

ILO's position paper

Inputs on the pre-zero draft of the post-2015 framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (Co-Chairs' non-paper)

The pre-zero draft of the post-2015 framework for Disaster Risk Reduction ("pre-zero draft") reaffirms the importance of positioning disaster risk reduction at the centre of a sustainable future. To ensure the success of such an approach, which aims to reduce the vulnerability and build the resilience of countries and people, an all-of society's involvement is needed.

Resilience can be achieved only through collective higher preparedness, collective higher capability to respond and collective higher ability to recover. As stated repeatedly in the text, reaching these goals requires all stakeholders, both in the public and in the private sector, to participate and assume responsibilities. In particular, the ILO believes that governments should promote a stronger engagement of social partners (workers and employers organizations), businesses and agents of local economic development in disaster risk reduction, through public-private partnerships, specific incentives and mechanisms of cooperation with local communities. In addition, in their disaster recovery and risk reduction efforts, governments should focus on social cohesion to establish the conditions for the creation of decent jobs, the generation of income opportunities, the protection of vulnerable livelihoods and the promotion of sustainable local development.

In fact, experience shows that decent work approaches (including regulated social relations inspired by International Labour Standards) and local economic recovery strategies contribute to stability and recovery from disasters, and that the protection of livelihoods is fundamental for socio-economic resilience in the face of multiple hazards.

The ILO's comments on the pre-zero draft aim to highlight the essential role the social partners can play to contribute to prevention, preparedness and resilience at community and national level, and to emphasize the critical connection between decent jobs and resilient societies. In particular, we note the following:

1. The workplace should be made center stage of disaster risk reduction in view of the role it has to play in prevention strategies; mitigation strategies; recovery and rehabilitation strategies¹. The actors of the workplace, employers and workers and their organizations, should be identified clearly in the text (instead of being included in the general categories "private sector" and "stakeholders"), and their double role as actors and beneficiaries of prevention, preparedness and risk reduction activities should be acknowledged.

¹ This position is coherent with the current proposed SDGs referring to the promotion of safe and secure working environments for all workers.

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2. More emphasis should be placed on the need for workers' and employers' organizations to take on an active role in preparedness and response plans at community and national level. For example, social partners should be encouraged to jointly develop business continuity plans, involving all stakeholders in order to build resilience along the supply chain, and should be invited to provide inputs on national plans through strengthened participatory planning mechanisms.
 3. The importance of reinforcing the preparedness of public services should be highlighted, emphasising in particular the needs of public service workers, who are on the front line of disaster response and too often find themselves unequipped or without the adequate training and protection. The public sector (all levels of government – national, state/provincial and local) should be considered also as an “employer” whose workers are the first respondents in case of emergency. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that in many countries the private sector has an important role in rescue, relief and recovery.
 4. The need to provide concrete incentives to the private sector to increase investments in risk management and business continuity, as well as to make CCA/DRR-sensitive (“green”) investments, could be given more relevance in the document.
 5. National employment policies that help generate decent and resilient jobs (jobs that can withstand shocks) in all sectors should be incorporated into disaster risk management programmes. Decent jobs improve collective preparedness and increase the resilience of communities by providing opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, while offering better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives, and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.
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