

Report on the Post-HFA Consultation  
4<sup>th</sup> Africa Regional Platform for DRR, 'Round Table on Post-HFA'  
13 February 2013, Arusha, Tanzania

## Background

During the 4<sup>th</sup> Africa Regional Platform for DRR (AfRP) held in Arusha, Tanzania, 13 – 15 February 2013, UNISDR Regional Office for Africa (ROA) organized a Round Table 'HFA2: The post-2015 DRR Framework for Africa' in which representatives of African governments, Regional Economic Communities, academics, civil society, development partners, NGOs, youth, the private sector and UN partners came together to exchange views on a Post-2015 framework for Africa.

Prior to the Round Table, Sub-regional platform consultations on the HFA and Africa Strategy/Programme of Action took place to inform about its implementation, define priorities till 2015 and recommendations for the Post 2015 DRR Framework. The consultations were led by ECOWAS for West Africa, ECCAS for Central Africa, SADC for Southern Africa and IGAD alongside the EAC for Eastern African members states.

The AfRP also featured a dedicated meeting for Youth for DRR and a Private Sector Event both of which resulted in recommendations. In addition, the Red Cross held a Regional Urban Forum back to back with the 4<sup>th</sup> ARP DRR which resulted in additional recommendations. Oxfam also shared its core recommendations for HFA2.

Themes and trends emerging from sub-regional consultations and recommendations from partners and post HFA Round Table follow below. Key recommendations by participants from each sector to questions posed are summarized thereafter. The concept note relative to the Round Table is provided as Annex 1.

## Key Impressions

1. African stakeholders reconfirmed that the HFA has proved its value as a central framework for DRR in Africa, alongside the Africa Strategy and Programme of Action, and should remain in force post-2015 with continued improvements related to mechanisms for coordination and dialogue, definition of indicators and ways to monitor and report. Special emphasis has to be given those associated with the post-2015 UN sustainable development and climate change adaptation agendas;
2. Several themes were highlighted for accelerated attention and action in a post-2015 framework: rapidly increasing urbanization and related risks, engendering disaster risk, engaging local actors and youth, the inter-linkage between social protection and poverty reduction, conflict and natural disasters;
3. To achieve disaster resilience, strategic partnerships need to be built and sustained between government and communities, development and humanitarian actors.

## Major Themes and Trends

### 1. People-centered communities of resilience

Putting people at the center of disaster-resilience building was a recurrent theme among participants at the Round Table. Speakers stressed the need to increase accountability and transparency in implementing DRR through allocation of responsibility and resources to the local and community levels. Communities are the first to be affected by disasters. To build disaster-resilient communities means committing to communication, education, public health, food security, livelihoods and infrastructure. One of the options suggested was to fast-track direct community participation through the devolution of DRR/DRM policy, legislation and institutions to communities giving local authorities the resources to build their capacities.

### 2. Integrated approaches for development

Participants pointed out how Africa's rapid economic growth continent-wide requires managing and leveraging the resource benefits to counter the potential vulnerabilities. Climate change and conflict will further destabilize development gains. Sustainability will require the integration of DRR and resilience-building in development strategies, diversified budgetary allocations and accelerated DRR, climate change adaptation and social protection into all relevant government programmes. DRR/DRM as one of the pillars in peer review mechanisms for regular monitoring and progress reports was another proposal that looked to move DRR forward by ensuring measurable indicators and shared approaches as well as streamlined common planning and evaluation systems.

Governments need to think nationally and build resilience locally especially infrastructure. To avoid duplication and ensure the effective use of development funding, requires cooperation among development and humanitarian actors. Integration of prevention and recovery along with the full recognition of DRR as a development issue are central to the recognition and support for DRR as development.

Early warning but no early action is the result of the divide between humanitarian and development approaches. To achieve resilience, requires the bridging of the two. The dynamic nature of risk, especially in a changing climate, requires study and integrated approaches at all levels not least for a post-2015 framework.

### 3. Enabling environments

In the interests of an effective post-2015 disaster-resilient framework, participants strongly encouraged governments and the international community to link post-2015 development and DRR agendas along with identifying and combatting underlying risk factors. Improved knowledge networks, including national and international information and early warning systems and data loss databases, need support from experts and academics but should be based in communities to inform decision-making.

More effort needs to be made to bring evidence of the cost-benefits of DRR to a wider audience and linked to accountability mechanisms and impact measurement systems. Though advocacy on the HFA has paid huge dividends worldwide, more needs to be done to sensitize all government ministries on the current and future benefits of the HFA in building resilient countries and communities especially in the face of mass urbanization. Conflict-prone areas need special attention in HFA2 as evidence supports that disasters can and do increase the risk of conflict and, conflict, the risk of vulnerability.

## Encouraging old leaders and engaging new ones

Women, especially, need to be empowered to build resilience. Women in Africa are a force for reckoning as they stand for election, mobilize community health, education and employment and take on social justice issues including land tenure rights. Youth are another important group especially when considering that the majority of the population of urban areas in Africa will soon be below 25 years of age. Investing in their talents, enthusiasm, creativity and capacities ensures inter-generational engagement for future disaster-resilient societies and MDGs.

We need new approaches and increased focus in investment in urban risk management and impact assessment. The private sector offers expertise, knowledge, networks and reputability. Harnessing its initiative will ensure that a future framework bears the imprint and support of private innovation. Parliamentarians in Africa have made bold strides for DRR. They present the issues of DRR, resilience and climate change adaptation with assurance and authority. Our challenge now is to advance the advocacy potential of civil society and local government actors in all ways consistent with building disaster-resilient communities.

### Key recommendations by participants from each sector are summarized below

- **General**

From your various perspectives, what should a post-2015 Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction look like especially in connection with other important areas such as climate change adaptation, resilient communities, sustainable development, environment and disaster preparedness recovery and reconstruction?. Please focus on concrete recommendations.

1. At country level Post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and Post 2015 Disaster Risk Reduction Agenda have to be linked.
2. DRR is not a goal in itself but a bridge to resilience building and sustainable development and planning.
3. HFA2 cannot be separated from the Convention on Climate Change and sustainable development. Sustainable and equitable development and poverty reduction need to support and contribute to the reduction of disaster risks.

- **AU**

What important lessons have been learned from implementing the Extended Programme of Action for Africa on Disaster Risk Reduction?.

1. We need stronger involvement by all stakeholders groups including civil society, private sector and youth.
2. Country action plans for DRR outcomes have to be revised under the lead of the Ministries of Finance.
3. The underlying risk factors have not been adequately addressed in HFA, but need to be addressed strongly in HFA2 to build the resilience of communities.
4. HFA has given us the opportunity to dialogue, but we are not quantifying these discussions with actions.
5. Budgetary allocations from governments are needed, but there should be two options, budget for DRR at the level of different sectors and an overall DRR budget.
6. Need for DRR/DRM to be one of the pillars in the African Union's peer review mechanisms for regular monitoring, evaluation and reporting of progress

based on measurable and verifiable indicators.

- **Regional Economic Commissions**

What concrete actions are you planning that will support an effective post-2015 disaster risk framework for Africa?

1. Education is the key to resilience, we need to strengthen skills and knowledge on DRR.
2. The creation of Integrated networks of national and international information systems on DRR and CCA including strong early warning systems and national disaster loss databases.
3. Streamlined legislation dealing with DRR in different sectors.
4. Improved data and knowledge management to inform decision-making (including website development).
5. DRR/DRM policy, legislation, and institutions should be fast-tracked, operationalized, and devolved to the grassroots.
6. Increased focus and investment in urban disaster risk management.

- **National Platforms**

What are the DRR priority areas for post-2015 and why?

1. Need to streamline common planning and evaluation systems.
2. Need for more evidence on disaster losses.
3. Cost-effectiveness and cost-benefits of DRR require evidence.
4. Accountability is equally important to all ministries Clearly laid out enforceable accountability mechanisms, as well as the process for accountability at national, regional and global levels, are issues relevant to the prioritization of DRR in the budgeting process.
5. Many government ministries are not aware of the HFA, we need to consider strong dissemination and guidance through media or other means on the current and future benefits of HFA2.
6. Accelerate the integration of DRR, Climate Change Adaptation, social protection and poverty reduction initiatives and programmes at all levels of government.

- **Gender**

What challenges exist in reducing disaster risks for women and other vulnerable groups in East Africa?

1. DRR has not been engendered and women are left behind in many disaster situations.

What lessons could you share to guide action on gender for an effective post-HFA contribution?

2. We need to ensure that women and children have access to the resource base for DRR education and remedies.
3. Women need to be empowered to build resilience; if women had equal rights of land tenure, agricultural production would increase by 30% globally.

- **Local government**

What are the major challenges for local government for building resilience at the local level that should be priority elements for a post-HFA framework?

4. Local authorities do not have the capacity to carry out DRR effectively.
5. Decentralization of the activities at national level are still a huge challenge, actions should be kept practical at the local level.
6. Increase accountability and transparency in implementing DRR through allocation of responsibility and resources to the local and community level.

- **Civil Society**

What are the top 3 issues that need to be addressed to build disaster-resilient communities?

1. Communities are affected most by disasters, therefore we need to identify priorities and challenges of communities and communicate with them about ideas and feelings, so that trust and confidence can be established.
2. We need to develop local infrastructure.
3. Communities are facing challenges such as Illiteracy and marginalization.
4. Communities need access to markets and services to reduce vulnerability.
5. Increase focus on people through more direct participation of communities in the policy framework for DRR.
6. Community education and awareness on DRR needs to be integrated across sectors and coordinated with government authorities, civil society and the general public.

- **Youth**

What information sources best serve to teach youth about disasters—parents, school, media, peers and why?

1. Empower Youth engagement in environmental protection and climate change adaptation through relevant information and knowledge, economic empowerment and access to disaggregated age and engendered data.
2. Youth need to be fully engaged in discussions on DRR and HFA2 as they are not only the future but represent the majority of society in many parts in Africa. (In future, the majority of population of urban areas in Africa will be below 25 years of age).

What would a disaster-safe community look like to you?

1. Youth can help in identification of vulnerabilities and capacities at community level.
2. Youth can promote sensitization and education, both contemporary and traditional.
3. Youth can help communities to use new technologies for DRR.
4. Youth have huge capacities to volunteer for DRR and CCA.
5. Youth have dynamic ways of thinking and are creative and innovative.

- **Parliamentarians**

What more can be done to ensure that DRR and CCA are integrated into national development policies, planning and programmes? What are the main DRR elements to be further addressed post-2015?

1. We need to address the risks relative to increasingly challenging urban environments and the related risks caused by increased population and economic migration.
2. Development is changing under the influence of climate change.
3. Risks are very dynamic. That dynamism has to be captured in the next framework.
4. Parliamentarians have to be active for DRR, under strong leadership of UNISDR.

- **Academic Institutions and Networks**

How can we better understand the costs and benefits of disaster risk reduction?

1. We need strategic programmes and investment frameworks at national level.
2. We need to leverage existing indigenous knowledge.
3. Academic research institutions should be utilized for resilience-building at

grass-roots level.

4. Conduct an audit of DRR funding of projects and programmes by government, donors, partners, NGOs etc. to inform decision-makers of value of DRR and return of investments.

How do we promote understanding of the linkages between conflict, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development?

5. There is strong evidence that natural disasters can increase the risk of conflict and that conditions of conflict can increase the vulnerability to natural disasters, hence the compilation of both undermines resilience.
6. HFA2 needs to address conflict impact on vulnerabilities, as people have no access to alternative income options due to restricted movements, or get displaced by conflict to risk prone areas.
7. We need to seek new partnerships with different actors to address these challenges.

- **UN Resident Coordinators**

How can UN joint programming contribute to effective resilience-building post-2015?

1. Need to institutionalize sustainable disaster management funds. Develop strong regional and national cooperation of stakeholders among development and humanitarian actors.
2. There is a high level of duplication among development partners; there has to be collaboration between the sectors.

- **Development Partners**

How do we best link development and humanitarian action for resilience-building in a post-2015 disaster risk reduction framework for Africa?

1. DRR needs to be fully recognized as a development issue; so far no money for DRR comes from development funding.
2. We have early warning but no early action, as development and humanitarian actions are not linked but need to be bridged to achieve resilience.
3. Balance humanitarian and development approaches and investment in addressing the underlying causes of disasters.
4. We can only build DRR, if we have a predictable risk environment, and integrate prevention and recovery.

#### Next Steps/Actions

- Further consultations at national level planned for 2013
- Africa Ministerial Conference on DRR planned for 2014, or sub-regional consultations

#### Upcoming Events /opportunities for further consultations

- Africa Ministerial Conference on DRR 2014 (tbc)
- Climate Outlook Forums (tbc)
- National Platform workshops (tbc)
- Periperi U Annual Consultations of Universities (tbc)

Annex one: Concept of Post HFA Round Table with speakers and questions.