GNDR

Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction

Analysis of Government Positions on the Post-2015 Disaster Risk Reduction Framework

Drawing from the Government Negotiations at the Second Preparatory Committee of the Third World Conference for Disaster Reduction, 17-18 November 2014

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Introduction

This analysis provides an overview of some of the most critical or contested issues amongst governments in the negotiation of the Post-2015 DRR Framework. It has been produced following the 2nd Preparatory Committee of the Third World Conference for Disaster Reduction, held in Geneva between the 17th-18th November 2014, drawing on member state statements in plenary and interventions during negotiations.

The primary audience of this document is civil society organisations wishing to examine member state positions. A secondary audience are governments themselves wanting to examine which other states share or differ with their own positions. This analysis could therefore be used for:

- more appropriate and targeted advocacy

- identification of potential partnerships

- the drafting of joint positions

1. Scope of hazards

A number of countries highlighted in their statements that taking a *multi-hazard* approach to DRR should be a priority (Bhutan, the EU and OECD). Jamaica and Mexico further emphasised this by specifically suggesting that the preamble should lay out a multi-hazard scope and approach to the Framework, whilst the Philippines stressed the need for multi-hazard early warning systems to be referenced in the priority actions.

African member states, including the Africa Regional Group, Ethiopia, Egypt, Sierra Leone, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, advocated strongly for the specific inclusion of *health hazards* with the scope of the Framework. This was also supported by the EU and the Philippines. Specifically, Zambia suggested improved health should be within the outcomes of the Framework. In addition, the EU, Japan, and the Seychelles pushed for the inclusion of *technological hazards* within the Framework's definition.

However, Cuba announced that they want the scope of the Framework to be limited to *'extreme hydrological and meteorological hazards'* and Egypt wanted the removal of the references to *slow onset disasters.*

One of the most contested issues amongst governments within this theme is the inclusion of *conflict* in the Framework. Some member states, in particular African nations including Mali and Zimbabwe, recognised the link between disasters and insecurity as well as other trends such as population growth and environmental degradation, and therefore stressed the need for the Framework to cover conflict situations. A number of European representatives (Czech Republic, the EU and Germany) also spoke out during negotiations of the need to include conflict in the definition of the scope of the Framework. However, a number of South Asian (Bangladesh, India and Pakistan) and North African states (Algeria and Egypt) as well as Azerbaijan, Cuba and Kenya wanted the deletion of all references to conflict.

2.   Link to Climate Change

In a number of country statements there was an evident desire to uphold a strong focus on **climate change** and to integrate this within the DRR Framework, ensuring coherence across the post-2015 discussions. This was championed by the African Union and Africa Regional representatives, as well as other African states (Morocco, Mali, Madagascar, South Sudan, and Togo), European representatives (EU, France, Sweden and the UK), South Asian, ASEAN, other South Asian states (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia), and also Japan, Nauru, New Zealand, Panama, and Peru.

A number of representatives also called for greater emphasis on **climate change adaptation**. This included representatives from; Africa Regional, Gambia, Jamaica, Japan and South Sudan.

The greatest push back in aligning DRR and climate change was from the United States delegation that argued for a **separate conversation**. Bolivia also asked for the removal of an ecosystems approach, as they felt this held too much emphasis on climate change. Kenya and Nauru also advocated to add a footnote in the Framework that climate change was being dealt with in the UNFCCC and not necessary to include here.

3. Ecosystems and Environmental Management

A number of governments highlighted that the **resilience of ecosystems** needed to be strengthened as a priority in the Framework. China, the EU, France, the Netherlands and the Philippines pushed at various points for the inclusion of ecosystem management or the taking of ecosystem-based approaches. Gambia made protecting biodiversity one of their priorities in their statement and Ireland and Panama wanted the addition of the need to **halt biodiversity loss** in the preamble of the Framework. However, Bolivia and Ghana stressed their desire to **leave out** any mention of ecosystems or ecosystem-based approaches, the latter saying it was too related to climate change and appropriate in this Framework.

France, Madagascar, the UK and Zimbabwe highlighted more broadly the need to add reference to **addressing environmental issues** in the goal and priority for actions of the Framework, some specifically wanting reference to the need to integrate DRR into environmental policies and plans. Cuba contrasted this with a strong message to remove all references to building environmental resilience in the document.

4. The link between disasters and development

Some member states (Algeria, Bhutan, Cameroon, Canada, Guyana and Nepal) recognised the interconnectedness between development and disasters, stating that DRR needs to be placed in the context of, or approached via, sustainable development. Algeria mentioned in their statement the need to take a socio-economic development approach to DRR and Madagascar, Peru and Togo spoke strongly of the need to focus on **resilience and the link to development.** Argentina, the EU and Turkey highlighted in both their statements and interventions in negotiations for the Framework to more strongly work to **address the underlying drivers of risk** relating to development. However, some countries wanted the **removal of reference to development issues** as drivers of disaster risk. This included Bangladesh, Cuba, Egypt, and India.

India and Luxembourg focused their comments on **linking the financing for DRR and development**, suggesting the need for a percentage of development budget earmarked for DRR, whilst the joint statements by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and from OECD countries spoke of the need for **partnerships with development actors.** Brazil specifically called for the coordination with development actors across UN agencies to better link DRR and development.

Many governments specifically mentioned the need to **link the Post-2015 DRR Framework with the Post-2015 Development Framework** (The Sustainable Development Goals) in their statements. This included Argentina, ASEAN, Bhutan, Cameroon, DRC, Japan, the Netherlands, Peru and the UK. Many governments saw the **alignment of the Framework's timeframe** with that of the 15 year timeframe of Post-2015 Development Framework as essential (Brazil, the EU, Fiji, France, Germany, Mexico, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Thailand, Turkey, the United States and the UK). In contrast, Italy, Kyrgyzstan and Togo suggested different timeframes - 20 years, 20 years, and 10 years respectively. Most vocal against the alignment and interconnection between the different Post-2015 frameworks was the USA who noted that they wanted to keep conversations **separate**.

5. Inclusion

During the negotiations, a number of countries advocated for an inclusive Post-2015 DRR Framework. The Samoa and South Sudan delegations both spoke of the importance of an integrated and inclusive successor Framework, with Canada, Finland and Turkey pushing for an understanding of **'vulnerable groups'**.

The Canadian delegation spoke most strongly of the need to maintain a **gendered perspective**, with a number of interventions stressing the importance of noting women, children and youth as some of the most at-risk groups. Canada also spoke of the need to include these groups within the DRR decision making process. Reference to a gender dimension, and a whole of society approach within the Framework was also championed by Korea, New Zealand, Norway, United States and Togo, who made specific references to this in their statements during the plenary session. CEPREENAC confirmed this position in their statement noting the need to have complementary policies and contributions promoting the **empowerment of women and gender**.

Youth, children and indigenous people were recognised as groups disproportionately affected by disasters that should be explicitly mentioned in the Framework by Algeria, Austria, Canada, CEPREENAC, Korea, New Zealand, Norway, the United States and Togo. The following countries also pushed for more explicit mention of those with **disabilities**; Ecuador, Estonia, the EU, Germany, Italy, Morocco and the Netherlands.

Brazil, Mexico and Fiji intervened to keep the existing reference to **indigenous people**. This was, however, countered by Bangladesh who wanted to remove reference to indigenous groups, and to replace this with '**ethnic minorities'**. Peru, in particular, advocated for the removal of the reference to specifically addressing vulnerable groups, and Cuba wanted the deletion of the term **'at risk'**. Egypt also specifically requested the removal of the need for **'equality'** from the principles section of the Zero-Draft. Notably, in both government statements and interventions there was little specific mention to **the elderly** as one of these at-risk groups.

6. People-centred

Many Major Groups have advocated for the need for the Framework to be 'people centred', building on local communities' needs, knowledge and capacities. This critical issue received much attention in member state statements at the 2nd Preparatory Committee. Argentina, the Philippines, stressed that people and *communities should be kept at the centre* of the Framework, with Argentina saying that communities should be players and decision makers in their own history. Bhutan, New Zealand, Spain, Zambia, and Zimbabwe made reference to the fact that resilient nations will only be achieved through *building the resilience of communities* and that actions should *focus on strengthening community capacities* and roles. Indonesia stated in negotiations that in the priorities for action local communities at the frontline need to be further emphasised as the key stakeholder. CEPREENAC and Morocco linked this to the *rights of all stakeholders.*

This was contrasted by Cuba, who wanted the removal of the reference to the Framework being people centred in the preamble, and also Kenya, who suggested the removal of the reference to the need for 'decision making power, resources and incentives to be allocated appropriately' in order to empower communities and local authorities in principle 15d. However, Austria and Japan spoke up strongly against Cuba's suggested removal.

7. Monitoring and Data

Emerging from the negotiations was an emphasis on the need for *development and sharing of monitoring methodologies and standards.* In statements, Gambia and Nepal highlighted the establishment of a strong monitoring framework and body to track implementation as one of their key priorities. Cuba and Iran wanted the removal of reference to sharing monitoring and developing common monitoring standards. However, the EU, France, and Samoa pushed back strongly on this proposed deletion stressing the importance of monitoring methodologies and standards. Taking this further, Cuba and Nauru also stated their desire for the removal of references to need for data to be *free and open* to all.

Another critical issue around monitoring and data was the proposition for the *need for disaggregated data* (across gender, age, disability and other factors) to be collected and shared. Brazil and Canada spoke most strongly on this, wanting the inclusion of a reference to need for disaggregated data in the priorities for action.

8. International Cooperation

International support was another of the most critically debated areas of the Zero-Draft negotiations. A significant number of LEDC countries pushed for reference to International Cooperation in their plenary statements. These included: African states (Africa Regional Group, Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia and South Sudan), Asian countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and the Philippines), Pacific countries (Nauru, Samoa, SIDS), as well as Argentina, Bolivia, Cuba and the Russian Federation. All these delegations wished to acknowledge the support developing countries need both through *regional partnership* and *international cooperation*.

The Africa Regional Group especially referenced capacities, and would like to see clear differentiation between those developed and developing countries in relation to differing *capacities, finances and research* when considering implementing the Post-2015 DRR Framework.

The countries that upheld the greatest opposition to this enhanced reference to international support were key donors, Canada, Estonia, the EU, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland who recommended any reference to this international support, especially financial aid implications, to be removed.

9. Knowledge

Recognising and harnessing specific *knowledge* is an additional area of the Zero-Draft that was focused on by member states during the negotiations. Iran, Kenya, New Zealand, the UK and the United States referred to *knowledge sharing and transfer* in both plenary statements and interventions. Argentina, in particular, recommended to strengthen the role of Universities as a primary stakeholder and source of knowledge.

There were a number of calls to strengthen the references to *scientific and technical knowledge* in the Framework. Mexico recommended the establishment of scientific advisory committees at global and regional levels. Spain also supported this, asking for synergies between technology and coordinated actions of all players. The UK recognised the existing networks of science and research institutions to support the technical work on DRR. The Japanese and Slovenian delegations were also in favour of strengthening the recognition of these *technological communities.*

Morocco and New Zealand complimented the reference to science by supporting additional references to *traditional and local practice*, and the use of traditional media used in ethnic societies. A number of other governments (Fiji, Indonesia and New Zealand) noted the importance of informal *education and learning*. Indonesia thought an additional reference to this should be included in the next draft of the Framework to reflect the 'peer learning among communities at the Frontline'. The Algerian delegation countered this by recommending the deletion of *'informal education systems'*, not understanding this reference to informality.

10. Build back better

The need to strengthen references to the critical opportunity to 'build back better' emerged as a key issue for many member states. The OECD's and the Philippines's statement mentioned the need to *institutionalise resilient recovery* as one of their priorities for the framework going forward. Many European nations (France, Germany, the EU, Netherlands, and Latvia) as well as Panama and Nauru, specifically wanted it referenced in the principle 15j around the importance of the recovery and reconstruction phases. Others wanted it brought out clearly in the preamble (Bangladesh, Fiji, Japan, and the Philippines). Japan highlighted that they thought its importance as an approach should be reflected in the capitalisation of the words to become 'Build Back Better' (BBB). This recognition of 'build back better' as an essential approach for the priorities for action was reinforced by Bangladesh, Bhutan, Colombia, Mexico, the Philippines, the UK and the US.

Conclusions

What should civil society be prioritising?

Little time remains before the finalisation of the Framework (31st January 2015) and little opportunity remains for civil society to have a voice in its development. Governmental negotiations continue on the 8-10th December 2014 and the 12-16th January 2015, and it will therefore be critical for civil society organisations to lobby governments around these key issues in the run up to and during these periods, so that the voice of civil society can be reflected in their interventions. In light of the analysis of the positions presented above, civil society organisations need to question where their priorities should be in their continued efforts to influence the content of the Framework:

Scope. It is important that the Framework covers the range of interconnected hazards that communities experience at the local level and that they deal with holistically. There is a therefore a need to lobby those governments who have not suggested the inclusion of health hazards to support this in their interventions in the upcoming negotiations. The inclusion of conflict is one of the most contentious, splitting member states' opinions. As the majority of disasters take place in countries characterised by instability and fragility, this context must be taken into account and civil society should specifically target those governments opposed and those not speaking out in support for its inclusion.

Climate change. The majority of governments support the stronger link to climate change in the Framework. However, the USA is the main opposer and represents a major donor and influencer of the Framework. There is therefore the need for CSOs to further explore the reasoning behind the USA's position on this issue.

Ecosystems and Environment. Increased focus on protecting and building ecosystems seems likely to emerge in the next draft due to high levels of support. Civil society should continue to stress the links between ecosystem degradation and disasters and lobby Bolivia, Ghana and Cuba who are the main opposers to this.

Development. The majority of member states recognise the link between development and disasters and specifically the need for policy coherence between the Post-2015 DRR and Development Frameworks. Whilst a small number of countries have spoken out against this strengthening of coherence, the USA is a significant opposer. Civil society needs to work to better understand why the USA is taking this position on this critical issue towards more effective advocacy. Further, there is a need to lobby those governments who are not necessarily coming out *against* the coherence with the Post-2015 Development Framework, but are rather *not coming out in support* strongly enough. This will build a more vocal critical mass in support of policy coherence.

Inclusion and 'people centred'. It seems that the majority of governments are keen for strengthening the 'inclusivity' of the Framework and the extent to which it is 'people centred'. However, civil society needs to continue to lobby governments around these issues to ensure that the specific language holds states to account to 'leave no one behind'. It appears extra focus is needed on advocating to governments around the importance of access for persons with disabilities and the role of elderly persons as a group subject to more risk and with unique knowledge and capacities to build upon.

Monitoring and data. Whilst monitoring frameworks and data sharing has become a key issue amongst member states, there is still a need for the focus to be on local level

participatory monitoring and the disaggregation of data across at-risk groups and civil society advocacy should reflect this.

International cooperation. This is one of the most contentious issues, splitting the opinions of governments across the donor and recipient divide. Civil society should focus on advocating with governments the need to build on existing domestic resources, both financial and also non-financial, including the capacities of local communities who manage their own risk. In particular, civil society should emphasise the potential linkages with related funds (e.g. Climate Adaptation Fund; Global Environmental Facility) which could unlock resources for strengthening resilience and build policy coherence.

Knowledge. Whilst knowledge generation and exchange has gained attention from member states in the negotiations, there is a need for further emphasis on the blending of local and scientific knowledge. Communities, and in particular those persons and groups subject to more risk, have significant knowledge around approaches to resilience which can be complemented with scientific knowledge. Specific examples of mechanisms that have facilitated this blending should be shared with governments.

Build back better. The increased emphasis on resilient recovery should be supported, highlighting the critical opportunity that the recovery period offers to highlight and address underlying causes of risk, and heighten political and media attention.

What could be the potential focus of upcoming negotiations?
As the governmental negotiations continue, and the final sections of the Framework are discussed in more detail, two issues are likely to emerge strongly and should be of priority for civil society to support:

- *Role of stakeholders:* It will be critical to ensure that governments state their support for strengthening references to the primary stakeholder role of civil society, and the critical role that their facilitating CSOs play. It is possible that governments will push for increased references to the reliance on international actors, and the need for a truly multi-stakeholder approach will be diluted.

- *Means of Implementation:* As the section on international cooperation and global partnership is discussed, it is likely that contentious discussions around international financial support will continue. It will therefore be critical for civil society to focus on advocating with member states the need to recognise the existing resources at the local level and also the potential to leverage additional resources through policy coherence with climate change and development agendas.

- *Accountability and transparency:* As the Informal Working Group on Targets and Indicators shares the outcome of their discussions, it will be important to ensure local level participatory monitoring and the establishment of baseline circa 2015 are supported by governments. Further, the need to ensure accountability through linkages with domestic and international legal frameworks will need to be pushed.

For more information on how the critical issues discussed in this document should be reflected in the Framework, see GNDR's position paper on Zero-Draft.