

**Informal Report of**

**The First Informal and Formal Sessions of Open-ended  
Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Indicators and  
Terminology Related to Disaster Risk Reduction, held in  
Geneva on 28– 30 September 2015**

23 October 2015

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

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## I. Introduction

1. The present report provides an account of the key discussions and deliberations of the first session of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group (OIEWG) on Indicators and Terminology related to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) held in Room XIX of the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. The first session constituted of a formal session from 29-30 September 2015, preceded by an informal session on 28 September 2015.
2. The Working Group derives its mandate from General Assembly resolution 69/284 adopted on 3 June 2015 which decided “*to establish an open-ended intergovernmental expert working group comprising experts nominated by States and supported by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), with the involvement of relevant stakeholders, for the development of a set of possible indicators to measure global progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, coherent with the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Indicators.*”
3. A total of 85 countries nominated 163 experts for the Working Group. The experts emanated from a variety of national ministries and departments reflecting the cross-cutting nature of Disaster Risk Reduction including: emergency and disaster management and relief; civil defense/protection; ecology, environment and natural resources; national statistical institutes; energy; humanitarian affairs; foreign affairs and international/regional cooperation; interior/home affairs; land, infrastructure, transport and tourism; public health; disease control and prevention; economy and development; and universities. In addition, there were 58 registered participants from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the private sector, scientific, technical and academic institutions. Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) and UN system entities including the FAO, ILO, UNICEF, UN-DESA, UN University and IFRC, among others, also participated. The September meeting was the first of three formal sessions envisaged by the abovementioned resolution which has further mandated that the group complete its work by December 2016 and submit a report to the General Assembly for its consideration. The second and third session will be held in 2016.
4. The informal session of the Working Group included panel discussions and interactive dialogues on a common understanding of terminology for sharing and using information on disaster risk reduction and on monitoring the risk of disasters and on options for a future system of indicators.
5. The formal session of the Working Group elected Ambassador Wayne McCook, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations in Geneva as its Chair by acclamation on 29<sup>th</sup> September. It subsequently adopted its Agenda (A/AC.285/1) and Calendar and Programme of Work (A/AC.285/2) for all three sessions by consensus in line with Paragraph 5B of resolution 69/284.
6. The first meeting of the formal session focused on an exchange of views, including comments and suggestions on 87 DRR related terminology contained in the background paper entitled “*Proposed Updated Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction: A Technical Review*”. The review was undertaken by UNISDR in cooperation with its Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) in line with Paragraph 50 of the Sendai Framework which recommended (and the GA endorsed) that the OIEWG consider STAG’s recommendations in updating the 2009 UNISDR Terminology. An international team of 40 plus experts from various disciplines, joined STAG, which identified the most important terms to update from existing terminology as well as new terms appearing in the Sendai framework for which definitions had to be developed.
7. The second, third and fourth meeting of the formal session was largely focused on an exchange of views, including comments and suggestions on 31 proposed indicators for six of the seven global targets of the Sendai Framework contained in the background paper entitled “*Indicators to Monitor Global Targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030: A Technical*

*Review*". The review represents the culmination of work undertaken by UNISDR and its partners that began in May 2013 after the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the Global Platform for DRR called for an immediate start of work to be led by UNISDR to develop targets and indicators to monitor the reduction of risk and the implementation of the post-2015 framework for DRR. The technical review incorporates findings from the analysis of more than 120 "HFA Monitor national progress reports" and pilot applications of the indicator systems in 5 countries. The list of suggested indicators from technical perspective was examined in July 2015 through an expert meeting on indicators and takes into account the on-going process of indicator development for the SDGs.

## **II. Informal Session**

### **A. Session on Terminology**

#### **(i) Background and key questions**

8. The first meeting of the informal session focussed on a general discussion on the key issues to consider in the terminology updating process, keeping in context the background paper on terminology. Key questions raised focussed on: the types of new terminology the Sendai Framework required; whether all terms in the Framework required new definitions or whether established definitions could be used; and how it could be ensured that terminology was well grounded. How far to go in the development of new terminology needed to be carefully balanced, considering the reality that it typically took countries a long time to change policies and legislations to adopt new terms. It was stressed that cooperation within regions and among countries and communities would play a vital role in matching terms to realities on the ground.

#### **(ii) Synopsis of presentations**

9. The private sector panellist highlighted DRR-related initiatives including relevant terminology utilized by the insurance (catastrophe modelling) industry that are of common interest to governments: average annual loss and losses at return calculations; a shared need to calculate average disaster risk (essential for insurance industries to set aside enough capital to satisfy regulators and for governments to measure progress on the Sendai Framework); and the need for alternative techniques - beyond historical loss data alone - to adequately calculate the distribution of disaster risk given that a single extreme event can cripple the insurance industry. Private sector risk modellers can share lessons learnt in: quantifying risk through the use of risk models; assessing what data needs to be collected and how it should be processed; measuring disaster risk before the disaster; collecting and processing data from actual events to improve the understanding of risk; and performing a risk audit on national procedures.

10. The civil society panellist highlighted that a democratic risk governance approach should be centered on citizen driven planning and accountability processes that position at-risk social groups as essential constituents in designing, implementing and monitoring effective DRR plans and investments. The interest of the marginalized and disenfranchised peoples need to be better considered. "Dominant groups" need to be capacitated and re-trained to work effectively and in equal partnership with at-risk social groups. Changing these socio-political relations are essential to ensure that DRR programming/investment build communities and cultural practices that are inclusive, well-informed, and collaborative (and thereby resilient). This requires critically examining the compatibility and tension between core terms and how they may drive implementation and shedding short-hand references that marginalize or stigmatize core constituent groups.

#### **(iii) Synopsis of interventions**

11. Taking the floor were experts from Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Morocco, Netherlands, Paraguay and Philippines as well as the European Union, representatives of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the panelists present. Key discussions and recommendations focused on:

- (a) **Managing expectations** through a focus on terminology directly related to Sendai's seven global targets. The focus should be on defining terms specifically within the context of DRR. Given the cross-cutting nature of DRR encompassing an array of fields, the approach to terminology development should be inclusive, holistic, flexible and compatible with the SDGs. Definitions from other sources can be reviewed for terms noted in the Sendai Framework but undefined in the terminology paper (e.g. gender, disability). Instead of deconstructing existing terms, they can be adjusted to new realities. There is also a need to create synergies between international processes in developing terms/indicators for the target on international cooperation.
- (b) **Strengthening national capacity** as States will have to monitor and report on the implementation of the Sendai Framework. As a lot of developing countries have data deficits, harmonizing sources of data and data networking can facilitate their access to data.
- (c) **Role of National Statistical Offices (NSOs)** in data collection, processing and disaggregation is crucial. As there are different ministries with whom NSOs work and terminology is key to creating dialogue, clear terminology and coherent concepts are essential for good quality information and indicators on DRR. Careful consideration of data disaggregation in terminology development is also important (e.g. while terms on vulnerability typically include women and the disabled, aspects of poverty and inequality tend to be excluded).
- (d) **Role of insurance sector** in collecting, sharing and distributing DRR related data was emphasized, given the relevance of data collected by the insurance industry on economic loss to data on human loss collected by Governments. The insurance sector has clear limitations, possessing better data on insured losses in well-developed insurance markets compared to uninsured losses in countries with poorly developed insurance markets. Losses to the poor in the informal, subsistence economy is thus typically unseen or uncalculated and needs to be better accounted for. Catastrophe modelling used by the private sector can be used by countries through encouraging knowledge transfer between the insurance industry and government.
- (e) Acknowledging that a term can have both an operational and a conceptual component, the Working Group should focus on **defining terminology as a tool to operationalize indicators**.
- (f) **Proposed new/additional terms** include universal design, accessibility, disability, livelihood and environmental losses. Slow onset disasters like drought need to be better defined. **Terms requiring clarification** include relocated, evacuated and displaced and the distinction between disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management. **Terms with varying interpretation/definition across countries** that need to be considered carefully with a view to arriving at a common concept include deceased, directly affected, illness/diseases, hazard, armed conflict, value added and DRR plans.

## B. Session on Indicators

### (i) Background and key questions

12. The second meeting of the informal session had a general discussion on issues for consideration in indicator development (keeping in mind 16 issues<sup>1</sup> raised in the background paper on indicators) including: defining the scope of indicators (e.g. what goes into the category of man-made hazards); ensuring global coverage of standardized disaster loss/damage data collection (currently 85 countries collect such data); defining timeframes for recording losses (e.g. accounting for multi-year droughts that cross national boundaries); doing away with thresholds in data collection to ensure measurement of small scale disasters; normalizing data (despite imperfections in methodology) to dissociate outlier events; measuring progress on qualitative indicators (e.g. implementation of legislation); ensuring coherence between terminology and indicators (in order for terms to serve as tools to define indicators); balancing disaggregation with national data collection capacity; and institutionalizing the Sendai Framework's indicators into the work of National Statistical Offices (NSOs).

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<sup>1</sup> Scope, normalization, time dimension, terminology, disaggregation, affected people, direct economic losses, indirect economic losses, critical infrastructure and basic services, national disaster loss database, self-assessment, coherence with SDG and UNFCCC, coherence with other national data, baselines, evolution, roles and responsibilities.

## (ii) Synopsis of presentations

13. The panellist from the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission stressed that indicators developed should be focussed on what is to be measured. The objective should be to collect good data rather than develop perfect indicators. While indicators are a simplification of reality and can be optimized later, data collection cannot wait and is essential to create a bigger picture to understand risk. As future risk models will be based on data agreed to be recorded, it is important to factor in that the science behind risk modelling (natural, technological, biological), statistical processing (normalization, composite index) and data collection (sampling, remote sensing, big data) will evolve and progress in the next 15 years. Consequently ambitious data and indicators should be developed that will lead to better risk models in the future. To facilitate discussions and support prioritized actions, the 16 key issues can be separated into short-term solvable issues (scope, time, terms, criteria, baselines, databases) and issues for future revision (outliers, disaggregation, affected, direct and indirect losses) to allow for the incorporation of new techniques.

14. The panellist from the National Statistical Office (NSO) of the Philippines highlighted key lessons learned from MDG implementation/reporting including: decrease in data disaggregation and accuracy from national to provincial/city levels; need to prioritize capacity building support to both data producers who will be responsible for collecting data as well as data users to ensure that they know how to make best use of the indicators; need for targets to be clearly quantifiable and tailored to national realities; and the need to reflect indicators in development programmes at the national level. Existing data sets in NSOs are not designed to monitor either the Sendai Framework or the SDGs and thus need to be tailored to do so.

## (iii) Synopsis of interventions

15. Taking the floor were experts from Cuba, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, India, Japan, Mexico and Morocco as well as the European Union, CSO representatives and the panelists present. Key discussions and recommendations included:

- (a) **Nature** – The nature of indicators should be simple, easy to understand and to communicate and relevant to policies (similar to the SDG indicators). They should also be aligned to the SDGs, to the extent possible, to lessen the data collection burden on countries.
- (b) **National specificity** - As global indicators will not cover all policy priorities of each country, they can possibly be embedded in nationally defined targets and indicators to provide countries the space to define their public policy priorities. Indicators can also be refined over time to further alignment with national priorities. Consideration can be given to weighing indicators by importance to allow for prioritization by countries.
- (c) **Loss Data** - As national-level loss data can be used at all levels and provides indications on risk levels, countries stressed on the importance of collecting such data, and on arriving at an agreement on minimum loss data collection standards. Questions were raised on the appropriate loss data collection tools to use, given the variety in existence. The context of national limitations in loss data collection needs to be taken into consideration in determining how ambitious minimum established standards should be i.e. it cannot be assumed that data quality will be the same across all countries and databases. Target F may possibly include indicators on support to data collection, in order to assist countries to develop capacity to collect loss data.
- (d) **Baseline** - Progress on baseline development for Framework monitoring will vary depending on the time frame selected. For countries presently lacking disaster loss data, baselines will need to be reconstructed going back to 2005 (at least). The Working Group will need to determine the data collection *methodology* while each country will determine the data collection *tool*.
- (e) **Disaggregation** - The Sendai Framework and the SDGs can serve as a starting point to attain disaggregated sectoral data, with priority given to disability, gender, economic vulnerability and age (among others). While retrofitting disaggregated historic data may be desirable, countries will need to decide upon its feasibility, while interested stakeholders may need to assist in

developing appropriate guidelines. The additional time and resources required to attain disaggregated data must be taken into consideration.

- (f) **Measuring resilience** – While the outcome of the Sendai Framework is a reduction of disaster loss (measured by Targets A-D), its global goal is to build resilience. Strengthening resilience goes beyond loss reduction and is manifested through preparedness, inclusivity, connectivity and lessons learned (among others). The forward-looking nature of targets E and G provide the scope for the development of resilience related indicators. There also exists the possibility to borrow resilience related data from the SDGs to constitute a composite index.
- (g) **Additional indicators/clarifications** – An indicator may be needed to measure time lapse between early warning and response (useful in the case of drought). Given the widened scope of the Sendai Framework, the questions arises as to whether data is currently available on technological and biological hazards and, if so, where it can be attained.

### III. Formal Session

#### A. Disaster risk reduction terminology (Agenda Item 4)

##### (i) Summary of outcome

16. The Working Group strived to come to a common understanding on the key questions related to terminology and built on an existing document entitled “*Proposed Updated Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction: A Technical Review*”, facilitated by UNISDR in cooperation with its Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) between August 2014 and August 2015. It had a general exchange of views aimed at gaining familiarity with the text and in building a sense of ownership by commenting on the review. Members offered suggestions and recommendations orally and via email that are reflected in the working background text on terminology available on the webpage of the working group.<sup>2</sup> The text is based on (i) existing terminology, (ii) the proposed updated terminology from UNISDR’s technical review, and (iii) terms proposed by the Working Group.

17. Taking the floor were the representatives of Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Germany, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Paraguay, Philippines, Russian Federation, South Sudan, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Tonga, United Arab Emirates, Zimbabwe and the European Union. Representatives of civil society organizations also spoke.

##### (ii) Procedural principles

18. There was general consensus among the Working Group to proceed on the following basic principles: paragraph 50 of the Sendai Framework will be interpreted to mean that the Working Group will produce definitions for terms in relation to indicators for the seven targets first and then for the Framework more broadly; only the experts from Member States can introduce terms into the background working text; interventions should be of a scientific and technical nature and serve to operationalize the terms; challenges posed by the technical review will be identified and solutions proposed; experts will supply missing definitions where needed; a term’s utility will be its relevance to its corresponding indicator; the definition of terms should be practical, simple, clear, concise and easily understood; and any term that risks undermining the Sendai Framework should be avoided.

##### (iii) Recommendations for terminology development

19. The experts outlined a number of recommendations to further improve the terminology development process, with the key working principles and conceptual issues outlined below.

- (a) **Avoid terms that lead to misinterpretation in translation**, e.g. as the proposed term “killed” translates to homicide or murder in Spanish (i.e. an intentional conduct aimed at causing death, which strays from deaths caused by disasters), it is better to replace “killed” with “deceased”.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.preventionweb.net/drr-framework/open-ended-working-group>

- (b) **Remain within scope of Sendai Framework.** Broad terms like “hazard” should be defined within the scope of para 15 of Sendai while “hazardous event” should clarify that “man-made hazard” does not include armed conflicts, socio-political instability/tensions and intentional acts. Similarly, “human-induced phenomenon” defined as part of “hazardous events” is too broad as it can encompass acts beyond Sendai’s scope.
- (c) **Adapt to local/national contexts.** Terms should be flexible enough to be applied and used by countries with distinct levels of progress on DRR and countries with limited resource availability (SIDS, LDCs). They should be phrased in a manner to prepare communities to develop their resilience, be adaptable and relevant to local and national DRR plans and be linked to the expected role of national governments. Responsibilities under post-disaster risk assessments must meet individual countries’ ability and capacity.
- (d) **Complement existing national legislation.** As countries have their own laws, rules and regulations on implementing disaster risk management policies with existing definitions of terminology used, definitions adopted by the Working Group should be complimentary to those in use. This will minimize unnecessarily lengthy national legislative amendments and further coordinated action on terminology and indicators. Particular attention must be paid to “hazard”, “hazardous event”, “emergency” and “disaster” all closely tied to national legislation.
- (e) **Be coherent with related global agendas** including the SDGs, Agenda 21 (climate change) and the global humanitarian agenda to further strategic analysis and avoid duplication of efforts.
- (f) **Facilitate national mainstreaming of Sendai.** Adoption and mainstreaming to terms like Strategic Environmental Evaluation - a management tool - can stimulate the inclusion of environmental governance plans, policies and strategies in national public policy making and sustainable development planning.
- (g) **Clarify distinctions among terms** used in DRR [disaster/catastrophe; adaptability/resilience; DRR Plan (how it differs from DRR strategy); relocated/displaced/evacuated (e.g. evacuation implies a greater notion of urgency than relocation)] through scientific expertise and review of glossaries to identify active definitions.
- (h) **Further coherence among agreed terms.** While the definition of “Capacity” encompasses both infrastructural and physical means (‘the hardware’) as well as the institutions, societal coping abilities and operational arrangements (‘the software’), the definition of “Capacity development” and “Coping capacity” addresses only the “software” component. This hampers comparability of terms as well as their use in connection to each other.
- (i) **Addressing “orphan terms” (i.e. terms not linked to an indicator).** While the definition of “disaster” includes “environmental losses” (e.g. forest fires), such losses have not been included in the proposed indicators for the seven global targets and thus cannot be measured.
- (j) **Clarify qualifiers.** Use of qualifiers like “rapid” in the definition of “rehabilitation” or “timely” in the definition of “resilience” are beyond the mandate of the terminology and cause ambiguity as they are relative terms.
- (k) **Disaster risk reduction (DRR) versus disaster risk management (DRM).** There was a proposal to substitute DRR with DRM to reflect the paradigm shift and the comprehensiveness of the scope of work which aims to contribute not only to reduce existing risk but to prevent the creation of new risk and to strengthening resilience of sustainable development. However this proposal was contested by delegations who noted that DRM was not the reality in many countries and as such the two terms should be maintained as separate concepts.
- (l) **Recognizing distinct characteristics.** Characteristics of people with disabilities, children, women, elderly and other groups should be taken into account by defining inclusion or the concept or an inclusive approach to DRM in the terminology.
- (m) **Incorporate principles of inclusion and people-centered approach in existing definitions.** E.g. the definition of disaster risk governance should better reflect the inclusive and participative governance processes discussed extensively in the Framework.
- (n) **Maintain focus as a DRR technical document** e.g. proposals to include references to “gender based violence” would be better addressed in forums on conflict and international humanitarian law.
- (o) **Illustrations** were requested to better understand where the definitions of terms begin and end, the scope of each term and how the terms relate to each other.



## **B. Indicators to measure global progress in the implementation of the Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction 2015-2030 (Agenda Item 3)**

### **(i) Summary of outcome**

20. The Working Group proposed indicators to be included in a working background text, building its work on the existing document entitled “*Indicators to Monitor Global Targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030: A Technical Review*”. The review was produced by an expert group meeting of scientific and academic organizations, civil sector, private sector and United Nations agencies, organized by UNISDR from 27 to 29 July 2015.

21. Taking the floor were the representatives of Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bhutan, Bolivia, Burundi, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Germany, Greece, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Serbia, South Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, United States, Zambia, Zimbabwe, the European Union and the Observer State of Palestine. Representatives of civil society and the scientific community also spoke. Also taking the floor were representatives of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Labour Organization.

### **(ii) Procedural principles**

22. There was general consensus among the Working Group to proceed on the following basic principles: paragraph 50 of the Sendai Framework will be interpreted to mean that the Working Group will produce indicators in relation to the seven global targets outlined in the Framework and coherent to the SDG indicators; only the experts from Member States can introduce indicators into the background working text; interventions should be of a scientific and technical nature and serve to operationalize the targets; challenges posed by the technical review will be identified and solutions proposed; experts will supply missing indicators where needed; and any indicator that risks undermining the Sendai Framework should be avoided.

### **(iii) Questions of a general nature**

23. Speakers acknowledged the non-binding nature of the Sendai Framework, but also spoke of the importance of adopting a spirit of enabling universal compliance. To that end, it was suggested that indicators for the Sendai Framework be developed such that all States would have the means to demonstrate compliance should they choose. Speakers noted the possibility of some States requiring help to achieve the level of rigor needed to report against the future global indicators. Thus, should participating States lack the capacity for compliance, even if voluntary, the Working Group said it might be possible to address that issue in its discussion of target (f) on international cooperation.

24. At the same time, members highlighted the importance of creating an indicator system that was not overly demanding. It was suggested by some speakers that the indicators be limited to basic data, such as number of deaths or level of direct economic loss. In contrast, other speakers expressed openness towards indicators with a wide scope, but pointed to the need for adequate time and capacity building to establish competencies in areas where governments did not have experience, and where there were no baselines. It was noted that in some cases monitoring was underway by the private sector, but before such data could be used, some forethought was required of governments with no previous experience of exchanging data with the private sector.

25. Members of the Working Group supported the need to collect disaster loss data, which was historical, and at the same time expressed interest in collecting data that hinted at future trends, which was prospective. They noted that the purpose of tracking progress on the seven targets was to gain knowledge on the effectiveness of disaster risk reduction as a policy for achieving “the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical,

social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries.” As such, they voiced support for an indicator system that would capture the impact of preventive disaster risk reduction measures, particularly social impacts, in order to help reorient public policy when needed. Therefore, in deciding what data to collect, they spoke of the need to consider the Framework’s scope, goal, guiding principles and priorities of action, not just the wording of the targets. They also placed importance on the answers to such questions as: Who is best positioned to collect the data? Who will analyze the data? What will be done with the resulting analysis? Could the indicators capture both positive and negative data (for example, the use of voluntary relocation as a positive and proactive measure to mitigate risk versus forced and reactive relocation)?

26. Speakers brought up the role of terminology in helping determine the selection of indicators. For example, on target (d) concerning critical infrastructure, speakers noted that the proposals in the background document referred to infrastructure that may not exist in some countries and hence could not be deemed “critical” (for example, El Salvador and its lack of a railway system). Other speakers noted the interpretation of “critical” would vary depending on the social group to which one belonged, for example women versus men, urban versus rural populations, and so on. Similarly, the definition of “basic services” would be defined differently according to people living with chronic diseases versus healthy populations, and so on. As a proxy for what is “critical,” some speakers noted the usefulness of defining “critical” along the lines of what society deems to be of value. For example, Norway has identified four categories of things that are of high value to its people: national governance and civil society, safety of people, welfare of people, and culture and nature. Similarly, on target (g), on early warning systems, speakers stressed the importance of providing a proper definition to “multi-hazard early warning system.”

#### **(iv) Questions on methodology**

27. **Scope (para 15 issue):** The Working Group explored the scope of disasters covered by the Sendai Framework, i.e. “small-scale and large-scale, frequent and infrequent, sudden and slow-onset disasters caused by natural or man-made hazards, as well as related environmental, technological and biological hazards and risks.”. Several speakers emphasized the importance of small scale events. While it was suggested that man-made hazards include conflict-related issue, it was opinion that natural hazards should be given focus.

28. **Disaggregation:** The question of disaggregation emerged with regard to data relating to people in vulnerable situations, given the different combinations of vulnerability factors, exposure and types of hazards that can produce a situation of vulnerability. While noting that an overly comprehensive indicator system would be cumbersome, the Working Group recognized the value of agreeing on a sufficient level of disaggregation that still leaves the indicators easy to use and comparable across countries.

29. Some speakers suggested that the level of disaggregation should be left to States to decide at the national level. Different countries may wish to make policy decisions relevant to their particular circumstances, which would require data to be disaggregated in ways specific to their policy needs. If in some countries data was not disaggregated to the level required of the Sendai Framework, speakers raised the possibility of using estimation methods, bringing to mind the importance of developing minimum standards in data collection methodology.

30. **Composite index computation and the component:** In the case of some targets, particularly targets (a), (b), (c), (d) and (g) on mortality, affected persons, and economic loss, damage to critical infrastructure/disruption to basic services, and early warning systems, respectively, the Working Group debated the advantages and disadvantages of using a composite indicator comprising several components. Speakers said that where there was no standard method to synthesize the data, it would be better to collect the indicators separately. Where it was possible to produce a composite indicator, speakers expressed support for doing so because composites are a convenient way to compare data across countries. But members of the Working Group acknowledged the challenge of determining what the component parts would be. For example, in the case of target (a), on mortality, some

members of the Working Group spoke out against using a composite indicator that involved the component “missing persons” due to lack of agreement on its meaning. In the case of target (b), the Working Group was in agreement on the use of a composite indicator calculated on the basis of several components, and was invited by the Chair to suggest component indicators deemed critical to the target. Similarly, with target (c), on economic loss, what one country considers an economic “loss” differs from another according to a country’s priority, rendering it difficult to be exhaustive. On target (d), several speakers commented on the scope of critical infrastructure. On target (g), on early warning systems, it was suggested to add a component measuring the dissemination of information, but no wording was provided. Furthermore, the importance of establishing the correct unit of measurement was raised. The component parts currently in the working background text are varied: “countries,” “people” and “local governments,” while the composite indicator is currently “countries.”

**31. Direct versus indirect impact:** In relation to target (b), on affected people, some speakers questioned whether the universe of people would include individuals who, for example, can no longer use a road that has been damaged by an event whose epicenter is elsewhere? Or individuals who have lost a family member in a disaster event in a foreign country? Or individuals whose vacation destinations are affected by disaster and must cancel their holiday? Similarly, in connection with target (c), on economic loss, if floods in Serbia affected the production of peat coal, which in turn compromised energy production, would the GDP contraction attributable to those power cuts be considered an economic impact of the flood?

32. In some special cases, the Working Group considered it desirable to impose a high degree of specificity with regard to how the data should be collected, so that particular phenomena – for example, death – can be more accurately attributed to a specific hazardous event. For example:

- (a) A flood may cause a landslide that kills people immediately, which may also cause a fatal waterborne illness that can kill people later. To which event (flood, landslide or illness) is the death attributed?
- (b) A storm topples trees killing 14 people, and another 16 people are killed following tree removal activities in the recovery phase two to three years later. Are the deaths attributable to the same event?
- (c) Deaths counted by countries that record the deaths of citizens abroad are at risk of being double-counted: For example, first responders lose their lives in the relief and recovery period at a disaster taking place in a foreign country; individuals lose their lives in a disaster outside of their own country. How should these deaths be recorded?

#### **(v) Special cases**

**33. Special case of agricultural losses.** Some members of the Working Group were unclear whether “agricultural loss due to hazardous events” includes agricultural losses during a period of drought, which because of its slow-onset nature is not a discrete event. The word “event” in this indicator would have to be properly defined. It was also noted that national data on agriculture may be collected for purposes other than disaster risk reduction – for example, to measure trade flows, which is done by plotting discrete events, and not trends. Thus, it raises the question of liaising with the line ministry responsible for measuring such losses and exploring the possibility of retrofitting the data to meet disaster risk reduction needs. Furthermore, the scope of agriculture was suggested to be widened, for example, including fisheries.

**34. The special case of the “input target” – Target (e): Substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020.** Rather than treating the indicator for target (e) as a yes/no indicator, speakers asked whether it would be possible to have indicators to measure levels of progress in implementing national strategies. If so, there may be a need to define minimum standards of excellence for national and local disaster risk reduction. Several speakers commented on unit of local government relating with planning unit and taking variety of government forms across countries into consideration.

**(vi) Target (f)**

35. **The special case of target (f).** On Target (f), members of the Working Group noted that the secretariat had not provided a basis for discussion on ways to measure international cooperation. Upon invitation by the Chair, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Ms. Margareta Wahlström, briefed the Working Group on the subject, echoing statements made previously by Mr. Andrew Maskrey, Chief, UNISDR Risk Knowledge Section, that there is not yet a firm understanding on how international cooperation on disaster risk reduction could be systematized. She said that during the Hyogo Framework for Action decade, a number of donor countries had committed to set aside higher percentages of development aid for disaster risk reduction and to establish an equitable balance in spending on humanitarian relief and risk-informed development investment. But uncertainty about how disaster risk reduction funding would be programmed into development work seemed to hamper efforts. Ms. Wahlström expressed hope that through dialogue between donor and recipient countries, a greater understanding would develop. To guide that dialogue, she also pointed to around 22 paragraphs in the Sendai Framework addressing international cooperation, among them:

- (a) Paragraph 47(d): on incorporating disaster risk reduction measures into multilateral and bilateral assistance programs within and across all sectors, such as poverty reduction, sustainable development, natural resource management, the environment, urban development and adaptation to climate change.
- (b) Paragraph 48 (a): on the coordination of disaster risk reduction strategies among the United Nations international and regional financial institutions and agencies through the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience, complemented by the United Nations Development Assistance Framework to support collaboration at country level.
- (c) Paragraph 48 (d): on the call to international financial institutions to consider the priorities of the Sendai Framework for providing financial support and loans for integrated disaster risk reduction to developing countries.

36. In addition, Ms. Wahlström said the Sendai Framework puts forward suggestions on the development of platforms for technology cooperation, and the use of regional and global platforms as instruments for cooperation. A policy marker for disaster risk reduction has also been developed to help interested countries track disaster risk reduction spending in national budgets.

37. Following that presentation, the Working Group developed a set of working indicators for target (f) based on proposals by the delegations of Egypt, Bangladesh, Ecuador and Brazil. Before agreeing to produce the working text that is currently in the working background text, the Working Group discussed a number of proposals that included:

- (a) Number of international cooperation initiatives.
- (b) Number of platforms for cooperation.
- (c) Level of activities of international development and finance assistance organizations.
- (d) Level of other types of related assistance, such as post-disaster assistance.
- (e) Levels of specific and easy-to-measure activities include climate forecasting systems, space based technologies and information on water basins.
- (f) Level of exchange of information.
- (g) Beneficiaries reporting quantity of assistance received.
- (h) For those slated to receive assistance, have they received funds?
- (i) For those receiving assistance, is there assistance for capacity building?
- (j) For those receiving assistance, is there a system of administration for proper reporting and targeting of funds?

38. In that discussion, some speakers stressed the need for the indicators to measure the effectiveness of international cooperation in bringing about the implementation of the Sendai Framework, particularly its priority actions, as well as the impact on local level actors who they viewed as instrumental in helping States meet the global targets. It was also noted that the indicators should measure the quality of cooperation, not only the number of donors. Disaggregated data was also

discussed, particularly by type of recipient (e.g. local level actors) and type of assistance received (e.g. technical support, training, and so on).

#### **(vii) Clarification**

39. For targets (a) and (b), which require the lowering of averages per 100,000, the Working Group noted that use of the formula “per 100,000” is meant to enable the calculation of percentage change per capita and is not to be taken literally to mean that communities with a population of less than 100,000 are exempt for the task.

### **IV. Way Forward**

40. A first reading of the background papers on terminology and indicators for the global targets was completed during the first session. It was emphasized that, in moving forward, the Working Group members will make the final determination as regards the eventual terminology and indicators to be adopted and presented to the General Assembly for its endorsement.

41. On the next steps, in addition to the present report on the proceedings of the first session, it was agreed that all suggestions, comments and proposed additions and deletions from members provided before the close of the first session will be reflected in brackets in the two background papers on terminology and on indicators, which are henceforth be referred to as the “working background texts”.

42. The two working background texts were finalized and posted on the website of the Working Group<sup>3</sup> on PreventionWeb on 2 October 2015, with the deadline for members to convey factual corrections by 9 October 2015.

43. On 23 October 2015, the secretariat posted the revised version of the working background texts on PreventionWeb and the Working Group members are expected to undertake the necessary consultations with experts and scientific advisors in their respective capitals and email comments to [drr.working.group@un.org](mailto:drr.working.group@un.org) by 30 November 2015.<sup>4</sup>

44. Based on the comments received by 30 November on the two revised working background texts on terminology and indicators, the secretariat will subsequently create a compilation of suggestions and proposals. These compilations will be posted on the webpage of the Working Group in December 2015 and will contribute to informing discussions during the second session of the Working Group.

45. The Secretariat will also prepare a concept note on methodology for economic valuations which will be posted on the Working Group webpage by 1 November 2015. Working Group members will have the opportunity to have an exchange of views on the note until 30 November 2015. The secretariat will subsequently prepare a compilation report of the e-discussions.

46. The exact date for the Second Session will be conveyed to the Working Group members following consultations between the Chair and UNISDR and members including through the ISDR support group and the DRR focal points of the regional groups or the UNOG coordinators for the regional groups, where no focal points are designated

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.preventionweb.net/drr-framework/open-ended-working-group/>

<sup>4</sup> The experts from Member States will have the opportunity to indicate whether their comments should be posted in the public domain of PreventionWeb in addition to the private domain where all comments will be uploaded and which only Members States experts can access via a password protected webpage. Comments from other stakeholders as UN and inter-governmental organizations will also be accepted and reflected in both the public and private domain on PreventionWeb.