

UN ISDR - United Nations International Strategy for  
Disaster reduction

## Post 2015 Framework - National Consultation - NORWAY

We refer to the invitation from UNISDR dated 19 July 2012 to organize national consultations on the Hyogo Framework for Action and the post 2015 framework.

In Norway, the post 2015 framework was discussed in a National Platform meeting on 18 April, 2013. Since the National Platform is relatively young (established September 2011), focus for the discussion was mainly on the post 2015 framework and not so much on experiences from the current Hyogo Framework for Action. A draft note was circulated prior to the meeting. Below are the comments from the Norwegian National Platform.

In addition to members of the National Platform, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Research Council of Norway participated in the meeting and the discussion. We underline that the comments from the national platform first and foremost reflect the views of agencies responsible for national and local implementation in Norway.

At the 3rd session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva, 2011, Ms. Hege Hertzberg, Political Director for Development at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said in the official statement of Norway that:

*Looking beyond 2015 - the final year of the Hyogo Framework of Action - Norway believes that we need an instrument to guide member states and local communities on a hands-on approach to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.*

Norway's national platform has, since it was launched in 2011, discussed a variety of topics concerning disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) in a national context. We see that the current Hyogo Framework for Action has played an important role in setting the agenda for DRR. However, we think a new framework should aim at providing more concrete, hands-on guidance than the current HFA does for *defining and prioritizing measures for DRR*, including CCA, at national and local levels.

In line with Norway's strategy for disaster risk reduction, Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crisis (2007) and Norway's humanitarian policy (2008), we would suggest that the post 2015 framework should focus on four priorities for reducing vulnerability and strengthening resilience. These priorities can also represent different stages in planning for disaster risk management (DRM):

1. **Knowledge: Assess risk and vulnerability** at national, regional and local level. All relevant sectors and stakeholders should take responsibility for assessing their vulnerability, including both existing and future hazards (changes due to climate change, urbanization, demographical/social changes, technological/economic development, etc.). Local knowledge on past and present experiences should be combined with available sciences and social science research as well as information available in databases etc. – they are supplementary elements of the knowledge base needed.

2. **Prevention: Avoid new risk and vulnerability** by ensuring that development does not take place in hazard-prone areas, or promoting security measures in cases where such development cannot be avoided. Land-use planning; development of robust infrastructure, ecosystem based DRR; innovative urban design (e.g. creation of 'blue-green' structures); building restrictions etc. are key instruments to ensure development of resilient local communities.
3. **Prevention: Reduce existing risk and vulnerability** through preventive measures in already developed areas, including technical (protective) installations; building enforcement; improvement of infrastructure; sustainable management of agriculture and ecosystems in order to enhance resilience; etc.
4. **Preparedness and response: Manage remaining risks** by strengthening disaster preparedness and response at all levels, including monitoring and (early) warning systems; preparedness plans; information to the public; reconstruction programs ('build back better'); etc.

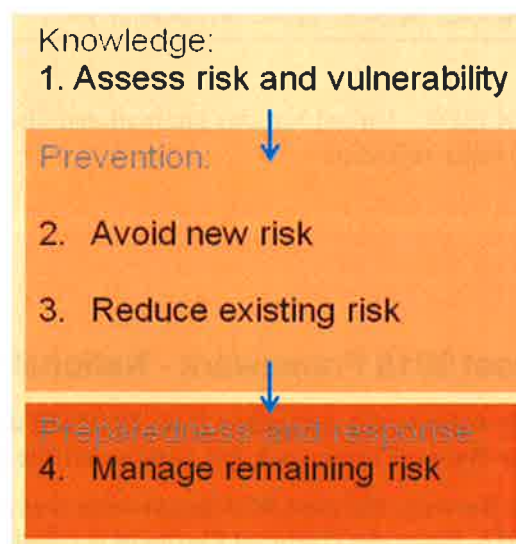


Fig. 1: Four phases of DRR

Planning for the future is an essential part of our work to avoid future risk. In this regard, we would point to the need to make use of available knowledge and institutions to support decision-making and defining measures. The Global Framework for Climate Services of the WMO ([GFCS](#)) seeks to provide user friendly climate services worldwide, particularly in developing countries. The main goal of the GFCS is 'to enable better management of the risks of climate variability and change and adaptation to climate change, through the development and incorporation of science-based climate information and prediction into planning, policy and practice on the global, regional and national scale' (World Climate Conference-3). Further, the IPCC Special Report on Extreme Weather Events (SREX) provides scientific background information on the development of extreme weather which increases disaster risk. The report demonstrates the need to strengthen disaster risk reduction at all levels and in all relevant sectors.

However, recognizing that people and communities are *already* exposed to risk, the most urgent is to define ways to prevent or reduce *existing* hazards and risks. Institutional frameworks at national and local levels must be set up in such a way that it can transform knowledge about past, current and future risks into decision-making and development processes. Knowledge about natural hazards and impacts of climate change must therefore be combined with knowledge about social and economic development, institutional and legal framework, local knowledge, etc. The combination of scientific and societal knowledge should make the basis for DRM, including definition and implementation of measures to avoid or reduce risks.

Examples of relevant measures for reducing existing and future risks are:

**For development of new areas/buildings/infrastructure:**

- To ensure land-use planning which will enhance resilience, hazard/risk assessments should be a part of the planning process prior to development of new areas.
- Building codes and localization of buildings should be accustomed to local risks.
- Development of safe and robust infrastructure; investments in critical infrastructure and buildings/installations with a long life-span should also take possible future hazards and risk into account in the planning process.

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- Resilient urban development. Urbanization should be accompanied with sustainable solutions for risk reduction, for example by enhancing development of 'blue-green' structures in cities. Critical institutions and infrastructure should be located in safe areas.
- Management of ecosystems and agriculture to enhance resilience. Urban development should include protection or creation of green areas, in order to absorb and store excess water, to provide recreational areas in case of heat waves, etc.

**For existing areas/buildings/infrastructure:**

- Cross-sector risk and vulnerability assessments, covering a variety of hazards and sectors and based on available research and local knowledge, should provide the basis for defining relevant measures to reduce existing risks.
- Risks should be managed as locally as possible. Emphasis should be given to sustainable solutions, for example ecosystem based measures and sustainable agricultural management (e.g. flood and drought prevention through rain harvesting, preservation/restoration of vegetation surrounding urban areas, etc.).
- When upgrading/renovating existing buildings or infrastructure, measures for reducing risks should be included when relevant and possible (for example, by upgrading to more effective drainage systems when renovating city streets).


For all phases of DRR, including identification of relevant measures for DRR, a cross-sector approach is needed. Successful transformation of knowledge into decision-making and implementation requires participation and involvement from different stakeholders, including different governmental agencies. Capacity building at national and local level is needed to enhance coordination and cooperation across sectors and governmental levels.

On behalf of the National Platform of Norway,

Yours sincerely,  
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