

Statement of Civil Society Organizations For the Fifth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

Yogyakarta, Republic of Indonesia, 25 October 2012



Strengthening Local Capacity for Disaster Risk Reduction has become an important part of recent discourse as more and more communities are adversely impacted by increasing disasters.

The HFA mid-term review has highlighted the limited capacity for DRM efforts at local level. Review of national-level progress suggests that action at local level was consistently in need improvement, under Priorities for Action 1 to 4. The Views from the Frontline report 2011 too, based largely on interviews at the local level, found “a significant gap between national and local level action. The report states how progress fades as activities get closer to vulnerable people.

Recognizing communities own ability to respond to shocks and stresses are shrinking. Climate related stresses along with natural hazards continue to deplete natural resources, coping capacities and human resilience. Some progress has been made in mobilizing communities for disaster risk reduction, with visible signs of improved preparedness, however, this is on a more piecemeal and short-term basis and the underlying vulnerabilities persist.

Noting civil society organisations have always raised the concerns, expectations and the voices within the community, particularly in the Asian region. Social cohesion and social solidarity is at the heart of community resilience and CSO play an important role in strengthening and ensuring it. They have and continue to play a critical role in upholding democratic values, serve as custodians of people based development and build community resilience. Successful partnerships with civil society organizations have substantially contributed to innovations, increased reach and investment and ensure inclusion of the marginalized with respect to DRR and CCA at local level. Civil societies in the Asia-pacific are important stakeholders for promoting accountability towards commitments made by governments for the sake of communities at risk.

Appreciating the theme and objective of the 5th AMCDRR “Strengthening local capacity for Disaster Risk Reduction” and in synergy with the Chair’s Summary for the Global Platform 2011 “need for multi-stakeholder collaboration, support to local governments and non-state actors on the frontlines” Civil Society Organizations make the following commitments

CSO Task Force commits to:

- Engaging and partner with Governments as equal stakeholders in all development initiatives
- Recognize and enhance communities’ capacity, nurture local leadership and foster transparency and accountability towards disaster risk reduction.
- To participate and contribute in development of the Post-HFA framework specially reflecting expectations of the most vulnerable and often excluded groups within communities.

- Share knowledge and experience to build resilience of communities at risk
- Hold ourselves accountable for all actions and commitments

We call upon participants of the Fifth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to:

- Reach out to all communities affected by both small and large scale disasters and address the underlying risk factors.
- Enable and influence view –points, policies, practices, and structures that facilitates local level implementation of DRR initiatives in a sustainable manner.
- Actively monitor the outcomes of the 5th AMCDRR

In conclusion:

We call upon the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to ensure community voices, their challenges and expectations are rightfully and adequately represented in all levels of decision and policy forums.

We further call upon the UNISDR secretariat to ensure that post -HFA consultations are participatory, inclusive and are initiated at local (community) level.