

**Towards a Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction**

**Comments from the Multi-Stakeholder Consultations in Samoa**

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INTRODUCTION

Countries party to the adoption of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 – 2015 at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005 have been invited to provide inputs into the design of a ‘framework’ to succeed the HFA when it expires in 2015.

The consultations in Samoa were conducted in August 2012 as a ‘complementary activity’to the HFA Monitor Country Progress Review (2011-2013) supported by ISDR Suva. The question of a post-2015 framework was posed to participants attending a multi-stakeholder HFA Review workshop in Apia (23-24 August 2012). Forty five members of the multi-agency Disaster Advisory Committee representing a cross-mix of society attended. The question was posed after having first worked through the HFA Monitor Template.

**Current Levels of Awareness & Understanding**

Levels of awareness and understanding of the RFA and HFA were limited. Only about 1/3 of participants had heard of the frameworks and only those working for the NDMO had more detailed knowledge of them.

As participants at the multi-stakeholder workshop were members of Samoa’s multi-agency Disaster Advisory Committee (DAC) there was a greater awareness and understanding of disaster risk management and climate change adaptation and mitigation at the conceptual level.

Participants felt that Samos was very active in disaster risk management and climate change as evidenced by the many programmes and projects being implemented (or in the pipeline).

**Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities**

*Achievements include:*

* Strengthening of disaster risk management legislation (Disaster and Emergency Management Act (2007))
* Development of a National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) in 2006 and revised on 2011 that includes significant guidance on DRR as well as institutional arrangements
* Development of a 5-year National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management (DRM NAP) in 2011
* Upgrade of the Disaster Management Office to a fully fledged ‘division’ in 2012
* Upgrade of tsunami early warning system, planning of evacuation routes and signage.
* Development of Coastal Infrastructure Management Plans (CIM Plans) for all coastal districts in Samoa. The CIM plans contain local assessments of flooding and coastal erosion, and provide maps of Coastal Erosion Hazard Zones and Coastal Flooding Hazard Zones.
* Climate Change achievements include baseline research and reporting to the UNFCCC as well as the development of a National Adaptation Programme of Action in 2004. A number of projects have already taken place, are current, or are in the pipeline to address implementation of the NAPA.
* Joint programming of disaster risk management and climate change at the community level

*Factors contributing to these achievements include:*

* Growing political appreciation for the importance of disaster risk reduction and climate change.
* Increased engagement of regional and international development organisations on issues of disaster risk management and climate change.
* Multi-sector nature of disaster risk management and climate change ensured that awareness of these issues was raised in a broad range of national agencies, mostly through their sectoral channels of regional and international cooperation.
* Importance attributed to disaster risk management and climate change as a development issue at the regional and international level.

*Major challenges include:*

* Disaster Management Office is under-resourced in terms of core operating budget and equipment.
* Integrity of the Development Consent Process and EIAs – too many questionable developments still taking place.
* No dedicated government budget for community-level DRM and CC activities
* Weaknesses in governance capacity
* Lack of support for ‘soft’ coastal protection measures as opposed to sea walls/
* Political expediency in the distribution and design of infrastructure development

*Factors contributing to these challenges include:*

* In a highly competitive environment, government planners do not see DRM and CC as a core government development function, preferring to rely on funding from development partners.
* Climate change is viewed as having its origins in developed countries with the feeling being that developed countries should pay for the negative impacts on small island countries.
* DRM and CC are exploited for political gain – politicians are quick to respond after a disaster, often with unrealistic promises of assistance.

*Integrated regional strategy for DRM and Climate Change*

Samoan stakeholders were not in favour of combining DRM and Climate Change in a successor arrangement to the RFA and HFA. They are comfortable with the current institutional and policy division between the two fields and believe that integration can be meaningfully achieved through joint programming as is happening in Samoa. Samoa has a DRM National Action Plan (NAP) and a Climate Change National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) and is not supportive of current regional trends to develop ‘joint’ DRM and CCA NAPs, or JNAPs.

*Significant elements for DRM and Climate Change that should be addressed in the integrated regional strategy in 2015*

Samoa is in favour of a greater focus on implementation of community level activities, and a lesser focus on policy and planning (mainstreaming), as they felt that much progress had been made in the area of DRM governance.

**Disaster/Climate and Development**

*Understanding of the relationship between disasters and development*

Participants had a good understanding of the relationship between disasters and development as well as their vulnerability as a small island state. Awareness of this vulnerability increased significantly after the Samoan Tsunami of 2009 in which 143 people lost their lives. However, Samoa’s engagement with disaster risk reduction and mitigation began in 2001 with the first Infrastructure Asset Management Programme (IAMP) which later resulted in the drafting of Coastal Infrastructure Management Plans for all districts. Samoa has a dedicated Land Use Management Authority and EIA and Development Consent Processes have been in place since the passing of the Planning and Urban Management Act in 2004.

*Development sectors that have been most affected by disaster*

Key disasters that have taken place in Samoa include the impacts of Cyclone Ofa and Cyclone Val in 1990 and 1991 respectively, as well as the Tsunami of 2009. 8 people lost their lives during Cyclone Ofa, 195000 people were affected and the cost to the economy was 200 million USD. 13 people lost their lives during Cyclone Val, 88000 people were affected and the cost was 278 million USD. 143 people lost their lives during the 2009 Tsunami, 5000 were affected and the recovery cost 22.5 million USD.

Infrastructure (roads, water systems, drainage, buildings), agriculture and tourism were the sectors most affected by the above disasters. Over 70% of the population reside along the coast, and it is these coastal locations, and the accompanying infrastructure, that are most at risk during cyclones and tsunamis. Tourism infrastructure is also primarily located along the Samoan coastline. Much of this infrastructure takes the form of family owned ‘beach fales’, which are rudimentary accommodation structures close to the water. Agricultural production is at risk to the gale-force winds and flooding that accompanies cyclones. Agricultural production closer to the coast has in the past been negatively impacted by seawater intrusion.

*Successes in mainstreaming disaster and climate risk into development planning and sectors, providing examples?*

While progress has been made in the mainstreaming of disaster and climate risk into development planning and sectors, the exact level of mainstreaming is currently unknown. There is a climate change project which is currently conducting a thorough analysis of the level of DRM and CC mainstreaming. Sectors active in this regard are the social development sector, forestry, water, infrastructure development and environment.

**Accountability and Governance**

*Responsibility for implementation of the RFA and PIFACC at national level.*

The Disaster Management Office and the Climate Change Office of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is responsible for implementation of the RFA and PIFACC. These responsibilities were allocated to them by national government and they are also the respective focal points for SPC/SOPAC and SPREP.

*Responsibility for integrating disaster and climate related risks into development planning and budgetary processes at national, sub national and local/community level*

While the DMO and the CCO are responsible for coordination, the legal responsibilities for disaster risk reduction are shared between a number of agencies. A list of these organisations and their respective statutory and non-statutory obligations are contained in the National Disaster Management Plan. Key agencies include: Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure and Ministry of Women, Social and Community Development.

*National governance structure of disaster risk management and climate change*

Governance of disaster risk management comprises a National Disaster Council, a Disaster Advisory Committee and sub-committees, and a National Disaster Management Office. Climate change is coordinated by a Climate Change Country Team and is managed by a Climate Change Office. Both the Disaster Management Office and the Climate Change Office are in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

*Transparency, accountability and decentralization of DRM and Climate Change as part of development policy and strategy*

Transparency is promoted through an inclusive approach that includes a 50 member strong Disaster Advisory Committee reporting to a National Disaster Council. Accountability is built into existing governance reporting systems as required by the Public Service Commission and Treasury. Decentralisation is promoted through project implementation in project villages. Local governance structures are required by DRM legislation to develop DRM village plans. DRM and CC governance supports the implementation of the DRM National Action Plan and the National Adaptation Programme of Action.

*What needs to be done to incorporate accountability in DRM and Climate Change in development planning and practices at national and local level*

The requirement to integrate DRM and Climate Change thinking into development planning and reporting could be reinforced through regular formal reminders to each ministry and agency at appropriate times during the annual planning cycle. Accountability could also be strengthened through improved community monitoring and participation.

**Linking DRM and Climate Change**

*Progress in linking DRM and Climate Change*

In Samoa, disaster risk management and climate change adaptation is linked at the implementation level through joint programming. Samoa does not have any ‘joint’ policy or action plan, nor does it have strong institutional linkages between disaster risk management and climate change. The government sentiment is that it is preferable to keep disaster risk management and climate change as independent entities given their history of separate development. The DRM and CC authorities are more focused on ensuring that joint programming takes place during implementation.

*Integrating disaster/climate risk assessment into land use and planning?*

Samoa has a relatively sophisticated system of screening development proposals by relevant agencies for negative social and environmental outcomes. However there is a need to strengthen the provisions for disaster/climate risk assessment.

The primary means of regulating development in Samoa is through land use planning under the Planning and Urban Management Act (2004) which promotes the sustainable use, development and management of natural and physical resources. One of the 19 criteria of the ‘development consent process’ provides for consideration of natural hazards such as flooding, earthquake, cyclone, subsidence, slip, drainage and erosion. Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations were introduced in 2007. A Code of Environmental Practice was introduced in 2006 to define methods and/or procedures to be followed by consultants, designers and contractors for the avoidance or mitigation of adverse environmental effects that may arise out of infrastructure development projects or maintenance work.

*Integrating disaster/climate risk into urban planning and development*

Disaster and climate risk relating to human settlements is mitigated by a combination of building codes, drainage plans and maintenance, river bank protection and channel deepening, spatial planning, and Standards for roads, road reserves, drains, bridges and seawalls falling under the Land Transport Authority Act 2007 and the Ministry of Works Act 2002.

The Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA) is the agency responsible for urban planning, including the planning of new settlement areas.

The Coastal Infrastructure Management Strategy (CIM Strategy) is another important piece in the statutory architecture governing the planning of human settlements that takes disaster risk into account. The CIM Strategy strives to promote better coastal infrastructure management at a national, district and local level, on issues relating to coastal hazards, protection of the environment and promotion of sustainable coastal development all in the context of improving resilience to natural hazards. CIM Plans have been developed for all of Samoa’s coastal districts. The CIM Plans lay out a series of solutions for a range of issues, including: road and drainage networks, power supply and distribution, water supply, and emergency plans.

CONCLUSION

The above reflects comments received from Samoa relating to the ‘Guiding Questions for 'Roadmap' National Consultations’ to inform the development of a post 2015 HFA arrangement.

ANNEX 1: SAMOA MULTI-STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

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