

GLOBAL CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP

Scaling up DRR in Humanitarian/Development Contexts

27 February 2020, Geneva

INTRODUCTION

In many crisis settings, emergency responses have been seen to be in a holding pattern, responding year-on-year to the same needs without promoting lasting positive change in people's lives. Short-term results do not address underlying vulnerabilities and are insufficient to lay the foundation for sustainable development. In the past years, new ways of working have been established that aim to strengthen the linkage between humanitarian and development aid, prioritizing the needs and vulnerabilities of those who have been left furthest behind by development progress. This humanitarian/development 'nexus' calls for humanitarian action to consistently reinforce development gains and for development assistance to be directed at addressing the underlying vulnerabilities and root causes of the crisis.

Many countries which experience crises for multiple years often face a combination of conflict, forced displacement as well as disasters associated with natural hazards. Climate change, combined with other factors such as rapid urbanization and inequality, is increasing the frequency and intensity of disasters, posing a long-term threat to socio-economic development, especially in the poorest and most fragile countries. Cyclical shocks systematically exacerbate humanitarian needs in protracted crises, placing further pressure on the humanitarian system to cover basic needs and provide essential services to millions of crises-affected populations. Other high-risk contexts face multiple disaster events on a regular basis resulting in high levels of displacement, growing economic losses, and increasing uncertainty of future impacts in the face of climate change.

Increasing disaster risks, mostly associated with climate change, are particularly challenging to mitigate in humanitarian contexts. Countries facing prolonged or recurrent humanitarian crises are often unable to put in place adequate disaster risk reduction measures due to limited capacities, insufficient governance mechanisms and lack of prioritization. Notably, 58% of global disaster-related deaths occurred in the top 30 fragile states over the period 2004–2014.

Historically, disaster risk reduction (DRR) has tended to fall in the gap between humanitarian and development assistance, with some elements fitting more naturally into one sphere or another. DRR straddles both development and humanitarian action. Although DRR programmes are often administered under humanitarian budget lines and through disaster management authorities, there is an irrefutable need for disaster prevention to be firmly anchored in development programming, with a long-term vision of reducing risk. Yet, DRR and climate adaptation are not prioritized as part of humanitarian actions. A recent study (GHO 2020, UNOCHA) looking at humanitarian response in five highly disaster-vulnerable countries between 2016 and 2018 found that only 3 per cent of projects in these countries had a disaster risk reduction and climate change component.

Due to longer planning time frames, operationalization of the humanitarian/development₁

nexus provides a key opportunity to mobilize joint action to not only end humanitarian needs, but also to reduce disaster risks. Strengthening DRR outcomes, especially in fragile and protracted crisis settings, but also in countries facing recurrent and increasing disaster risks is an important contribution to the global effort to leave no-one behind.

PROJECT RATIONALE AND PROGRESS TO DATE

The efforts to better align humanitarian and development action are having an impact on the broader set of tools, services, leadership and coordination fora for humanitarian and development stakeholders and processes¹. For example, more joined-up analysis and longer planning cycles provide opportunities to further embed risk considerations into the contexts of analysis, planning, and monitoring of joint humanitarian and development action.

For these reasons, UNDRR has undertaken to examine how disaster risk reduction is currently being embedded and how it can be scaled-up in humanitarian/development contexts. The first phase of the project concentrated on the Asia Pacific region, and entailed a literature review, key informant interviews and a regional workshop in Bangkok in December 2020. The second phase is now extended to humanitarian contexts in Africa and the Middle East.

The final output will be a set of recommendations to help DRR practitioners, RC/HC, UNCT/HCTs, cluster coordinators, National Disaster Management Agencies (NDMAs) and individual humanitarian and development agencies/organizations identify opportunities in humanitarian contexts, including within humanitarian programme cycle (HPC) to more effectively integrate DRR, whether in protracted or recurrent crisis contexts. A draft of these recommendations will be shared as preparatory material and will be discussed in detail during the workshop.

MEETING OBJECTIVES

1. Consider the extent to which DRR is currently integrated in humanitarian/development contexts, including the identification of barriers and enablers;
2. Identify areas for scale-up of DRR including through greater engagement between DRR and humanitarian-development practitioners;
3. Review the draft recommendations providing substantive inputs and examples;
4. Propose next steps and follow-up actions.

¹ Stakeholders and processes include United Nations Country Teams/Humanitarian Country Teams (UNCT/HCT); Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator, RC/HC) UN Sustainable Cooperation Frameworks / Humanitarian Response Plans

Draft Agenda

Thursday, 27 February 2020	
08:30 – 09:00	Registration
09:00 – 09:15	Introductory Remarks: Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction
09:15 - 09:45	Setting the Stage
09:45 – 10:30	Panel Discussion - Regional Perspectives on Aligning Humanitarian and Development Action and DRR
10:30 – 10:45	<i>Coffee Break</i>
10:45 - 12:30	Country Case Studies
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 15:00	Group Work - Reflections on the Recommendations for Integrating Disaster Reduction Into Humanitarian Response (Including Humanitarian/Development Contexts)
15:00 – 15:15	<i>Coffee Break</i>
15:15 – 16:15	Group discussion on Way Forward
16:15 – 16:30	Closing Remarks