

## **Joint UN Statement**

### **Reflecting sectors in the document and agriculture, land use and forest management**

#### **UN Contributions to the open-ended informal consultative meetings**

**2nd October 2014, Geneva**

*Mr. Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen*

*The UN System wishes to repeat its appreciation to the honourable Co-chairs, Bureau Members and to all Member States for the continued opportunity to participate in the Informal Consultations as Observers and Resource Persons. We hope that the following statement on the role and responsibilities of key sectors in the successor to the Hyogo Framework for Action will contribute to the design of a comprehensive and effective delivery of risk reduction.*

As an important premise, we wish to echo the statement made in the discussions on principles and specifically the need for comprehensive risk governance. Comprehensive risk governance should exist at all levels, involve all institutions of government, from the national to the local, across every aspect of society and across all sectors, in both urban and rural areas. The issues of governance applies to all sectors which require all the governance and enabling mechanisms such as policy direction, financing, risk assessment, training and so on. A specific value added of governance measures is seen in how effectively they support sectors in delivering real action - in a coordinated way - at all levels of society, particularly at the local level. The co-chairs have also emphasised the need that the new framework should be action-oriented and people centred. It is in this context that the discussion on the role of sectors zooms in.

The UN system welcomes the recognition of the active role and responsibilities of sectors in the zero draft document. This said, the UN wishes to see an even stronger recognition of sectoral responsibilities and accountabilities, and inter-linkages aiming at commitments for more intense partnerships for system wide DRR planning, mainstreaming and delivery on the ground.

Disaster risks are interrelated, but impacts differ in various sectors on the ground. Reports on the implementation of the current Hyogo Framework for Action have underscored that least progress has been achieved, so far, in Priority 4 on Reducing Underlying Risk Factors, which is at the core of risk reduction. This Priority area should be unpacked to reveal exactly what measures will reduce risks. In promoting disaster risk reduction through sectors a more proactive approach can be undertaken to simultaneously address - from various angles - existing and new risks as well as underlying vulnerabilities and to enhance resilience. There is a continuing need to mainstream disaster risk reduction into the programmes and activities of respective sectors and systems.

As we know, disaster losses are accentuated in the most vulnerable and poor households and communities and result in long-term consequences for food security, nutrition, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, health, education, environment and other critical dimensions of human welfare, which often diminish or reverse gains in the reduction of poverty, vulnerability and hunger. A significant portion of the world's food insecure live in degraded ecosystems which amplify the effects of droughts and floods, resulting in serious livelihood impacts from even low-intensity shocks. Land, water, forest, and aquatic resources management, or lack of them, affect the impact of disasters, as the conservation functions might be affected and risks increased. Climate change and increasing resource scarcity is and will further deepen vulnerabilities to disasters, especially in these environments.

## Observations and challenges

*Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to briefly elaborate key observations on the sector specific challenges and perspectives that can enhance the understanding, the prevention and the reduction of risks, including the need for building back better wherever possible.*

- From evidence gathered from reporting on the HFA 1, we noted that the set-up of national DRR platforms – despite their value added for DRR awareness raising and capacity development - did not create incentives for all sectors to take up DRR proactively. This underlines the need for the integration of DRR into government multi-sectoral development planning and budgeting, as well as the direct involvement of sectors to enhance DRR and its outreach to the most vulnerable.
- Investing in social, economic and environmental resilience requires sector specific action, particular at local level. Agriculture, including fisheries, aquaculture, livestock and forestry, for instance, is key in providing services to the local level that enhance disaster resilience, and link food and nutrition security with sustainable development, sustainable land, water and forest management techniques, and to health systems. Sectoral services include support to affected communities during small scale disaster events that do not trigger external assistance.
- Better understanding how risks impact at community and farm levels is needed, combined with timely access to sector specific information and early warnings which facilitate the identification of location specific prevention, mitigation and preparedness measures to reduce risks and ensure more effective response and recovery.
- Known and new risk reduction technologies and practices need to be scaled up, transferred and disseminated to the most vulnerable. Ecosystem-based management approaches that make more sustainable use of vital land, water, and forest resources offer opportunities to enhance the resilience of people, communities and systems. The UN system offers a range of proposals to seize opportunities; again, the sectoral line agencies play an important role in delivery.
- Addressing the underlying risks drivers of slow-onset disaster caused by drought is particularly relevant in the agriculture and environment sectors. Drought-related disasters, such as crop shortfall, heat stress on livestock or wild fires, can have far-reaching humanitarian, socio-economic and also security repercussions. Drought, for instance, is a major cause of death in children linked to malnutrition and food insecurity, often leads to migration, and can cause or exacerbate conflicts.
- More attention is needed in advancing DRR in contexts beyond natural disasters. This includes to better link DRR with specific needs and challenges related to trans-boundary plant pests and diseases, food safety events, socio economic crises and protracted crises and conflict.
- Stronger emphasis on risk and safety standards in all aspects of DRR is key to strengthen sector responsibilities and accountabilities for enhanced DRR.
- Effective emergency response and building back better in emergency response, recovery and transition contributes significantly to increase resilience. DRR measures are essential aspects of sustainable recovery and rehabilitation. This requires culturally sensitive strategic coordination between humanitarian and development interventions, and direct investments into and across risk sensitive sectors.

## **Recommendations: Addressing sectoral issues in post 2015 framework document**

*Ladies and Gentlemen, the UN offers the following recommendations to reflect main issues the UN system believes could be articulated more clearly in a post-2015 framework regarding key sectors.*

- The central role of sectors, including agriculture, in implementing DRR could be reflected in each of the sections under the Priorities for Action. This would guide sectoral line agencies on sector specific responsibilities and accountabilities in the planning and delivery of the three goals of the post-2015 framework.
- We would propose that a short paragraph is included on actions to be taken by sectors that are vital for disaster risk reduction, including agriculture, health, education, water and environment, to describe very briefly key issues. These actions, we would propose, are critical to enhance resilience and ensure that the new framework is focused on people-centred action.
- In a similar vein, inclusion of sector specific targets, indicators, and reporting in a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction will enhance accountability and the basis for monitoring of progress and impacts of disaster risk reduction.
- Crucial to the call for focused attention on sector specific responsibilities is the need for extensive capacity development for DRR delivery, particularly on the ground. Enhanced capacity development through sectoral line agencies, along with clear institutional and financial commitments, will trigger a better integration of disaster risk reduction into sectoral investment plans, standard operating procedures, and recovery and development programmes.
- We need to seize the opportunity offered by the HFA 2 to explicitly connect to international frameworks. Only in this way can complementary visions among multi-sectoral development strategies be supported. Such references will facilitate a better understanding of practical synergies between disaster risk reduction (HFA2), climate change adaptation (COP21), sustainable development SDG), urbanization (Habitat III in 2016) and humanitarian assistance (World Humanitarian Summit) in sectoral and cross-sectoral policies, including through joint analysis of risk, planning and programming.
- Finally but most importantly is the need to call for solid operational and action-oriented partnerships across sectors to address the challenge of multiple risks at all levels, and to optimize available resources.

*Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to reiterate that the global challenge of disaster risk can only be effectively tackled if all concerned stakeholders take on roles and responsibilities in respect to their comparative advantage and mandate while working in strategic alliances and close collaboration. We believe that a meaningful system for cross-sectoral cooperation and partnership - based on clear sectoral responsibilities - can greatly contribute to enhance the effectiveness of joint efforts in reducing and managing risks and building resilience to disasters at local, national, regional and global levels. From an agriculture, land use and forestry management perspective the importance of integrating sectoral approaches into disaster risk reduction is indispensably important, as these sectors are part of the risk drivers and solutions at the same time.*

*The UN system stands ready to provide technical assistance, including as appropriate, in suggesting specific language, to the Bureau and the Member States for the framing of the post-2015 framework throughout this process. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute.*