

Joint Civil Society Position on Post 2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

[DRAFT GNDR16 May2014]

1. Introduction

This joint civil society position paper is intended as a contribution to the *multi-stakeholder consultation process to develop the post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)*. The paper draws from the experiences and expertise of a broad range of civil society actors and community practitioners working to strengthen the resilience of at-risk men and women, notably the 38 civil society representatives who participated at the Civil Society Forum in Geneva, Switzerland 10-11 Feb 2014.

The paper highlights a number of critical issues and related policy recommendations that civil society considers should be incorporated within the post-2015 DRR framework to make it more effective. These recommendations will need to be contextualised according to local realities to make them resonate with national governments responsible for the safety of their citizens. The paper is informed by UNISDR's "*Elements for Consideration in the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*" and focuses on areas that are either missing, unclear and/or require greater emphasis within the current discourse. The paper represents a joint civil society action endorsed by a broad cross-section of civil society actors (see Annex). The paper will be used to support coherent advocacy and communications activities in the national, regional and global consultation process leading up to the 3rd World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) in Sendai, Japan, 14-18th March 2015.

2. Context

When developing a post-2015 DRR Framework it is important to recall the strengths and weaknesses in the current Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). Notable achievements of the HFA over its ten year timeframe include: 1/ adoption of a simple normative framework has facilitated international cooperation and served as a useful advocacy tool to raise DRR commitments; 2 / increased awareness and understanding of DRR theory and practice; 3/ supported the strengthening of national DRR legislative and institutional arrangements, particularly disaster preparedness and response capacities.

The main shortcomings of the HFA can be summarised as: 1 / limited progress in reducing the causes of risk; 2/ limited connectivity with other development frameworks and actors; 3/ implementation gap between national DRR policy intent and local practices¹; and 4/ weak accountability, in part due to ineffective monitoring and redress mechanisms.

The result of these gaps and challenges (with the exception of decreasing mortality risk for major weather-related disasters) is a continuing upwards trend in disaster losses. Whilst most countries have made some progress across all five Priority Areas, the HFA will not achieve its expected outcome of a substantial reduction in disaster losses by 2015. This is primarily because current patterns of social-economic development are creating unacceptable levels of risk, faster than the ability to take *corrective* actions to manage the accumulating levels of risk. Moreover, a substantial proportion of disaster losses are due to low-severity high-frequency disasters² which receive minimal government support and are grossly under-reported on national databases. In reality, disaster losses are substantially greater than the official figures indicate, suggesting that a radical rethink to the current DRR approach is required.

¹Global Network for Disaster Reduction Views from the Frontline 2009.

²UNISDR (GAR2013) found that ninety percent of losses in developing countries are associated with "*extensive risk*"

3. Substantive Elements of a post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

3.1 Guiding Principles

There was consensus at the GP-DRR 2013³ that a post-2015 DRR framework should be underpinned by a clear set of principles that have relevance across all strategic objectives and priority actions. Principles form the basis for actions and should inform the way the post-2015 DRR framework is developed, implemented and evaluated. Shared values and principles can support different stakeholders to develop coherent programming and sustain meaningful cooperation over the longer term. From a civil society perspective the following principles are considered important to reduce the risk of households and communities to disasters;

3.1.1 RIGHTS-BASED;

The actions of governments and other actors to reduce disaster risk must be consistent with legal obligations to respect, protect and fulfil universal human rights. Existing international legal obligations and associated national legislations should form the non-negotiable normative basis of a post-2015 DRR framework. Within societies, this will require actions across rights holders and duty bearers to address structural inequalities, exclusions and injustices that marginalise certain groups and reinforces differential vulnerability – for example ensuring people can participate in political decision-making processes and have access to the necessary natural, economic and social resources

3.1.2 EQUITY;

Closely associated with notions of justice and inclusion in this context, the principle of equity represents a belief that everyone is entitled to a minimum level of security and protection in the event of disasters. The post-2015 DRR framework must be designed to reduce disaster risk for all men and women regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, geography, disability or other social-economic status. Goals and objectives should be designed to include not only those most “easy to reach” but also marginalised and excluded groups who are disproportionately impacted by disasters. For example: the economically poor; women; children and youth; older people; persons with disabilities; persons living and working in the informal sector; migrants; minorities and indigenous peoples; persons living in fragile conflict-affected areas

3.1.3 PEOPLE-CENTRED;

To have impact at the local level the post-2015 DRR framework must be built on the real experiences, needs, realities, concerns, local wisdom and solutions of affected populations. A people-centred approach puts at-risk men and women (as *the primary bearers of risk*) at the forefront of global efforts to strengthen resilience, including the formulation and execution of a post-2015 DRR framework. It requires affected populations to set and pursue their own agenda, control their own resources, have access to relevant information and have the means to hold governments and other actors to account for meeting duties and obligations.

3.1.4 ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY;

People’s ability to withstand, cope with and recover from extreme environmental hazards depends on the ability of the earth’s planetary systems to provide a range of eco-system services that sustain livelihood security, offer physical protection and reduce the impact of natural hazards such as landslides, floods, avalanches and storm surges. Social-economic development patterns can degrade ecosystems leading to increasing disaster risk. For example; anthropogenic climate change is contributing to an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events.

³Chair’s Summary Forth Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2013

A post-2015 framework primarily designed to reduce disasters caused by natural hazards must be based on the principle of environmental integrity, where social-economic development is in balance with the capacity and functioning of the natural environment, in order to maintain biodiversity and sustain healthy ecosystems essential for people's well-being and security.

3.2 Recommendations and Priority Actions;

3.2.1 STRATEGIC EMPHASIS ON TACKLING THE CAUSES OF DISASTER RISK

Reversing the upwards trend in disaster losses will require a post-2015 DRR framework to address two fundamental challenges: 1/ First and foremost is the need to reduce the creation of new and emerging risk to acceptable levels by tackling the underlying risk drivers; 2/ the need for accelerated actions to reduce the existing accumulations of disaster risk.

Historically, DRR measures have focused on managing existing risk (notably through enhanced preparedness and response) whilst actions related to underlying risk drivers (HFA - PFA4) account for least progress. To increase progress towards this critical area there must be stronger political commitment and ownership of the DRR agenda across the main social-economic development actors. In this respect, it may be helpful to reframe disaster reduction under a resilience-based development objective- where resilience is the ability to sustain development when subjected to extreme shocks and disturbances.

Reducing the creation of risk to acceptable levels by tackling the proximate and root causes of risk at different administrative scales (from local to global) will require a comprehensive risk management strategy. The strategy will need to acknowledge and be informed by the political economy of development, particularly the need for equitable access to, and control over, economic and natural resources. It will need to tackle the power imbalances that underpin differential vulnerabilities, combining *supply-side* actions focused on increasing the effectiveness of state institutions and critical public policies with *demand-side* actions aimed at shifting power relations, cultural values and norms (including public perceptions and attitudes towards acceptable levels of risk).

Practical Actions:

1. The post-2015 DRR framework to be underpinned by a clear set of guiding principles including rights based, equity, people-centred and environmental integrity.
2. Reframe the post-2015 DRR framework under a sustainable development goal:
Goal: *Strengthen the resilience of nations and men and women in communities to sustain development when subjected to extreme hazards, shocks and disturbances*
Strategic Objective 1; Transform development pathways to reduce the generation of new disaster risk to acceptable levels
Strategic Objective 2; Reduce *existing* accumulations of disaster risk caused by inappropriate development pathways to acceptable levels
3. Identify principles, values and (ecosystem-based) approaches underpinning resilience-based development pathways.
4. Actions to incentivise, promote and advance resilience-based development.
5. Actions to incentivise, promote and support accelerated actions to manage existing disaster risks.

3.2.2 STRENGTHEN POLICY COHERENCE ACROSS DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS AND ACTORS

We live in an increasingly hyper-connected, fast-changing world where social, economic, environmental and geo-political risks interact and do not fit neatly into separate conceptual frameworks. Reducing disaster losses to an acceptable level will require global cooperation on an unprecedented scale to address underlying drivers of risk. Although inter-linkages between different policy domains are widely acknowledged, they continue to be managed in separate policy silos with different actors, funding mechanisms and operational processes. Only when the frameworks and actors dealing with disasters, development, conflict, poverty and climate change are connected in a strategic manner can they be effective in making a difference at the community level.

These complex realities are reflected in the holistic approaches that households adopt to sustain their lives and livelihoods when exposed to multiple risks, where the ability to manage one risk is closely related to the ability to manage another. Community-driven approaches tend to be designed to provide multiple benefits that *protect* and *enhance* people's lives, livelihoods and assets across a range of foreseen and unforeseen risks. They take more long-term perspectives, foster power-sharing and collaboration based on iterative action-learning processes, where local leaders and community practitioners are the main agents for change.

From an institutional perspective this will require external policy frameworks to shift from narrow technocratic solutions towards more integrated strategies that better represent the way at-risk people manage multiple risks. It will require strong political leadership and coordination to build coherence across distinct yet interconnected policies and actors. It will involve the development of alternative conceptual models and connecting narratives that reframe climate change, disasters and development within a mutually reinforcing agenda. It will require an operational approach that fosters experimentation, innovation and supports comprehensive risk mapping, joint assessments and planning, integrated programming, harmonised monitoring, reviews and evaluations. It will require connecting formal and informal structures across institutional scales and may involve structural changes to the institutional and funding architecture to breakdown thematic silos and deliver such changes.

Practical Actions:

1. Broaden the scope of the next DRR framework to encompass disaster risks of any type: natural, man-made, economic, political, social or technological (including violent conflict and emerging technological risks).
2. Strengthen inter-disciplinary trans-boundary networks to share knowledge, learning and good practice.
3. Develop integrated risk models, mental frames and narratives for harmonised approaches.
4. Develop comprehensive risk management programmes that reflect community-driven approaches including comprehensive risk profiling, assessments and registers at national / sub-national / local levels.
5. Structural changes to the international development's institutional and funding architecture to incentivise and facilitate harmonised strategies and build coherence across related policy frameworks.
6. Identify and incorporate common principles and values underpinning resilience-based development within relevant post-2015 frameworks (Sustainable Development / Climate Change).
7. Develop political leadership and financial, legal, social, political and administrative incentives for integrated approaches across disaster, climate and development actors.

3.2.3 IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

At the heart of actions to strengthen community resilience are the governance or political processes that enable different stakeholders to articulate needs and priorities, mediate differences, negotiate trade-offs and exercise individual and institutional rights and responsibilities. In general, the more accountable governments are the more responsive they are to meeting people's rights and the greater their political commitment to providing a minimal level of protection from disasters.

Although accountability for disaster risk reduction has made progress in some countries, it is generally weak and requires strengthening. Strategies to strengthen accountability and ensure compliance are essential for the effective implementation of DR policies and legislation. A well-informed and empowered citizenry can play a vital role in holding governments and private sector actors to account. There is strong evidence that where public and legal accountabilities are grounded in public awareness, informed by access to relevant information (clear responsibilities, authorities, rights and entitlements, performance standards, targets and indicators) they exercise pressure on governments for the fulfilment of their political mandates.

Practical Actions:

1. Develop clear accountability and transparency mechanisms across sectors and institutional scales.
2. Explicitly link the *protection of persons* from disasters to existing domestic and international legal instruments (e.g. International Human Rights Law and Standards).
3. Develop nationally-contextualised goals, targets and indicators for different countries, based on established post-2015 baselines at national and local levels.
4. Develop and endorse appropriate resilience standards and codes (inclusive of informal sector and non permanent housing).
5. Establish transparent and impartial participatory monitoring and reporting processes, including peer reviews, social audits, and mid- and end-term evaluations.
6. Clearly define DRR institutional and individual roles, responsibilities, duties, commitments and entitlements at all levels so that actors can hold one another to account.
7. Ensure disasters loss data and indicators are disaggregated as appropriate so progress across different social-economic groups can be measured.
8. Develop information management systems for collation, mapping and dissemination of relevant risk information to relevant stakeholders.
9. Develop compliance and enforcement mechanisms for government and private sector actors, including complaints / grievance procedures that are accessible to marginalised groups.

3.2.4. INCREASED FOCUS ON SMALL-SCALE RECURRENT “EVERYDAY” DISASTERS

The post-2015 DRR framework should be relevant to both large and *small-scale* disasters. Small localised “everyday” disasters account for the majority of losses in terms of social, economic and environmental assets. These low severity but relatively high frequency disasters are usually triggered by weather events and the interaction of these events with the local ecosystems. Disasters losses due to everyday disasters are increasing rapidly and will be amplified by climate change, particularly for low-income households in low and

middle-income countries where the government's institutional and technical capacities are limited. The majority of these losses are unaccounted for, uninsured, do not unlock external assistance and have to be locally managed.

An increased focus on preparing for and mitigating everyday disasters (i.e. extensive risk) is strategically important given the scale of the cumulative losses, the number of people affected and the fact that over time "extensive risk" can concentrate and reconfigure into "intensive risk" – which is more difficult and expensive to address through "corrective actions". Addressing the causes of small localised disasters can provide multiple leveraged entry points to address the creation of new disaster risk and strengthen community resilience.

Practical Actions:

1. Prioritise low-severity high-frequency weather-related disasters, particularly in developing countries and areas of insecurity and fragility with minimal government capacities.
2. Strengthen national and sub-national loss databases to systematically record small-scale recurrent disasters.
3. Develop risk management tools, methodologies and approaches appropriate to extensive risk.
4. Post-2015 DRR framework to incorporate a strong focus on addressing the drivers of extensive risk especially investing in comprehensive risk governance capabilities at the local level.

3.2.5. STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNANCE CAPABILITIES

Government resources are limited and the allocation of resources reflects the priorities of those who influence decision-making. If at-risk people have little voice or opportunity to influence political and technical decision-making processes, the allocation of resources for preventive measures will ignore and could be biased against their needs and priorities: for example; flood control measures in one part of a city could end up increasing the flood hazard for poorer residents living elsewhere in the city. Many of the causes of vulnerability and exposure have their roots in governance deficiencies and power imbalances (including gender inequalities) between different social-economic groups that can make public policy decisions discriminatory, exclusive and unjust.

Accordingly, shortcomings in the provision of resilience measures are often rooted in deficiencies in existing governance mechanisms, particularly in relation to extensive risk. The quality of governance within a country determines the extent to which citizens are able to participate in political and economic life and is central to the task of strengthening resilience. Whilst acknowledging that not all disaster risks can be addressed at the local level, *Views from the Frontline 2011* identified investing in local governance as the single most important factor in strengthening community resilience. Enhancing local governance requires greater clarity of the roles and responsibilities of different state and non-state actors, together with substantial investments in capacity building and public financing to strengthen and resource local governance processes. It also requires changes in the culture of public administration to support new ways of working that promote decentralisation, empower citizens, build trust, encourage participation and cooperation, and strengthen local leadership capabilities.

Practical Actions:

1. Invest in decentralised governance systems and local capacities including clearly defined authorities, roles responsibilities and dedicated budgets/ financial resources.

2. Invest in formal and informal local / community leadership capabilities e.g. training, coaching, experiential learning.
3. Recognise the rights of all groups to engage in local governance processes, including developing legal and institutional provisions to access information and facilitate participation in decision-making processes.
4. Develop effective change processes to tackle structural imbalances and gender inequalities that underpin the vulnerabilities of different social, economic and demographic groups.

3.2.6 ADOPT GENDER-SENSITIVE COMMUNITY-DRIVEN APPROACHES

Community resilience is the basic building block and foundation of a resilient nation. An engaged citizenry supported by local leadership are the first responders in times of crisis and should be at the forefront of actions to strengthen resilience. The effective use of existing resources and resilience capabilities is a prerequisite for effective risk management strategies and must be fully supported by government institutions and responsible political leaders. Women in particular, as a group who often bear the greatest burden of disasters, can play a vital role as change agents within their communities. Their voices, concerns and priorities must be highlighted within planning and decision-making processes.

Accordingly, a post-2015 DRR framework should adopt gender-sensitive *community-driven* approaches based on an understanding of how affected men and women strengthen their own resilience to extreme shocks and disturbances. Community resilience is closely related to the ability of different community members to resolve differences, self-organise and engage in collaborative actions. Community-driven approaches are particularly relevant for small localised disasters which are usually self-managed by the affected populations and can help ensure DRR actions are appropriate, cost-effective and sustainable in the longer term.

Practical Actions:

1. Promote and support gender-sensitive community-driven approaches designed to build on and strengthen local resilience capabilities.
2. Promote and support decentralised and devolved local governance systems.
3. Empower community-level women's organisations, volunteer groups and civil society actors to manage disaster risk by having access to information, resources and decision-making processes.
4. Co-develop participatory tools and methodologies with women and other local stakeholders to proactively engage at-risk men and women in the design, planning, management and implementation of disaster risk management processes.

3.2.7. PRIORITISE THE HIGH-RISK PEOPLE AND POPULATIONS

Disasters can impact on all peoples within societies whether in high, medium or low-income countries. However, whilst acknowledging the heterogeneity of different groups and communities there are inevitably certain groups within countries who are disproportionately affected by disasters.

The first of these groups are people who, due to a variety of physical, social and economic factors, are more vulnerable, marginalised, excluded or unprotected by society. These include women, children and youth,

older persons, ethnic and religious minorities, displaced, indigenous, persons with disabilities, the economically poor and persons with particularly high-risk livelihoods.

The second group are at-risk populations who, due to their geographical location, are more exposed to hazardous environments. This group includes people who live in least developed countries and small island developing States; people who live within fragile states where government institutional capacities are weak or dysfunctional or may be affected by insecurity and violent conflict. It also includes people in both high and low-income countries who live close to industrial complexes such as nuclear power stations, petro-chemical plants and solid waste landfill sites.

Informed by principles of equity and justice, the post-2015 framework must ensure DRR interventions are proportionate to the level of risk with which people and populations live whilst recognising the role that high-risk men and women can play as a driving force for strengthening community resilience. This requires particular attention to engage high-risk people and populations including developing tools and approaches relevant to situations of fragility, insecurity and conflict.

Practical Actions:

1. Ensure the representation of all members of society in DRR decision-making processes, with specific attention given to engaging high-risk people and populations.
2. DRR strategies and resource allocations to be appropriate and proportionate to the risk levels of different socio-economic groups, populations and countries.
3. Disaggregate relevant disaster risk information, targets and indicators (both quantitative and qualitative) according to demographic, economic and social status.
4. Develop specific targets and indicators that support the prioritisation of high-risk people and populations.
5. Develop risk management strategies relevant for situations of fragility, insecurity and violent conflict.
6. Classify communities within close proximity to transportation corridors and industrial complexes susceptible to technological hazards as high-risk groups.

3.2.8. PROMOTE AND SUPPORT THE CRITICAL ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Achieving a substantial reduction in disaster losses will require a comprehensive strategy that supports changes in societal values, norms and perceptions of risk together with changes within government institutions and public policies – institutional changes must evolve hand in hand with changes in individual behaviour. Achieving these changes requires a critical mass of both state and non-state actors working collaboratively to overcome the inevitable resistance to change and create the momentum required.

Over the past decades the number, capacity and legitimacy of civil society organisations has increased substantially as they have gained experience and expertise in working alongside vulnerable men and women to identify, analyse and manage disaster risk. Civil society organisations and community practitioners can play an important role in sharing and aggregating citizen perspectives, raising public awareness, transparency and accountability, and developing good practices for their meaningful participation in the formulation and execution of DRR policies.

Yet in many countries civil society is often seen as opposition to governments and the political space for civil society as an independent development actor is shrinking. Moreover, the capacity of civil society in the global

South is variable and requires support to nurture community-driven approaches. In recognition of the vital role a vibrant civil society can play in strengthening community and societal resilience the promotion and support to civil society should be an essential ingredient of a post-2015 DRR strategy.

Practical Actions:

1. Recognise the role of civil society and community practitioners in broadening the participation of citizens in the formulation and implementation of community-driven disaster risk management strategies.
2. Strengthen the capacities of civil society to engage in multi-stakeholder DRR dialogue and actions.
3. Invest in civil society and community practitioner networks to share good practices, increase collaboration and strengthen coherence between different civil society actors and state actors.
4. Invest in South-South and South-North knowledge platforms to share expertise and enhance the integration of local / traditional wisdom and technological / scientific knowledge for DRR.
5. Create an enabling environment in legal and institutional provisions for civil society to promote citizen voices, aggregating citizen perspectives and translating into national policies and practices.

3.2.9 SUPPORT GREATER ENGAGEMENT WITH A RESPONSIBLE PRIVATE SECTOR

Seventy to eighty five percent of total financial investment is related to private sector business, with many of these investments located in areas prone to natural hazards. The actions of the private sector in core sectors of the economy (e.g. energy, transportation, mining, construction, agriculture) to a large extent determines how risk is created and/or reduced. To date, private sector engagement in the HFA has been limited and there are growing calls amongst government and inter-governmental bodies for increased engagement with the private sector in the post-2015 framework.

Whilst there is a strong argument for this approach given the substantial financial resources that private companies control, it is apparent from experience of the last few decades that there are inherent conflicts of interest in private-led development partnerships. There are numerous examples where market liberalization and deregulation has resulted in corporate practice that deepens political and economic inequality, undermines human rights commitments, weakens environmental protection, and supports tax avoidance and acts of corruption with government officials.

Whilst a responsible private sector does have an important role to play in strengthening the resilience of nations and communities, increased engagement with the private sector must be balanced by stronger regulatory and accountability frameworks in close partnership with civil society and other actors. Appropriate governance and regulatory arrangements to guide, control and monitor corporate practice should serve to increase the responsibility and accountability of the private sector for making risk-informed investment decisions at all levels. This includes the activities of small and medium enterprises, local entrepreneurs, cooperatives and traders who are based in the local area and need to be actively involved in risk management processes with their host communities to optimise opportunities and ensure the generation of risk associated with their business is within acceptable levels.

Practical Actions:

1. Develop strong incentives, regulatory, accountability and enforcement mechanisms to promote and regulate risk-sensitive corporate practices.

2. Develop clear criteria to determine whether private sector actors are eligible to become post-2015 DRR partners (e.g. no history of human rights or environmental abuses, tax avoidance or acts of corruption).
3. Identify opportunities for large, medium and small businesses for strengthening resilience.
4. Improve business resilience through adoption of standards, business continuity planning.
5. Strengthen and promote the development and use of relevant risk management tools such as risk transfer and risk insurance mechanisms.

3.2.10. SYSTEMISE DISASTER LEARNING WITHIN SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT

Disasters can provide important lessons and offer strategic leverage points for advancing the resilience agenda in the post-disaster recovery and broader development processes. The opportunity for the post-disaster recovery to build safer more resilient communities is underplayed in the current HFA and should be explicitly captured within a post-2015 DRR framework:

1/ Post-disaster forensics can reveal relative strengths and weaknesses in social-economic development pathways that are not readily apparent under “normal” conditions. These critical insights can serve to increase understanding of the principles, values and limits of resilience that should be incorporated within the post-disaster recovery and inform future development investments.

2/ Leverage point for transformational change, disasters can serve to change public perceptions and attitudes towards levels of acceptable risk. They can serve as a catalyst for changes in institutional and individual behaviour that may not be possible in “normal” times.

3/ Mobilisation of resources; The social, economic and political impact of disasters can raise political commitment for institutional reforms to strengthen disaster preparedness and tackle the underlying drivers of disaster risk, including the mobilisation of political and financial resources for new ways of doing things.

Practical Actions:

1. Post-2015 DRR framework to be demonstrably based on lessons learnt from the implementation of HFA.
2. Systematic use of post-disaster investigations / forensics to reveal causal processes and identify lessons learnt to inform recovery and broader sustainable development processes.
3. Comparative analysis of post-disaster forensics and recovery processes to synthesise lessons learnt and identify core principles, values, boundaries and limits underpinning resilience-based development.
4. Establish international resilience information networks to exchange knowledge on strengthening resilience.
5. Develop comprehensive disaster recovery frameworks to integrate disaster preparedness, response, rehabilitation and sustainable recovery processes.
6. Utilise disaster events as strategic opportunities to advance resilience principles and values within social economic development pathways.

4 Stakeholder Commitments and Political Declaration

Although not formally part of the post-2015 DRR framework, the inclusion of *Voluntary Commitments* underpinned by a *Political Declaration* as part of the overall outcome of the World Conference is welcomed as it provides a stronger recognition of the vital role of different stakeholder groups in reducing disaster risk than in previous frameworks.

There is an assumption within the HFA that governments will take action to protect their citizens from disaster risks. However, this is not the case in many developing countries where local communities “*de facto*” have to assume primary responsibilities for the self-protection of their lives, livelihoods and assets. For the majority of the world’s population affected by disasters these informal mechanisms and local non-state actors provide important sources of local resilience. Their contribution should not be underestimated and must be recognised and institutionalised within the post-2015 framework.

Accordingly, reducing disaster risks to an acceptable level will require different stakeholders (e.g. governments, at-risk communities, civil society, trade unions, academia and the private sector) to work together towards a shared vision of safer more resilient societies. To secure the commitment and ownership of civil society and community practitioners of this shared vision, it is important that the reformulation of the post-2015 framework reflects the priorities and actions that civil society actors consider important, based on their own experiences and insights of reducing disaster risk. This requires recognition of the value and role of civil society as an independent development actor that is able to provide critical local-level perspectives, strengthen public accountability and develop radical innovations and alternative conceptual models of resilience and sustainability. These actions go beyond the notion of “*voluntary commitments*” but requires an approach that both supports and resources all relevant stakeholders so they can play a central role in policy formulation and execution.

The achievement of a substantial reduction in disaster losses will require radical changes to current disaster risk management practices that in turn will require changes in disaster risk governance to build trust and strengthen collaboration. At the heart of effective collaboration is a commitment to sharing decision-making power between government agencies and other stakeholders. From a civil society perspective, it is important the Political Declaration includes the following expressions of political will by the signatory parties:

- 1. First and foremost, a strong expression of political commitment for the safety and protection of persons in the event of disasters.**
- 2. A strong expression of political commitment to multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral collaboration and partnerships.**
- 3. A commitment to empower community organisations, volunteer and practitioners groups, and other forms of civil society to engage in the formulation and execution of DRR policies and practice**

The incorporation of the recommendations and actions outlined in this position paper should help ensure the realities and concerns of at-risk communities (i.e. the primary risk bearers) are adequately reflected in the way the post-2015 framework is conceived, designed and subsequently implemented.

<p>Practical Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The post-2015 DRR framework to incorporate the core recommendations and priority actions as articulated by community groups and civil society organisations.2. A strong political commitment by national governments to recognise and fulfil their primary obligation for the safety and protection of persons in the event of disasters.
--

3. A strong political commitment by national governments to multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral collaboration and partnerships.
4. A strong political commitment by governments and inter-governmental bodies to empower community based organisations, volunteer groups and other elements of civil society to actively participate in the formulation and execution of public DRR policies and practices.
5. Acknowledgement of the unique role and support for the participation of civil society, including community practitioners and other stakeholders in strengthening risk management and resilience.
6. Resource Commitments: All actors (government, civil society, private sector, academia) to identify resources they can provide for strengthening resilience within their operational /programme budgets.

Summary Civil Society Recommendations, Principles and Political Commitments for Incorporation within a Post-2015 DRR Framework

1. STRATEGIC EMPHASIS ON TACKLING CAUSES OF RISK	2. STRENGTHEN POLICY COHERENCE	3. IMPROVE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY	4. INCREASED FOCUS ON "EVERYDAY DISASTERS"	5. STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNANCE CAPACITIES
6. ADOPT GENDER-SENSITIVE COMMUNITY-DRIVEN APPROACHES	7. PRIORITISE HIGH-RISK PEOPLE POPULATIONS	8. SUPPORT THE CRITICAL ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY	9. PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE PRIVATE SECTOR	10. SYSTEMISE DISASTER LEARNING
<u>GUIDING PRINCIPLES:</u>				
EQUITY	RIGHTS-BASED	PEOPLE-CENTRED	ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY	
<u>POLITICAL COMMITMENTS:</u>				
FOR THE SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF PEOPLE FROM DISASTERS	TO COLLABORATION	MULTI-STAKEHOLDER	TO THE EMPOWERMENT OF COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS	

Annex:

List of civil society networks and/or actors endorsing this “Joint Civil Society Position on Post 2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction”