



## Civil Society Recommendations for Post-2015 DRM Framework

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### OUTCOME

#### ***Communities that are resilient to extreme shocks and stresses of any type***

A post-2015 disaster risk management framework must strengthen the resilience of people and their communities to absorb and adapt to shocks and stresses of all kinds: internal and external; short and long-term; natural or man-made; rapid or slow onset; rural or urban; economic, social, environmental or geopolitical.<sup>1</sup> Community resilience is the basic building block and foundation of national resilience and should be considered the overall outcome of a post-2015 disaster risk management framework.

### EIGHT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A POST-2015 DRM FRAMEWORK

#### **1. Prioritise the poorest, most vulnerable and marginalised people**

Disasters impact on all societies whether in high, medium or low-income countries although they disproportionately affect poorer countries with weaker governance, poor and marginalised communities and in particular demographic groups such as women and children. Accordingly, whilst the post-2015 framework should be designed as a comprehensive agreement to support a global agenda across all countries, the framework's strategic emphasis must recognise different levels of vulnerability amongst different countries and societal groups based on principles of justice, equity and social cohesion. In practical terms, this means the disaggregation of relevant data at national and local levels for income and non-income related parameters including sex, ethnicity, age, disability, minorities.

#### **2. Ensure the scope of the framework includes *all* types of natural and human-made disasters - including small-scale recurrent "everyday" disasters**

Vulnerable people are exposed to a complex multi-dimensional risk environment where different social, economic, geo-political, climatic and environmental risks impact one another in unpredictable ways - particularly in areas of civil strife, conflict and fragility. In this complex, unpredictable environment, effective risk management strategies cannot address specific risk types in isolation from each other and must be holistic, flexible and long term to adequately reflect local realities. At the community level, the dominant risk is from the under-reported and uncompensated small-scale recurrent disasters (primarily triggered by weather events), which are rapidly increasing in developing countries.

#### **3. Prioritise tackling the causes of vulnerability and exposure**

Ultimately, the success of a post-2015 framework will depend on its effectiveness in tackling the underlying drivers of risk. Building resilience is a change process that requires tackling the structural power imbalances between different social, economic and demographic groups that underpin differential vulnerabilities within communities. These are important influences of vulnerability and exposure.

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'communities' is used to describe groups of people, kin groups and neighbourhoods drawn from a localised area.



#### **4. Strengthen and resource local risk governance**

A capable, accountable and responsive local government that works collaboratively with civil society, the private sector and at-risk communities is one of the most important factors to accelerating implementation of risk reduction policies at a local level. Effective local risk governance requires investments in strengthening local risk governance capabilities, including enhanced human and institutional capacities, political authority, financial resources, accountability and partnerships.<sup>2</sup>

#### **5. Place rights and responsibilities of *all* stakeholders at the core of the framework**

International laws, conventions and treaties provide frameworks that define rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders at all levels from local to international e.g. a human-rights based approach puts the relationships (social contract) between people (rights holders) and governments (primary duty bearer) at the centre of the process and provides a basis for the accountability and responsibilities of governments for the safety and protection of people. When basic rights to education, health and housing are denied for example, then vulnerability increases. Grounding the post-2015 framework in human rights standards and other legislative frameworks will reinforce accountability by ensuring commitments to people' safety and protection are legal obligations.

#### **6. Establish clear goals, standards, baselines, targets and indicators**

An absence of accountability and transparency has been a limiting factor to achieving the goals of the current HFA. Broadly speaking, accountability refers to different actors being held to account for progress towards transparent performance standards and targets for which they have clearly delineated responsibilities. In this respect, goals, standards, baselines, targets, indicators and associated monitoring and redress mechanisms are essential to measure progress and enable people to hold governments to account for progress towards specific measurable goals and standards. A prerequisite is a public national loss database, which records and disaggregates information about disasters and their impact.

#### **7. Institutionalise the role and strengthen the capacity of civil society**

Civil society has a critical role in strengthening community resilience and enhancing the ability to which people can hold the state accountable and responsive to their needs. Civil society proactively engages in policy analysis, gathers and aggregates people's perspectives, participates in strategy formulation, supports policy implementation and monitoring, strengthens domestic accountability and drives the social change necessary for increased resilience based on experiences and knowledge of working alongside grassroots communities. However, in most countries governments have not institutionalised the role of civil society and there is limited space and opportunity to contribute to enhancing community resilience. Provision of external support to strengthen the capacity of civil society and to support networking is essential. This is particularly critical in fragile states and/or places where democracy is not yet mature. In these situations, greater emphasis is needed on sources of resilience outside state institutions.

#### **8. Demand clear commitment from the private sector to strengthening community resilience**

The private sector is influential in both creating and reducing risk - ranging from small and medium enterprises operating in the informal and formal sector through to large multi-national corporations. Businesses have not yet fully adopted resilience as an integral part of their strategies. Instead evidence shows that current practices can often create or enhance risks - particularly for those most vulnerable. A post-2015 DRM framework with a strong commitment towards public-private partnerships would require a focus on ensuring clearer responsibilities in strengthening community resilience. This must include the role of small-scale informal businesses which account for 75% of total employment in developing countries.

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<sup>2</sup> Local risk governance is more than local government. It reflects the collaboration required between local government, civil society, private sector and local communities to tackle risks together.



## **CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**

GNDR members have emphasised some critical success factors to implementation. These are an integral part of the success of the post-2015 framework and apply across each and every part of the framework. They create the environment which will enable people to participate more fully in social and economic life and ensure a sustainable environment for present and future generations. These factors must be monitored just as that of any other element and can be used to measure the success of the framework as a whole. Three factors in particular have been identified:

### **Gender**

Gender equality is one of the key forms of equality which must be comprehensively addressed in a future framework to strengthen community resilience. The framework must recognize gender-specific vulnerabilities – for example, women and girls are disproportionately affected by disasters in part because of structural inequalities in terms of decision-making authority and leadership opportunities within households and communities. The exclusion and vulnerability of women is particularly important to address given the key role women play in ensuring the survival and resilience of their families and as active agents of change within their communities.

### **Inter-generational and environmental sustainability**

People, communities, society, the economy and nature are all part of an inter-connected social-ecological system. The commercial exploitation of natural resources linked with modes of production and consumption are fundamentally unsustainable and inequitable, leading to accumulating stresses within social-ecological systems. Increasing disaster losses and climate change impacts are indicators of these stresses. It is essential for the post-2015 framework to recognise and respect the core functions, critical interdependencies, thresholds and limits that sustain local ecosystem functionality and inter-generational equity.

### **Inter-cultural linkages**

Culture has an essential role to play in terms of the strengthening community resilience. Individuals belong to different cultural groups or social networks. These networks and the connections between them play an important role in enabling communities to self-organise, to innovate, to share good practices and experiential learning supporting the creation, acquisition and retention of indigenous knowledge. From a societal perspective, inter-cultural linkages can promote solidarity, support cross-border cooperation, connectivity and social cohesion. Self-organising, learning, connectivity and social cohesion are considered some of the core principles underpinning community resilience.