

Women's Major Group Intervention
(Section D)
Informal Dialogue #4 between Co-Chairs and Major Groups
October 9, 2014

Good morning Co-chairs and distinguished colleagues,

My name is Sarah Bradshaw. I am speaking today on behalf of the Women's Major Group. This is the last informal meeting before PrepCom 2, and before the Zero Draft is finalized later this month. **We would like to take this opportunity to make some last key points and to reiterate our key concerns.**

As we have noted previously, if there is to be a gendered implementation of the HFA, women and men must be mentioned explicitly throughout the document, and differentiated vulnerabilities, risks, contributions and knowledge must be explicitly recognised. Gender considerations are missing in paragraphs relating to either policy formation or implementing strategy in Section D.

We welcome the inclusion of the statement specifically addressing women in part D section 23 (under the "Role of Stakeholders"). However, recognising women as critical in DRR without also supporting this role via resources and capacity building is not sufficient. To express this support, we suggest it read: "The critical role of women in managing disaster risk and in workforce capacity should be recognised and valued, including through the provision of resources to further enhance their capacity to lead and be engaged in inclusive processes for designing and implementing gender responsive disaster risk management that benefits all persons and communities."

We welcome the focus on resilience (Section D paragraph 21) and the recognition of the need to invest in social, economic, and environmental resilience; however, we feel that at present the focus is too much on science and technology and the role of the private sector, and not enough on people. The private sector does have a role to play but there is need also to recognise the key role of public finance and the responsibility of States to act. We recommend adding that any public-private partnerships are in alignment with human rights standards and have strong accountability standards to ensure social and environmental safeguards. Science & Technology can support early warning/communication, but systems must be designed and implemented together with the people who need the information, in order to be sure that any technology actually reaches them and is useful for them.

A people centred and human rights-based approach would seek to build resilience through tackling the inequalities, including gender inequalities, that mean some groups, especially women, do not have access to, or control over economic and social resources. This also more clearly link to the identified need to better recognize and address the “underlying causes of risk”. This focus would also more clearly link to the proposed SDGs in particular Goal 1 on Poverty, where DRR is a proposed measure of advancement in this Goal. Actions in line with the SDGs need to be more clearly articulated in the HFA, including adopting a more transformative approach to DRR as is presented, for example, in SDG11 – to Make Cities and Human Settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable with the aim to ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services, and upgrade slums.

Once again we would call for a greater focus on the rights, not just responsibilities of those impacted by natural hazards, with recognition that all people have the right to be protected from disaster risk and to have their gender and age specific needs met during and after an event. This includes women’s sexual and reproductive health rights and also the right of women and girls to live free from violence – which should be explicitly addressed in the document (Section D 15b and 17d). The right to education, health and information is necessary to build resilience, as is the ability to engage in public spaces, have a voice and make decisions. At present these aspects necessary to build the desired ‘culture of prevention’ (Section E point g) are not clearly articulated and need to be included here.

We believe that HFA2 should be an action oriented program, and as such needs to have targets and indicators that help to shift societies toward equality and in this way build resilience and improve each person's ability to act. We would like to reiterate our call that the final targets must provide sufficient depth to reflect all 3 dimensions of sustainable development and to facilitate actions that are effective and inclusive - promoting the rights of all persons, and promoting equality, including gender equality through realization of women’s rights.

The WMG looks forward to continued interaction with the co-chairs, Member States and Major Group and other stakeholder colleagues to ensure the HFA2 responds to and improves the lives of everyone.