

Options for increasing the effectiveness of development assistance for disaster risk reduction under the post 2015 Hyogo Framework for Action

REPORT

13 September 2013 – Geneva

Participants:

Representatives from the Governments of: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, EC (DEVCO), Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, UK.

Others: UNDP, World Bank/GFDRR, OECD, ODI, UNISDR.

SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Opening Remarks

Elissa Golberg, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada, welcomed participants, indicating that Canada was delighted to host an event for donors to take stock of progress in supporting the implementation of the HFA, and to collectively think about ways to enhance the effectiveness of international disaster risk reduction efforts. She noted that, for Canada, strengthening resilience to disasters remains a priority, both domestically and internationally. Looking forward to the successor framework to the HFA, she highlighted the importance of ensuring this is linked to other key global initiatives taking place in 2015 (MDGs/SDGs, the Red Cross Movement International Conference, and the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016) and that the framework is itself pragmatic, action-oriented, inclusive, and with clear roles and responsibilities.

1. First Session: DRR in the post 2015 Development Agenda

The session examined the role that donors have and could play in supporting DRR, and how “risk” might infuse the broader post 2015 development agenda. The panel discussion was moderated by Tom Mitchell, ODI.

Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction (SRSG) opened the discussion by reminding participants that the Rio+20 Outcome Document had stressed the importance of stronger interlinkages between DRR, climate change adaptation, and long term development planning. She argued that it was critical for DRR to figure prominently as a development, as well as a humanitarian, challenge in the post 2015 processes. She stressed that sustainable development would be impossible without full consideration of disaster risk.

Francis Ghesquiere, Head of GFDRR, informed participants about the growing stature of disaster risk management as one of the corporate priorities of the World Bank. He indicated the World Bank's commitment to mainstreaming DRM into development planning, which was evident from DRM featuring in the Bank's Corporate Scorecard, as well as from the rapidly growing portfolio of ex-ante risk management projects and expanding pool of DRM staff. He emphasized the importance of embedding DRM into post-2015 development framework.

Erik Solheim, Chair of the OECD DAC, reiterated that political leadership for DRR (the "rarest raw material in the world") at a global level was lacking, and that better use could be made of national leaders in countries such as China, Bangladesh or Mexico, to ensure that "risk-aware" policy-making is picked up in the post-2015 agenda. He called for DRR practitioners to "speak the language of politicians" and to simplify their terminology so that it was better understood by the general public. He argued that development assistance is best used as a catalyst for greater domestic investment (public and private) in DRR. He underscored the importance of "risk informed" private sector investment, and pointed to the important role of the insurance industry and construction sector. He urged participants to use the Development Assistant Committee (DAC) as a platform to drive the DRR agenda.

In the following discussion:

- **New Zealand** highlighted the positive catalytic role of donors in the Pacific in supporting capacity development and the engagement of the private sector
- **Korea** agreed with the need for greater political leadership
- **Japan** suggested that DRR should be part of all programme evaluation processes, and called upon all countries to send high-level delegations to the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai in March 2015 – at Ministerial or Head of State level if possible. He stressed that DRM is a 'matter of survival' for the business community.
- **Canada** argued that Sendai and the lead-up process provide an opportunity to tell positive stories about what we have achieved, and to use these to engage political decision-makers who require positive messaging that DRR investments yield tangible results.
- **Hungary** noted that the resilience agenda is gaining prominence, and offered to help facilitate better inclusion of DRR in the post- 2015 Development Agenda in its capacity as co-chair of the Open Working Group
- Participants requested support in the form of a **plain-english communication on DRR** to enable them to advocate effectively with their representatives on the SDG Open Working Group.

2. Second Session: How have donors programmed assistance for DRR under the HFA? (Moderator: Gillian Holmes, UNISDR)

Prashant, Team Leader of Partnerships and Strategy at GFDRR, and Rachel Scott, Senior Advisor, OECD, presented the findings from two research efforts, a publication to be launched by GFDRR and ODI on 20th September, entitled “Financing Disaster Risk Reduction: A 20 year story of international aid” and the results of a survey on donor spending conducted by OECD in preparation of this meeting¹. A business case for establishing a special marker for DRM in the DAC Creditor Reporting System² was made by GFDRR and UNISDR.

In response, Finland, Germany, EC, Australia, Sweden, Canada, the Netherlands endorsed the proposal from UNISDR and GFDRR to establish a **policy marker** in the OECD/DAC Creditor Reporting System to make donor contributions to DRR more visible. UNISDR/GFDRR agreed to convene a Technical Advisory Group of interested donors to support the development of a proposal for the DRM marker for submission to the DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics (WPSTAT) by end February 2014.

There was also discussion on the need to use existing DRR funding better – with more accurate targeting and prioritisation. DRR and risk concepts could usefully be mainstreamed into programme review and quality control processes. Donors also need to get better at measuring results, if they are to demonstrate the positive impact and value of DRR funding. Advocacy to increase domestic investments in DRR, and encourage appropriate policy responses, should also be a focus for donor efforts.

3. Third Session: What approaches have been most effective in ensuring effective DRR programming by donors since 2005? (Moderator: Rachel Scott, OECD DAC)

Shireen Sandhu, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Australia in Geneva, explained how AusAid had, since 2009, been integrating DRR and CCA across its humanitarian and development programmes, supported by focused DRR training for staff, including a mandatory eLearning course.

Anna Gebremedhin, Director, Humanitarian Assistance Unit, Finland, said that external advocacy and pressure from EU, UNISDR and NGOs had encouraged the Finnish Government

¹GFDRR presentation is available at https://www.gfdr.org/sites/gfdr.org/files/docs/GFDRR-Presentation_DRM-Financing_Sept.13.pdf and OECD presentation is available at: <http://prezi.com/iaxwhatwo-my/disaster-risk-reduction-donor-effort/>

² The Creditor Reporting System (CRS) is a database on official development assistance (ODA) and other lending to developing countries. The CRS aid activity database has become the internationally recognised source of data on the geographical and sectoral breakdown of aid and is widely used by governments, organisations and researchers active in the field of development. For Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Members, the CRS serves as a tool for monitoring specific policy issues, supplementing the information collected at the aggregate level in the annual DAC Statistics. All data collection and treatment is carried out by the DAC Secretariat.

to develop a DRR Policy in 2012, and that Finland had volunteered for a Peer Review of its National Platform in October 2013. Though the development of a DRR policy was relatively easy, she argued that implementation of this policy level had proved challenging.

Joshua Tabah, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Canada in Geneva, described how DRR is mainstreamed throughout the Canadian Government's development programming by virtue of two requirements: an environmental assessment that requires consideration of environmental impacts and a risk management approach that explicitly considers natural hazard risk. While risk management is at the heart of Canada's results-based-management system, systematic tracking of spend on DRR is only conducted on an ad hoc basis, and Canada continues to work internally on an overarching policy framework for DRR and resilience.

Kimio Takeya, Senior Advisor, JICA, Japan, stated that experience in Japan had shown that early warning saves life but did not protect effectively against economic losses. This had led the Japanese Government to place increasing focus on DRR particularly in its policy discussions with Ministries of Finance and Planning. A key challenge was to support DRM efforts at local level.

Many examples of good practices by donors were highlighted during the plenary discussion, but challenges were also evident in ensuring full integration of DRR into international and national development agendas. Participants concluded that a change in mindsets was crucial for success. At the same time, many argued that DRR interventions should be more tightly linked to work around climate change, environmental sustainability, and public-private partnerships.

4. Fourth Session: Options for the future

Moderated by Ambassador Golberg, break out groups discussed how donors could work together to ensure coherent international support for DRR under HFA2. The following proposals received support:

- SRSW Wahlström to **brief the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group** (H.E. Ambassadors. Csaba Korosi and Macharia Kamau) ahead of the session where DRR would be debated from 6-10 January 2014
- Development of a **Primer Paper** in plain english to inform briefings of representatives who would participate in the SDG Open Working Group in January
- Engagement of heavy-weight **political champions**/advocates, including through the Friends of DRR group
- Support for the ongoing work on **DRR indicators** for the post-2015 process
- Development of an **advocacy strategy** linking DRR with climate change for more visibility in the SDGs.

Donors hoped to see the following in the post-2015 Framework for DRR.

- Greater engagement (and commitments) by a **wide range of stakeholder groups**, including the private sector and increasing focus on domestic governance of DRR.
- **Targets and indicators** to guide implementation at national level– in a way that can be measured, with a flexible approach to the national adoption of specific targets.
- A robust **economic case** to champion DRR investments.
- Closer links with **climate change adaptation** programming.
- **Differentiation** of operating environments – DRR in fragile states, in urban contexts, at local level, during disaster recovery.
- A separate «pledging» conference to **clarify the role of donors** in implementing the HFA II in developing countries.
- Further thinking about the best way to **scale up spend** in support of HFAII, in a way that effectively helps catalyze domestic investments
- An **action plan** to implement HFA2 commitments.

5. Final remarks

SRSR Wahlström concluded that the meeting had resulted in a strong call for risk and resilience to feature strongly and visibly in the SDGs.

Given the broad consensus on the need for a DRM marker in the OECD/DAC CRS system, she requested that participants nominate a 'focal point' for the Technical Advisory Group which would be established by GFDRR and UNISDR to start work on a full proposal.

She reminded participants that the "HFA 2" would be built upon HFA1, and requested active engagement in the HFA2 consultations, including the two Preparatory Meetings scheduled tentatively for July and November 2015.

She agreed to brief the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group ahead of the meeting in January, and confirmed that a Primer Paper would be circulated to support participants when briefings their OWG representatives

Lastly, she proposed a a meeting of Permanent Representatives in Geneva in mid 2014, which the Permanent Representative of Canada offered to co-host with like-minded Member States.