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Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction: A Proposal for Monitoring Progress[1]

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Abstract – The Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDDR) will be held in Sendai City, Japan in March 2015, at which countries will adopt the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction (hearafter informally called HFA2). UNISDR - in collaboration with leading experts in related fields - is developing a proposal for new system of DRM indicators, which will contribute to discussions on HFA2 and WCDRR. This initiative follows the fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in May 2013 in which 3,500 participants from 172 countries called for an immediate start of work to be led by the UNISDR to develop targets and indicators to monitor the reduction of risk and the implementation of HFA2. The successor framework will address the challenges posed by increasing disaster risk.

The development of effective monitoring system is crucial for building a successful post 2015 framework. The indicator system not only informs the need for continued monitoring on the key remaining issues of the HFA implementation, including the priority area of action 4 (reducing underlying risk factors), it will fundamentally shapes the way international community understands and interprets the key challenges of disaster risk management agendas over the next 20-30 years. Also, the national level monitoring framework will likely inform local and community level DRM interventions, influencing the way we operationalize concepts such as disaster risk, vulnerability, resilience and its linkages with climate change and development goals. As the WCDRR coincides with other important milestones of development and climate change agendas including the Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-Kyoto framework for climate change mitigation and adaptation, finding a holistic yet focused and manageable set of indicators–or what some refer to as the Holy Grail— has been a key focus of discussion surrounding the development of new monitoring system.

Keywords – *HFA2, WCDRR, Indicators, Monitoring*

1. Introduction & Context

The Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDDR) will be held in Sendai City, Japan in March 2015, at which countries will adopt the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction (hearafter informally called HFA2). UNISDR - in collaboration with leading experts in related fields - is developing a proposal for new system of DRM indicators, which will contribute to discussions on HFA2 and WCDRR. This initiative follows the fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in May 2013 in which 3,500 participants from 172 countries called for an immediate start of work to be led by the UNISDR to develop targets and indicators to monitor the reduction of risk and the implementation of HFA2. The successor framework will address the challenges posed by increasing disaster risk.

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[1] This article is a summary of the above mentioned conference with a special focus on proposed elements for consideration in the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

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2. Proposal of new Monitoring System

2.1. Challenges in current HFA Monitor

In preceeding the development of new structure of monitoring system, the UNISDR implemented through analysis of the limitations of the HFA Monitor as a tool for monitoring progress in disaster risk reduction and identified areas for enhancement and improvement, for example:

- As self-assessment tool, the HFA Monitor generates results which are explicitly subjective. While this expresses a governments own vision of progress, this means that the results of the HFA Monitor cannot be used to benchmark or compare countries. Countries have very different risk profiles and are at different stages of development. As such, some with very low levels of disaster risk report significant progress in achieving the HFA, while some very high risk countries report only minor progress.
- The HFA itself is largely structured around a paradigm of reducing and managing existing risks, configured through past development. As such the HFA Monitor has provided only limited information on whether development policies or practices are generating new disaster risks or whether countries have policy instruments to strengthen resilience, particularly of low-income households, small businesses and groups and sectors with high risks.
- The 22 HFA core indicators are input rather than output or outcome related. They indicate whether a country has adopted a new building code but not whether the code has led to an improvement in building quality or whether the number buildings damaged in disasters is going down. As such, the HFA Monitor cannot measure whether the strategic objective of the HFA, namely the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries is really being achieved or not.
- The HFA was not explicitly linked to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. As such, it has not been possible to identify whether progress in implementing the HFA has contributed to the MDGs or to climate change adaptation or vice versa.

2.2. Proposal for new monitoring system for post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

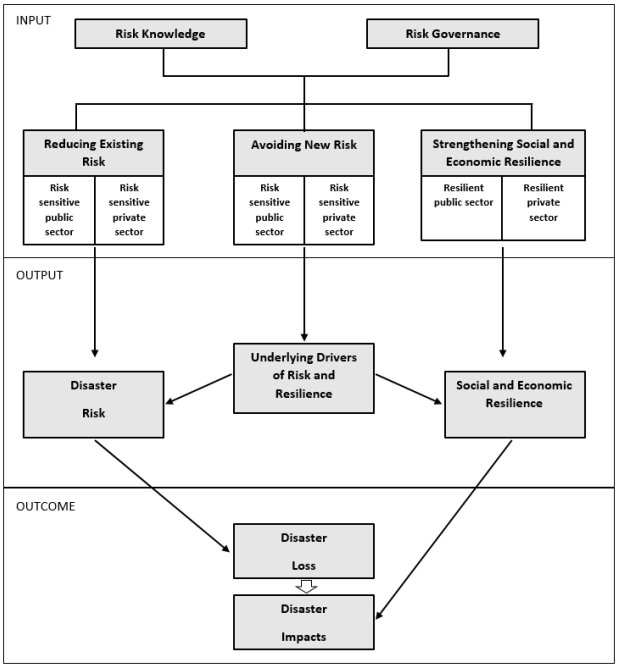

Figure 1: Tentative Proposed Elements of the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction Indicators. Source: UNISDR (2013)

Figure 1 illustrates the proposed architecture of the proposed monitoring framework. In contrast to the HFA Monitor, it is proposed that progress is monitored not only at the level of Inputs but also at the level of Outputs and Outcomes. This will enable governments to systematically assess, not only what policies and mechanisms they have in place to manage their disaster risks but whether these are effective in producing desired outputs in terms of reduced risk and strengthened resilience and outcomes in terms of reduced disaster loss and impacts.

The proposed monitoring framework is designed not only to assist governments to measure progress, in the context of a Post 2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, but as a tool to support the definition of national plans, priorities and targets. It is designed to be used by countries in all income and geographic regions, with different risk profiles and at different stages in addressing their disaster risks. It is also designed to maximize the use of existing indicators from publically accessible global databases and which are common to other reporting frameworks (for example on sustainable development and climate change).

Table 1: Some Issues Discussed on the Proposed Indicator Framework in the Expert Meeting. Source: The authors

Item	Description
Comprehensiveness	The proposed indicator system is very comprehensive in trying to capture the link between policy inputs, underlying risk drivers, and damage and loss information. The framework must strike a balance between comprehensiveness and manageability of monitoring system to minimize administrative burden.
Conceptual Clarity	Notions such as risk drivers, vulnerability and resilience are not sufficiently clear, and the distinction becomes less clear especially when these concepts must be measured using quantitative indicators.
Use of damage and loss information	The documentation of damage and losses is often incomplete and sporadic (as hazards occur probabilistically). Tracking progress using damage and loss information might therefore be difficult. Attention to risk, instead of damage and losses, might be a useful way forward.

Table 2: Some Issues Discussed on the Proposed Indicator Framework in the technical workshop on indicators, monitoring and review process for the post-2015 framework. Source: The authors

Item	Description
Simple vs comprehensive	There was a strong call to keep the indicators simple and easy to apply. On the other hand, others called for a more comprehensive approach representing progress on a range of issues and complex process.
Target	The issue raised on how to effectively link global and national targets. Participants emphatized the need that national targets should be flexible to be tailored at every country's specific situattion.
Link to SDG and Climate Change	Governments and other stakeholders are clearly calling for the post-2015 framework for DRR indicators to be linked very clearly to SDGs and CC, by aligning goals and targets.
Focus on local level	There was a lot of emphasis to focus on monitoring action at the local level. There have been national centralized efforts so far under HFA but now the opportunity ahead is to capture local efforts. The challenge is no one-size first all.
Terminology, data availability, technical capacity	Some emphasized clarity and relevance of terminology and concepts used. Some noted there are still many gaps, particularly in the availability of disaster loss data and baseline data. Some emphasized the lack of national capacity and the need for technical support
Reporting periodicity	Some supported 4 years or longer periodicity while others claimed that sticking to current biannual monitoring/reporting. There was a proposal that country selects the timing of reporting given the reporting requirements of twice or three times within HFA2 time frame.

The framework combines global targets and indicators at the Outcome level, which would be included as part of a Post 2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, with nationally defined targets and selected indicators at the Output level that would reflect how each country approaches the achievement of the global targets. In addition, the monitoring framework includes a menu of public policy indicators at the Input level. Countries can select an appropriate set of Input indicators with respect to their policy approaches to disaster risk reduction. The monitoring framework is designed for use by national governments. However, many of the proposed indicators could also be used by local governments and other stakeholders.

2.3. Participatory development process of the proposal on new monitoring system until the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee

To discuss the indicator framework, the UNISDR Expert Meeting on the Development of a Disaster Risk Management (DRM) indicator system was held in Laxenburg Austria on 10-11th Feburary 2014. The major aims and objectives of this meeting were for the UNISDR secretariat to gather expert views, both conceptually and practically, on the proposed elements of the indicator system. The experts shared their evaluations of proposed framework in terms of its conceptual clarity, data needs, comprehensiveness, appropriateness and usefulness of the proposed framework and set of indicators (table 1).

In June-July 2014, the UNISDR implemented extensive consultation to the experts and the UN System on a technical background paper to be submitted to a technical

workshop at the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the WCDRR. In July 14 at Geneva, "the technical workshop on indicators, monitoring and review process for the post-2015 framework" was held as a part of the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee and governments and stakeholders participated in the discussion (table 2).

3. Monitoring challenges in the post 2015 Framework for disaster risk reduction

While targets and indicators must undergo political negotiation toward final agreement in Sendai, the proposed framework developed by the UNISDR secretariat serves an important foundation for policy discussions and deliberation in coming months. The proposed indicator system must, therefore, speak to the international audience with clarity regarding its major policy goals and key milestones and how they tied with the interlinked goals of sustainable development and climate change adaptation.

To improve the monitoring of national level progress on DRR, the Post 2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction indicator system must address the following:

- Striking a balance between comprehensiveness versus easy of monitoring
- Linking DRM agendas with that of sustainable development and climate change concerns
- Coordinating global, national and local level DRM concerns and policies
- Addressing prevention of new risk generation as well as existing risk reduction
- Tracking DRM policy development progress together with DRM outcome
- Engaging wider stakeholders across public, private and civil society sectors for increasing commitment and accountability.

Based on the discussion at the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee, extensive consultation held in June-July 2014, and the pilot studies to check feasibility of the proposal implemented in Algeria, Japan and Mozambique, the UNISDR Secretariat will refine the proposal for monitoring system toward the second meeting of the Preparatory Committee which will be held in November 2014.

Conference Documentation References

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Citation

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