

**Preparatory Committee of the Third UN Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction**  
**Informal Working Group on Targets and Indicators**

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**Expert consultation for the Informal Working Group on Targets and Indicators**

As a result of discussions held in the October 24 meeting, the IWG requested technical guidance on a number of issues:

- How are "affected people" defined in disaster databases (national, EM DAT, national disaster databases, insurance and others) and what could be a more appropriate and exact definition
- Should we limit economic loss to "direct" or also include "indirect" or both. Should it be expressed as a % of GDP?
- Is damage to education and health facilities normally included in economic loss estimates? What would be the justification for treating them separately?
- What should be the baseline for countries to start reporting in 2016 ..... moving average of last 10 years, 5 years or what?

In order to answer these questions in the most informed way, UNISDR has carried out a consultation with experts between 27 and 31 October. A list of the experts consulted and their inputs are available upon request.

The summary conclusions of this consultation are:

- **The "affected" indicator** is very subjective, not easily defined, and therefore, any measure of this variable would be not comparable over time or among countries, *thus making it inappropriate to track progress or use as a target*. It is advisable to use instead a combination or one of the following: injured, evacuated, relocated, houses damaged, houses destroyed and directly exposed. The first three indicators are widely available in the majority of current disaster databases and the housing indicators in most national disaster databases. Exposed population can be quantified but requires additional information and risk modelling skills, making it a less appropriate indicator.
- **Direct/indirect losses:** The broad consensus of the experts is that *direct* economic loss data is more concrete, comparable, verifiable and easier to obtain. Indirect losses are difficult to quantify in space (losses far away of the disaster area, for example), time (losses many years after the disaster) and sector (environment, culture, trade, taxes), and therefore, are far less robust. The recommendation in this case is to report and set targets on direct losses and request countries to report voluntarily but separately on indirect losses as complementary information. A very precise definition of the minimal set of assets to be included in the

determination of direct losses should be annexed to the target, and similar work would be also important for indirect losses.

- **Damage to Education and Health facilities:** This variable is commonly available, concrete and verifiable, affecting two critical sectors of society. Experts did not pose any objections to the inclusion of these indicators.
- **Baseline:** Experts provided inputs identifying two parts to this question. One is the minimal reporting period required to create a significant baseline against which progress can be measured with some level of confidence in the years to come, and the second is the precise definition of the indicator: the figures to report (absolute loss values) and how frequently it should be reported (by year or biennium) to track progress with maximum certainty.

The consensus of the experts is that the period of the baseline should be as long as possible, **recommended 10 years**. Experts suggested there are several ways of building indicators (*average, median, linear trend, trends without outliers, etc.*) and recognized the best approach should be to report *absolute* loss per year (or per biennium) so that any of these methods can be constructed in the future. For example:

- Countries should report absolute mortality figures per year so that a specific indicator (average mortality per million) can be constructed.
- Countries should report yearly direct economic loss so that an indicator such as the 5 years moving average of losses as proportion of gross fixed capital formation can be obtained. Having the absolute loss, however will also allow the construction of other metrics such as the ratio between the losses and the modelled Annual Average Loss of a risk assessment.

*UNISDR, 3 November 2014*