



Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction

GNDR Post HFA debate: Summary of Regional and Online Discussions October-November 2012

Introduction

Work is under way to fashion a successor to the Hyogo Framework for Action on Disaster Reduction, which was established by the UN in 2005 for a ten year period. During that time the Global Network for Disaster Reduction has been founded and has pursued the 'Views from the Frontline' programme of complementary assessments of the Framework. This action research has highlighted challenges including a persistent gap between policy and action, limited progress in addressing underlying causes, the need to strengthen local level participation and governance and the need to engage local people as active contributors to building resilience.

As a contribution to the development of a successor framework GNDR produced a discussion paper which informed a number of regional and online discussions. It asserts that

" . . . for a combination of fundamental and strategic reasons the current HFA will not arrest or reverse disasters losses by 2015. Building the resilience of nations and communities will not be achieved by designing HFA 2 as a more nuanced version of HFA 1. Radical changes are required in the way the post-2015 framework is conceived, designed and executed to adequately represent experiences of vulnerable people and ensure full participation of all stakeholders in the process to reduce risk to acceptable levels . If this were to happen the post-2015 instrument could serve to inspire a truly global partnership for a resilient world."

The document launched discussions which were held in the following locations:

Southern Africa: Potchefstroom, South Africa, as part of the meetings inaugurating the South African Society for Disaster Reduction (approx 25 participants)

Asia: Yogyakarta, Indonesia as part of the Civil Society pre-meeting to the Asian Ministerial meeting on DRR (approx 90 participants)

Latin America: San Salvador, El Salvador; As part of the GNDR regional meeting for Latin America (approx 25 participants)

East Africa: Nairobi, Kenya; As part of the GNDR regional meeting for East Africa. (approx 30 participants)

Online: four discussions concerning a discussion paper, the current HFA, challenges for a future framework and the shape of a future, post HFA framework (approx 90 participants)

Nearly all participants were GNDR members who are practitioners working on DRR and related themes at local level.

The paper distills down the key themes which emerged with a particular focus on recommendations for a post HFA framework, accompanied by fuller notes of the discussions which appear in annexes.

Note that GNDR has also advanced views in earlier discussions, for example in the position paper produced for GP-DRR in 2009 and in other presentations and papers. This paper reports specifically on the recent round of discussions in order to distil the points raised by participants. It does not represent a position, agreed or otherwise, on the post HFA framework.

Themes

The discussions were very rich, insightful and detailed and can be read in the notes forming annexes to this summary.

Analysis of the points highlighted in the regional discussions and online debates found 18 themes referred to by participants. This document presents a summary of these themes. A simple ranking is provided identifying which of the themes were most commonly referred to. The following list and summaries present the themes in order of their weighting on this basis (see Annex 1)

Themes and comments in order of weighting (*numbers in brackets indicate the number of discussions covering this theme*)

1. Access to resources (5)

This point occurred repeatedly. As the majority of our membership are in low income countries implementation of priorities for action is severely impeded by lack of resources. In one discussion members suggested that the HFA is designed for developed countries as the resource requirements seem to imply this. Identification of resources to implement a successor framework should be an integral part of its design and will be a test of the political commitment to disaster prevention

2. Monitoring and accountability for progress against indicators and goals (5)

It was widely felt that self-reporting at national level was inadequate to ensure that progress was achieved on the Priorities for Action at local level. The VFL programme itself has provided a complementary assessment of progress and it is felt that monitoring at local level should be an integral part of a successor framework as ultimately this is where the effects of the framework should be seen. This is

dependent on standards and legislation being in place. where sufficient governance capacities exist, against which to assess compliance.

3. Integration with other development frameworks (5)

It is clear to many of the participants, and to the communities they work with, that siloed frameworks and activity do not match local realities, where people don't differentiate between risk factors and they often interact. Discussion members felt that the new frameworks being established in 2015 - post HFA, MDGs, SDGs and climate treaty in particular, should be integrated in their design and execution rather than independent in order to collectively address underlying causes of vulnerability and exposure

4. Local participation in building resilience (5)

Whilst the word 'participation' is used liberally it is clear that discussion members see participation as more than just consultation or co-option. It means that local people are key actors in building resilience, with important views, expertise and capacities which should stand alongside the involvement of other actors. Other points below address particular aspects of this general point.

5. Processes for implementation (4)

It was widely felt that in the absence of clear processes or pathways for implementation of the priorities for action they remained as aspirational goals without clear guidance for their delivery. An effective framework requires clear processes for implementation which identify the roles of different actors, the mode of action, resources and methods

6. Local knowledge creation (4)

Discussion members see local knowledge as a valuable resource in building resilience. Terms such as 'indigenous knowledge' are often rejected as they imply knowledge which is less important than 'expert' knowledge. In fact local communities, particularly as they are mobilised, self organised, act and reflect on their actions are the key experts in local level resilience and their contributions should be seen as having equal weight to those of other 'experts'.

7. Multi risk - taking account of all risks, natural and anthropogenic (3)

The discussions echo points made by GNDR members during the VFL programme about the multi-risk environment that local communities face. They do not distinguish risk factors such as conflict, violence, corruption, land grabs, and other socio-economic factors from environmental risks and feel that a successor framework should take account of all these risk factors..

8. Taking account of vulnerable groups (3)

So-called vulnerable groups such as women are often regarded as in particular need of support. The emphasis in the discussions was on the positive role that such groups can play if they are not marginalised structurally or for cultural reasons. The discussion suggested that they should be regarded as key actors in working for resilience, focusing on high-risk people and countries

9. A more meaningful name (2)

Some discussion members felt that as part of more effective and inclusive communication (see below) a more obvious and accessible name for a successor framework than 'Hyogo Framework for Action' should be adopted. Some referred to the Millennium Development Goals as a framework title that had clearer meaning for different audiences.

10. Binding framework (2)

Frustration was expressed that as well as a lack of clear local level monitoring and accountability the framework is not binding in nature. They felt that making a successor framework binding on the signatories was a critical factor in securing progress.

11. Cross sector co-ordination and partnerships (2)

In line with the comments above about multi-risk factors and integrating frameworks some discussion members felt that the different actors addressing issues such as DRR, Climate change, poverty and livelihoods etc should be encouraged and supported to coordinate their activity and to work together where possible.

12. Integrating Humanitarian and Development activity

The experience of many discussion participants is that they are engaged in both development and humanitarian work. More importantly they see that addressing risk reduction and building resilience is primarily a development activity and that DRR and resilience building should therefore integrate Humanitarian and Development activity. There was also a concern that in doing this the specialist thematic expertise which has developed is not diluted.

13. Improving communication of the framework

Whilst some participants praised the way that the HFA has changed the agenda and has build awareness at national and institutional level, many said that awareness at local level, even with local government, is very limited. Again they compared this with the MDGs, where some felt there was much more local and public awareness. They felt that a successor framework should have a clear programme for communication at local level.

14. Including preparedness and response

Whilst the focus is on resilience there was also a concern from some members that preparedness and response will always be needed and should form an integral part of a successor framework

15. Taking account of conflict and fragility

In regions which are particularly characterised by fragile states and conflict (for instance in the East Africa Regional meeting) it was felt that conflict is a critical factor to address in order to build resilience.

16. Good governance

Following from the above, local governance is a critical starting point for building stable community relationships between local level actors and is particularly critical where the capacities of the state are limited.

17. Extensive disasters

The author is surprised that this point ranked so far down as much discussion in GNDR generally is about the significance of extensive disasters in the experience of vulnerable communities. Whereas mega disasters grab the headlines much greater erosion of resilience is caused by these relatively unseen disasters. Marcus points out that this was highlighted in the main discussed in the Asian Ministerial

18. Managing natural resources

In regions where governance is weak natural resources are particularly vulnerable to degradation, exploitation, land grabs and so on. To allow communities to build resilience the effective and sustainable management of natural resources is an important action

Summary conclusions

Focusing on the top 7 themes (those raised in three or more discussion sessions):

- The emphasis of the discussion has been on a **more holistic approach** to risk and resilience, breaking down the silos and recognising that all risk factors have to be addressed in order to build resilience.
- Having established this principle, **clear processes for implementation** should form part of a new framework, as otherwise its goals remain aspirational.
- Implementation processes should acknowledge the role of **local communities as active participants contributing valuable local knowledge and expertise and sharing in local level governance.**
- Finally all of this needs to be underpinned by mechanisms to provide **financial and other resources** for local level implementation and to ensure **monitoring and accountability** at all levels.

This are the top headlines from the debate. The full list of 18 themes and the accompanying discussion summaries (Annex 2-6) provide rich insights into the civil society perspective on fashioning an effective framework.

Next steps

The discussions and key themes which arose from them will be taken forward to a Global Conference of the GNDR to be held in XXXX on 20th and 21st March 2013. This will combine the inputs from the discussions with the data from current and previous VFL studies in order to develop a report and recommendations on the shape of a post HFA framework.

Annex 1: Ranking of discussion themes

Themes for Post HFA framework identified in Regional and Online discussions						
Theme	Asian regional workshop	South African Regional Workshop	Latin American Regional Workshop	East African Regional Workshop	Online discussions: Weeks 1, 2 and 3	Totals
Access to resources		1	1	1	2	5
Monitoring and accountability for progress against indicators and goals	1	1	1		2	5
Integrated with other development frameworks	1	1	1		2	5
Local participation in building resilience	1	1	1	1	1	5
Processes for implementation		1	1	1	1	4
Local knowledge creation		1	1	1	1	4
Multi risk - taking account of all risk, natural and anthropogenic					3	3
Taking account of vulnerable groups	1		1		1	3
A more meaningful name			1		1	2
Binding framework			1		1	2
Cross sector co-ordination and partnerships	1		1			2
Integrating Humanitarian and Development activity					1	1
Improving communication of the framework					1	1
Including preparedness and response					1	1
Taking account of conflict				1		1
Good governance				1		1
Extensive disasters					1	1
Managing natural resources				1		1

Annex 2: Notes from Southern Africa Discussion

Southern Africa Post HFA discussion Potchefstroom 8th Oct 2012

Delegates: Lewis, Zimbabwe; Johnson, Swaziland; Molemo, Lesotho; Titus, Botswana; Dewald, South Africa, Christa, South Africa, Bradley, South Africa; Michael, South Africa; Gert, Namibia; Nguza, Namibia; Mitulo, Zambia. (Higino, Mozambique and Maynard, Malawi didn't make it).

Session 1. Discussion on questions about the HFA.

Two groups discussed the questions below and then agreed key points in a plenary session:

What has the HFA Achieved?

- It has promoted multi Stakeholder engagement
- It has encouraged Government responsibility
- It has highlighted Civil Society Responsibility
- it has promoted dialogue between a whole range of actors
- It has encouraged a shift from preparedness and response to DRR
- It has stimulated other activities and actions - such as GNDR

Limitations of HFA

- It is non binding
- Its emphasis is purely on the government policy level
- There is a lack of support for capacity building at all levels
- The UN system which houses it has a lack of connection to regional and local levels

VFL Perspectives

- It encourages a false sense of security at national level - a persisting gap between national policy and local implementation
- The HFA is not known or understood at local level
- There is a lack of any strategy and process for implementation
- It only works in rich countries which have the infrastructure and resources to support
- It assumes the operational infrastructure which doesn't exist in poor countries
- There is a lack of ownership and responsibility for risk at local level and a false sense of ownership at national level

Requirements for a new framework

- A clear implementation process
- Making use of local knowledge
- A defined role and accountability for civil society alongside government
- Capacity building at all levels as a regular activity
- Retaining a focus on DRR but taking account of other risk factors
- Other frameworks to take account of DRR

Session 2: Designing a Resilience Framework for Action

Delegates worked in two groups to design their proposed Resilience Action Frameworks, taking account of the discussion above

Group 1: Led by Dewald van Niekerk

(Does not assume the role of a UN Agency - based on local action)

Main themes

- Local knowledge creation and building
- Community based and participatory devt and disaster risk reduction
- Understanding of peoples' own development
- Localisation of indigenous resources towards disaster risk reduction
- Local institutionalisation of DRR
- Partnership rather than government driven
 - Total systems approach (urban/ rural context) (avoiding siloed devt systems)
 - From patchwork to network - get groups talking to each other
 - Ingrained DRR
- Resilient livelihoods
- Communities bouncing forwards as well as bouncing back
- Community response capacity
 - Strengthening existing mechanisms to response manage disasters
- Did not discuss funding but believe that there is funding in development more generally and that would be drawn on?

Implementation

Needs offices in each country who coordinate *all* levels - rather than in the hands of the government

Building up from the local level rather than down from the National level

Dewald drew a multi dimensional venn diagram to make the point that the shape of the intersection of the blobs is where resilience lies - where different activities coincide in a holistic programme - so building resilience is strengthening those intersections

Group 2. Led by Gert Van Rooy

Only had time to come up with two goals, which they considered most important:

Goals	Priorities of Action	Indicators	Accountability
Capacity Building	Mobilising resources Mobilisation of Participation - as willing participants rather than forced	Number of people Funding allocation	Reporting structure Monitoring and Evaluation
Awareness raising (moving from disaster driven to DRR)	Involve all levels , community, political structures	Awareness campaigns Knowledge awareness	M and E system Numbers of community members trained

Comments on the table above

What is the accountability and what are the incentives - why would different actors participate in this?

Capacity building needs to be linked to awareness - why dredge this canal - because it reduces floods and that gives better crops etc. (instead of waiting for relief food)

Responsibility of communities is an important aspect.

Annex 3: Asia Regional meeting notes

1) List of key issues raised, main challenges or constraints identified:

- Structure and local governance of DRR including budgeting raises concern as the authority and power given to local government are not equipped with appropriate resource to implement the authority in DRR
- Accountability should strengthen the quality of DRR works through mechanisms such as - social audit, complaints and response mechanism
- Regulation does not always give impact to the progress in the local level
- Cooperation between multi-stakeholders increases the quality of the local DRR
- Community (indigenous community) also have existing capacity (not only vulnerabilities) to contribute in the disaster resilience
- The community resource is often exhausted to respond and cope with daily small scale disasters and therefore needs priority and political commitment to be responded and supported
- Things are getting worse. There is a substantial increase in losses and the vast majority of losses are small scale crises
- HFA framework did made impact as it is a good advocacy tool in global and national level and it guides regulation discussion in national level but the way it was structured needs critical reflection especially the way risk is perceived by local community
- Principal issues faced by communities in Asia-Pacific region
 - Increased risk due to environmental changes due to climate changes in the region
 - Lack of resources and capacities at the local level
 - Accountability towards vulnerable communities
 - Less importance on disaster risk reduction at the local level
 - Timely and accurate information about the risks
 - Increased exposure and new emerging threats to communities
 - Level of participation of various stakeholders
- -Weak governance especially lack of appropriate and timely information has been responsible for increasing communities exposure
- -Local level communities' exposure is exacerbated by lack of external support in form of resources and technical know how
- Communities own ability to respond to shocks and stresses is shrinking due to high cost of response alternatives
- In absence of an enabling policy environment current local level partnerships are mostly limited to consultation only
 - Poor interaction and lack of feedback system is leading to indifference and reflects insensitivity at local levels

In conclusion

- New challenges are emerging which decreases the resilience of communities and house hold
- Accountability framework needs to looked at local level keeping in mind local customs and
- traditions

- True participation is need of the hour in region
- Strong linkages needs to created from national to local level
- Gap between knowledge and practice need to reduced for innovative local solutions

2) Recommendations and proposals for the Post 2015 DRR framework and development agenda:

- Strengthening cooperation amongst the relevant actors and working in silo has to be stopped.
- Accountability : complaints and feedback mechanism from community to government needs to be established and strengthened to make systems more resilient
- Disabilities inclusion needs to be included and carried forward as the persons with disability are the most excluded groups in the whole DRR work
- Community resilience which brings humanitarian, developmental and governance issues together is the foundation of the national resilience
- Social cohesion and social solidarity is the heart of the community resilience and CSO plays important role to play in strengthening and ensuring it.
- Consultation process of the next post international framework has to ensure wider participation and bottom up approach so that the next post 2015 arrangement will be more coherent, synergic and holistic and do not fall in silo institutional framework which only responded to the symptom/effect of disaster events
- We need to challenge the structure of institutional architecture in which DRR put under.

3) Conclusions by the Chair of the event:

- The resilience agenda needs to cover the entire spectrum including both humanitarian as well as developmental goals. There are opportunities in terms of the Transformative Agenda, as well as the post HFA discussions.
- Good local risk governance holds the key to ensuring that communities remain at the centre stage of all interventions.
- Importance of tracking commitments made in the meeting leading to impact on the ground.

Annex 4: Latin America Regional meeting

(This declaration was drawn up and agreed by delegates at the Latin American regional meeting to be taken forward to the UNISDR regional meeting in Chile.

SAN SALVADOR DECLARATION MEMBERS OF THE GLOBAL NETWORK FOR DRR - GNDR

That the areas and challenges for a Post 2015 Framework for Action should consider:

- The Framework for Action should emphasize in the relationship between Sustainable Development, Resilience and Risk Management, and its name should reflect its meaning and significance.
- It should incorporate the positive aspects of the HFA.
- It must integrate the community as protagonist in risk management, defining clear mechanisms for participation.
- To integrate and link with other mechanisms for promoting development and climate change adaptation (MDGs, Framework Convention on Climate Change UN)
- That in addition to integrate Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), explicitly incorporate Social Risk Reduction (RRS) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA).
- That the Framework for Action has to be a binding commitment and that States should commit themselves to undertake investments for its fulfillment, both in human and financial resources, and its integration into development plans.
- That from its design, it should incorporate an accountability framework that ensures transparency and community participation.
- That in its approach it should establish mechanisms of coordination, integration and public-private and multi-inter-sectorial coordination.
- To integrate with more emphasis the most vulnerable populations: children, women, elderly, and people with different needs.
- To include crosscutting perspectives of Gender and Children, as fundamental pillars to consider the priorities for action in the new framework.
- That it should incorporate the scope for learning management (systematization of best practices, knowledge management occurred in the grassroots).
- To consider from the start and as part of the same framework, clear mechanisms and systematic dissemination to reach all groups according to their characteristics and contribute to strengthening the capacities of local communities.

Annex 5: East Africa Regional Meeting

Plenary Discussion on HFA 2

From an East Africa perspective key issues to be included in post-2015 include :

- Good governance - including of natural resources
- Drought – climate change
- Natural resource management / land use / land grabbing - particularly with pastoralist communities
- IDPs
- Conflict management (particularly resource-based conflict)
 - Inc. Peace building
 - Breakdown of traditional structures / chief / customs – reconciliation mechanisms
 - Influx of small arms - disarming
 - Extreme poverty
 - Increasing mobility / exposure to outside influences
 - Increasing state overlay on traditional customs
 - Less respect amongst youth / urban of traditional teaching
- Community awareness / citizenry empowerment - focus actions on strengthening **community resilience** as foundation for national resilience.
- Build social safety nets / protection based on local coping mechanisms / capacities
- Great emphasis on bottom-up approaches – particularly in areas of fragility and conflict, with non-existent / minimal government capacities

Annex 6: Online discussions

Week 1. Responses to discussion document: summary

Here's a summary of the discussion in week one:

Baquer felt Marcus's paper did a good job of covering most of the major issues, but that there is a need for evidence to support these points and recommendations. This is a good point and we are planning to draw together evidence from the VFL programmes and work in 2009, 2011 and 2013 to support the case made in this paper. We are hoping to announce a global workshop to be held in March 2013 to address this.

Edet made a specific point about targeting and registration, which if not properly done could lead to inclusion and exclusion errors during distribution. He suggested including this under Challenge 7.

Peter raised an interesting comparison with the MDGs as he remarks that in Nigeria these have been implemented much more thoroughly than the HFA, suggesting that there could be valuable learning about how this was achieved.

Sano agreed that the MDGS have achieved much more penetration and impact. He feels that the various developmental frameworks including the MDGs, SDGs and climate treaty, along with the HFA should be harmonised for greatest effect. He also feels that at local level CBRM (community based risk management) should be the harmonized version of the CBDRM (community based disaster risk assessment) - taking into account the range of risks resulting from natural, climate driven and other hazards.

Peter agreed with Sano that a reform of the UN frameworks and their harmonization could be very effective, and made a plea to keep this in mind as we carry on our discussions.

Jessica was supportive of the document and of its emphasis on building trust between State and Citizens. She had a specific concern about the role of women and their tendency to be marginalised. This is important as whilst women contribute much to community level resilience, their needs are often not addressed. She also commented that whilst resilience offers a useful understanding it is not the only understanding. Finally she wonders why the economic argument for DRR has not hit home. Are we not getting our message out?

Week 2. Strengths and weaknesses of the HFA: summary

common themes are emerging about the gap between policy and implementation of the HFA and about the need to respond to regular extensive disasters at the frontline taking into account all risk factors - social, politico economic and including violence and conflict as well as environmental risks.

The role of UNISDR and the scope of its mandate have also come under the microscope. I am currently in San Salvador where we have just completed a GNDR regional meeting. One of our tasks was to formulate recommendations for UNISDR's regional consultation on the topic of the post HFA, taking place next week. I don't want to steal the group's thunder by circulating them in advance of that meeting, but they certainly share a lot in common with the issues raised in this discussion.

Week 3: What are the key challenges that you think a successor framework has to address (ie what is the problem statement?): Summary

- * Many agreed that the HFA has been effective in setting an agenda and developing awareness, particularly at the international and national level.
- * They highlighted the gap between policy and implementation of the HFA
- * They mentioned the need to respond to regular extensive disasters at the frontline taking into account all risk factors - social, political, economic and including violence and conflict as well as environmental risks.
- * They felt it needed to engage people at community level to participate and to contribute valuable local knowledge
- * They saw a need for the framework and for UNISDR to engage more strongly at national and sub-national level: The participants in the discussion felt that comparing the HFA with the performance and the reach of the MDGs the HFA had made much less impact, and that for its impact to be strengthened the framework would need to be binding, measurable and the agency would need to be able to work at national and subnational level

Week 4: The shape of a successor framework to the HFA: Summary

There has been some discussion this week about the benefits and challenges of bringing development and humanitarian response together. Shakeb and others have championed this, and Edet offers a healthy reminder that we need to recognise the specialist skills which are applied. If we lose those then we'll be like sharks in the jungle¹.

Communication is also raised by Shakeb as a need. The use of local languages and a plainer style of writing which demystify the framework would make it more accessible.

As has been discussed in consideration of the current framework, clear strategies for implementation, access to resources and meaningful baselines and monitoring are

seen as essential. Philimon suggests there should be a specific Priority for Action concerning accountability and monitoring.

Peter reminds us of an important strand of all the discussions which is that the focus has to shift from environmental and climate driven disasters to recognising the range of risk factors which lead to vulnerability - including economic and social factors, violence and conflict.

Philimon also believes that - comparing HFA with the crunch model and the MDGs, its successor should integrate with other developmental frameworks and engage all actors, not just DRR people.

He also points out that preparedness and response will always be needed.

Finally I sense a little support for having a name for the new framework that means something!

Post script: Some comments added at the conclusion of the debate

Marcus underlined that a post-2015 HFA should reflect a broader interpretation of disaster risk, that includes threats and hazard of both natural and man-made origins. Writing from Monrovia he included conflict and violence as critical issues in some regions such as West Africa and the Horn of Africa. Baquer and Peter responded by supporting this point.

Ben Wisner reported that the suggestions made in this discussion reinforce wide thinking on the post 2015 landscape. However his concern is for implementation and accountability which he sees as great weaknesses in the current HFA. How will these be addressed in future?

Loy reflected on the expectation for international frameworks to drive change and suggested that they are limited in their scope and influence. Other layers of governance and other actors need to be mobilised and to participate to address complex challenges, and he agreed that conflict in particular is a complex risk which isn't necessarily in his view 'man made' and also interlocks with other drivers of risk.

Pradeep made detailed points regarding the situation in India, which cohere into a general point about the continuing gap between governmental policy and action and the engagement and participation of local actors.