

**Advisory Group on the Post-2015 Framework
for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Global Platform**

**Summary Report
11-12 May 2012, Geneva**

Key Messages

1. The risk of disasters is on the rise. We need to continue to promote overall understanding of risk and vulnerability and find solutions to both short and long term trends.
2. Evidence-based knowledge about the need for and benefits of disaster risk reduction is both poor and underutilized. We need to encourage and find mechanisms that apply knowledge and scientific evidence in policy and decision-making.
3. Reducing the risks of drought remains problematic; increasing our knowledge through research is vital to future gains.
4. More can be done to educate people about disaster risks and the need for disaster risk reduction; transferring knowledge and sharing information are particularly needed at the community level.
5. A stronger case for investing in disaster risk reduction needs to be made, utilizing more research around the economics of disasters and the approach of the private sector.
6. Much has been achieved around reducing the risks of disasters through the current Hyogo Framework of Action. More work is required around the trans-boundary impacts of disasters, measuring success and learning the lessons of implementation, especially at national level. Recording of disaster losses at the national level will help build baseline information.
7. We need to rebrand disaster risk reduction in a more positive manner, with emphasis on gains rather than ‘issues’, which should be supported with good case studies and examples of incentives that work.
8. Reinforce that a multi-stakeholder approach is required to reduce the risks of disasters. We need to recognize and work with the drivers and actors that produce change. This will require more local engagement and consultations with partners and stakeholders.
9. Take advantage of international processes and agreements to help shape and complement the post-HFA consultations. Continue to build the links between climate change adaptation, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction to demonstrate progress and relevance to other processes. Abstain from building new systems to implement the post-2015 DRR framework, but instead valorize and use existing systems and networks.
10. Consider the use of principles in the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, building on the existing elements in the current Hyogo Framework of Action and what stakeholders can provide.

DAY 1 - FRIDAY 11 MAY

1. Introduction

The Special Representative for the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) on Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström stressed that there is now more political momentum on disaster risk reduction and resilience. The challenge remains to have risk reduction embedded into development planning and strategies. At the country level disaster risk reduction and building resilience needs to be better shaped and packaged to increase visibility and action. We need to propose concrete solutions to gaps identified in the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) Mid-Term Review in 2011. A good, sound consultation process on the post-HFA will be critical in order to reach new groups and practitioners. The deliberations and suggestions of the Advisory Group will be highly valued in this regard and integrated into the secretariat planning and approach to the consultations.

2. Building a Common Understanding

(i) Risk Trends and HFA Progress

Introduction

UNISDR presented the risk trends from the *Global Assessment Report 2011* (see attached presentation). Professor Virginia Murray summarized the findings of *Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation* (SREX).

Summary of discussion

- The scientific evidence and projections (such as occurrence of flooding and drought) need to be more accessible and understood by decision-makers. The SREX has been designed in this fashion. The report explicitly considers the socio-economic implications of risk. Further work on SREX is likely in specific regions and as series of further guides (for example in health).
- With the risk modeling evidence from the GAR and with the SREX, we now need to work on changing behavior and perceptions, and influencing actions around risk. The IPCC recommended a report on how people change behavior in response to risk.
- The GAR and SREX have important messages that can enhance the post-HFA consultations. An important point to note is that climate is not solely driving increased risk; it is more the exposure and vulnerability of populations. In future this increased exposure and vulnerability will be coupled with changing climate.
- Drought is a hazard not well researched. Scientific evidence and examples on how fragile states can build resilience to drought and water shortage are lacking.
- At the moment, scientific evidence and knowledge is not driving action. The science of climate and risk should be leading to action on the ground at the community level. The role of the Advisory Group is to provide the narrative from the scientific evidence to the stakeholders in disaster risk reduction. Also some measures are needed to fill the gap between the knowledge derived from science and the use of this knowledge in decision-making.
- Standards for access and right to information: Some governments look at education systems; the right to such information is becoming public policy in some countries such as Japan. In Australia, all government information is available to the public unless it can be demonstrated that it should not be disclosed for specific reasons, including national security, privacy, or commercial rights.

(ii) Global and Regional Developments in Disaster Risk Reduction

Introduction

UNISDR presented the history of the global, regional and national work on disaster risk reduction focusing on the coordination systems (platforms) and the main advocacy and outreach tools (*Resilient Cities* campaign and DRR champions). UNISDR also outlined some of the key challenges identified in the Mid-Term Review of the Hyogo Framework of Action like quality of national platforms, reaching out to communities, recording of data losses, and coherency between global and regional platforms.

Summary of discussion

- The post-HFA should focus on what is required to reduce risk and how to achieve it. The case for why has essentially been made.
- Advisory Group members underlined the importance of national recording and accounting for disaster losses, without which a baseline will not be available to project future trends. A national database will also help make the case for savings and investment in disaster risk reduction.
- Be patient. A good movement is emerging from the *Resilient Cities* campaign. The next stage could be to scale up to a national level. The rural sector should not be left behind.
- The regional level has some good agreements and coherency around disaster risk reduction.
- Many national platforms have not been designed well. Need to include the planning institutions and financing ministries in addition to traditional emergency management. We need to go to them and connect with their meetings and consultations, and not assume that they will not come to us. Targeting local level (community, authorities, practitioners, women and youth groups) remains the key in terms of implementation.
- Some success stories such as building codes (India), social protection schemes and health systems, education programmes, investment incentives (Japan) would help.
- We should consider mobilizing around the economic case and social movements. These are the drivers for change. Less focus on the formal global, regional, national up-down relationship. Social mobilizing reaches people on the ground.
- Local to local learning is a way to exchange views. We need to tell the story, which is a communication challenge. Share more information and success stories. Local knowledge and action need to be developed and led from the local level.
- Need standards and guidelines for measuring impacts, assessing risks and evaluating savings from DRR investments.

3. Delving into the Substance

(i) Governance

Introduction

Mr. Saber Chowdhury outlined the important governance or institutional arrangements for successful disaster risk reduction. At the national level a combination of good policy and legislation were key. Linking climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction was important. National governments needed to focus on how to deliver with Mr. Chowdhury outlining the success in Bangladesh. Many of the national institutions dealing with disaster risk reduction were still response focused. The mindset

needs to change from response to preparedness. Consideration must be given to transboundary risks in the future. More initiatives and cooperation required for transboundary issues.

Summary of discussion

- Regional transboundary work should be initiated, that could be a model. We can look at best practices such as in Europe in terms of measuring data, reporting and effective partnerships. A multi-hazard approach is part of recognizing impact on other countries.
- Climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction policy, institutions and programmes need to be more integrated at national and local level. The climate change agenda is politically charged, whereas disaster risk reduction is less so.
- Civil society organizations can focus on disaster risk reduction in the context of governance and capacity. National platforms should take into account local community platforms.
- Multi-stakeholder collaboration could be fostered with stakeholder guidelines. Indeed, INGOs still get funds only from humanitarian funding sources. Explicit recognition of the role INGOs can play as honest broker can change this.
- There is a need for a clear, common understanding and much more positive example of what is working in disaster risk reduction. Implementation is mostly common sense activities. Many are undertaking measures without consciously realizing it is disaster risk reduction.

(ii) Investments

Introduction

Dr. Satoru Nishikawa highlighted that disaster risk reduction is not expenditure, but an investment for sustainable development. The challenge is how to demonstrate the returns of the investment in disaster risk reduction. He pointed out that the devastating impact of the 1959 typhoon was a turning point in Japan for investing in disaster prevention measures and risk reduction. Since then, Japan has kept investing in preventive measures and risk reduction after each major disaster, including the earthquake in 1995 and 2011. He used the investment in the Meteorological Office in Japan as an example to explain that investment in disaster risk reduction should be linked to specific subjects and issues. He introduced an interesting initiative by a Japanese local bank to encourage local enterprises to invest in preventive measures for BCP.

Summary of discussion

- Investments in disaster risk reduction have direct returns with multiplier effects, generating growth and creating employment. Put a positive face on investment opportunities.
- The private sector plays a crucial role in our understanding of investing in reducing disaster risk. There is a need to track and draw attention to private sector financing of disaster risk reduction.
- The economics of disaster risk reduction needs more substantive work. The evidence base needs much more development, with clear evidence to substantiate the case for return on investment. The launch of GFDRR following WCDR was a big step forward. However, the World Bank and regional development banks need to be further involved. The IMF is starting to realize the capacity building opportunities.
- Governments need to integrate the private sector's role and the models of business continuity plans into development planning, especially on where to invest. The role of the government in regulating and providing incentives for investment reducing the risk of disasters is critical.

(iii) Measuring Success

Introduction

Dr. Marco Ferrari presented the various measures of success considered by the Mid Term Review of the Hyogo Framework. In fact we have made progress, including the measuring, especially with regard to the preparedness for disaster response. Measuring impact of DRR is, however, widely missing in the long lasting development of resilience (HFA Priority 4) as DRR has in general not yet found its entry into the development planning of countries. Dr. Ferrari suggested that the most important parts to clarify, measure and focus on in post HFA include elements and issues abandoned during the pre-2005 drafting or neglected in the post-2005 implementation process, like: trans-boundary cooperation, the economics of disasters and disaster risk reduction including accounting, and access to information for assessments. There were also important links to other international processes (climate change, Rio+20 and post MDGs) where measures like targets and goals could be considered. There were several options to measure success in terms of value, standards and guidelines. We need to clarify which ones serve our purpose. The key is to assess how the perception of risk leads to resilience.

Summary of discussion

- The implementation of the Hyogo Framework is still progressing but at the same time risks are increasing. We need to clarify what should be measured and which interlinked elements of information would allow a successful measuring. Then we need to prioritize and put in place systems of indicators that measure how much a given risk is reduced and resilience is improved.
- Given that risks have actually been increasing, we need to be circumspect about the trends and processes, recognizing for instance that measurement and ownership of risk are necessary first steps in a much longer term process of reducing risk. Putting in place policies that will bring about change are important measures of success at this point in time.
- Measuring and accountability will be important for future generations.
- In 2015, there may be a host of new international agreements. Disaster risk reduction and resilience can perhaps be mainstreamed into the texts of new agreements.
- Some further work is required on timeframes, with targets around a goal for reducing losses from disasters.
- Stimulate accountability measures for governments for what could happen in case of disaster.
- For the post-2015 process one should abstain from the re-writing of a new comprehensive DRR document and focus on measurable implementation of the existing measures by concentrating on the formerly abandoned and neglected elements of HFA-1. Equally, one should abstain from building new systems to implement DRR, but valorize and use existing systems and networks.

DAY 2 – SATURDAY 12 MAY

1. Facilitating the post-HFA Consultations

(i) Lessons from international processes

Introduction

Mr. Eduardo Valencia-Ospina explained that the topic on “*Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters*” was included in the agenda at the Fifty-ninth session of the *International Law Commission* in 2007. Mr. Valencia-Ospina, as Special Rapporteur, explained Draft Article 12 is still under consideration by the *Commission*, dealing with the “*right to offer assistance*” to the affected state. The

International Law Commission does not cover non-state actors. The current *Hyogo Framework* may be too broad in its coverage to create incentives by duty. A post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction should consider a set of principles or guidelines addressed to states, regional entities and communities to increase accountability and ownership. This is the road that *International Federation of State Parties* has chosen by adopting the “*Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance*”.

Summary of discussion

- The UN General Assembly will endorse the outcome of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction. It implies that preparation needs to take place in advance of 2015 through the Secretary-General’s Report and using New York delegations embarked on the Rio +20 process. In addition, the Draft Article 11 of the *International Law Commission* could be tested at community level with possible linkages with the *Hyogo Framework*.
- The *Hyogo Framework* is an instrument for a movement. Some aspects need to be scaled up in consideration of a post-2015 framework such as leadership, transboundary cooperation, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Important that there is ownership from the movement i.e. the stakeholders.
- The post-2015 framework needs to be comprehensive in terms of the sequence of actions, selecting the areas that will help most to move others. One way would be to identify basic principles; otherwise we will continue debating questions of priorities. The current work of the International Law Commission is focused on disaster response and will not necessarily be able to capture prevention.

(ii) Contribution of the Advisory Group to the Post-HFA Process

Advisory Group members indicated they plan to contribute the following:

- Utilise key reports like the *High-level Panel on Global Sustainability* entitled: “*Resilient People, Resilient Planet: A Future Worth Choosing*”, and link to poverty alleviation, health, water and agriculture.
- Help develop and design main messages for use of the Advisory Group and beyond.
- Demonstrate how science can be used effectively for decision-making; identify best-practice case studies. Including the creation of guidelines, using evidence from the Global Assessment Report, to help facilitate this process.
- Promote more research around drought and how science can help reduce drought-related poverty.
- The *Communities Practitioners Platform for Resilience* will contribute to *Resilient Cities*, Regional Platforms, and women’s day-to-day involvement at grassroots level. The post-HFA process will be useful for the *Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction* to align to the timing of consultations and use the language of resilience to reach more people. A set of principles and a list of networks and partners to reach will be done as a contribution to this process.
- Outreach to new actors like financial institutions and professional associations. Connect more and utilize the UNISDR Regional Offices.
- Find more examples, cases (for example business continuity plans, pandemic flu) and public private partnerships to promote the case for investment in disaster risk reduction.
- Inform and engage with the review of national platforms.
- Develop proposals for measuring success of the existing Hyogo Framework of Action. Start to develop the components (for example a plan of action, a set of principles and baseline data) for the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

2. Next Steps

The UNISDR secretariat will follow-up on the proposed actions and include into work plan of the post-HFA consultations. Advisory Group members can begin to work on their proposed contribution to the process and report back at the next meeting. The SRSG informed the Advisory Group that a protected workspace is at their disposal to share documents and access meeting background materials. The public post-HFA website hosted by *Preventionweb* will be regularly maintained to feature key developments.

The SRSG proposed that the next teleconference in July 2012 to focus on the outcomes of the Rio +20 Summit. A further meeting of the Advisory Group is scheduled for later in 2012 (October or November tbc) and another before the Global Platform in May 2013.