municipality board conducted the first risk assessment on cultural heritage, and I tried connecting it with infrastructure. But it was difficult to transfer this knowledge, as if I spoke another language. Climate change -- how to manage the risk by understanding vulnerability, exposure, etc. -- is not explored in the planning process. Sometimes we adapt without knowing, which is not good enough.”*

*---Marco Cardinaletti, City of Ancona, Italy*

**What are the top three issues, imperative to building local resilience to disasters that need to be further addressed in the Post-2015 Framework for DRR?**

1) **Bottom-up engagement:** National and international legal frameworks and policies are not enough to drive effective assessment and implementation of DRR. Rather, bottom-up engagement and education is needed. Therefore, the post-HFA framework should engage local governments from the beginning. Otherwise, engagement will only take place randomly and will not achieve broad, sustainable results.

2) **Knowledge-sharing:** Many politicians lack the basic knowledge they need to engage communities around disaster risk reduction and effect change. They require better understanding of the risk to effectively articulate to their constituents why they must take certain actions today to protect tomorrow. Governments should consider appointing a ‘knowledge broker’ to encourage mayors (political level) and city managers (executive level- technical) to drive changes and understand the “cascading effects” of natural hazards and climate change. Governments should also provide directives and decrees that empower and inform local governments on international and national agreements (and link this to resource allocation- not to become “unfunded mandates”). The example presented during the consultation was flood-preparedness. Many cities may be well prepared for floods but they are only thinking about floods. They don’t think about floods in the context of multiple risks and the cascading effects of floods, such as the impacts on hospitals.

*We found out there’s lots of knowledge in the municipalities, inside their heads. What they need is a knowledge broker: someone with tools, strategies and approaches, to give legitimacy to that wisdom and to unlock it. It’s important that such a process is driven by a mayor.*

*---- Andreas Koler, Tyrol Region, Chief Risk Analyst, alpS Centre for Climate Change, Austria*

**3) Multi-stakeholder engagement:** Keeping local governments and communities involved in DRR is a challenge at local level where terms of office are generally short. One way to ensure the sustainability of DRR planning and programs, as well as to integrate CC Adaptation into DRR, is to engage with volunteers and various stakeholders, such as fire departments, health organizations, private sector, and other community groups and representatives.

Cataloging and maintaining a dialogue with local contacts can help to ensure the successful transition of DRR activities to the next mayor and government. Volunteers working in emergency services and other community protection roles are especially vital to raising awareness of the importance and value of DRR and ensuring local governments' activities are sustainable through changes in leadership.

**The post-HFA framework should recognize that DRR must be delivered across both the short and long-term:**

- Mayors and local governments do need to deliver short-term solutions to maintain the support and protection of the communities who elected them to office. An example was given of Siquirres, Costa Rica, where Mayor Verley successfully partnered with local industry and members and leaders of the community to install a new drainage pipeline in a high flood prone area of the city, which is residential and also a pathway for local children to walk to school.
- At the same time, there is a wide consensus that successful DRR is ultimately built over a long-term period. The post-HFA should reflect this by developing a framework for at least the next decade (2015-2025), but preferably the next 20 years (through 2035).

**New methods are needed to measure and evaluate DRR and resilience:** The concept of creating a DRR or urban resilience index was discussed with mixed views. However, there is a consensus that governments should, with the input of local leaders and communities, develop a method for measuring the effectiveness of DRR activities.

*“Having tools to measure progress of cities is important. If they can see the gain from investing in DRR they are more likely to keep doing it.”*

*--Violeta Seva, City of Makati, Philippines*

**Next Steps/Actions**

- **Resilience Index/Measurement and Standards for Resilience:** Further consideration is needed on how the post-HFA Framework should address the issues of creating measurements and standards for resilience. One of the most important outcomes of the ICLEI congress was the evidence of the move toward Resilience Indicators. World Bank has done an attempt in the past, failed. Currently UNHABITAT is proposing a project to develop an Urban

Resilience Index. UNISDR should consider its role and leadership for such efforts through the Making Cities Resilient Campaign and in collaboration with other partners.

- **Measurement and ROI (through LGSAT):** One way to motivate local governments is to rate what they are doing and how they are performing so they could motivate other governments. For example, to attract more tourism and investment. Some cities such as San Francisco, Philippines, are realizing the impact of their DRR actions through an incremental increase in tourism. A self-reporting and peer review system based on the current Local Government Self Assessment tool could lay the foundations of a measurement tool. Also, an Environmental Impact System could be used as a campaign instrument and as an entry point to start to rate cities' performance. SRSR mentioned a project underway by the International Association of State Auditors. Expand on this further. How can UNISDR help cities to measure this return on their investments and activities?
- **City Clusters:** SRSR suggested the creation of city clusters to continue the consultation on the post-HFA agenda (Building the Resilience of Nations and Communicates to Disasters). The sheer volume of cities and partners already engaged in the Campaign creates an enormous force to effect change on a tangible level. City Clusters would deepen and expand upon the concept of City Champions already developed by the Campaign and feed into CCCA (see below) and set short and mid to longer term actions and objectives.
- **Concrete Course of Action for local government (CCCA):** Al Arquilano, Vice Mayor, San Francisco, Cebu, Philippines suggested the establishment of a programme called Collaborative Concrete Course of Action for local government (CCCA). The premise of CCCA is to deploy both physically and technologically all of the knowledge and resources currently housed within the Making Cities Resilient Campaign to help cities begin delivering concrete DRR approaches that are measurable and sustainable.
- **Further learning tools and access to finance are needed:** Knowledge dissemination and partnerships are critical to identifying opportunities to share resources to develop and implement DRR activities. Local leaders also need more resources to understand HOW to implement what national government mandates them to do. David Jackson outlined the Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility (LOCAL) of UNCDF (currently working in Cambodia and Bhutan, planned for Bangladesh and Mali), which tops government funding with direct access to global finance. The funds can be requested for specific projects that are recognized as building resilience. Likewise, the WB is working on a new financial mechanism for project finance for initiatives such as urban regeneration, and opens up opportunities to attract private sector finance. How can the Campaign help cities access this and other similar finance opportunities?

- **Develop methods to apply the knowledge and lessons of successful existing resilience building and emergency management programs:** There are cities that are well advanced in terms of applying plans and emergency management so how can we learn from them? How can the Campaign help? Do we need a survey of needs of cities in a particular area that catalogues their knowledge, training and dissemination?
- **Find new ways to engage community leaders:** Local situations are diverse, so it is critical to engage influential people in the community to buy into DRR- and to consult on role and needs of local governments in a the post-HFA framework. Define expectations, role and outreach mechanism for such local leaders. The Campaign is an optimum vehicle because it could lead to networks on specific topics and provide a clearer profile of what campaign cities do.

#### **Upcoming Events /opportunities for further consultations**

- CityNet 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Jakarta (July)
- World Urban Forum, Naples, Italy (Sept)
- Fifth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, Yogyakarta (Oct)
- WCSDA/UNISDR Resilient Cities, Beijing (Oct)
- Latin American Federation Municipalities (Oct)
- Sustainable Cities and Towns of Europe (April 2013)