



Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction**Preparatory Committee**

Second session

Geneva, 17-18 November 2014

Agenda item 5

Considerations on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction

Summary of Chairs' dialogues and technical workshops¹**Note by the secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. The second session of the Preparatory Committee for the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was held from 17 to 18 November 2014. Recognizing the importance of all contributions in formulating the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, the co-Chairs of the Preparatory Committee convened two dialogues with the major groups to solicit views on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction under two themes: (1) Priorities of action indicated in the zero draft of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and the role of stakeholders in the context of international cooperation and global partnership; and (2) role of major groups in building coherence and mutual reinforcement between disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate agreements and the potential major groups commitments to support the implementation of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

2. Also during the second session of the Preparatory Committee, the Conference secretariat convened two technical workshops to provide a space for substantive discussions between experts and stakeholders on: (1) Indicators, monitoring and review process for the post-2015 framework; and (2) on the integration of disaster risks in financing. The first workshop was moderated by Her Excellency María del Pilar Cornejo (Ecuador). The second workshop was moderated by His Excellency Toni Frisch (Switzerland).

¹ This note includes a summary of the two Chairs' dialogues with major groups held on 17 November and 18 November from 1:15 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. and two technical workshops held on 17 November from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and 18 November from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.



II. Chair's dialogues with major groups

3. During the Chairs' dialogues on Monday, 17 November, speakers from the business and industry major group raised the importance of highlighting in the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction the issue of urban planning, the importance of using standardized data for understanding disaster risk, and the use of the term "insurance" to clarify what is meant by risk transfer mechanisms. They also stressed the need for business continuity management in the context of preparedness planning. Representatives of the business and industry major group said that both developed and less developed countries would gain from engaging with the private sector on disaster risk reduction. The group's future focus would be on sharing best practices among stakeholders.

4. Representatives of the women's major group raised the importance of recognizing the need for gender equality and greater leadership roles for women in disaster risk reduction. They noted the importance of addressing underlying risk factors through a human-rights based approach and ensuring diverse participation in decision-making, implementation, evaluation and monitoring. To support women's leadership in disaster risk reduction, there was a need to institutionalize gender-responsive training and capacity-building to remove barriers to women's participation. To better understand disaster risk, they called for countries to engage in gender analysis using gender-specific, disaggregated data, while respecting ethical issues in data collection. They noted that the use of gender-specific indicators could bring about more comprehensive monitoring, accountability and transparency in governance while respecting, protecting and working towards the fulfilment of stakeholder rights.

5. Speakers from the non-governmental organization major group stated that local-level actors who implemented the Hyogo Framework for Action should also pick up the work of the future framework. A good working partnership between local communities and local governments was key to successful implementation of the future framework. In recognition of the knowledge and existing capacity of local communities, it was important for local governance institutions to be inclusive of civil society in terms of programme design and implementation. The role of faith-based organizations and organized religions should also be required in risk reduction efforts. Finally, there needs to be a reflection on how technology transfer and capacity-building activities could be directed towards those working in the informal sector.

6. Children and youth major group representatives welcomed the all-stakeholder approach in the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction as important for stronger accountability. The group stated that it was important to establish a way to monitor voluntary commitments. Monitoring and evaluation should begin with the youngest people in society, as youth and children were very familiar with their local surroundings and the risks that they and others faced. Local governments could focus on what younger people understand of risk, and informal education should be highlighted. Resources should be made available for exchanging experiences among youth institutions, disaster risk reduction programmes and disaster risk reduction platforms, and steps can be taken to share reporting with youth and child organizations.

7. Representatives of the local authorities major group stated that local authorities had capacities that could benefit national governments. They highlighted the need for more emphasis on urbanization and urban planning issues and noted that stronger safety agendas for high-risk industrial and energy industries should be highlighted in the future framework. The section on enhancing preparedness for an effective response and build back better in recovery and reconstruction could include several items, such as establishing minimum standards for evacuation, shelter and provision of food, and paying more attention to at-risk groups, women, persons living with disabilities, people with illnesses, older persons and

children, among others. If local government was to be responsible for upholding standards for preparedness, the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction would need to determine what those standards were. Reporting against the future framework would need to involve local authorities.

8. Speakers from the indigenous peoples major group recalled the language of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), which described the group as “indigenous peoples.” The principle of free, prior and informed consent was important to the group and should be included in disaster risk reduction activities. The link made in the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction between indigenous knowledge and scientific knowledge was appreciated by the group, as was the importance given to culture and cultural resilience. The group called for specific inclusion of indigenous peoples in the transmitting and sharing of information, in which they have typically played a relevant and essential role. The group urged that a strong message be embedded in the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction on the importance of implementation. They noted the importance of strong links to the sustainable development goals, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process and financing for development. The post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction should be not only an aspirational document but an action-oriented document, drawing links to the proposed Goal 17 of the sustainable development goals on strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development.

9. The scientific and technological community major group stressed the importance of using analytical tools to better understand disaster risk. There was a need to encourage closer partnerships with the communications sector to enhance the dissemination of science knowledge for evidence-based decisions. The review process for the future framework should incorporate new knowledge. There was a need to improve the flow of information on disaster risk reduction across all sectors. It was important that evidence-based disaster risk reduction be the basis for policy decisions. On that point, the group stressed the importance of advancing risk literacy through curricula reform, lifelong learning and professional training, providing better access to science advisory capabilities for policy dialogue, and for more focused research design oriented towards actionable outcomes. It was further noted that particular attention should be given towards the needs of small island development States and least developed countries in translating words into action.

10. The farmers major group stressed the importance of partnership and coordination in managing risk and building resilience, noting that engagement with farmers could be further strengthened.

11. During the Chairs’ dialogue on Tuesday, 18 November, speakers focused on the issue of building coherence across international agreements. Recognizing the importance of alignment between international efforts on sustainable development goals, climate change and disaster risk reduction, speakers pledged to assist governments to develop a strategy to ensure coherence. Speakers urged governments to call upon the scientific and technological community and other major groups to improve integrated assessment of disaster risk across all sectors, and to dedicate time within all international deliberations for information exchange. Targets and indicators were a vital connection between frameworks and should be monitored across instruments. The workers and trade unions major group, in particular, stressed the importance of managing the transition to a carbon free economy and of setting standards across industries against which to monitor progress.

12. Speakers also discussed the possibility of establishing permanent information-sharing platforms to improve coherence, as well as devising ways to share evidence of successful working methods across sectors, such as poverty reduction, agriculture, urban and rural development and women’s empowerment, among others. Speakers supported the idea of holding multi-stakeholder dialogues. In the case of workers and trade unions,

tripartite approaches were commended, where government, employers and trade unions discussed ways to take joint action. Speakers discussed the possibility of creating online repositories of information and a virtual discussion space, as well as engaging in awareness-raising activities within and among groups to improve coordination among major groups and between major groups and governments.

Technical workshops

13. During the first workshop on indicators, monitoring and the review process for the post-2015 framework, speakers stressed the importance of ensuring that global targets for disaster risk reduction were easy to understand, feasible, relevant to the work being done by countries on sustainable development and climate change, and were based on scientific evidence. Participants noted the importance of devising targets that accounted for the frequency of and differences in hazards experienced by countries, the types of data models used by different countries, the existence of different types of systems to ensure accountability, and the extent disasters occurred as a result of factors beyond a particular country's control.

14. Participants were briefed by the facilitator of the informal working group, His Excellency Wayne McCook (Jamaica), on the work of the informal working group on targets and indicators established by the co-Chairs. The informal working group had focused its discussions on ways to establish disaster risk reduction targets that added value to political decision-making. In setting targets, the informal working group noted the importance of understanding how such targets could affect national policies and programmes.

15. Participants reflected on examples of targets currently being used by countries. The workshop discussed the importance of having data collection systems in place, as well as a mechanism for stakeholder dialogue and review of data, to support the achievement of targets. Review processes should be inclusive, open and consensual, with the participation of local and national actors, as well as government and non-government actors. Factors that would allow targets to be reached successfully were highlighted, such as a high level of political commitment, access to technical guidance, and the existence of legal and regulatory frameworks.

16. Speakers exchanged experiences on how risk management had improved in their respective countries by establishing an appropriate set of indicators to measure progress towards established targets. Depending on the type of data that had been collected, countries were able to establish a picture of where improvements could be made. This included improvements in the area of governance and how investments decisions were made to achieve certain targets. In designing an indicator system, speakers noted the importance of establishing criteria for progress that were neither too specific nor too general. Targets need to be realistic and relevant.

17. Participants discussed the role of regional organizations in helping countries establish baselines, systematize data collection methods and conduct cross-State comparisons.

18. Some participants asked for simplicity in the future monitoring system, noting that the current Hyogo Framework for Action Monitor was cumbersome, did not adequately link local to national actions, and lacked precision.

19. During the second workshop on the integration of disaster risks in financing, speakers noted that processes such as the Basel Accords which govern international standards for banking regulators have highlighted the importance of financial stability in becoming more resilient to disasters. Speakers noted that when risks were quantifiable and information about risks was accessible, it was possible to take action concerning those risks, thus bringing about a sense of stability. On that point, mechanisms, such as insurance,

were helpful for businesses and governments that sought to hedge against future losses. Yet, access to risk transfer was limited for poor countries and poor people, whose risks were often underestimated and thus improperly accounted for. The future framework should be designed to tackle this problem.

20. Participants noted that in the future, communities would be facing a much greater risk environment because of urbanization, agricultural risk and migration. It was estimated that 6.3 billion people would be living in cities by 2050, putting a burden on existing poor infrastructure. Poor- and middle-income countries would have high financial needs, amounting to trillions of dollars. To practice sound financial management, it would be increasingly important to incorporate the price of disasters into national accounts and in the valuation of national assets. Techniques pioneered in finance, such as using insurance to stem the loss of economic capital, had allowed for the protection of capital and contributed to the resilience of the finance industry, and should be used in the field of disaster risk reduction. It may also be necessary in the future for public and private investment to account for disaster risk and discount their capital against that risk.

21. With uncertainty increasing and changing, participants noted that better integration of science in understanding risk was essential. The global scientific community, funded largely by governments, was working towards establishing more accurate representations of risk and strategies to manage risk. It was noted that a key challenge was putting a number to risk. The scientific community had recognized that the key to better management of disaster risk centred on making risks more visible. In that regard, work was ongoing between insurance companies and members of civil society to categorize risk.

22. Speakers discussed how accounting for damaged infrastructure had helped provide an idea of the cost of disasters. They noted that legislative and institutional frameworks had helped encourage the institutionalization of disaster risk management through building codes and building management procedures and guidelines, thus protecting public and private infrastructure investments. Yet there was reluctance to move building codes too far above the minimum, citing the problem of affordability — a position that was based on false economics because societies were paying through the cost of disasters. It was imperative to find ways to incentivize better decisions that lead to better building in the beginning.

23. Participants stressed the importance of risk-proofing the poorest and most vulnerable, such as the informal sector and rural women, among others, who have not been part of or sufficiently accounted for in most national accounting efforts.
