The successor to the HFA has to build upon its successes and learn from its weaknesses. Above all else, it has to situate DRR within sustainable development – every aspect of its articulation and implementation should focus upon supporting and improving development. It is through the development process that the reduction of risk will be maximised, and the creation of new risk minimised.

Lead authors: Jan Kellett and Tom Mitchell
The future framework for DRR: avoiding and reducing risk through integration into sustainable development

The component parts

The HFA is divided into five pillars or themes, which have served to create ‘silos’ when implemented at different scales. This was not the intention. The authors recommend that the successor to the HFA avoid this by presenting its constituent parts as fundamentally interlinked components – a set of three gears, underpinned by seven building blocks. These offer a coherent guide to managing disaster risk in programmes, investments and private decision-making spheres in the context of sustainable development.

Each component, working together, will strengthen disaster resilience for sustainable development.

Component A: Minimising risk creation

DRR must be integrated into all development decisions, programming and practice, with climate change an active component. Central to this is the building of the institutional and enabling environment for risk-sensitive practices, and the involvement of all stakeholders.

Component B: Reducing existing risk

Building on a strengthened institutional environment for risk reduction, dedicated and deliberate attempts must be made to reduce existing risk, through and across all sectors, through both structural and non-structural methods.

Component C: Managing residual risk

A certain level of disaster risk will always remain. The residue must be adequately managed, through preparedness for effective response and relief, financial protection at all levels, coping mechanisms including social protection. Risk reduction must, in addition for recovery and reconstruction efforts.

The building blocks

The measurement of progress should be based on outcomes rather than process: The approach to monitoring the progress of the original HFA focused on a set of process or input indicators (e.g. has a disaster risk assessment been conducted, or does DRR legislation exist?) Its successor must also focus on outcomes – e.g. the actual reduction in disaster losses – as well as on the building blocks of disaster resilience. This is critical for enhancing accountability and understanding how progress is happening. Key to this is the establishment of a set of commitments that governments can endorse, commitments that are underpinned by a rigorous goal, target and indicator infrastructure.

The HFA needs to be an essential, integrated part of key development frameworks: In 2015 there is a unique alignment of global development frameworks under negotiation, with discussions on the successor to the HFA happening at the same time that a likely new set of SDGs and a new climate agreement are being negotiated. To be truly effective, the post-2015 frameworks on DRR should be integrated into each of these high-profile international frameworks and the commitments made under the post-2015 framework on DRR should be replicated in the other frameworks, with shared language, cross-referencing, goals, targets and indicators as appropriate.

Risk assessments must be the foundational component: "The starting point for reducing disaster risk … lies in the knowledge of the hazards and the physical, social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities … and of the ways in which hazards and vulnerabilities are changing in the short and long term, followed by action taken on the basis of that knowledge." Risk assessments should continue to be a founding principle of the international framework for DRR, but with special emphasis on three aspects: how risk assessments inform sustainable development, how the threat from multiple risks (including those not from natural hazards) needs to be understood together, and how risk assessments actually drive action and shape decisions.

The high levels of accountability and transparency required, needs investment: Key to the success of a future framework is a heightened level of accountability and transparency. This will require going beyond the self-reporting HFA monitor and will involve:

- Investing in data and tracking mechanisms for assessing activities, funding and outcomes at a country level, supported by the framework itself, which can assist through standardisation.
- A strong peer review mechanism between countries that allows for learning, progress to be highlighted and gaps to be considered. Such a mechanism has been established in the European Union, with the UK and Finland the first two countries to receive a peer review of their national progress on managing disaster risk by specialists from other countries.
- Internationally, the progress of countries and stakeholder groups against the goals, targets and indicators should be continually monitored, verifying information provided by governments. This will also help in considering the overall success of the post-2015 framework on DRR in reducing disaster losses and achieving risk-sensitive development.

Social inclusion and empowerment are essential to tackle vulnerability: The post-2015 framework on DRR must pay close attention to the social and cultural dimensions of disaster, ensuring that the framework foregrounds how the most vulnerable, most marginalised communities, are both more likely to be affected by disasters, and more severely. The components of a future framework must understand the particular vulnerability of these communities, and the suitably empowered role they can play in risk reduction should have high priority.

Contextualised implementation, tailored to each country: The post-2015 framework on DRR should support DRR across a wide range of contexts, including in the most fragile states. It has to be sufficiently flexible to support implementation where natural hazards aren’t the dominant threat and where government capacities are weak.

Policy developments must be underwritten by financial commitments: The national financing of DRR should be foregrounded in the post-2015 framework on DRR. It should be underpinned by a targeted commitment to spend, both on stand-alone DRR activities and initiatives and, more importantly, through being embedded into broader development planning and expenditure. International financing of DRR should be targeted to those countries and activities that are most needed, with donors shifting the burden of DRR to their development aid.
How the components are included in statements and consultations on the successor to the HFA

Mid-Term Review

- The executive summary notes progress: ‘An analysis of government reports…’
- The structure and operation of the component parts of the HFA are seen throughout the framework agreement (p. 5-13). Called ‘priorities for action’, they are as follows:
  - Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.
  - Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.
  - Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.
  - Reduce the underlying risks.
  - Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

Synthesis Report

- ‘Progress is consistently lower in HFA Priority 4, which aims to address directly the underlying drivers of risk.’ (p. 5)
- ‘Governance systems at the heart of DRR. Risk governance systems need to be strengthened…’

How the components are featured in the HFA

The general principles underpinning the HFA are detailed in Para 13:

In determining appropriate action to achieve the expected outcome and strategic goals, the Conference reaffirms that the following general considerations will be taken into account:

a. The Principles contained in the Yokohama Strategy retain their full, speedy and effective implementation of the HFA Monitor, for the 2005–2007, 2007–2009, and the on-going 2009–2011 cycles, indicates that progress is indeed taking place in disaster risk reduction, especially from an institutional point of view, in the passing of national legislation, in setting up early warning systems, and in strengthening disaster preparedness and response.‘

- ‘The subsequent reporting cycle, ending in 2009, indicated that the biggest challenges facing the world today: poverty, rapid urbanization, rapid population growth, and climate change…’

The architecture

The architecture
In order to make progress towards the expected outcome and strategic goals, public policies on risk management need to be underpinned by appropriate governance frameworks. Public policies will need to be underpinned by mechanisms for information and knowledge generation and management in order to ensure that relevant information and knowledge on risk and on risk management alternatives is available to policy and decision makers at different levels, from individuals and households to international organisations. (p. 7)

The priority areas of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction need to be defined in terms of critical public policies that address disaster risk in publically owned, managed or regulated services and infrastructures, and in the environment, but also that regulate or provide incentives for actions by households, communities, businesses and individuals. (p. 7)

**Recommended Reading**

The four main documents used to discuss developments over the past 10 years – the Elements Paper, Chair’s Summary, Mid-Term Review and Synthesis Paper – are all useful for a deeper understanding of the structures of past and possible frameworks. In addition, other documents provide a perspective from a different angle:

To see the United Nations plan of action for DRR go to:

To read how the World Bank articulates its own work in DRM, see:

To read about key challenges in creating a new structure for DRR, see: