

(non-paper)

The Government of Japan attaches importance to the following points in establishing the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction (post-HFA).

1 Nature of the post-HFA

Ensuring sustainability of DRR efforts

The post-HFA should be a guideline to ensure sustainability of DRR efforts of Member States and encourage their concrete actions.

DRR measures in each Member State have made progress based on the HFA since 2005. This is mainly because the HFA is an easy-to-understand and useful reference for DRR practitioners at the national level and provides action-oriented priorities. The post-HFA should therefore maintain this HFA's basic nature and characteristics. It should also update and reinforce the HFA based on emerging issues and the development of DRR measures in Japan and the international community since 2005, while maintaining the basic elements of the current HFA.

The post-HFA should inherit the terminologies and ideas of the HFA so that concrete DRR measures could continue to be implemented particularly in developing countries. It should maintain consistency with widely accepted concepts of DRR measures that are currently practiced on the ground.

On the other hand, it is understandable that new concepts need to be highlighted from the perspective of the linkage with the post-2015 development agenda. Even so, the balance with the existing concept is important, and new concepts should not be excessively focused on.

2 Outcomes, targets and goals

Linkage with the post-2015 development agenda

In 2015, not only the post-HFA but also the post-2015 development agenda, a navigator for the whole development sector, will be formulated. While the current MDGs do not explicitly address DRR, it should be clarified in the post-2015 development agenda in order to mobilize necessary resources for DRR and promote DRR mainstreaming. For that purpose, we should work on the post-HFA and the outcomes of WCDRR so that they can provide inputs into the post-2015 development agenda. The targets of the post-HFA should be simple, clear-cut and easy-to-understand so that DRR is to be a part of the post-2015 development agenda.

3 Guiding Principle

(1) Human security and the participation of various actors in DRR

Under disaster conditions, all people become vulnerable. It is therefore vital to provide protection focusing on individual situations, particularly for those who have special

needs such as persons with disabilities, the elderly and children. This is why we should reflect the voices of various actors in the process of formulating DRR plans and reconstruction plans.

Furthermore, we recognized again that women played particularly important roles in the reconstruction processes from the Great East Japan Earthquake and the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. We therefore reiterate the need to ensure equal opportunities for leadership and participation of women in decision-making process in order to build a society resilient to disasters.

Thus, Japan advocates the strengthening of people-centered efforts to protect and empower individuals and communities in DRR. Human security should be therefore clearly mentioned as a guiding principle of the post-HFA.

(2) Investment in disaster prevention/mitigation from a long-term perspective

Investment in disaster prevention and mitigation from a long-term perspective has not been sufficient compared to efforts for disaster response and recovery. However, investment in disaster prevention and mitigation before disasters, with measures that can adapt to future environmental changes, is cost-effective as it costs less than the amount needed for recovery from disasters. It is also important to continue to promote investment in disaster prevention/mitigation from a long-term perspective, under the initiation of each government, recognizing that recurring disasters would spoil sustainable development.

4 Priorities for Action

(1) DRR mainstreaming

The world is now facing a number of challenges such as population explosion, rapid urbanization and climate change. It is estimated that these factors will increase disaster risks in the future. It is essential for each state to further promote DRR through incorporating DRR perspectives in its development planning, positioning DRR as a key policy agenda and mobilize necessary resources.

(2) Responsibility of the national platform / national focal point of DRR

As confirmed in the HFA, each sovereign state bears the ultimate responsibility to protect the lives and properties of its people. The participation of various stakeholders such as local governments, private sector, communities and non-government organizations is an important element of DRR. However, it is only the central government that can take the lead and coordinate with strong initiative so that each stakeholder can engage itself in DRR, particularly through measures including the improvement of legal systems, regulation, long-term planning, budget allocation and incentive provision. It is the responsibility of the central governments to promote DRR through uniting all the efforts in the nation to protect their human lives and properties.

(3) Appropriate combination of structural and non-structural measures

Non-structural DRR measures, including early warning system and DRR education, has steadily developed and greatly contributed to saving lives of people from disasters since the HFA was adopted. However, in many cases, due to the delay in establishing structural measures, development achievements have been undermined and economic loss has exploded. Structural measures that protect development areas from physical forces of a disaster are effective particularly to prevent economic loss from small-scale but frequent disasters.

In Asia in particular, people have been living and developing their cities in areas with flooding hazards due to geological conditions. For instance, most of the Tokyo area also used to be flood plain in the past, but as a result of the development of the Tokyo area with flood control measures for centuries, Tokyo enjoys today's economic development. Many Asian cities share the same destiny, so structural measures are essential.

It is therefore necessary to take effective DRR measures, combining non-structural measures and structural measures in an appropriate manner, which protect development achievements from disasters. Although structural measures such as building infrastructure resilient to disasters require more cost and efforts than non-structural ones, it is necessary to secure its budget and implementation mechanism based on an unwavering political will from a long-term perspective.

(4) Build Back Better

DRR efforts are important in all phases from ex-ante measures (prevention, mitigation and preparedness) to ex-post measures (emergency response and recovery/rehabilitation). Among them, the recovery/rehabilitation phase is a good opportunity to drastically reduce risks through development measures such as land use planning and building standards improvement.

Japan has recognized the importance of learning from past disasters and preventing/mitigating future disaster occurrences, based on the lessons learned from the experiences in the Great East Japan Earthquake. It is Japan's responsibility to share with the international community the importance of providing safer communities for future generations, taking the opportunity of disasters.

This policy of "Build Back Better" has been developed by the International Recovery Platform (IRP), which was established after the Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005. This policy has been implemented, in addition to practices in Japan, in the recovery efforts from the 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami and the 2013 Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. It is of paramount importance that the "Build Back Better" policy be much more clearly articulated in the post-HFA.

Actions for "Build Back Better" should include:

- a) Adopting specific public policies, and establishing coordination and funding

mechanisms, and procedures to plan and prepare for post-disaster recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction in order to mitigate and minimize losses.

- b) Strengthening community resilience, incorporating DRR in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts and undertaking effective and drastic measures including land use planning and structural measures to prevent disasters in the future.
- c) Learning from disasters that occurred, sharing the lessons learned and utilizing them to strengthen the resilience of the affected communities as well as other areas facing similar disaster risks.

(5) Reliable disaster statistics

It is important to establish reliable disaster statistics under the leadership of each Member State. Reliable disaster statistics is an essential basis for effective DRR measures such as assessing risks, planning effective measures against disasters by learning from past disaster experiences, and securing necessary budget for DRR. Establishment of such reliable disaster statistics is the first step for appropriate and effective DRR.

(6) Utilization of science and technology

Risk reduction, monitoring and information dissemination and sharing based on the latest science and technology and knowledge such as earth observation by satellite, GIS and big data will contribute to enhancing decision-making and DRR measures by national and local governments. It is necessary to promote utilization of the latest technologies as well as further research and development.

In this course of action, a system should be established that evidence-based results of science and technology can contribute to DRR decision-making at the national level. At the international level, existing mechanisms should be reutilized under the post-HFA so that they can contribute to the review of the post-HFA. Such mechanisms include ISDR's Science and Technology Group (STAG), ICSU, IRDR, and Global Risk Forum as well as existing ISDR Thematic Platforms.

(7) Promotion of efforts of the private sector for DRR

Once production and distribution activities are suspended by disasters, it would affect not only regional economic activities, but also cause significant negative impacts on financial services and markets for goods that have high import/export ratio both domestically and internationally. It is therefore important to promote the efforts of the private sector for DRR by building disaster-resilient markets through securing business continuity beyond territorial borders and promoting insurance and mutual assistance mechanisms. Markets that can create new production and services through DRR should be also aimed at.

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