

## THE POST HYOGO FRAMEWORK: WHAT'S NEXT FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION?

Disaster risk is increasing fast and is outpacing Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) efforts. Weather-related hazards are responsible for a large proportion of disaster losses and are on the increase as climate change takes hold. More people and assets are being exposed to disasters through migration and development. The analysis and response to crises often focuses on major events, but the HFA must also work for poor and marginalized women and men and for them, it is the relentless attrition of smaller recurring shocks and stresses that damages livelihoods, strips assets and drives them further into poverty.

The next three years offer an outstanding opportunity to provide a crucial step change in disaster risk reduction through the development of new international instruments. The Post-Hyogo Framework, the successor to the MDGs and a new climate agreement are all expected in 2015. Thus there is an unparalleled opportunity to go beyond the incremental progress seen to date in order to reduce risk for vulnerable and marginalised people all over the world. Another occasion like this may not occur for 15 years or more.

### Has the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) delivered?

The HFA has encouraged the development and implementation of a more systematic and pre-emptive approach to disaster risk management. But it is less clear whether the HFA has created systemic change at local level, particularly for the most vulnerable. However, we should be careful of judging the HFA too harshly; the goals are ambitious, the HFA is only seven years old and change is often not linear in complex systems. Still, the Framework has some limits:

- **The main weakness of the HFA and DRR in general is that it has not been 'owned' by the development sector.** This is a well-accepted fact and has been identified in a myriad of reports, meetings and consultations.
- **The lack of targets and accountability is another shortcoming.** Whilst there is evidence that the loss of lives is being reduced, there is no way to clearly quantify whether other losses have been reduced because no baselines were measured in 2005, and no systems were set up to measure disaster losses. And according to Views from the Frontline, we are likely to see a substantial increase in disaster losses by 2015 at the current level of activity and trends.
- **A lack of impact on the local level:** The HFA has stimulated much activity on strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at the national level, but there remains clear blue water between national level policies and strategies, and local level risk reduction activities.
- **A lack of focus on extensive risk and the most vulnerable:** Actions around the HFA have tended to focus on intensive risk, but it is extensive risk that affects many more poor and marginalised people, with devastating effects. As these disasters are generally not measured, they are invisible. The HFA has also insufficiently addressed the most vulnerable and marginalised, particularly women, who continue to bear a disproportionate burden of disaster risk.

Oxfam proposes an HFA2 which would build on the HFA's modest achievements, but make it fit for purpose by encapsulating developments since 2005, and isolating and addressing its weaknesses:

### Oxfam's core recommendations for HFA2:

**Core Principle:** The HFA2 should enshrine **equity and accountability** as the primary drivers of DRR to provide an unambiguous direction for the negotiation of the agreement and its subsequent implementation at local, national, regional and international levels.

**A new measurable target based on outcome:** the targets should aim to reduce human cost, financial cost and the impact on the most vulnerable. Such a target would capture extensive as well as intensive risk and be disaggregated for local level as well as national.

#### New commitments for states to:

- Adopt, within a certain timeframe, and consistently implement a **national loss database** which is compliant with HFA standards. Whilst not underestimating the challenge that this brings, the data that such databases collect are a prerequisite for high quality DRR planning and accountability.
- Complete **nationwide gender-differentiated, participatory risk assessments at the local level** within a certain timeframe, say two years. These assessments should capture both extensive as well as intensive risk, and clearly identify the most vulnerable communities. These will then form the bedrock of DRR work in the future, informing the planning of public investment decisions and providing baselines for monitoring.
- **Support DRR at the local level** through the provision of necessary budget, mandate, staffing, training and technical support.
- Seek and facilitate the **genuine participation and leadership of local communities** in relevant policy, planning and implementation processes at local level, with representation at the National Platform. This should include a specific requirement to support the participation and leadership of women and those marginalized by geography, language, or social or political exclusion.
- **Integrate DRR across sectoral development plans at national, district and local levels** – such as Agriculture and Food Security, Education, Health, Urban Planning and the Built Environment, Water and Sanitation, etc.

**Strengthen accountability:** Provide support for the binding commitments and add **new indicators to the HFA monitor**, including reporting on national spending and availability of funds at the local level.

**Increase funding:** Endorse **commitments made at the Busan Aid Effectiveness Forum to increase DRR spend**, create a mechanism which acts as a broker or **clearing house** to match needs to potential donors, and supporting **private-public partnerships**.

# The HFA2 must be driven by equity and accountability - with clear new targets and commitments from all states in order to reduce risks for the most vulnerable.

## Equity and the right to protection have to be at the heart of the HFA2

Hazards affect all countries, but disasters target the vulnerable. The HFA is a universal instrument, applying to all countries, but this should not suggest that all countries are equally affected by disasters. The HFA must work for the most at risk and DRR, which addresses the underlying causes of risk, must be targeted at the most vulnerable to start to undermine inequality. Women in particular can be disproportionately affected by disasters, precisely because of pre-existing inequalities.

There is a strong basis in international law for a rights based approach to disaster management, preparedness and response. A focus on rights and responsibilities provides a clear focus for work on DRR and underscores the need for equity and accountability to be at the heart of the post 2015 HFA. Whilst these principles are not necessarily new to the HFA, they were not explicit or clearly articulated in the documents coming out of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe in 2005.

## A stronger focus on community based resilience

The principle of equity underscores the necessity for the HFA2 to reduce risk for the most vulnerable people. Experience shows that DRR activities planned and implemented at the local level tend to be more effective. However, funding for local level activities is often lacking. To address this, the HFA2 must enshrine a clear focus on the local, municipality and district levels, not just the national level. National vision needs to be turned into local reality, by translating national strategies into local level implementation strategies and plans of work. Crucially, this must be done in conjunction with those at risk.

## A stronger focus on extensive risk

Both the study of disaster risk as well as the practice of DRR has focused on patterns of intensive risk and latterly mega-disasters. Whilst the cost of the damage – to houses, fields, and livelihoods – of extensive disasters may be low in global terms,

## Building an enabling national environment

The HFA correctly identified that the state has the primary responsibility for sustainable development and for reducing disaster risk, including for the protection of people on its territory. Communities must be able to influence and guarantee rights and access to key resources, knowledge and information. Effective and participatory local institutions are particularly important in this context.

Governments also need to develop a holistic approach to building resilience against shocks, stresses and uncertainty, thus considering disaster risk alongside risks from conflict, climate change, and economic volatility. This would mitigate against taking a narrow silo'd approach to DRR, and instead reinforce the centrality of considering all aspects of the HFA together, building across the development-humanitarian spectrum.

## Climate change

We are already starting to see the effects of climate change, with direct impacts on people's vulnerability to disasters. In particular, there will be devastating consequences for agricultural production, resulting in a downward spiral of worsening food insecurity and deepening poverty.

Numerous reports, including the HFA mid-term review and the SREX identify a clear gap between national efforts towards adaptation to climate change and for disaster risk reduction. Governments tend to manage them in silos, despite their strong interdependencies, reinforced by the fact that these two sectors generally have different institutional and administrative homes and different funding channels, leading to an inefficient use of resources. There must be real efforts to integrate DRR and CCA at the national, district and local levels.

While the state has the primary responsibility for sustainable development and for reducing disaster risk under the HFA, equity under the climate regime implies that polluters have a responsibility towards those countries which have the least responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions but are on the frontline of climate change. Ad-hoc solutions such as humanitarian pledges will not be enough and much more investment is needed in mitigation ,adaptation and reducing the impact of loss and damage.

it is crippling to people who have few reserves. While extensive risk has been gradually receiving more attention from the international community, it is still largely unaccounted for, mainly because individual events are not associated with spectacular manifestations of mortality and economic loss. There is progress at recording disaster loss at national level, but this is patchy at best. Thus much of this extensive risk is invisible. This does not just represent a failure of data capture and analysis but also leads to insufficient political attention. In the end, risk is being shouldered by the poor and marginalised, who have the least resources to cope with it. And because such disasters may be quite localised, there is little if any outside support, from government or international community. People are left to cope with this loss on their own. Shocks like these are one of the key reasons that people struggling out of poverty are pushed back again.

### **A stronger focus on the most vulnerable and excluded**

The right to protection and relief from disasters applies to all citizens – men, women, boys and girls - equally. Vulnerability to disasters is not random - people are vulnerable because they are marginalised and politically unimportant - whether that's because they are women, disabled, the elderly, of a certain caste or ethnic group, living in a certain area or with a particular livelihood (e.g. pastoralism). Whilst it is recognised that no government is able to implement all the programmes it would like to, and choices have to be made, very often the most vulnerable and marginalised people are not the first priority for effective DRR work or early response to deteriorating situations which later become disasters. This results in the burden of disasters not being shared equally. The HFA (in para. 13c) referred to this as “Cultural diversity, age, and vulnerable groups should be taken into account when planning for disaster risk reduction, as appropriate” but this is not strong enough. These issues should not ‘be taken into account’ but should be at the core of the analysis and action.

### **A stronger focus on gender equity**

Risks and vulnerability have a fundamental gender dimension. Women are disproportionately affected by disasters, because of pre-existing gender and other forms of inequality and discrimination. At the same time, women and girls are also powerful agents for development, resilience and change and their role, experience and knowledge are critical in disaster response, risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Whilst gender is identified as a cross cutting issue in the HFA, it received dangerously little prominence in the core HFA documents and was identified by the Mid Term Review as an area where progress was lagging. This was underscored by the 2011 Global Assessment Report which referred to this as ‘global gender blindness’ and showed that only 26 per cent of countries reported significant existing commitment to gender as a driver for progress on DRR. Women’s organizations in particular represent untapped potential for implementation of the HFA in terms of ideas, capacity and experience.

### **Indicators and targets**

The current system of monitoring HFA progress is not adequate. The HFA does have indicators, which are entirely based on process (e.g. the existence of a functioning National Platform) rather than outcome (e.g. a reduction in vulnerability, risk or losses). At the same time, not all countries complete the reporting and significantly, a country’s performance is not widely publicised or promoted. Targets need to be a major new addition to the HFA2 as they are essential for credibility, confidence, accountability, learning, buy-in and creating a common understanding. Targets enable governments to be held to account by their people, and should lead to greater transparency and a full provision of information. They would also allow countries to ask for assistance within an agreed framework. A prerequisite for any target is a public national loss database which captures certain standard information, which can then be aggregated. Currently there are around 60 of these national databases, with the number increasing all the time. Considerable work is required in building up national loss databases where they do not exist and standardising the data collected.

### **DRR in the Post-2015 MDGs**

The HFA2 cannot be considered in isolation from the development of the post-2015 MDGs as this process offers a key way of addressing the lack of mainstreaming DRR within other sectors.

Oxfam proposes a standalone target on risk, with a central focus on tackling and radically reducing disaster risk, particularly for the most vulnerable. At the same time, risk management should be embedded into other goals (e.g. health, water) by recognising the impact of disasters, climate change and conflict on them, and seek to avoid their impacts.

Targets should be outcome based, capture extensive as well as intensive risk, capture the impacts on the people most at risk and be able to disaggregate for district as well as national level. They need to be simple but capture the broad impacts of disaster. Mortality, financial losses and vulnerability/risk should be three key components.

### **Accountability and reporting**

To go alongside new outcome-based targets, an improved reporting and monitoring mechanism is required for the existing process-based HFA indicators. The current HFA monitor is undertaken by self-assessment which is neither objective nor verified/triangulated. Whilst the Hyogo Framework is not a legally-binding document, it is a commitment of governments and therefore there is a requirement for robust accountability as well as ensuring a sufficiently high degree of consistency between states. Current reporting should be improved – including updating and strengthening of the indicators in the HFA monitor. Further, verification is important and each country should undergo formal verification every, say five years. The new Peer Review initiative is an interesting model and should be expanded.

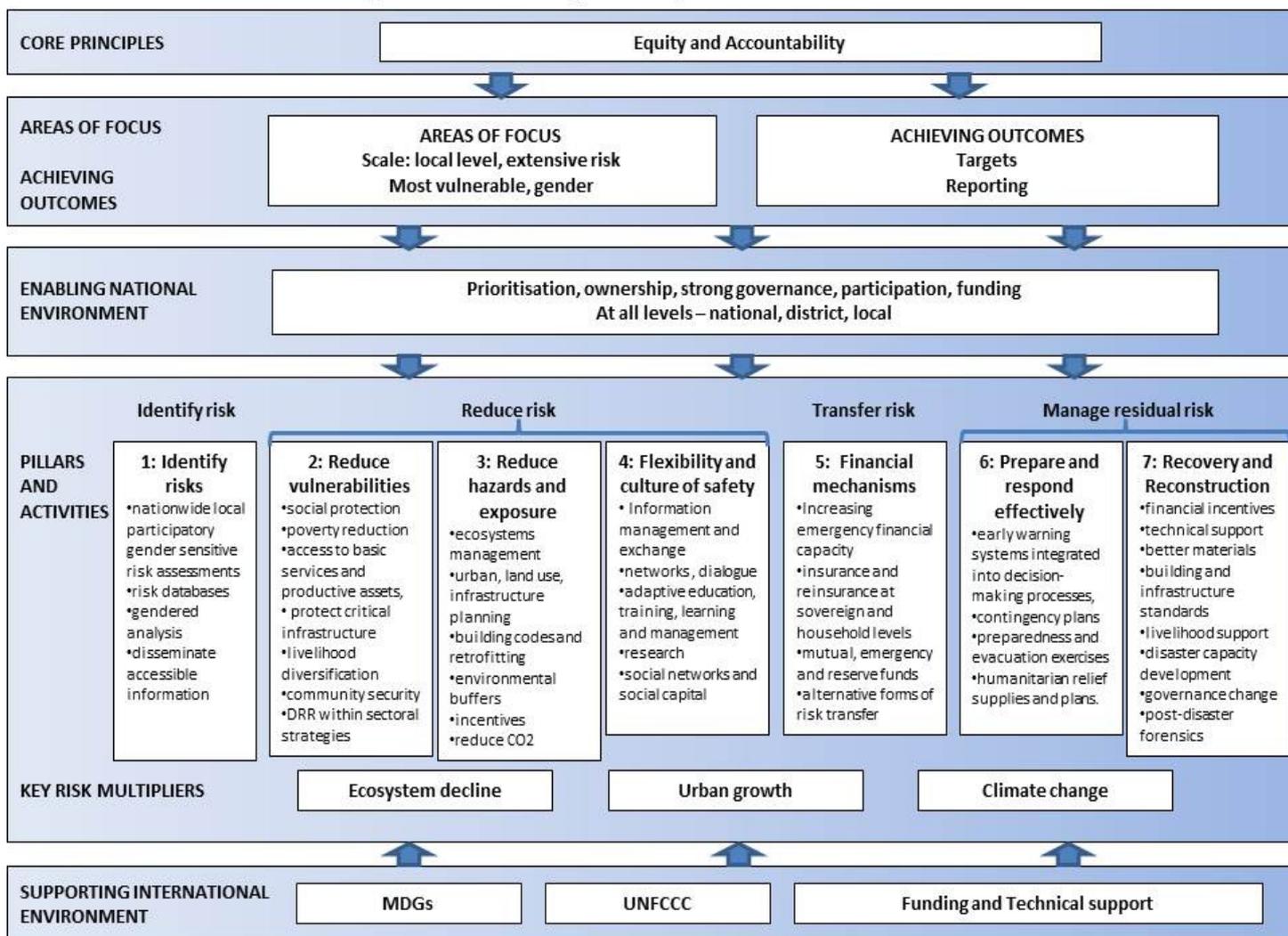
### **Increasing funding and technical support for implementation**

DRR has been proven to be cost effective, and the costs of disasters are rising all the time but DRR is not prioritised. Together, the major donors spent one per cent of total aid on DRR, but of this, 75 per cent went to four countries (Pakistan, India, Indonesia and Bangladesh) meaning that most countries received very little international support. And whilst funding for DRR has been increasing, research<sup>1</sup> on 24 OECD DAC donors shows that on an individual basis, only 3 donors have spent more than one per cent of development aid on DRR, and only two donors have reached the commitment of 10 per cent of humanitarian funding spent on DRR. Globally, there is still insufficient investment in DRR.

<sup>1</sup> Global Humanitarian Assistance. Aid investments in disaster risk reduction - rhetoric to action. Dan Sparks, October 2012.

Most international agreements have some form of funding mechanism to support developing countries as they work to fulfil their commitments. Whilst the HFA clearly references the provision of funding, much more could be done in terms of the provision of financial and technical support. In addition, greater coordination between humanitarian, climate change adaptation and development financing streams is required to improve the coherence, effectiveness and potential to bridge or link interventions.

### Oxfam Proposal: Summary of the post 2015 HFA framework



#### The road to 2015

Business as usual is not an option in a world of rapidly increasing exposure and vulnerabilities and increasing hazards. The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR) in May 2013 needs to start building consensus around a new vision for DRR that will put equity, vulnerability and accountability at the centre of the negotiations. Ultimately, The HFA2 will need to provide the necessary policies and incentives to significantly scale up community based resilience.

As a start, space has to be provided for affected communities and local actors to fully participate in the HFA2 negotiations, at the next GPDRR and beyond, on the road to the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Japan in 2015.

The GPDRR also needs to ensure that the necessary preparatory work will be delivered in the next two years if we are to have a fit for purpose HFA2. In particular, serious research and consensus building is needed on potential indicators and targets. Considerable work is also required in building up national loss databases where they do not exist and standardising information as such databases are a prerequisite for high quality DRR planning and accountability.

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