

INITIAL ANALYSIS OF THE PRE-ZERO DRAFT OF THE POST-2015 DRR FRAMEWORK

The [pre-zero draft](#) of the successor to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), informally referred to as HFA2, was released on 8 August 2014. In general, this is a significant improvement on the previous [Suggested Elements](#) paper, with greater emphasis on many of the issues highlighted during the consultation period, and a much stronger implementation framework. Oxfam has however substantial concerns that need to be addressed if an effective instrument is to be agreed in March 2015 at the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

Vision and framing of the HFA2

Disaster risk is increasing fast and outpacing DRR efforts. Greater clarity, vision and action are required, but this draft provides too little on that front.

- **Low level of ambition.** The professed outcome of HFA2 is a ‘substantial reduction in losses’ but this will be impossible to achieve without a step change in DRR actions at all levels. The increasing reality of climate change, pressures of population growth, migration and urbanisation, and environmental degradation are presenting challenges that are existential for some, and impoverishing for many. The language used in the draft does not outline the required sense of ambition, urgency, and prioritisation on disaster risk reduction to face the very real challenges that the world is facing.
- **No clear narrative and structure.** Linked to the above, the draft does not provide a clear message, focus, priorities or vision, nor does its structure aid implementation. It is not clear how the purpose, outcome, targets, goals and priorities for action fit together to provide a meaningful theory of change.

Key aspects which require significant rethinking

There are many aspects of the pre-zero draft that require strengthening, but unless these two particular issues are addressed, the HFA2 will simply repeat the failures of the HFA.

- **The centrality of bottom-up community resilience.** The HFA provided a very useful framework for governments to start to develop risk reduction approaches and this has led to very significant benefits over the last few years. But it still offered a very top-down approach. Over the consultation period, and indeed before and during Regional and Global Platforms, there has been a strong shift of focus to action at the local level, empowering and enabling communities to strengthen their resilience. This is stronger in the current draft than in the HFA, but there is still a long way to go to more carefully balance top-down support with bottom-up action.
- **The centrality of whole-of-government approaches.** As has been said many times, DRR is a development activity. Risk must be reduced in all activities, across the development spectrum. Yet the HFA2 implementation is likely to be the responsibility of a National Disaster Management Agency or similar. How can this disconnect be resolved? Ideally the HFA2 needs to be the explicit responsibility of multiple government departments, or – a weaker option – the HFA2 needs to be written in such a way that it can act as a tool for NDMA to engage with other government departments. It is clear that drafters of the pre-zero draft are aware of this problem, but it is not clear that it has been resolved in the current draft. Clearer links with mainstream development policy and practice at all levels are required, including at the international level through the post-2015 development agenda.

Some specific changes required

Section A: Preamble

- **Stronger ambition of the framework:** The preamble should be redrafted to provide for a greater sense of ambition, aspiration, urgency, exigency, focus and prioritisation on disaster risk reduction to face the very real challenges that the world is facing. Para 3 and 4 identify some of these issues but without the urgency required. The language used in the document should outline a higher level of ambition and visionary thinking.

Section B: Purpose, Scope, Outcome and Goals

- **Clearer language for the purpose:** Para 7 rightly highlights the need to link DRR with development, and includes welcome references to the local level and to resilience of people and communities. However, the precise phrasing is uneven. We would suggest this paragraph is redrafted to read: “The purpose of the post-2015 DRR framework is to manage disaster risk through development at local, national, regional and global levels to build the resilience of people, communities and countries.”
- **Clarification on scope:** Para 8 specifically includes small and frequent disasters, which is a significant step forwards. The link with technological hazards is however not clear, and there is no reference in the entire draft to disasters in fragile and conflict affected states.

- **Amendments to the global targets – particularly inclusion of risk:** Oxfam supports global targets as a key accountability tool and means of creating more political space for DRR, as well as the need to ensure complementary targets between the post-2015 development framework and HFA2. The proposed targets are broadly helpful, but amendments are required; a key amendment is the inclusion of a new target on risk:
 - 1) Loss indicators are necessary but not sufficient to assess outcome. They have more to do with the size of the hazard than the efficiency or otherwise of DRR measures; one big disaster will significantly skew the results, or conversely, a false impression may be given if countries happen to avoid major disasters in the 15 year period. Hence a target is needed on disaster risk. This is a more forward-looking target and should enable the engagement of other government ministries and departments in risk reduction.
 - 2) The additional target on the number of affected people is welcome to broaden out the measurement of social impact, which in turn also makes this more relevant to extensive risk. This needs to be carefully defined.
 - 3) We urge the reinsertion of damage to housing in the fourth target, as included in the Revised Elements Paper. This is a very useful indicator of damage to people's livelihoods and needs to stay. Either this should be reinserted into the damage target, or it should be incorporated into the target on affected people.
 - 4) The target on DRR strategies is a process, rather than outcome, target. Its measurement is more subjective and is best placed in the reshaped HFA2 monitor.
 - 5) The timeframe for the targets needs to be 15 years, to synchronise with the post-2015 development goals.
- **Better language for the goals:** Whilst we broadly support the three goals, the language needs changing. The word 'resilience' in the third goal is too narrowly defined. Here, it is primarily around bouncing back, therefore mostly on recovery. This is very important, but this is not resilience. In the Priorities for Action, resilience is rightly used in much broader terms. Alternative language or framing is thus required for the third goal.

Section C: Guiding principles

- **Refining (and reducing) the guiding principles.** The draft states that previous principles from Yokohama and the HFA should be retained, and then lists a further 14 guiding principles. Oxfam believes that it is impractical to have so many, and essentially makes them meaningless. As a result, we propose that this list is reduced, and pared back to the minimum. Guiding principles should be 1) a short number of key issues that provide an unambiguous direction for the negotiation of the agreement and its subsequent implementation and 2) They should apply to all aspects of the HFA2 (rather than one or two specific elements) and to all countries.
After applying these criteria (and strengthening the principle in relation to rights which is critically important), the five following principles would guide the HFA2:
 - 1) Each State has the primary responsibility to manage disaster risk. This should be achieved through inclusive participation and international cooperation.
 - 2) Risk management constitutes an international legal duty aimed at protecting persons, their livelihoods and property while respecting their human rights.
 - 3) Disaster risk management is an essential component of governance at local, national, regional and global levels, and requires the full engagement of all state institutions of executive and legislative nature at local and central levels.
 - 4) High-risk people, communities and countries should be prioritised, with a focus on the potentials, needs, participation and empowerment of all social groups, particularly women, the elderly, children and youth, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples.
 - 5) Disaster risks have local and specific characteristics and their management requires the full leadership and empowerment of local communities and administrators.

Section D: Priorities for Action

- **Review and refine.** The reshaping of the priorities for action into four areas has some advantages: it sorts out some anomalies from the HFA (such as early warning being separate from preparedness) and it explicitly highlights recovery and reconstruction, which was mostly overlooked in the HFA. However, more work is required and we propose that:
 - 1) These priority areas are reviewed to introduce the **centrality of community resilience and local level action**. The framework still looks very top down. At the very least, the second priority should be renamed 'Strengthen inclusive governance' but more is needed to really address this issue.
 - 2) These areas are reviewed to **enable whole-of-government approaches**. The new priority area of investing in social, economic and environmental resilience is certainly one very useful step in this regard. Explicitly referring to all three pillars of development – social, economic and environmental – is helpful as this helps to cement the relationship with development thinking and keeps all three in balance, particularly important to keep people at the heart and ensure that environment does not get lost.
 - 3) Activities identified under each priority should also be **reviewed once the principles and the priorities are agreed**, to ensure consistency. For example 14b) should be adapted to ensure that disaster risk assessment takes into account gender, age and social groups, and is undertaken at the local level. In addition, 'periodically' should be made more precise to provide a stronger sense of urgency.

- 4) **More logical framings** should be considered to give a stronger sense of direction. A more chronological framing could be useful: for example, strong governance, understanding risk, prevent and reduce risk, transfer risk, manage residual risk. A stronger link needs to be established between the three strategic goals and these priority areas.
- 5) The division into national/local and global/regional is a helpful split but our experience is that often it is the **'meso' or 'district' level** that is key to effective implementation, or in practice can work as a hindrance to effective implementation.
- 6) **Gaps** remain to be identified – for example, disaster forensics under priority 3 (para 16), risk transfer under priority 4 (para 17), the elderly as a key social group (para 23) etc.

Section E: International Partnership in the implementation and follow-up process

- **A timeframe of 15 years.** Para 26i states that the framework is 'open-ended.' This is highly impractical - political agreements such as this have to have timeframes to provide a political imperative for progress; strategically, it would be astute to link with the post-MDGs development framework as there is an obvious need to hardwire DRR into mainstream development issues; practically, it is clear that knowledge, experience and expertise on DRR and risks are increasing all the time (eg risk financing, crowdsourcing of risk and loss data); and finally, the nature and intensity of risk is likely to change significantly, depending on the level of global action taken to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Regular review periods will not provide sufficient time or space for fundamental re-evaluation and re-assessment. The timeline should therefore be 15 years, synchronised with the post-2015 development framework.
- **Links with other International processes:** The pre-zero draft has several references to the necessary coordination between the HFA2, the post-2015 development framework and the climate change negotiations. As mentioned above, aligning the timeframe of the HFA2 with the post-2015 development framework would already help to build consistency between the frameworks. In addition, the links in terms of science, data collection and monitoring, building on the promising discussion on these issues during PrepCom1, need to be further explored. Further to this, if the HFA2 is to be serious about risk reduction, it should reference the need to take urgent action to limit climate change impacts. At a minimum, the HFA2 could use emerging language on climate change in the SDGs context and re-affirm the scientific view that the increase in global temperature should be below 2 degrees Celsius.
- **Financial and technical support:** While each state has the primary responsibility to manage disaster risk, the reality is that -as mentioned in para 26a- developing countries will need increased support to achieve the outcome of the HFA2. International financial and technical support has to be more concretely articulated and significantly stepped up to give confidence that this framework will address the needs of all member states.

Section F: Transition Phase

- **A standalone HFA2 with clear new schematic.** Section F and para 27 should be deleted (paras 28 and 29 moved elsewhere) – without a timeline, this 'transition' is meaningless. The link between HFA and HFA2 must be clarified. On the one hand, the pre-zero draft sets new guiding principles and strategic goals, and reshuffles the priorities for action. But on the other hand, para 27 states that the activities under the HFA remain valid in this 'transition phase.' Oxfam proposes that HFA2 should build on the HFA but not be bound by it. HFA2 should be constructed in such a way that it can wholly supersede the HFA. Having two frameworks with overlapping priorities is operationally impossible and therefore likely to be demotivating. What is needed is one standalone framework with a new schematic.

Getting the process right

- **Inclusion of Major Groups in the informal consultations.** The principle of strong engagement of all stakeholders in the World Conference and its preparatory process has been clearly established through UN General Assembly Resolutions 67/209 and 68/211 that recognised the 'importance of the contributions and participation of all relevant stakeholders, including Major Groups', as well as the Chair's Summary of the Fourth Global Platform that found that 'active engagement of all stakeholders is a pre-requisite for a strong and shared outcome.' It is therefore hard to see why Major Groups are excluded from Member States' consultations – this is not in keeping with the spirit of 'full and effective participation' mandated by Resolution 68/211, nor previous Disaster Risk Reduction processes, nor other international consultations (including the recent and effective Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals). Multistakeholder engagement surely means all stakeholders together, not in separate rooms.
- **Producing working drafts.** The co-chairs should produce a working draft or non-paper at the end of September to summarise progress on Sections B and C - purpose, scope, outcome, goals and guiding principles – to then enable a more meaningful discussion subsequent sections, particularly priorities for action and more detailed elements of the framework. Such a draft would be produced without prejudice to further drafts, would likely increase support for the first full draft and would act as a strong confidence-builder, showing a clear progression of the process and allowing all stakeholders to see the impact of the consultations.