



**Global Network**  
of Civil Society Organisations  
for Disaster Reduction

“Clouds but little rain...”



**Views from the Frontline** A local perspective  
of progress towards implementation of the  
Hyogo Framework for Action

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# “Clouds but little rain...”

## **Views from the Frontline**

A local perspective of progress  
towards implementation of the  
Hyogo Framework for Action

Views from the Frontline has served  
to deepen the communication and  
coordination between different  
stakeholders on disaster risk reduction  
by involving government, organisations  
and communities at the local level.

VFL regional report, South America, May 2009

**June 2009**



## Executive summary

With a wry but wise smile, Bishop Donald Mtetemela, a development worker for over 25 years and head of an East African development organisation, looked to the sky and explained:

**“The people I work with every day see many clouds – international initiatives and plans, but very little rain – actual change at the frontline.”**

It's an image that sums up the challenge of turning the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (HFA) into practical, sustainable activity at the frontline where people at-risk live, eat and work<sup>1</sup>. This is the challenge that must be met if a substantial reduction in disaster losses is to be achieved.

### Listening to views from the frontline is critical to understanding progress

'Views from the Frontline' (VFL) is the first independent assessment of progress ever undertaken towards implementation of the HFA at the local level. The review serves to connect policy formulation at international and national level with the realities of policy execution at local level. VFL is the pilot of a series of planned biennial reviews designed to complement national-level HFA monitoring coordinated by UNISDR. Results from the two initiatives should help establish a clear picture of progress and guide policy discussions to identify critical gaps and actions that will accelerate progress at the national and local levels.

The main objectives of the VFL review were:

1. To provide an overview of progress at the local level within participating countries
2. To strengthen public accountability for disaster risk reduction (DRR) policy execution by establishing a local level monitoring system and relevant baselines
3. To enhance civil society monitoring, research, analytical and advocacy capabilities
4. To increase dialogue and understanding between different groups responsible for reducing risk.

### How it worked

The review involved 48 countries in Africa, Asia and the Americas. Overall coordination was by the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR) working through regional and national focal points who mobilised over 400 civil society organisations to administer the survey<sup>2</sup>. These participating organisations completed 5290 survey questionnaires (primarily through face-to-face interviews) with three key informant groups: local governments, civil society organisations and community representatives. The main VFL research was complemented by two supporting studies covering 2035 people that focused on the situation facing two high-risk groups – women and children. The review adopted a sampling approach, which took account of the risk profiles of participating countries. The questionnaire incorporated a mix of qualitative and quantitative questions based on indicators derived from the five HFA Priorities for Action (PFAs) as well as cross cutting issues. Core indicators were not identical with the HFA monitor indicators used in the GAR, but they were comparable.

### A summary of the findings so far

Results and findings from this pilot review should be considered as preliminary and will continue to be refined during further country consultations and thematic analysis, but some clear headlines have emerged.

The review found a significant gap between national and local level action. Reports of progress fade as activities get closer to vulnerable people – overall progress at

<sup>1</sup> See [www.unisdr.org/eng/hfa/hfa.htm](http://www.unisdr.org/eng/hfa/hfa.htm) for a copy of the Hyogo Framework for Action

<sup>2</sup> The Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction brings together civil society organisations committed to influencing and implementing disaster risk reduction policy and practice at the local, national and international levels. Find out more at [www.globalnetwork-dr.org](http://www.globalnetwork-dr.org).

community level is 'very limited'. Progress is unevenly distributed across local actors, with civil society organisations often appearing to emerge as DRR 'champions' at the local level. Levels of progress are also different across regions (Asia regions and Central America score highest; whilst East and West Africa and the Middle East score lowest). The greatest levels of progress are often associated with countries that have adopted community-based approaches.

There are differences in perceived progress across the HFA PFAs and cross cutting issues. At local scale, least progress is reported towards PFA 1 (*Governance*), PFA 2 (*Risk Assessment and Monitoring*) and PFA 3 (*Knowledge and Education*). Within PFA 4 (*Underlying Risk Factors*), low levels of progress are reported by community respondents in food security, poverty alleviation and social protection. A number of VFL country reports highlighted climate change to be one of many inter-related problems perceived to interact at the household level with security, poverty and wellbeing. Under PFA 5 (*Preparedness and Response*) the review found opportunities were being missed to 'build back better' in post-disaster recovery. One of the lowest scoring indicators overall was community participation in decision-making process. This finding was reinforced by two complementary studies, which report that very little progress has been made in understanding the distinct vulnerabilities and attributes of high-risk groups such as women and children. Quantitative and qualitative data shows the most commonly cited constraints to progress are a lack of human, financial, training and technical resources.

As a direct result of the VFL research, literally thousands of structured conversations have taken place between government, communities and civil society. One of the objectives of VFL was to create a space for different actors at a local level to talk about DRR. In feedback from participants, this is seen as an important benefit of the review process.

## Headline conclusions

Nationally-formulated policies are not generating widespread systemic changes in local practices. Resources are scarce and considered one of the main constraints to progress although there are existing resources at local levels, which remain untapped. The key to unlocking these local resources is through adopting participatory approaches - civil society, particularly grassroots women's groups, can play a critical role in facilitating this community engagement.

The foundation for building resilience is people's awareness and understanding of the risks that they face. Therefore, a strategic entry point to building resilience is to undertake participatory risk assessments at the local level. Such assessments would:

- Inform disaster preparedness including early warning for effective response (PFA 2 & 5)
- Increase knowledge and education (PFA 3)
- Inform local development sector action planning (PFA 4)
- Increase awareness; raising social demand, public accountability and political commitment for DRR (PFA 1)
- Open space for dialogue, participation, trust and relationship building between different actors (PFA 1 and cross cutting issues).

Climate change creates a need, but also provides an opportunity to address underlying risk factors, raise external resources and political commitment for building resilience. Whether 'experts' refer to climate adaptation, poverty alleviation or DRR, at a local household level it comes down to the same thing – the security and well-being of lives and livelihoods. Actions at a local level to deal with the underlying drivers of any one of these, usually helps with the others. Calls for a closer integration and alignment of efforts to reduce risk, alleviate poverty and adapt to climate change means bringing the decision-making processes that address underlying causes closer to people

*It is felt the required frameworks and policies are already in place but are not implanted properly. Ineffective implementation can be attributed to weak enforcement mechanisms and limited capacities at all levels of those that are entrusted with the responsibility for implementation. Proper resource allocation can only be ensured after gaps in linkages and limitations of capacities of all stakeholders are removed. For proper utilisation of resources both top-down and bottom-up approaches need to be strong – the current approach to DRR is largely top-down.*

VFL blog: India

*Many governments have legislation and to some extent structures in support of decentralised ways of working – but with huge gaps in implementation and working culture. The wealth of knowledge and resources that civil society organisations have should be effectively used for building capacity of decision-makers, so that they in turn become community sensitive and centred. In reality, existing structures are hierarchical and not conducive to participatory approaches – so there should be a recommendation to engage and practice decentralised governance in general.*

Vishaka Hidellage: Practical Action Sri Lanka

at-risk.

Turning policy into practice requires finding the appropriate balance between top-down and bottom-up engagement. It is important to understand both national and local perspectives in discussions to define strategic priorities, which accelerate progress towards reducing disaster losses. As the HFA approaches the midway point of 2010, the results of the VFL suggest that the emphasis should shift from policy formulation at international and national levels to policy execution at local levels.

VFL 2009 has proven itself as an important first step towards building a global constituency and architecture to measure the effectiveness of DRR policy interventions at the local level. In the future, VFL could be extended geographically and incorporate climate adaptation indicators to measure climate resilience as well as disaster resilience. This would be a significant development in the way civil society, communities and governments work together to address global issues such as preventing disasters and adapting to climate change.

## **10 core recommendations**

1. Reorient HFA implementation strategies to support a proactive and systematic deepening of engagement with at-risk communities, including participation of most vulnerable groups.
2. Recognise the right of at-risk women, men and children to engage in decision-making and planning processes - participation must be clearly defined and explicitly recognised through policy, legal and institutional provisions.
3. Undertake participatory local hazard-vulnerability assessments and associated risk mapping as strategic entry points to raising critical awareness and understanding of risk and to building relationships among different actors. Set specific time-bound targets with clear responsibilities and delegated authority in support of these assessments. Teach children to do this too, using schools as important local centres for community action for disaster risk reduction.
4. Use local disaster risk knowledge to inform local programming and action planning of principal development sectors; risk considerations should become routine in all development investment planning and programming.
5. Decentralise authority and resources to appropriate administrative levels in support of local multi-stakeholder partnerships (including equitable representation from most vulnerable); to coordinate and manage risk reduction, poverty alleviation, development and climate adaptation policy execution.
6. Develop innovative financial strategies for supporting local level initiatives and partnerships, including direct local level access to disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation trust funds and technical resources.
7. Extend VFL's geographical coverage and modify indicator metrics to incorporate climate adaptation characteristics ahead of Global Platform-DRR 2011 as a means to independently audit disaster risk and climate adaptation progress <sup>3</sup>.
8. Maximise the potential of existing traditional social networks and investigate potential of social networking and internet-based communications innovations as approaches to communicating and sharing information, raising critical awareness, building broad-based constituencies and coalitions and mobilising social demand for DRR.
9. Invest in networks at all levels that improve the exchange of good practice and learning, promote civil society harmonisation and coordination, and foster dialogue and collaboration between state and non-state actors.
10. Carry out reform of the humanitarian response system, making it one committed to engaging with and strengthening local and national preparedness and response / recovery capacities, and one that bases programme interventions on assessments of people's own perceived priority needs in relation to their capacities and vulnerabilities.

<sup>3</sup> The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP-DRR) is the main global forum on disaster risk reduction. In June 2007, the first session brought together over 1100 representatives of governments, UN agencies, regional bodies, international financial institutions, civil society, the private sector and the scientific and academic communities to raise awareness on disaster risk, to share experience and to guide the ISDR system with a view to supporting countries to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action. Further details at [www.unisdr.org](http://www.unisdr.org)

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# 1 Introducing *Views from the Frontline*





# 1 Introducing *Views from the Frontline*

**7000 people**  
**48 countries**  
**400 organisations**  
**and counting...**

*Views from the Frontline* is a research and learning project that has developed momentum from the ground-up as the views of over 7000 local government officials, civil society organisations and community representatives from 48 countries have been brought together to help paint a picture of the progress being made in implementing disaster reduction activities where it matters most – at the frontline where people ‘at-risk’ live, eat and work.

Led by the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), an initial plan to pilot the idea of a ‘ground up’ survey within twenty countries, has grown into a large-scale global project. Over 400 organisations have conducted face-to-face interviews with 5290 people and two supporting studies with a focus on women and children have gained an additional 2035 views. It makes *Views from the Frontline* (VFL) the largest independent, global assessment of disaster reduction at the local level ever undertaken and meets a critical gap in disaster risk reduction (DRR) policy implementation by providing ‘bottom-up’ perspectives from the critical interface between local governments and at-risk communities. Based on the experiences of this first pilot phase, the review offers scope for future expansion and development both within the participating countries and beyond.

The VFL project is designed to support and complement the UNISDR-coordinated biennial monitoring and review process, which invites governments to provide a self-assessment of their progress in the implementation of disaster risk reduction at the national level in accordance with the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). By offering local views, VFL complements the UN’s first Global Assessment Report (GAR), launched 17 May 2009<sup>4</sup>. It allows comparisons to be made between the GAR national level findings and the views of people living and working at the frontline where disasters strike.

Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative research, views have been gathered and compiled on the extent to which the five Priorities for Action (PFAs) and associated ‘cross cutting’ issues outlined in the HFA are making an impact at local level. A series of action oriented, practical recommendations have then been formulated on the basis of VFL data.

This VFL pilot project proves the concept that by working together, a global network of civil society organisations can develop and apply rigorous measures of progress on an international scale. It shows that engagement at local level provides a critical source of valuable and often untapped resources and expertise. VFL serves to connect policy formulation at the international and national levels with the realities of policy execution at the local level. These VFL findings are preliminary; research and analysis continues - further refinements are planned, and VFL has the potential to be expanded, developed and rolled-out further to support ongoing monitoring and evaluation activity; with the ultimate aim of improving policy and practice to reduce disaster losses<sup>5</sup>.



**Global Network  
of Civil Society  
Organisations  
for Disaster  
Reduction**

The **Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction** brings together civil society organisations committed to influencing and implementing disaster risk reduction policy and practice at the local, national and international levels. With 600 members from 300 organisations working in 90 countries the GNDR membership provides a diversity of skills, experience and extensive reach, particularly at local levels in virtually every region of the world. Find out more at [www.globalnetwork-dr.org](http://www.globalnetwork-dr.org).

<sup>4</sup> With the objective of substantially reducing the loss of lives and livelihoods caused by disasters, 168 countries adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (HFA) at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Japan in 2005. To help measure progress, the UN’s first Global Assessment Report (GAR) was unveiled on 17 May 2009. See [www.unisdr.org](http://www.unisdr.org).

<sup>5</sup> As research and analysis continues, further news and information about this ongoing Views from the Frontline project is available at [www.globalnetwork-dr.org](http://www.globalnetwork-dr.org).

By offering a local perspective it is hoped that progress can be made in three core areas:

1. Clear and relevant baselines can be established on which future progress will be measured. Greater public accountability for the implementation of disaster-related policies and legislation will result.
2. Civil society capabilities will be enhanced to monitor progress, share information, formulate joint policy positions and develop advocacy coalitions.
3. Local dialogue and understanding will increase, resulting in multi-stakeholder efforts to build sustainable resilience at the local level with partnerships among local government, civil society and communities.

## About this report

This report is composed of the following sections:

- **The methodology** used to simultaneously engage local governments, community representatives and civil society organisations in a research and learning process; opening dialogue, increasing understanding and building relationships among different stakeholders responsible for disaster prevention.
- **The results and findings** taken from *quantitative data* from VFL country reports collating data from views from the three local respondent groups – local government, civil society organisations and community representatives, supported by *qualitative data* drawn from VFL interviews and discussions and *anecdotal examples and stories*. A combination of charts, case studies and quotes are used to present the findings. Quantitative data was obtained using a scoring system very similar to the one developed by the UNISDR for use in national level self-assessments. Views continue to come in from around the world and research and analysis continues as the VFL project develops.
- **Conclusions, ten core recommendations** and a series of specific recommendations for each HFA Priority for Action. Emphasis has been given to drawing lessons from successful disaster reduction activity in different parts of the world and producing a set of action-oriented, practical recommendations that will help to accelerate delivery of HFA at the frontline.
- **An outline of the next steps** and plans for further research, analysis and expansion of the *Views from the Frontline* concept. The GNDR will present this report at the UNISDR Global Platform-DRR in June 2009 and subsequently use the research and learning to support further policy development, mobilise funding, and inform programme design by organisations seeking to reduce disaster losses between now and 2015, and beyond.
- **And an annex** contains further information on the scope and methodology.

‘The image of civil society organisations is improved through the pick-up of issues of national and international interest and we have been seen as real partners to governments.’

VFL: Jordan

## 2 Inviting and collecting views – methodology and approach





## 2 Inviting and collecting views – methodology and approach

*Views from the Frontline* research mobilised and involved over 7000 respondents from 48 countries:

- **5290 people participated in the global VFL survey** from 33 countries.
- **1181 women participated in the women's VFL survey** involving women in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Cameroon, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, Turkey<sup>6</sup>.
- **854 children participated in the child-centred VFL research**<sup>7</sup>. A total of 375 girls and 479 boys took part from Bangladesh, Bolivia, Egypt, El Salvador, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Malawi, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sierra Leone and Swaziland.

The main objectives of the VFL review were:

1. To provide an overview of progress at the local level within participating countries
2. To strengthen public accountability for DRR policy execution by establishing a local level monitoring system and relevant baselines
3. To enhance civil society monitoring, research, analytical and advocacy capabilities
4. To increase dialogue and understanding between different groups responsible for reducing risk.

VFL methodology used a key informant and focus group approach to measuring progress towards implementation of the HFA at the local level, as assessed by three local level stakeholder groups:

- Local government representatives
- Civil society organisations
- Community representatives.

<sup>6</sup> *Women's Views from the Frontline* survey was conducted by the Huairou Commission, November 2008 – May 2009. Further details at [www.huairou.org](http://www.huairou.org)

<sup>7</sup> The child-centred disaster risk reduction survey was conducted by Plan International, in collaboration with World Vision International, May 2009. Further details at [www.plan-international.org](http://www.plan-international.org)

The project consists of two main elements: research and learning:

- **The research element** focuses on face-to-face interviews or self-evaluations by local government officials, civil society organisations and local community representatives to assess their perceptions on progress made towards disaster resilience and risk reduction as part of the HFA five PFAs.
- **The learning phase** of the project aims to then use the research findings to develop consensus on policy positions and associated recommendations to take forward to national, regional and international levels - including the UN Global Platform-DRR review process. Group discussions and workshops are also in progress in the countries where the primary research was conducted.

The implementation infrastructure for the main study engaged 40 countries, of which 33 were able to provide data within the time-frame of this report:

- In each country a **National Coordinating Organisation (NCO)** was chosen to take the lead in implementing the review process.
- NCOs were assisted by a **National Advisory Committee** (key DRR state and non-state experts) to guide and advise the NCO and support the wide involvement of civil society actors locally.
- Local civil society organisations, referred to as **Participatory Organisations (PO)**, were primarily responsible for conducting the survey through a series of face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions with key informant groups using a questionnaire format based on the HFA five PFAs and key cross cutting issues. In this pilot phase of VFL, over 400 POs were involved.
- NCOs were coordinated by **Regional Coordinating Organisations (RCO)** who provided training and support to their region's NCOs in the implementation process, and drafted regional reports based on a synthesis of country-level findings. The RCOs' role was crucial to further cross-country linkages and learning between participating countries within the region.
- The **Global Network of CSOs for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)** took the lead in designing the project methodology, providing overall support and communication. It has been responsible for analysing the overall findings and identifying the main similarities and discrepancies across countries and regions.<sup>8</sup> The GNDR is furthermore well positioned to raise international awareness of locally identified needs.

<sup>8</sup> The project methodology was drafted and conceptualised by a Keystone ([www.KeystoneAccountability.org](http://www.KeystoneAccountability.org)) consultancy team: Natalia Kiryttopoulou, David Bonbright, Janine Schall-Emden and Lorenzo Fioramonti, working closely with GNDR. An international advisory working group provided guidance and feedback. A number of tools used in this handbook, in particular those used for the project's consultative activities and some of the management structures, draw on and were inspired by the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (see [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org) for details).

The indicator matrix is modelled on the Hyogo Framework for Action based on **five main PFAs or 'strategic areas'** in addition to a set of cross cutting issues:

- 1. Governance**
  - Frameworks and structures
  - Planning
  - Financial resources
  - Financial resources (for partnerships)
  - Human resources
- 2. Risk assessment, monitoring and warning**
  - Disaster risk assessments
  - Early warning systems
  - Risk management systems
- 3. Knowledge and education**
  - Information management & exchange
  - Formal education (curriculum)
  - Formal education (training of teachers and materials)
  - Community training
  - Public awareness
- 4. Underlying risk factors**
  - Environmental and natural resource management
  - Adaptation to climate change
  - Food security
  - Social protection
  - Economic protection
  - Poverty alleviation
  - Land use
  - Urban planning
  - Overall planning
  - Building codes and standards
  - Building codes and standards (enforcement)
  - Protection of critical public facilities
  - Public-Private Partnerships
- 5. Disaster preparedness and response**
  - Disaster preparedness capacities (future risks)
  - Disaster response
  - Disaster preparedness and response planning
  - Disaster response and recovery
  - Evacuation
  - Training drills and rehearsals
  - Financial reserves and aid
  - Coordination and information exchange
- 6. Cross cutting issues**
  - Community participation and information
  - Actual and fair participation
  - Encouraging volunteers
  - Training activities
  - Gender
  - Gender (resources)
  - Cultural sensitivity (diversity)
  - Cultural sensitivity (traditional knowledge)
  - Cultural sensitivity (languages)

## Analytical Framework

A common survey method was designed by GNDR to ensure high-quality standards and cross-country comparability. A questionnaire was developed containing a mix of quantitative questions, based on those used by UNISDR in its national level assessment of HFA implementation. The questionnaire also contained qualitative (open ended) questions based on the five HFA PFAs and cross cutting issues.<sup>9</sup> The survey allows for a certain degree of flexibility to meet local demands and context differences. Not all questions were applicable to all respondent groups (e.g. policy issues are only asked of local government officials) and therefore were not asked.

Respondents completed the standardised questionnaire primarily through face-to-face interviews. Responses to the closed questions followed a five-point scale, providing an indication of progress:

**1 = No, not at all**

**2 = To a very limited extent**

**3 = Some activity but significant scope for improvements**

**4 = Yes, but with some limitations in capacities and resources**

**5 = Yes, with satisfactory, sustainable and effective measures in place**

This scale is similar to that employed by the UNISDR in its national assessment. For visual purposes, each overall Priority Score is colour-coded as follows:

## Colour-Code Results

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
RED	ORANGE	YELLOW	LIME	GREEN

Using colours to show the final scores will help the NCO when communicating the results to a broader audience and is a valuable tool for advocacy purposes within local communities and at the national/regional level.

## Local Community Consultations and National Workshop

Once the data was collected and analysed, the methodology included participatory tools, namely **community consultations** and **national workshops** to discuss findings. Survey implementation provided a first opportunity to open a dialogue among civil society organisations, local government, and community representatives and the consultations and workshop extended this discussion among the three stakeholder groups. As of this first VFL report, not all participating countries have yet been able to conduct the follow-up community consultations or national workshops on the results of the survey.

Further detail about the VFL methodology and approach is available in the annex of this report.

<sup>9</sup> See Annex for the 'Indicator matrix', which shows the questions used with the three VFL respondent groups.

### 3 Understanding views – results and findings





## 3 Understanding views – results and findings

These preliminary results and findings from VFL research are drawn from three core sources: primarily from quantitative data from VFL country reports collating data from views from three local respondent groups – local government, civil society organisations and community representatives – in 33 countries, supported by qualitative data drawn from VFL interviews and discussions about the progress of HFA implementation with members of these three respondent groups<sup>10</sup>. Finally, data was enhanced by anecdotal examples and stories from some members of the GNDR.

Regional and country reports provide a valuable data source for detailed discussion with national governments as well as the three local respondent groups. These reports are available on the GNDR website [www.globalnetwork-dr.org](http://www.globalnetwork-dr.org). For the purposes of this global VFL report, an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data has been performed, and this section presents the results and findings that are of most relevance for a global audience seeking to understand frontline views and identify what needs to happen to support the delivery of the HFA goal – to substantially reduce disaster losses by 2015. Examples are drawn from different regions and countries to help explain particular scores, trends and findings.

This results and findings section presents Views from the Frontline under five headings:

- A global view of progress
- Views of progress across nine geographical regions
- Examining the different perspectives taken by local respondent groups
- A closer look at views on progress being made on each of the HFA's five PFAs and the cross cutting issues
- Views on the VFL research and learning process

### 3.1 A global view of progress

When asked about the levels of progress being made towards implementing HFA, Bishop Donald Mtetemela, a development worker for over 25 years and head of an East African development organisation looked to the sky with a wry but wise smile and explained: *“The people I work with every day see many clouds – international initiatives and plans, but very little rain – actual change at the frontline”*. ‘Clouds but little rain’ is an image that sums up the global results and findings from this pilot VFL research and learning project. In harmony with the GAR findings produced in the UNISDR’s national level assessment, the VFL data at global, regional and national level show clear gaps between policy and practice. At national level there has been investment in institutional frameworks, science and technology, and new policies and legislation for disaster risk reduction. However, for people at the frontline trying to handle the practical consequences of vulnerability to disaster, national policy has not yet yielded the fruits of these investments on the ground.

VFL stakeholders perceive progress made in implementing all the HFA PFAs to be in the range ‘to a very limited extent’ to ‘some activity but significant scope for improvements’ (See figure 1).<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Additional data and country reports from participating countries are expected and will be integrated into future reports; however, a cut off date had to be enforced for purposes of working up analysis and writing this present report. Further updates will be available at [www.globalnetwork-dr.org](http://www.globalnetwork-dr.org)

<sup>11</sup> Taken from responses to each of the five Priorities for Action and cross cutting issues.

Responses in the quantitative study provide an indication of progress on a five-point scale:

- 1 = No, not at all
- 2 = To a very limited extent
- 3 = Some activity but significant scope for improvements
- 4 = Yes, but with some limitations in capacities and resources
- 5 = Yes, with satisfactory, sustainable and effective measures in place

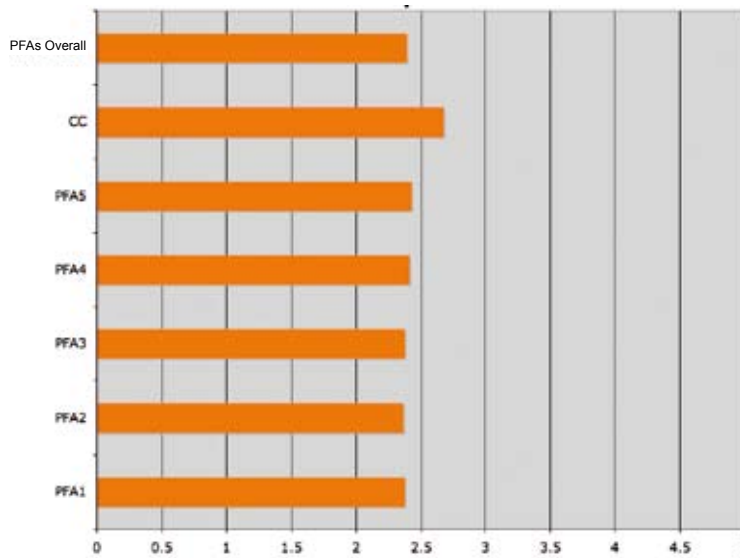


Figure 1: Views from the frontline on progress of the five HFA PFAs and Cross cutting issues

This is less progress than reported by national level respondents to the GAR, as shown in figure 2, and reflects a critical gap between national perspectives and local perspectives that needs to be bridged.

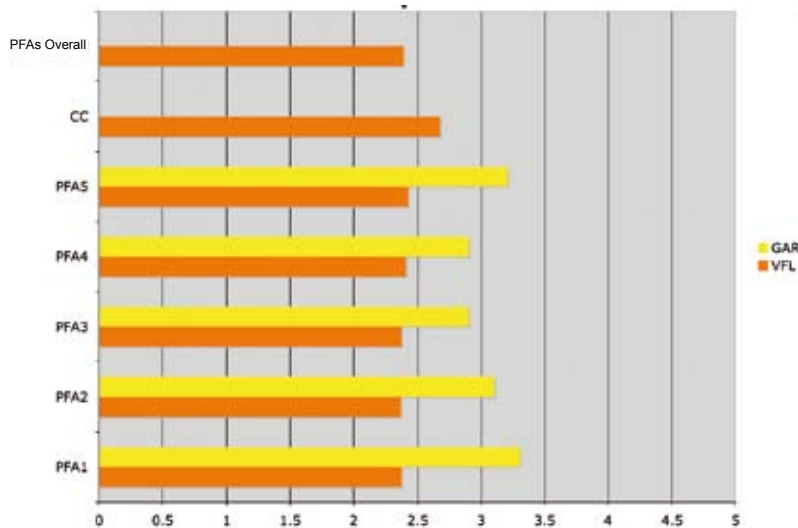


Figure 2: Different perceptions of progress towards HFA PFAs as reported by VFL and GAR

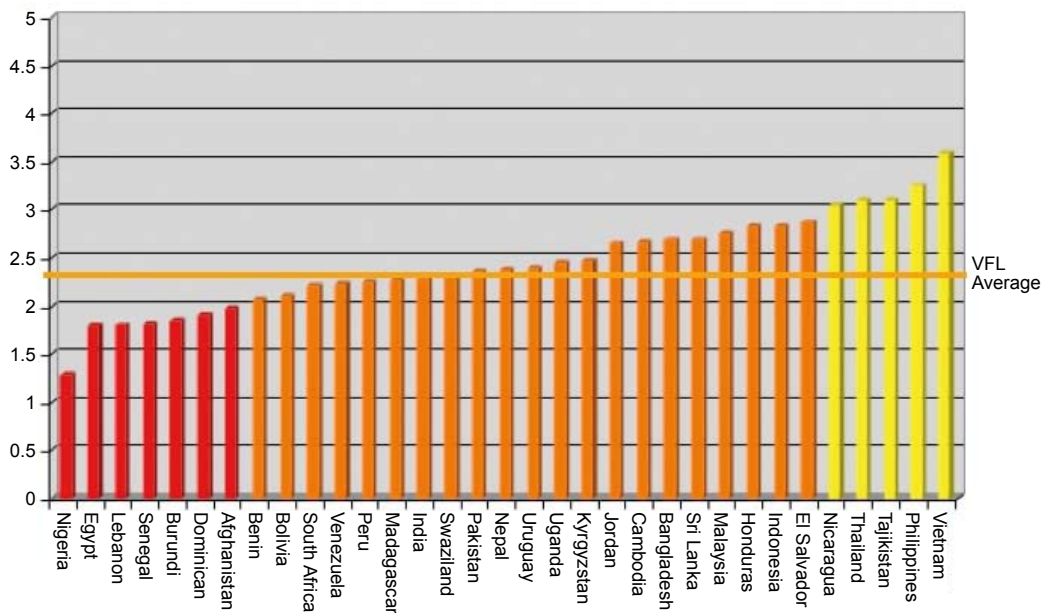
Aggregating all the VFL results for PFA progress, the 'VFL global average' is 2.38, compared to the global average generated by the GAR, 2.95 – indicated in figure 3.<sup>12</sup> By any measure, progress at this rate will not deliver the required reduction in disaster losses by 2015. VFL results add emphasis to the general conclusion that can be drawn from the GAR - at current rates of progress the HFA is not on track to achieve its goals.

Taking a closer look at country scores for overall HFA progress one sees there are some steps forward being made, but no VFL country reports a substantial level of progress. Only five countries attain an overall level of 3 – meaning 'some activity but with significant scope for improvement' – all others are at the lower levels of between 1.25 and 2.87<sup>13 & 14</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> The two global averages are not strictly comparable since the VFL global average is calculated from 33 low and medium income countries, whereas the GAR averaged comes from 62 countries, including some high-income countries. The presence of the high-income countries increased GARs global average. However, as noted in the text, neither global average is high enough to suggest that the HFA is on track to meet targets by 2015.

<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that Nigeria (score = 1.29) and Vietnam (3.58) had fewer respondents than most other countries, which is likely to account for the significant divergence in their results from the VFL country average of (2.38). These figures are the scores for HFA progress based on PFAs1-5 but excluding cross cutting issues so as to offer a comparison with GAR.

<sup>14</sup> The Tajikistan VFL Country report highlighted potential data quality problems so conclusions for this region should be treated with some caution.



**Figure 3: HFA implementation as reported by VFL respondent groups in 33 participating countries**

Philippines scored overall highest of all participating countries (not including Vietnam which had a lower response rate than most countries – see footnote 13). The Philippines VFL country report indicates that government culture is supportive and open to formation of local level partnerships (government – civil society – communities) – a key factor for local progress. The quantitative and qualitative data suggest that countries that have made greatest progress are ones that have adopted local community-based approaches. This correlates with findings of the GAR which found that community and local level approaches, particularly when supported by effective decentralisation processes and government-civil society partnerships, are a key driver of progress and can increase the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of disaster risk reduction.

In the Philippines, various projects implement mainstream disaster risk management in education, public works and local development planning. The National Disaster Coordinating Council uses a community-based coastal resource management model to engage communities in disaster risk reduction. There is awareness among local governments about disaster risk reduction, but the capacity of Local Disaster Coordinating Councils remains uneven.

VFL country report: Philippines

**FOCUS ON NIGERIA**



Collapsed bridge, Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria

**Bridging the gap**

The higher scores reported in the GAR suggest that while awareness and establishment of policy may be moving ahead at the national level, there is an urgent need to now focus on action at the local level. The VFL country report from Nigeria highlights this challenge. A local government leader in the riverine Akwa Ibom region of Nigeria took the VFL team to see a bridge, which had collapsed due to erosion and flooding, cutting communications to several villages in the region. She has been trying unsuccessfully for several years to secure resources from central government to rebuild the bridge – essential for local communities. In the meantime, local villagers have managed to create limited pedestrian access, using their own resources. There is a national DRR strategy, which is based on the HFA, but bridging the gap between policy and practice is the challenge.

**FOCUS ON  
KYRGYZSTAN**



Avalanche in Narvn



Mudflow in Batken

Views from Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia reflect the average level of progress indicated by the VFL project as a whole; with scores ranging from 2.31 to 2.61 for the PFAs – though the responses suggest significantly higher progress in knowledge and education – PFA3 – which with the score of 2.61 was higher than the global average of 2.33.

Since 1998, 13,082 families in Kyrgyzstan have been displaced due to landslides and the risk of landslides. During the last 5 years alone, over 6,000 people have suffered from mudflows, avalanches, landslides, earthquakes and other natural disasters. 3,500 potential zones subject to landslides have been identified in the southern part of the country. Over the same period, the Ministry of Emergency Situations has recorded 3,455 mudflow occurrences. VFL country report: Kyrgyzstan

### 3.2 Views of progress across nine geographical regions

Different regions report different levels of progress. Figure 4 shows that South East Asia, Central Asia and Central America report the most progress with West Africa the least<sup>15</sup>. An analysis of regional data shows the reported level of HFA frontline progress is highest in Asia, and lowest in Africa and the Middle East. In the Latin American region, South America reported a relatively lower level of progress, whilst Central America had a higher overall assessment. By comparison, the GAR reports Africa, Asia and the Americas all have similar levels of progress, albeit nuanced in terms of individual PFAs.

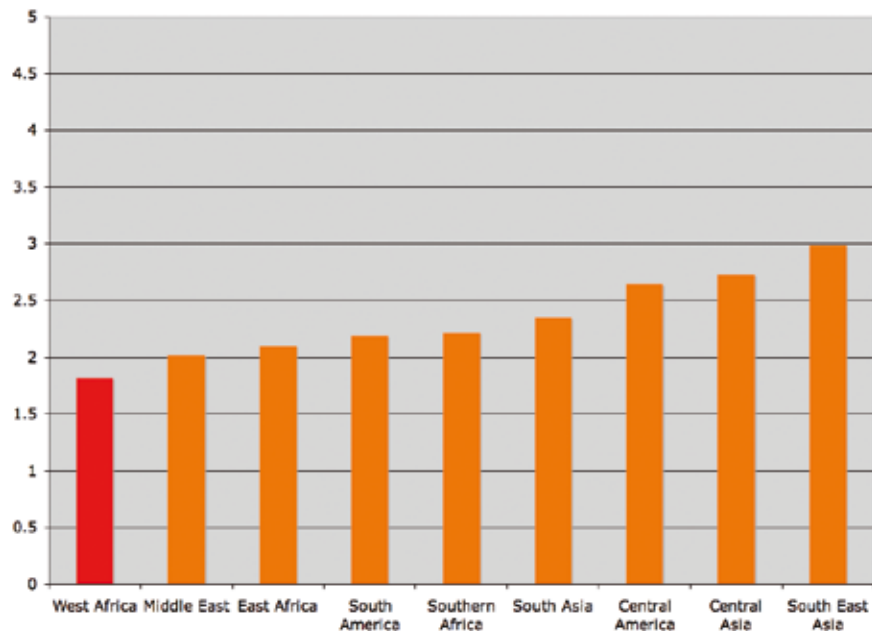


Figure 4: Overall ratings of HFA progress by region

The VFL research also shows widely different levels of perceptions of progress when the regional data is broken down by PFAs as shown in figure 5.

<sup>15</sup> See annex (a) for list of countries in each region

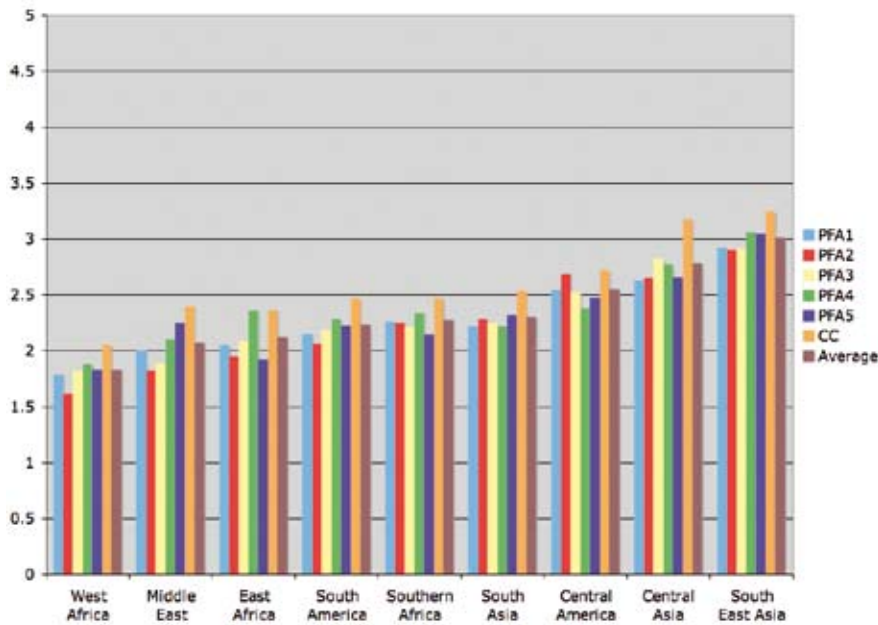


Figure 5: Views on regional progress with PFAs and cross cutting issues

Explanations include the fact that there are wide differences in the resources available at national and local level for DRR generally and for implementation of the HFA in particular. This issue of resource availability is extremely significant. In Swaziland, for example, the VFL study reports extremely limited awareness of disaster risk reduction, citing the influence of HIV/AIDS and poverty. Similarly, a lack of resources - both financial and human - was named by over 64% of respondents in the Dominican Republic as the main constraint toward DRR.

VFL country reports also suggest that awareness of disaster risk reduction is related to experience and memory of disasters. Recent disaster experience can lead to practical action at the community level and development of expertise as well as flows of resources to local government and civil society organisations. For example, the Philippines is exposed to regular extreme climate events, and its VFL reports a proactive approach born of necessity. Likewise, participants from Peru noted that recent experience of disasters had a mobilising effect. In Central America, DRR efforts multiplied after the impact of El Niño in 1997, hurricane Mitch in 1998 and earthquakes in 2001 in El Salvador, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras in particular show comparatively higher levels of progress, which are evident in levels of hazard monitoring by civil society and local government as well as higher levels of awareness of disaster risks by the communities. The challenge for communities elsewhere is to develop this proactive approach before disaster occurs rather than as a consequence.

### 3.3. Examining the different perspectives taken by local respondent groups

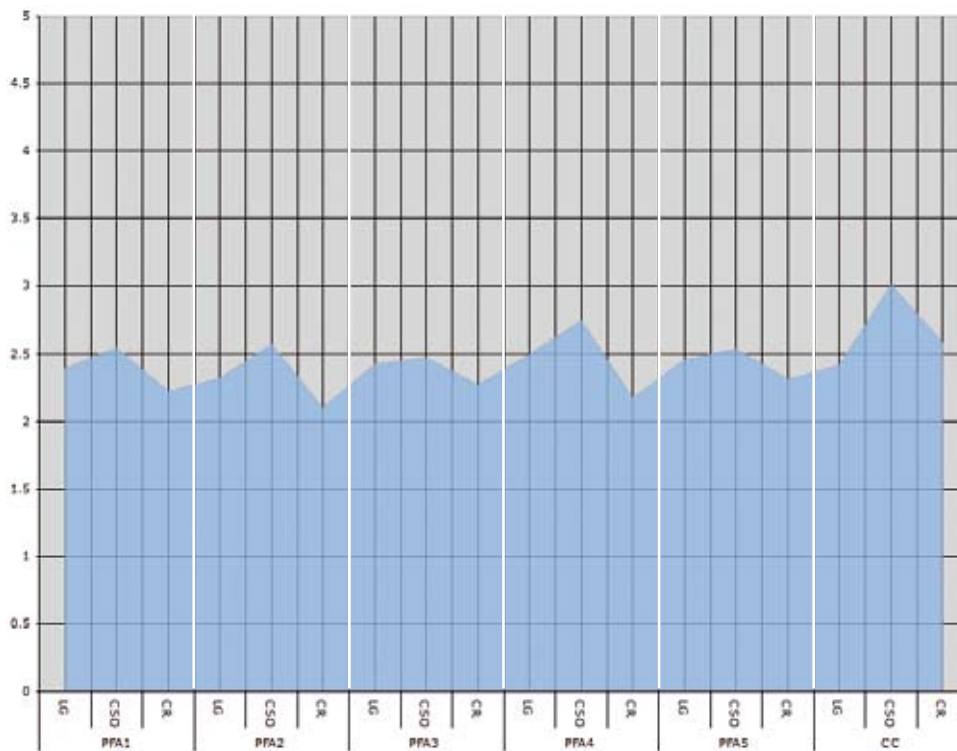
There are significant differences among the three VFL respondent groups - local government, community representatives and civil society organisations. Figure 6 compares responses from the three respondent groups of the extent to which progress has been made towards each PFA. In graphical format, the VFL data shows a series of 'peaks and troughs' depicting significant differences in responses from the three respondent groups. Despite the HFA's stated requirement for multi-stakeholder partnerships to achieve effective implementation, there appear to be sharp contrasts in perceptions of progress by the three groups at a local level. Civil society

We saw zero level physical infrastructure, no communication systems, rescue tools, computers, rainfall and storm identification etc that will enable communities in risk assessment, monitoring and warning... Poverty is very high - 75% of communities suffer food shortages and limited health facilities. A HIV/AIDS prevalence rate of 42% means that orphans and vulnerable groups have increased beyond the scope of the government's resources. VFL country report: Swaziland

Recurring experience of disaster damage and loss has compelled the Philippines to take on a more proactive approach in disaster management. The urgency of disaster risk reduction in the Philippines is due to the fact that the country is one of the world's most hazard-prone countries and has a high incidence of poverty. VFL country report: Philippines

organisations often report being the most active participant in HFA implementation at the local level, with both local government and communities themselves reporting less progress towards each PFA.

Throughout all the priorities, it is evident that civil society organizations are scoring higher than the government. This shows the importance of using the capacities of the civil society organizations in order to strengthen the government's action in DRR. Therefore, partnerships at the local level between the civil society and the local government and governmental bodies are the best way to optimize the available resources and capacities to build the resilience of the community. VFL country report: Lebanon



**LG** = Local government **CSO** = Civil Society Organisation  
**CR** = Community representative.

**Figure 6: Rating of PFAs by different respondents**

In many cases (e.g. Bangladesh, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Uganda) civil society organisations report a greater awareness of DRR than either local government or community representatives. Swaziland offers an exception to this trend with local government reporting most progress across all PFAs, although this is in sharp contrast to the view of civil society organisations and community representatives there – an example of how perceptions can differ at local levels. The Swaziland VFL report indicates that frameworks and policies have not yet been established in a comprehensive way and the different perceptions of progress represent a localised example of ‘clouds but little rain’.

Setting the results from Swaziland alongside those of Philippines and Lebanon provides an indication of the contrasting local perspectives – see figure 7. The Philippines reports higher levels of progress than most VFL countries and Lebanon, one of the lowest. Progress by PFAs is seen as higher in all cases for Philippines and interestingly, the ‘peaks and troughs’ are much less pronounced when it comes to views on cross cutting issues (such as actual participation, gender engagement and volunteering). This may indicate a degree of convergence in views among the three respondent groups on progress in these cross cutting areas. Local government tends to have higher scores, and the VFL country report for Philippines highlights the progress that has been achieved through partnerships with civil society and local communities. The peaks and troughs for Philippines paint a very different picture to that seen in data from Lebanon – where the VFL report explained that disaster risk reduction is a new concept.

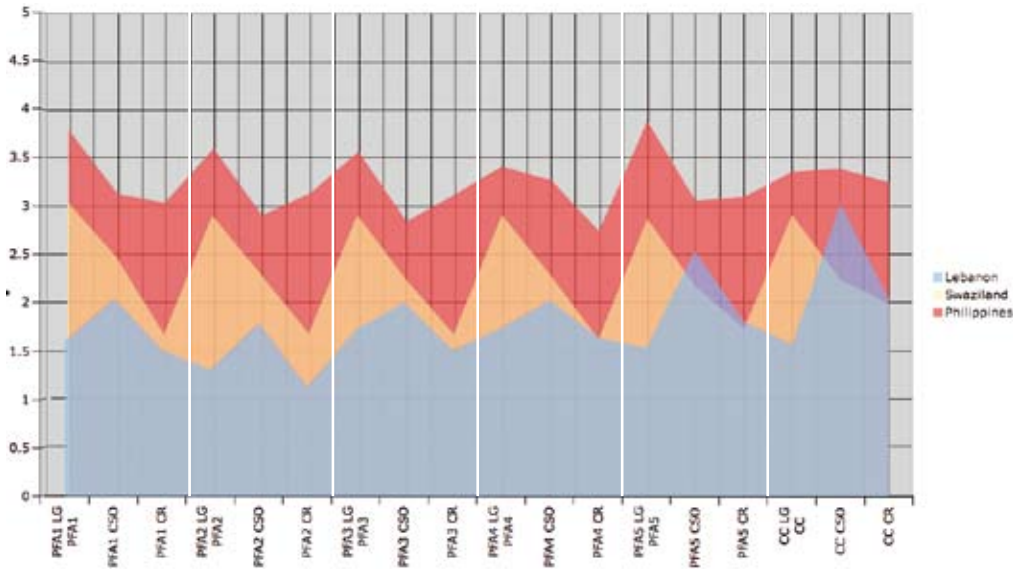


Figure 7: Assessments of PFAs from Lebanon, Swaziland and Philippines

The peaks and troughs for Lebanon are similar to those for the global results, as seen from figure 8. The greater progress indicated by civil society organisations in many countries surveyed suggests that they are effectively ‘championing’ disaster risk reduction in their work with at-risk communities. The VFL country reports provide various examples of civil society taking responsibility for stimulating awareness and action by both local government and communities – Nepal is one example amongst many (See *Focus on Nepal*, p18).

Disaster Risk Reduction is a new concept for both the public and private actors that work in community-based and national-level development in Lebanon. National and local capacities for disaster risk reduction are generally weak and may vary in the different levels. Lebanon doesn't have a disaster risk management system as outlined in the Hyogo Framework for Action and national and municipal strategies and action plans are missing.

VFL country report:  
Lebanon

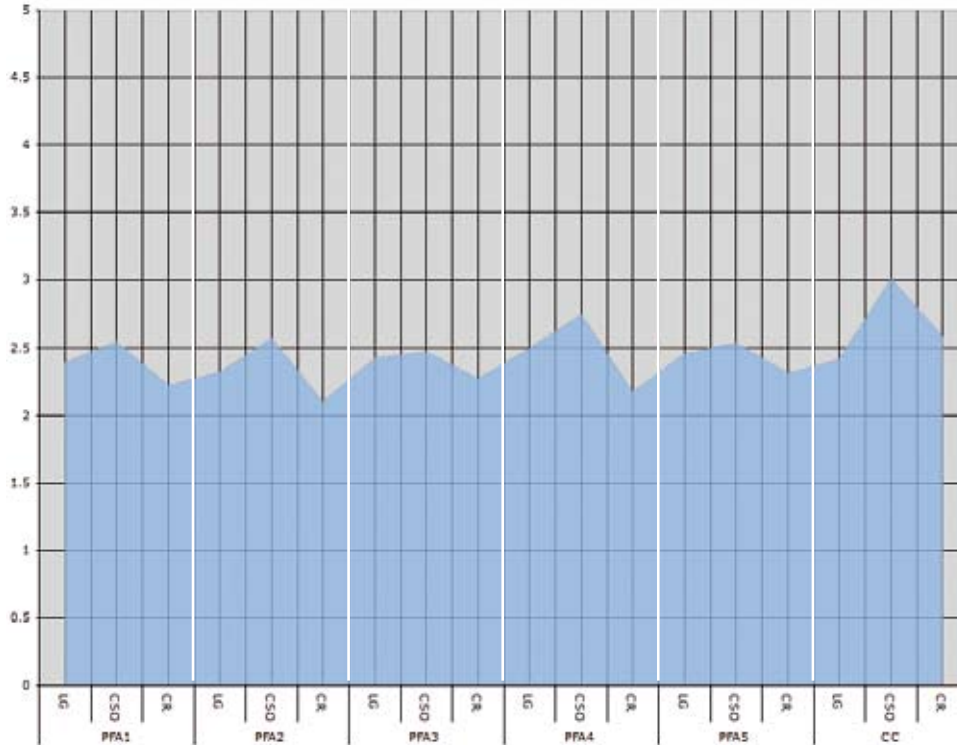


Figure 8: Responses from the three respondent groups for all countries

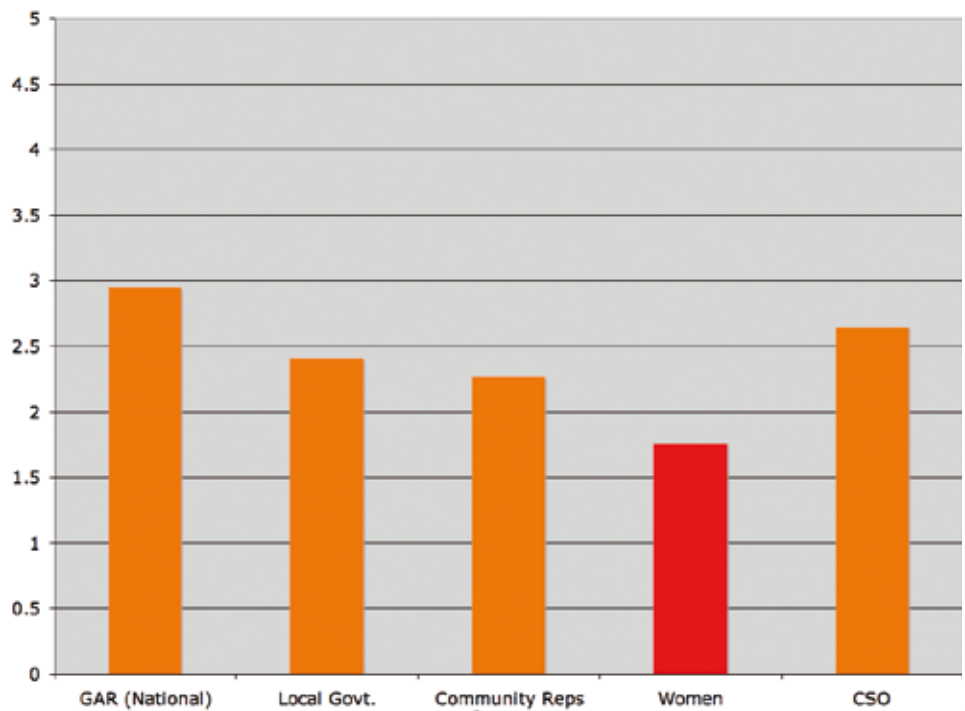
**FOCUS ON NEPAL**

In Nepal, which is among the top 20 countries most vulnerable to disaster, Huairou Commission member, Lumanti Support Group for Shelter surveyed grassroots women leaders, government and municipal officers. In the course of the research Lumanti found that there was low awareness of HFA within and outside the government. When the organization reported this to the Disaster Section of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the officer in charge responded with a decision to jointly organize a training workshop to orient national and municipal officials on the National implementation Strategy for the Implementation of HFA. By the end of the workshop there was an agreement that Lumanti would support a community-led disaster risk mapping process in 10 wards across 5 municipalities in collaboration with local authorities, with the support of the National Government. Women’s views from the frontline: Huairou Commission

The survey results from within Latin American countries also show the general trend of civil society acting as a key driver in promoting DRR with both communities and local government. However, in both South and Central America, civil society stakeholders highlight the need for much more work to be done with local government institutions in order to shift the emphasis from primarily reacting after the onset of disaster to building resilience beforehand. A limited understanding of the advantages of applying DRR in the principal development sectors - as well as of strategies for disaster preparedness and response - is reported in these VFL regions. Financial constraints to promotion of longer-term risk reduction are also highlighted.

The role of civil society organisations in South America is fundamental to strengthening local governments at the municipal and regional levels and to incorporating risk management as a cross cutting theme in poverty reduction and other development-focused projects.

VFL regional report: South America, May 2009



**Figure 9: A breakdown of different responses to HFA progress showing the ‘fading-out’ of perceptions of progress from national level to communities ‘at-risk’**

Figure 9 clearly shows the ‘fading out’ of assessments of progress by respondents at a national level to local government level and then to community level. Assessments by women are even lower. In comparison, the perception of progress reported by civil society organisations is higher than all other local level respondents, although still less than the national respondents consulted by the GAR.



### 3.4 Views on the progress being made in implementing each of the HFA's five PFAs and cross cutting issues

The Hyogo Framework for Action consists of five PFAs and further cross cutting issues. As well as seeking views on progress at the frontline for each PFA, the VFL asked about local views on the progress of the cross cutting issues (e.g. community participation, gender inclusiveness). In addition, project partners conducted complementary studies from a gender perspective and a child-centred perspective. These results are set out below and key findings highlighted.

#### a) Views on the big picture

The general view from the frontline is that only limited progress has been made across all five PFAs. PFA 4 and PFA 5 show marginally greater progress than PFAs 1, 2 and 3. Significant variation exists among views expressed by the three respondent groups as discussed in section 3.3, with an overall trend toward higher scoring by civil society organisations and a 'fading out' at the level of local government and community representatives.

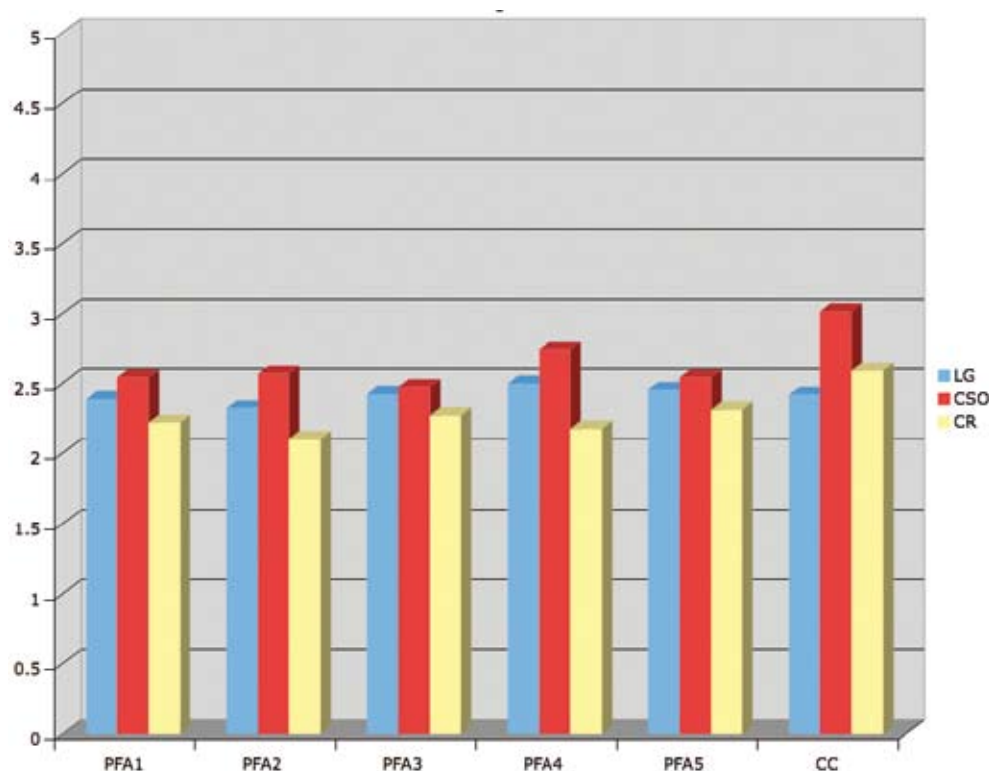


Figure 10: Overall assessment of PFAs by the three VFL respondent groups

Figure 10 provides an overview of perceptions of the broad patterns of progress on the PFAs and cross cutting issues and indicates the divergence of views among the three respondent groups.

Each PFA is made up of a number of 'indicators of action' (see page 8) and significant contrasts emerge at this level. For example, overall results from the VFL study for cross cutting issues show relatively high assessments from civil society organisations, but when examined at the indicator level some quite low assessments emerge particularly at the community level. Indicators such as 'volunteering' and 'gender' are rated relatively highly, but indicators such as 'participation' are given significantly lower ratings – particularly compared with the views of local government. The highs and lows revealed by the indicators provide an insight into where focused activity would help to enhance progress.

### Local level governance and implementation

Research projects reported in 2008 and 2009 revealed that Disaster Risk Management (DRM) at local government level in South African local government is still to a very large extent underdeveloped, despite legislation adopted in 2002. Many noted that there is a lack of pro-active behaviour regarding DRR on the part of local government. There seems to be a lot of ignorance in local government regarding DRM. Various municipal departments still believe DRM is the business of a designated department and where DRM is still to a large extent considered a response orientated function. VFL country report: Republic of South Africa

### b) Views on PFA 1: Governance

The focus of PFA1 is on the interface between policy, frameworks and structures established at national and local level and the practical implementation of these at the frontline.

#### Key findings

- Of the five PFAs, the average progress reported at the local level for this first PFA is joint lowest with PFAs 2 and 3 and the VFL rating (2.36) is significantly lower than the GAR score (3.3).
- Local government rate the 'frameworks and structures' indicator highest, which suggests government officials at the local level are aware of the existence of national frameworks and structures.
- It appears that while frameworks and structures may have been established nationally and locally, many communities remain unaware and are not yet involved. Generally speaking, community representatives give low ratings to 'participation' in the cross cutting issues section, which supports this analysis.
- Financial and human resources for implementation score very low, particularly at community level. All three respondent groups indicate that access to resources is low. This point is backed up in many supporting country reports. There is a repeated call for more resources in order to implement structures and frameworks effectively.
- For most indicators the highest rating is given by civil society in self-assessments of their own progress, with a 'fading out' from local government level through to community representative level.

#### PFA 1 Governance

Indicator	Respondent group			Average by Indicator
	LG	CSO	CR	
Frameworks and structures	2.69	2.58	2.38	2.55
Planning	2.69	2.83	2.57	2.70
Financial resources	2.10	2.21	1.94	2.09
Financial resources (for partnerships)	2.06			2.06
Human resources	2.39	2.54	2.27	2.40
Schools and Health Facilities			1.93	1.93
<b>Average by group</b>	2.39	2.54	2.22	<b>2.36</b>

Note: PFA average is drawn from raw data

GAR Average 3.3

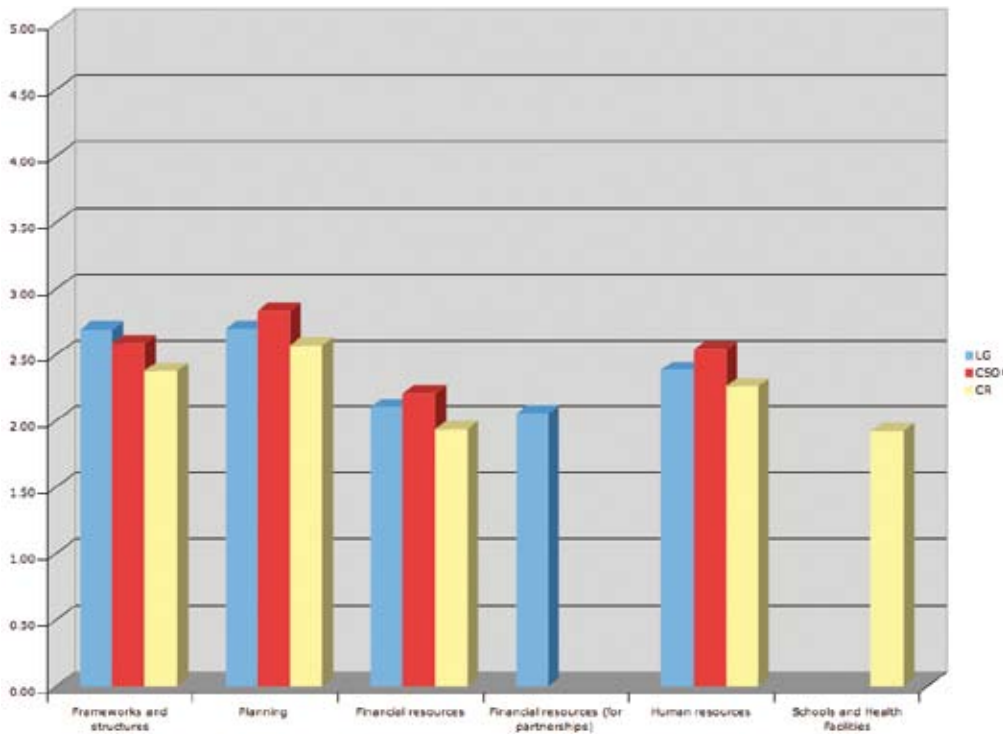


Figure 11: Views on PFA1: Governance

### c) Views on PFA 2: Risk assessment, monitoring and warning

The starting point for building resilience is an understanding of the hazards and particularly vulnerabilities that put people ‘at risk’ and the incorporation of this knowledge into disaster reduction and preparedness actions. This section explores the extent to which respondents feel that risk assessment, monitoring and warning is happening at a local level.

#### Key findings:

- Progress on PFA2 is given one of the lowest scores amongst all respondents.
- ‘Conducting disaster risk assessments’ receives the highest score of the three indicators, but it is still very low given that risk assessment is critical to progress and offers a strategic entry point for community-based and local disaster risk management.
- Reports from some countries, such as Venezuela, indicate that risk assessments are perceived as a highly specialised activity only to be undertaken by specialist disaster agencies such as relief groups, fire fighters and civil protection, although in reality community-based tools have been developed to undertake participatory risk assessments.
- Most countries report very limited progress in establishing local level early-warning systems accessible to at-risk communities – substantially lower than the GAR country score at national level. The GAR indicator for this is 3.1 compared with the VFL average of 2.19.
- Some communities have successfully initiated their own locally-owned warning systems – in India for example, the VFL reports areas where formal warning systems are lacking, but the spread of mobile phones has provided an informal tool for early warning: one community described receiving cyclone warnings for their region from relatives who were watching 24-hour global weather reports on television in USA.

‘Risk mapping (pure hazard mapping in many cases) was established in Soviet times. However, the mapping scale is too small for risk management activities. Also, risk zoning and land use zoning regulations are absent or incomplete.’

VFL country report:  
Kyrgyzstan

‘Since risk and vulnerability assessments involve the use of systems and processes to prevent disasters from occurring, it’s a task that must be completed by society as a whole. In order to be effective, it’s crucial for training to be provided along with the materials and tools provided.’

VFL country report:  
Venezuela

**Lots done. Lots to do.**

While current humanitarian issues in Sri Lanka need to be recognised, the VFL country report highlights DRR progress. It also emphasises the need for engagement at all levels:

*Sri Lanka is a disaster prone country facing floods, tsunamis, fires, droughts, landslides, cyclones, epidemics and animal attacks. National Level Disaster Risk Assessment is done by the Department of Meteorology and Disaster Management Committee (DMC) who pass information to the provincial and divisional community level through the District DMC and government disaster risk management mechanism led by District Secretaries. Village DMCs have been established with village volunteers for risk assessments, early warning, evacuation, maintaining IDPS and re-construction activities.*

Early Warning Systems such as tsunami early warning towers, sirens, flood gauges, rain gauges and multi hazard warning towers have been established by a range of stakeholders but challenges remain. The VFL scores participation of communities in remote risk areas for assessing hazard risk as very low. A number of constraints were highlighted including a lack of risk assessment systems, lack of early warning systems and information sharing system and lack of an information base.

VFL country report: Sri Lanka

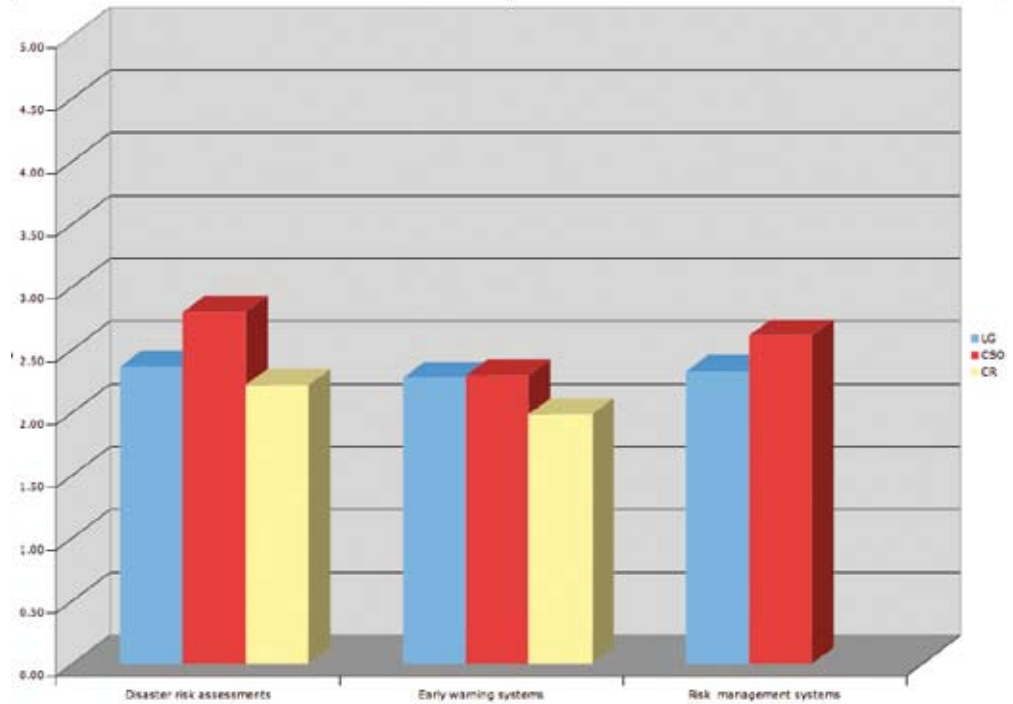
<sup>16</sup> As part of the Views from the Frontline review, the Women's Views from the Frontline survey was conducted by the Huairou Commission, November 2008 – May 2009. Further details at [www.huairou.org](http://www.huairou.org)

**PFA 2 Risk Assessment, monitoring and warning**

Indicator	Respondent group			Average by Indicator
	LG	CSO	CR	
Disaster risk assessments	2.36	2.80	2.22	2.46
Early warning systems	2.28	2.29	1.98	2.19
Risk management systems	2.33	2.61		2.47
<b>Average by group</b>	2.32	2.57	2.10	<b>2.36</b>

Note: PFA average is drawn from raw data

GAR Average 3.1



**Figure 12: Views on PFA2: Risk assessment, monitoring and warning**

**d) Views on PFA 3: Knowledge and Education**

A range of indicators in PFA3 measures both formal and informal channels of training and awareness.

**Key findings:**

- This is the joint lowest PFA theme overall (alongside PFA 1 and 2) reflecting a perceived lack of any significant progress at the local level
- Despite initiatives such as the UNISDR ‘Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at Schools’ campaign, the local perception of progress in teaching DRR in schools is very limited. Global results show differences between views of local government and community respondents on the effectiveness of information management and exchange and of formal education. However the rating given by community respondents for public awareness (2.32) is not far off the score given by local government (2.4), which suggests that while community respondents feel the flows of information into the community could be improved, public awareness is nevertheless increasing to some extent.
- The Women’s Views from the Frontline survey reported that the majority of women respondents have very little knowledge of their rights and entitlements, the different duties and responsibilities of different actors, and feel marginalised from decision-making processes<sup>16</sup>. This finding resonates with the broader VFL survey in which participation is a low scoring indicator.

- In the child-centred disaster risk reduction research, many noted the 'lack of awareness and training initiatives' around DRR activities and planning, particularly in terms of children's involvement<sup>17</sup>. Some cite a lack of both awareness and training, whilst others said there are awareness and willingness but little initiative to make the most of this motivation.
- Specific channels of information highlighted by a number of countries are the effective use of local newspapers (Venezuela) and community radio (Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Peru, and Senegal) to deliver education and awareness at a community level.

'Radio is a medium that reaches all populations in their own languages (Quechua, Aymara) and is one of the most effective tools to reach out to communities and have a multiplier effect'.

VFL country report: Peru

### PFA 3 Knowledge and Education

Indicator	Respondent group			Average by Indicator
	LG	CSO	CR	
Information management & exchange	2.60	2.53	2.35	2.49
Formal education (curriculum)	2.40		2.14	2.27
Formal education (training of teachers and materials)	2.28	2.37		2.32
Community training	2.38	2.52	2.16	2.35
Public awareness	2.40		2.32	2.36
School safety	2.32	2.32		
<b>Average by group</b>	2.41	2.47	2.26	<b>2.37</b>

Note: PFA average is drawn from raw data

GAR Average 2.9

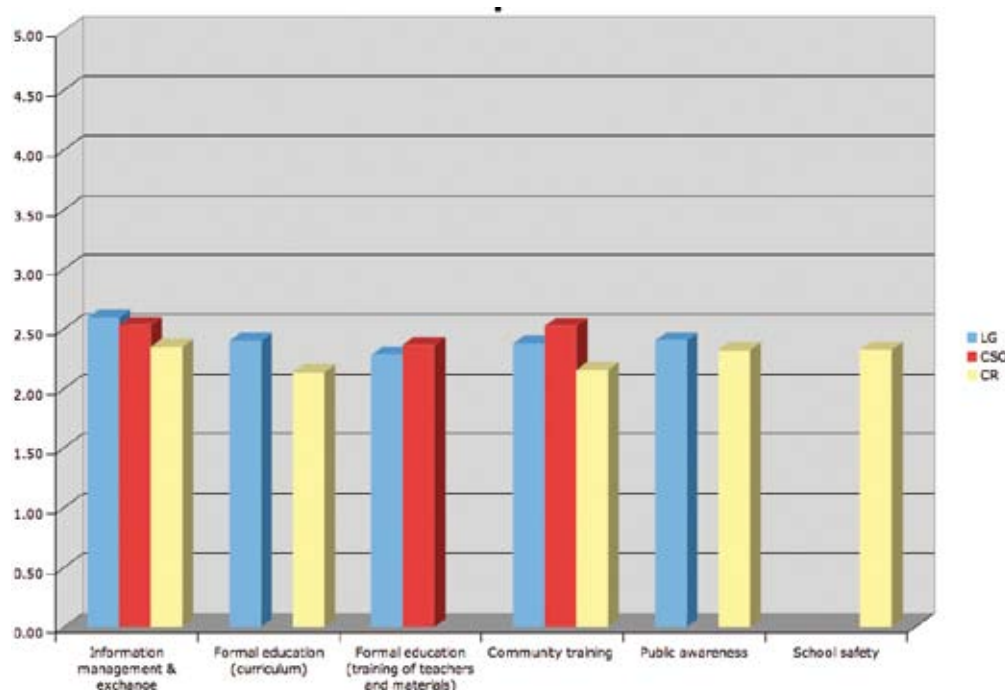


Figure 13: Views on PFA3: Knowledge and Education

District councils are exploring various awareness-raising opportunities. In special events, such as Bingo Social, popular amongst community residents, information sharing and discussion on disasters can be integrated.

VFL country report: Philippines

Several community representatives and civil society members in Honduras mentioned the importance of 'popular education' by using communication techniques appropriate for informing traditionally excluded populations.

VFL country report: Honduras

<sup>17</sup>The child-centred survey was conducted by Plan International; January 2009 – April 2009. Further details at [www.plan-international.org](http://www.plan-international.org)

“With global climate changes there has been an increase in the number, intensity and influence of natural disasters – with extreme consequences for infrastructure destruction, a great loss of numerous socio-economic development achievements and an increase in poverty.”

VFL country report: Vietnam

## FOCUS ON BANGLADESH

### Finding new ways to raise awareness

Education in Bangladesh is itself vulnerable to the effects of disasters. Cyclone Sidr in 2007 alone damaged an estimated 5,927 educational institutions, resulting in a total value of damage and losses of BDT4.7 billion (US\$68m). In the same year, floods affected 15 million children and around 10% of the country’s 80,000 primary schools. The school pictured on Bhola Island is being lost to erosion. As well as buildings, educational activities are hampered - often schools are used for shelter and students and teachers cannot gain access.



#### Only 17% children clearly know the signals of a cyclone

according to a British Red Cross study of seven coastal districts of Bangladesh. 37.1% children partially understand the signal and 45.8% think they do not know about the signal at all. Households that teach their children about cyclone preparedness are more likely to have knowledge on early warning. However, only 42% households reported to have taught their children about cyclone preparedness.

Introducing skill development orientation and cyclone signal awareness to school students, especially in coastal areas, is significant.

The Ministry of Information has recently responded to a long-standing demand of the NGO/CSOs to facilitate the establishment of Community Radio, particularly in disaster prone areas so that warnings could be circulated more frequently and in local languages. Following the formulation of a Community Radio Policy, the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission has called for applications from the NGOs/CSOs to establish community radio in their preferred areas. As a result, we are expecting establishment of 116 community radio stations in different and out-reach geographical locations in Bangladesh. These community radio stations create new hope for at-risk communities.

VFL country report: Bangladesh

### e) Views on PFA 4: Underlying risk factors

Actions on a number of so called ‘underlying risk factors’ involve environmental and resource management, land use, urban planning, poverty reduction, and social protection. Good, environmentally sensitive social and economic development contributes to reducing disaster risk and increasing the resilience of communities, and vice versa. DRR and sustainable human development are inextricably interwoven. PFA 4 was considered by many to be the most important priority to address.

#### Key findings:

- Very limited progress made according to community representatives despite being scored as the PFA that has made most progress by 11 countries.
- There are significant differences between local government and community perspectives on this PFA. Overall planning and building standards are perceived as high by local government, but low by community representatives. This difference of perspective could be because many vulnerable groups live and work in the informal sector outside of the formal planning and policy domains.
- When asked ‘Is your community trying to adapt to future changes in climate and weather?’ community representatives rated progress higher than other indicators in this section, suggesting that the impact of climate change is becoming a higher priority at community level.

“Cambodia is disaster prone and vulnerable to natural disasters, with floods and droughts common every 2 years, particularly since 1988. The country’s susceptibility to disasters is also increasing as a result of climate change and global warming, and a lack of infrastructure to help level off the effects of uneven weather patterns.”

VFL country report: Cambodia

- Food security, social protection and poverty alleviation are considered important risk factors at the community level - economic protection was the lowest scoring indicator by community representatives.
- There is also a striking difference in perception of progress between local government and community representatives concerning the whole range of social welfare and development indicators: food security, poverty alleviation, social protection, and economic protection. Plans and policies are being formulated but appear to be having limited impact at the community level.
- Local government and communities seem to have more agreement on the progress made in managing land use, natural resource management and measures to cope with climate change. However, overall, these resources are quite low, never achieving a 3 – ‘some activity but significant scope for improvements’.

#### PFA 4 Underlying Risk Factors

Indicator	Respondent group			Average by Indicator
	LG	CSO	CR	
Environmental and natural resource management	2.79	2.84	2.36	2.66
Adaptation to climate change	2.38	2.72	2.33	2.48
Food security	2.52		2.16	2.34
Social protection	2.47		2.22	2.34
Economic protection	2.28		1.86	2.07
Poverty alleviation	2.44		2.05	2.24
Land use	2.32			2.32
Urban planning	2.43			2.43
Overall planning	2.80		2.20	2.50
Building codes and standards	2.31		1.94	2.13
Building codes and standards (enforcement)	2.56			2.56
Protection of critical public facilities	2.71	2.67	2.23	2.54
Public-Private Partnerships	2.31			2.31
<b>Average by group</b>	2.49	2.74	2.15	<b>2.41</b>

Note: PFA average is drawn from raw data

GAR Average 2.9

In Peru almost 70% of dwellings built are informal and do not follow the codes and standards for construction. The low perception of this indicator by the communities (1.81) is consistent with this fact.

VFL country report: Peru

‘There is a lack of expertise to develop policies for environmental sustainability’.

Civil Society organisation, Afghanistan

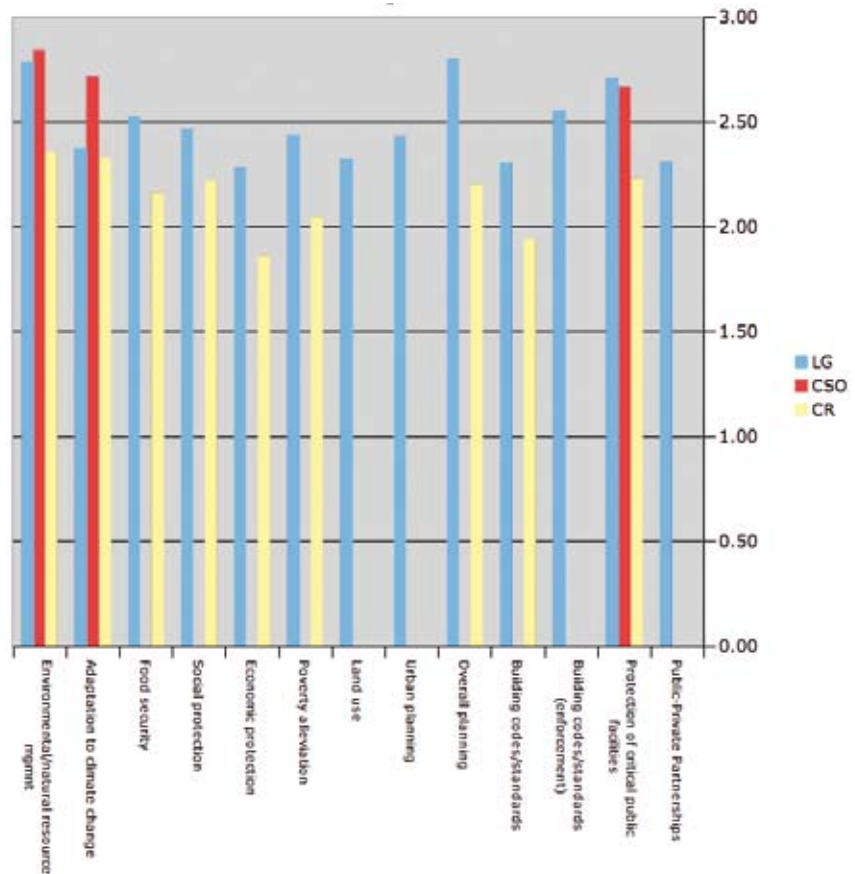


Figure 15: Views on PFA 4: Underlying risk factors

**FOCUS ON BANGLADESH**

**A ‘Disaster Laboratory’**

**‘The country could be considered as nature’s laboratory on disasters. Except volcanoes, most natural disasters are experienced in Bangladesh.’** explains the VFL country report.

‘The rivers swell with summer monsoons, filling Bangladesh’s vast flood plain and submerging a quarter to a third of the land in a typical year - and up to two-thirds in the worst of years. Several cyclones usually tear through the heart of the country each year, drowning people in storm surges and ripping up trees and homes. Less sudden calamities - droughts in the country’s few highland areas, erosion of the riverbanks and coastlines - also rob people of food and land.’



Coastal erosion on Hatia Island, Bangladesh

**Policies and plans**

A National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) focuses on three impacts associated with climate change: increasing sea-level rise, changing rainfall patterns, and increases in the frequency and intensity of extreme events. However, despite ‘policy documents’ and ‘plans of action’ the risk reduction approach has not yet reached the point of becoming mainstreamed in the development process.

Although projects such as cage aquaculture, floating vegetable gardens, drought resistant crop/vegetable farming have been implemented in different parts of the country - such effort and initiative is insufficient for the scale of implementation required.

VFL country report: Bangladesh



## f) Views on PFA 5: Disaster preparedness and response

At the moment of impact, all disasters are local. Family and friends tend to provide the immediate search and rescue, response and care. Local government and civil society are usually active on the spot before national level efforts are mobilised. This section focuses on the views from the frontline about such preparedness and response.

### Key findings:

- Average scores for indicators in the area of preparedness and response tend to be higher than other PFAs, although are generally rated lower by the community.
- Very low score (1.84) reported by community representatives to the Training drills and rehearsals indicator reflecting that this is not systematically happening with community members at the local level.
- Exceptions to this finding include Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador reporting that members of the community have a relatively higher level of the response skills needed in a disaster situation (average score of 2.86).
- In general, local government reports a lack of financial resources as a common constraint; although Peru and several other countries' VFL reports suggest there is evidence of good local partnerships between civil society and communities to help provide financial reserves for reconstruction and recovery.

### PFA 5 Disaster Preparedness and Response

Indicator	Respondent group			Average by Indicator
	LG	CSO	CR	
Disaster preparedness capacities (future risks)	2.58	2.47		2.53
Disaster response	2.63	2.34	2.48	
Disaster preparedness and response planning	2.42	2.56	2.05	2.34
Disaster response and recovery	2.48	2.67		2.58
Evacuation	2.12	2.12		
Training drills and rehearsals	2.25		1.84	2.04
Financial reserves and aid	2.26	2.26	2.95	2.49
Coordination and information exchange	2.67	2.64	2.51	2.60
<b>Average by group</b>	2.44	2.54	2.30	<b>2.42</b>

Note: PFA average is drawn from raw data

GAR Average 3.2

One indicator that received high marks from community representatives is the existence of emergency supplies, managed by communities or in partnership with local organisations. This reflects measures taken to prepare for future emergencies in response to an earthquake in Pisco on 15 August 2007.

VFL country report:  
Philippines

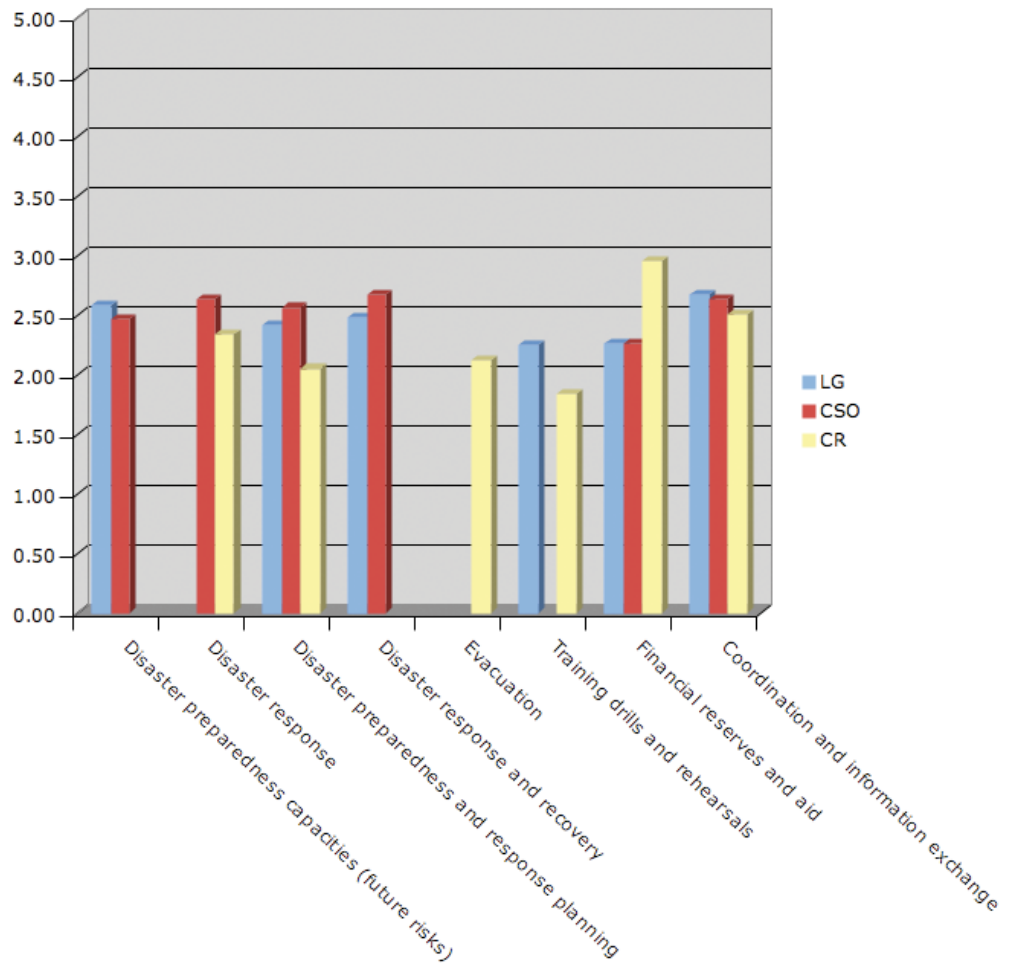


Figure 14: Views on PFA5: Disaster Preparedness and Response



### Working together to respond to avalanches in Kyrgyzstan

A partnership between local communities and civil society has established 'Village Rescue Teams' in the remote Ferghana valley, demonstrating the capacities that can be mobilised through local level collaboration. The creation and support of these teams is now a key feature of ACTED's Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy.

The aim is to increase the capacities of remote disaster prone villages to deal effectively with the aftermath of a natural disaster; an essential aspect of disaster response given the inaccessible nature of many disaster prone areas.

Once trained, the Village Rescue Teams take the lead in

- Increasing awareness of villagers about potential disasters and available methods of mitigation
- Streamlining disaster preparedness activities through the implementation of Village Development Plans
- Drafting contingency plans by identifying potential voluntary in-kind contributions of villagers in the case of a natural disaster
- Mobilising community members to implement community-based disaster preparedness activities using local resources and capacities
- Building partnerships with local authorities and potential stakeholders in order to ensure an adequate and timely response to possible disasters.



Village rescue team. Tegerek-Saz village, Osh, December 2007.

On 24 February 2008 an avalanche hit the village of Kyzylbulak - causing severe damage to property and livestock. The only immediate assistance available was from the Village Rescue Team. The team followed the Village Contingency Plan created during training, and notified the head of the municipality and the unit of the Ministry of Emergency Situations in the district. The team mobilised the community to clear snow from the areas where people were trapped, using the specialist equipment provided. After three days of clearing snow the area was accessible again for outside services.

VFL country report: Kyrgyzstan

### g) Views on: Cross cutting issues

Implementing the five PFAs requires effective engagement and mobilisation of communities. Women as well as men need to be at the heart of these activities. Children and youth should also be involved. This requires meaningful participation, high levels of volunteering and culturally appropriate implementation. Although cross cutting issues were not specifically measured in the GAR HFA monitoring process, VFL assessed cross cutting indicators. The findings highlight some particular challenges.

#### Key findings:

- Actual participation by communities in planning and decision-making and access to information was scored overall “very limited” by community representatives.
- Local government rated community participation as greater than the communities themselves.
- Civil society organisations provided the highest overall scores to the indicators relating to cross cutting issues.
- Local governments scored lowest on gender indicators.
- Civil society scores its own activities in these areas reasonably high, especially when it comes to gender inclusiveness and cultural sensitivity.
- There is considerable scope for developing partnerships with local government to deepen engagement and involvement with civil society and at-risk communities.

### Cross cutting issues

Indicator	Respondent group			Average by Indicator
	LG	CSO	CR	
Community participation and information	2.58	3.23	2.43	2.74
Actual and fair participation (participation at government level)	2.46	2.87	2.21	2.51
Actual and fair participation (at local level)	2.23	2.23		
Encouraging Volunteers	2.56		2.99	2.78
Training activities	2.52	3.19		2.85
Gender	2.38	3.11	3.03	2.84
Gender (resources)	2.04	3.08		2.56
Cultural sensitivity (diversity)	2.38	2.90		2.64
Cultural sensitivity (traditional knowledge)	2.54	3.10	2.59	2.74
Cultural sensitivity (languages)	2.33	2.64	2.73	2.57
<b>Average by group</b>	2.42	3.01	2.60	<b>2.67</b>

Note: PFA average is drawn from raw data

**FOCUS ON BENIN**



Indicating typical floodwater levels – Cocotomey, Cotonou, Benin

The Benin VFL country report highlights the common challenge between local level capacity, energy and ingenuity but limited participation in decision-making and limited access to resources from local and central government:

*Annual flooding is the norm for the Cocotomey community in Cotonou, Benin. The market has been abandoned, schools have been shut, and access to the clinic has been prevented. In the last year two people died as a result of the flooding. Local people have identified a way to drain flood-waters to low-lying swamp land but this requires excavating a drainage channel for several hundred metres, which crosses a thoroughfare. After failing to persuade the local authorities to undertake the work the local community raised funds to attempt the work themselves but this was stopped by authorities. Instead, they are currently making do with a partial scheme and continue to lobby the local government to properly deal with the problem.*

VFL country report: Benin

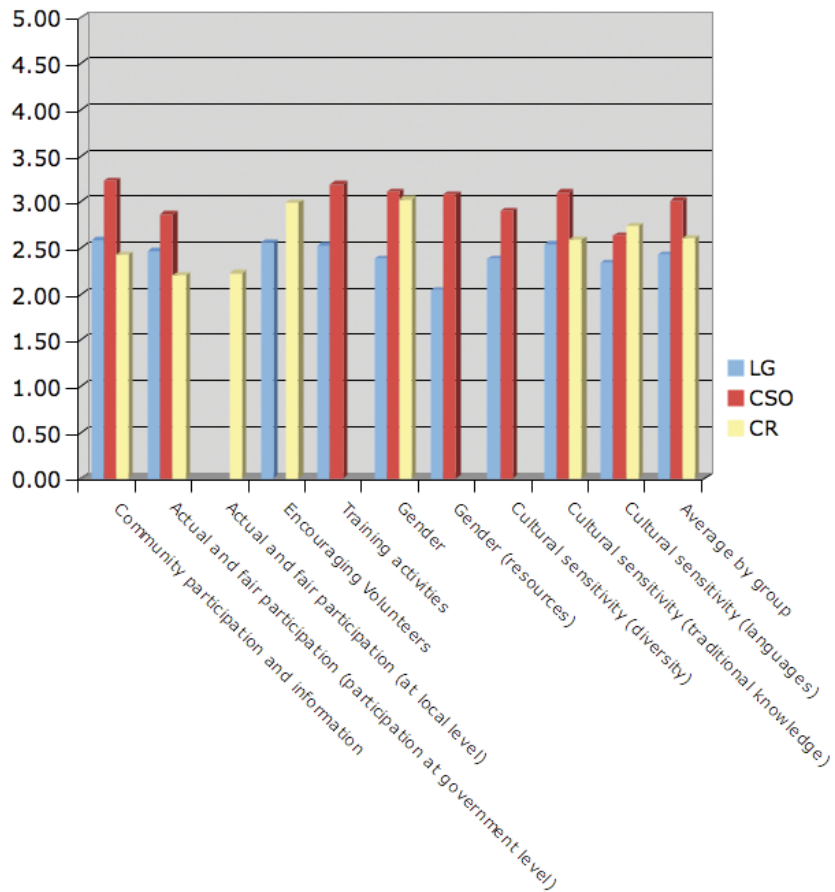


Figure 16: Views on cross cutting issues

“One of the pillars of our organisation is non-discrimination; women occupy most of our leadership positions and we are also seeking broad participation from children and adolescents.”

VFL CSO respondent: Uruguay

“The children and youth of the committee are so awesome! Last year there was a landslide and we couldn’t go out of the community, the municipality never came, so they had the idea that everybody had to do a human chain, and we were able to move all the rocks from one side of the community to the other, like ants... the adults wouldn’t have had that idea.”

Community Representative, El Carrizal, El Salvador

## Women's Views from the Frontline survey

**The Women's Views from the Frontline survey secured views from 1,181 women in 12 countries** – Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Cameroon, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, Turkey. Figure 17 compares the responses of the women's VFL survey with the global VFL survey. Key findings from this comparison include:

- Responses from local government and civil society are generally comparable, but for all PFAs, female representatives clearly rate progress lower than the averages from all community respondents.
- The majority of female respondents are unaware of rights and entitlement, unfamiliar with roles and responsibilities of different actors, all indicating women feel particularly disenfranchised from the framework and from action on disaster risk reduction.
- In most of Latin American, views from civil society and communities suggest more progress than local government in the inclusion of women and in sensitivity to cultures and local languages.
- In general there is a contrast in the data between relatively higher scores for volunteering and involvement by women at a grassroots level, compared with the lower levels of ratings for indicators relating to participation in decision-making. This suggests that while commitment, local capacities and initiatives are high, access to formal decision-making process, and consequently resources, remains low.

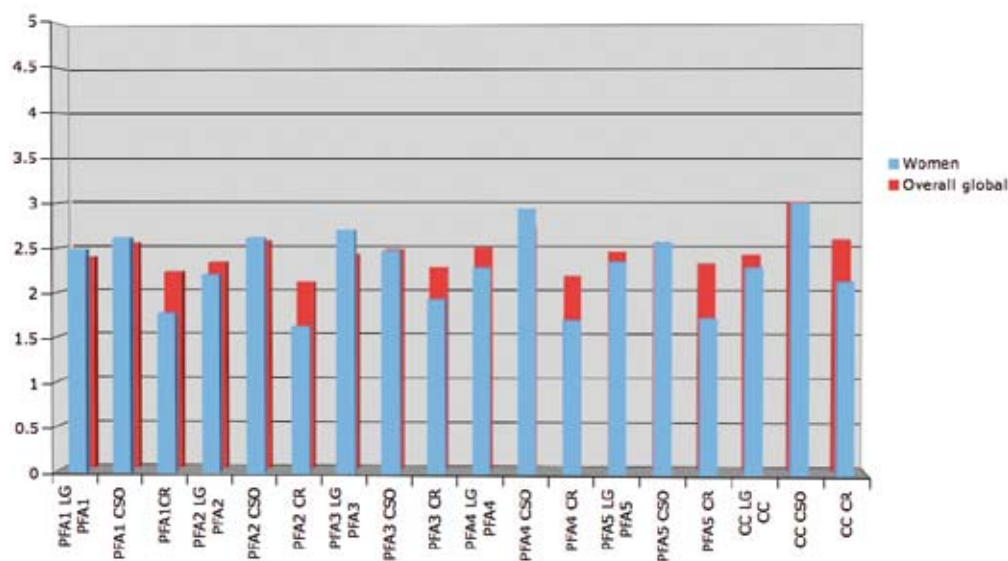


Figure 17: VFL for women compared with the views for all VFL respondents

Operationalising gender as a cross cutting issue needs governing principles and/or standards to engage poor communities particularly women, to participate as citizens in shaping DRR policies and programmes. Experience shows that women's ability to participate in decision-making processes, interface with government institutions and access and control resources are key to effective disaster risk reduction – Women's views from the frontline. Huairou Commission May 2009

<sup>18</sup> These averages don't include responses to cross cutting issues, to enable a comparison with GAR, which didn't measure indicators for this area. Including cross cutting data, the global VFL average is 2.43.

<sup>19</sup> In comparison with other countries in the survey, the assessments in the Philippines were particularly high but it should be noted that the interviewers there were only able to work with children who had been exposed to training in Disaster Risk Reduction.

## Child-centred disaster risk reduction survey

### 854 children participated in the child-centred disaster risk reduction survey

(375 girls and 479 boys), which covered thirteen countries: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Egypt, El Salvador, Haiti, Indonesia, Malawi, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sierra Leone and Swaziland. The overall data shows a global average for this child survey of 2.33, similar to the score from the global VFL survey of 2.38.<sup>18</sup> Headlines from this child-centred survey include:

- The assessments of progress in different countries range from very low assessments in countries such as Egypt, Nepal, Haiti, Pakistan and Sierra Leone to higher assessments in Bangladesh, El Salvador, India and Malawi with Philippines coming out highest.<sup>19</sup>
- Several respondents cited prohibitive attitudes and cultures keeping children and young people on the sidelines, generally noting that children's voices are heard secondary to those of their superiors – elders and officials.
- Progress is more evident where the contribution that children and young people can make to DRR is recognised and welcomed - by authoritative and influential figures at government level as well as at the household level.
- The contribution of children and young people to DRR would have a far greater impact in an environment where they are encouraged to use their energy, enthusiasm, interest and creativity, and supported in feeding their new knowledge and skills into the process.

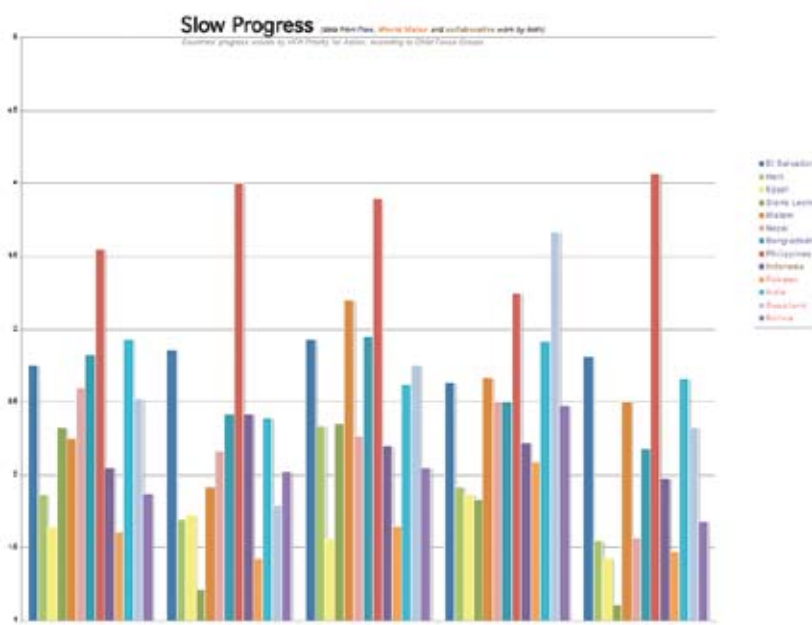


Figure 18: Confirmation of slow progress in child centred survey <sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup>This chart is taken from the child-centred DRR survey report – available from Plan International [www.plan-international.org](http://www.plan-international.org)

### 3.5 Views on the VFL research and learning process

The final part of this results and findings section shares views from the frontline about the pilot VFL research and learning project itself, participation levels and the research and learning process.

#### a) Widespread involvement has taken place

Even at this 'pilot' stage a key result of the VFL project has been widespread participation from local government, civil society organisations and community representatives. Views have been shared from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. 48 countries have participated, of which 33 have so far provided datasets. According to the World Bank classification 13 countries were low income, 16 were lower mid income and 4 were higher mid income. 5290 people were consulted in the main global VFL research with a further 2035 participating in the supporting women and children VFL studies.

*Views from the Frontline has let us meet with and get to know different actors in our area, even with people that it was difficult to get access to before.*

Paz y Esperanza: NCO, Peru April 2009

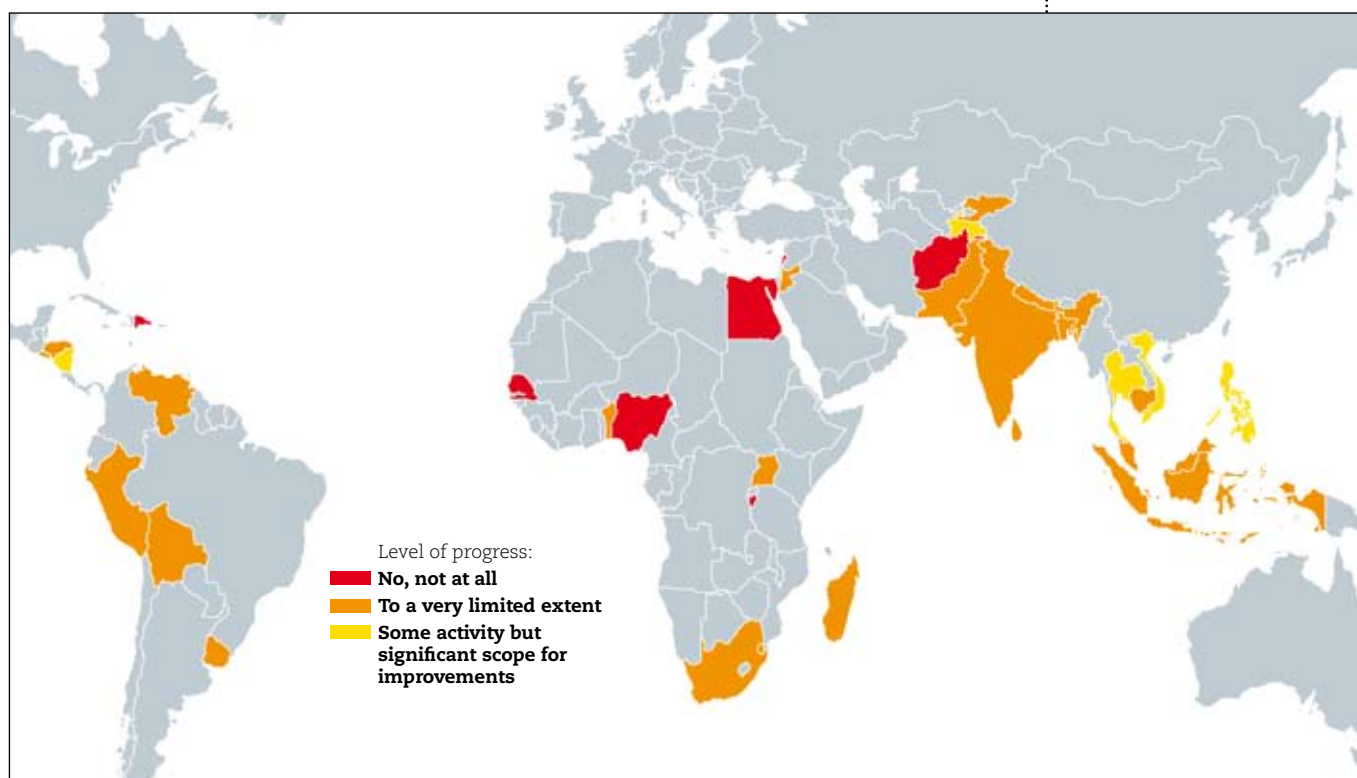


Figure 19 – Map of VFL coverage

Widespread commitment to this project can be seen from the active involvement of a wide variety of civil society organisations at all levels, including international NGOs, individual national NGOs and many smaller local organisations working in partnership with them<sup>21</sup>. Many donated considerable expertise, time as well as financial resources to conduct interviews, analyse data and to generally support the engagement process. The implication is that this type of frontline research and learning fills a critical gap and is considered a vital part of the infrastructure to build resilient communities. This bodes well for the anticipated follow-up and potential expansion of VFL global review programme ahead of the UNISDR-coordinated third session of the Global Platform-DRR 2011 and mid-term review 2010.

<sup>21</sup> See annex (a) for list of participating organisations.

### **b) The face-to-face, multi-stakeholder process has created valuable opportunities for dialogue**

Reports from various participating organisations emphasised the value of creating an opportunity to talk about DRR at a local level – improved dialogue is one of the objectives of the VFL project. As a direct result of the VFL survey, literally thousands of structured conversations have taken place between government, communities and civil society, and in places such as Cambodia and Peru extensive community and national consultations have taken place. Such consultations are planned in other VFL countries. Strong feedback from participants showed that they regard the opportunity to open up space for dialogue and build relationships as important benefits of the participatory process.

*‘It improves organisational capacity in conducting this type of research, and it also improves communication and expands networking both with government and CSOs.’*

Yakkum: NCO Indonesia April 2009

### **c) We can achieve more by working together**

The VFL review provides strong evidence that where local governments work together with at-risk communities and civil society organisations it is possible to reduce vulnerability. Collaborative working through participatory process and local partnerships appears to offer a way forward. This is not easy in countries where civil society is seen as opposition to governments, and where governments fear that ‘empowering communities’ will result in a loss of their own power.

Changing these dynamics requires all parties to move from confrontation to cooperation – the foundation is the building of trust, mutual understanding and constructive relationships. It requires much greater strategic investment in those actions and activities that support participatory action research, foster dialogue between state and non-state actors, builds alliances and coalitions, and strengthen networks that facilitate collaborative and cooperative approaches.

### **d) Value for money**

A final finding in relation to the VFL is that, due to the active participation and in-kind contributions of organisations and individuals across the globe, the process has proved a highly cost effective way of securing views and lessons to share. The total estimated costs of the core VFL are in the region of US\$1 million– from concept development through pilot design, delivery and reporting – this equates to a cost of \$20-\$30,000 per country. Of this, over half was contributed as in-kind contributions from the participating organisations. Having invested in this pilot process a foundation has been created on which to build an enhanced, wider research and learning programme that amplifies voices from the frontline to national and international policymakers and donors.



## 4 Acting on views – conclusions and recommendations



*Even though VFL shows there is a gap at local and national level in DRR progress - it is not a thing that needs to be disputed. The most important thing is to realise that the implementation of HFA is not yet optimal. Therefore, three components (government, civil society and communities) should hand in hand, make collaborative and complementary efforts to improve the implementation of the HFA so that within the next two years substantial progress can be achieved.*  
VFL Blog: Kyrgyzstan

## 4. Acting on views – conclusions and recommendations

Despite progress at international and national policy level, the greatest barrier to achieving a substantial reduction in disaster losses by 2015 is the lack of a systematic implementation of disaster risk reduction activity at the local level.

Nine conclusions flow from the analysis above. They are followed by a set of ten core recommendations designed to accelerate progress at the local level. A more specific set of recommendations is also offered to support the delivery of each of the five HFA PFAs.

### 4.1 Core conclusions from Views from the Frontline

#### **a) Nationally formulated DRR policies and plans are not generating widespread systemic change in local practices, and importantly, they are not engaging vulnerable and marginalised people as vital and active partners in building disaster-resilient communities.**

VFL research reveals a gap between progress perceived at national level and the views on the frontline, where people vulnerable to disasters live and work. Reports of progress at the national level ‘fade out’ as activities get closer to vulnerable people where impact is at best limited and patchy and at worst not happening at all. At local level, VFL data shows significant differences between the level of perceived progress by the three respondent groups - local government, civil society organisations and community groups. Of particular concern is the fact that community scores (average 2.16 indicating ‘very limited progress’) are consistently lower than both local government and civil society scores, and women assess progress lowest overall (see figure 10). Civil society organisations, particularly grassroots women’s groups, working alongside vulnerable people appear to often be the most active participants in building disaster-resilient communities, although there are some notable exceptions, where at-risk communities have initiated disaster preparedness actions themselves in response to recurrent hazards.

Different countries and regions report uneven progress. Comparison between VFL national data sets suggests that greatest progress has been made in countries that have adopted community and local level approaches to disaster risk reduction (e.g. Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nicaragua, Philippines, Sri Lanka), although the relationship between progress and participation requires further research. Participatory processes can ensure policies are grounded in the realities of the local context, are community-owned, cost effective and sustainable in the longer term.

#### **b) Disaster risk reduction activity needs to focus more on establishing an understanding of risk, working with people at all levels.**

According to local views, the HFA priorities showing least progress are PFA1 – Governance, PFA 2 – Assessment and Monitoring of Risk, and closely related to these, PFA 3 – Knowledge and Education. Given that the foundation for reducing disaster risk and building resilient communities lies in an awareness and understanding of the hazards and vulnerabilities that are faced, this is significant. Undertaking relatively straightforward participatory risk assessment and risk mapping exercises has helped in many areas (e.g. Philippines). Risk assessment and associated risk mapping provides a strategic entry point to build disaster-resilient communities and nations by identifying relevant risks with people affected by and seeking to reduce that risk. Participatory tools for doing such assessments at local level already exist<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> See ProVention Consortium’s community risk assessment tool kit at [www.proventionconsortium.org/?pageid=39](http://www.proventionconsortium.org/?pageid=39).

Benefits of this approach include:

- Assessment of disaster risk through participatory methodologies increases knowledge and understanding of disaster risk. Children too should be involved and taught how to assess risks in their local communities. (PFA 3)
- Information gained can form the basis for enhanced early warning, disaster preparedness and response actions (PFA 2 and PFA 5)
- Risk considerations can be used to inform local policy and action planning within principal development sectors (PFA 4)
- Increased critical awareness of risk creates public demand for building resilience, strengthens public accountability of policy holders to vulnerable people, and raises political commitment for DRR (PFA 1)
- Participatory processes open dialogue between the people involved, build consensus, trust and constructive relationships – a foundation for effective partnerships (PFA1 and cross cutting issues).

**c) Opportunities are being missed in the post disaster recovery phase to ‘build back better’.**

VFL research shows that frequent and recurrent disasters are often a catalyst for greater engagement in disaster risk reduction. Disasters can be the catalyst to promote regular disaster preparedness exercises and utilise disaster recovery processes to build local capacities to reduce risk in the longer term. But findings suggest that opportunities for governments and communities to capitalise on the high political attention and resource flows that disasters create are being missed.

Local governments are making some progress towards PFA 5 - Preparedness and Response – but the research found very limited capacities for preparedness and response at the community level. The community-level indicator for training drills and rehearsals was one of the lowest scoring indicators in the entire VFL survey (with some notable exceptions where communities have initiated disaster preparedness actions themselves). The indicator to assess progress towards ‘building back better’ also scored relatively low amongst all groups, indicating that risk reduction isn’t being systematically built into the relief, rehabilitation and recovery process. It needs to be.

**d) Whether ‘experts’ refer to climate adaptation, poverty alleviation or DRR, at a local household level it comes down to the same thing – the security and well-being of lives and livelihoods...**

VFL found some evidence for an increasing awareness of climate change – but it is just one sign amongst many of the various challenges that people struggle with in their daily lives – climate variability and extremes, poverty, illness and lack of health care, food insecurity, social protection. The list goes on. At the household level, DRR, climate adaptation and poverty alleviation are dealt with in a holistic way and are not differentiated into thematic sectors as happens at the macro level. VFL reinforces the recommendations in GAR to align and integrate efforts to reduce risk, adapt to climate change and alleviate poverty so that they focus on the underlying drivers of risk. At the community level these underlying drivers include issues of food security, poverty and social protection in both an urban and rural context. Achieving greater integration and synergy among actions to reduce disaster risk, alleviate poverty and adapt to a changing environment means bringing decision-making and planning processes closer to at-risk people.

**e) ...but the comparatively higher profile of climate change provides an opportunity to mobilise resources to reduce risk.**

Given the perceived threat of climate change on all societies and the high political attention it is receiving, climate change provides a significant opportunity to



Participatory risk-mapping in Orissa, India

*While governments and NGOs have distinct programmes and funding streams for DRR and development, from a grassroots women’s perspective, actions to reduce disaster risk include a range of practices such as upgrading housing, enhancing food security, strengthening livelihoods, organising household savings, improving access to basic services and infrastructure, preparing for emergency response and pressing for greater accountability for local and national governments. Grassroots women who have organised themselves as savings groups, neighbourhood committees, federations, cooperatives, networks and other citizens’ platforms have potential knowledge, good practice and existing partnerships that can be mobilised for disaster risk reduction actions embedded in development and poverty reduction - Women’s views from the frontline. Huairou Commission May 2009*

### **Representation - women**

*The community based disaster management plan is formulated with the participation of communities and it is amended annually in their presence again by the disaster management committee (DMC) established at the community level.*

*DMC has made a provision that one third of committee representatives will be women.*

CSO comment in survey data: Nepal

mobilise political and financial resources that could be utilised to build resilience. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change estimates global climate adaptation costs of between US\$49 – 171 billion per year by 2030 - compared to current estimated DRR expenditure of US\$200 million per year<sup>23</sup>. The view from the frontline is that far greater resources are needed at local levels to reduce vulnerability and improve the security and well-being of lives and livelihoods. Climate change and adaptation funding offer a potential resource. At the end of the day, the objective is the same: to save lives and secure livelihoods.

### **f) The lack of resource at the frontline is preventing faster progress to implementing HFA...**

VFL quantitative and qualitative findings highlight a lack of dedicated financial resources, human resources, training and know-how in local governments as the most common constraints at the local level. Progress to date indicates that conventional “trickle down” approaches to resource mobilisation are not working. There is an urgent need for alternative cost-efficient strategies to mobilise political commitment and resources, which up scale the building of local capacities to reduce risk.

### **g) ...but there are also existing resources that remain untapped.**

Whilst human, technical and financial resources are undoubtedly scarce, there exists a considerable body of relevant experience and expertise at the local level. VFL provides strong evidence that civil society organisations working alongside vulnerable people often have a higher level of awareness and understanding of the local hazards and vulnerabilities than government officials. In this respect civil society organisations and communities represent a massively under-utilised resource that could be strategically harnessed; augmenting government efforts to build community resilience.

The solution to tapping into these resources is in part political. The primacy of government’s responsibility to uphold people’s right to safety and protection is acknowledged. But political will is required to turn rights into reality. Resources are required, and competition over resource allocation is part of the political life of all nations. At the local level the key to optimising resource mobilisation is a commitment to participation. Civil society organisations, particularly grassroots women’s groups, with established relationships and experience of working alongside vulnerable people can play a vital role in mobilising and facilitating sustainable community engagement.

### **h) Greater focus on the HFA ‘cross cutting issues’ would enhance effectiveness – particularly community participation in decision-making processes.**

The solution is not only to secure and invest more resources. VFL findings also reveal a lack of commitment to addressing cross cutting issues that are essential for the HFA implementation, such as gender inclusiveness, cultural sensitivity and meaningful community participation<sup>24</sup>. One of the lowest scoring cross cutting indicators is community participation in decision-making processes. This is significant because without community participation the chances of connecting nationally-driven policy directives with tangible action at the grassroots level are slim. These findings were reinforced by the two VFL complementary studies focusing on women and children, which found very little attempt to engage these particularly high-risk groups and a large deficiency in understanding of their distinct skills, attributes and vulnerabilities.

A key benefit of the VFL process has been the DRR dialogue, reflective discussions and relationship building that has occurred, sometimes for the first time, amongst government officials, civil society and men and women representing at-risk communities.

<sup>23</sup> Economic Aspects of Adaptation to Climate Change, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2009

<sup>24</sup> The UNISDR HFA Monitor Tool did not develop core indicators for cross cutting issues of this kind.

**i) Turning policy into practice involves finding the right balance between top-down and bottom-up engagement - an important 'push-pull' factor.**

The HFA is approaching its midway stage of 2010, and the strategic emphasis needs to shift from policy formulation at the national level towards policy execution at the local level. Effective policy implementation requires strong accountability and transparency so this means being able to link measurable inputs at the macro level with measurable outputs at the local level.

VFL provides a means to measure progress at local level and in so doing establishes provisional baselines against which the effectiveness of policies and actions by national governments and donors can be consistently assessed. By securing views from the frontline in 48 countries, this pilot VFL research and learning project is an important first step towards building a global constituency and system to independently measure progress towards building resilience. This independent measurement focuses on the critical interface between local government and at-risk communities. The next VFL iteration (planned for the third session Global Platform-DRR 2011) could be geographically extended and modified to incorporate climate adaptation indicators ahead of the post-Kyoto 2012 agreements. This would be a significant development in the way that at-risk communities, civil society and governments can collaborate on global issues such as preventing disasters and adapting to climate change. Government authorities can support such collaborative approaches by providing an enabling environment (policy frameworks and legislation providing access to information and resources that remove blockages to progress) and appropriate incentives to make them happen.

## **4.2 Acting on views from the frontline – immediate recommendations**

### **10 Core Recommendations**

1. Reorient HFA implementation strategies to support a proactive and systematic deepening of engagement with at-risk communities, including participation of most vulnerable groups.
2. Recognise the right of at-risk women, men and children to engage in decision-making and planning processes - participation must be clearly defined and explicitly recognised through policy, legal and institutional provisions.
3. Undertake participatory local hazard-vulnerability assessments and associated risk mapping as strategic entry points to raising critical awareness and understanding of risk and to building relationships among different actors. Set specific time-bound targets with clear responsibilities and delegated authority in support of these assessments. Teach children to do this too, using schools as important local centres for community action for disaster risk reduction.
4. Use local disaster risk knowledge to inform local programming and action planning of principal development sectors; risk considerations should become routine in all development investment planning and programming.
5. Decentralise authority and resources to appropriate administrative level in support of local multi-stakeholder partnerships (including equitable representation from most vulnerable); to coordinate and manage risk reduction, poverty alleviation, development and climate adaptation policy execution.
6. Develop innovative financial strategies for supporting local level initiatives and partnerships, including direct local level access to disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation trust funds and technical resources.

7. Extend VFL's geographical coverage and modify indicator metrics to incorporate climate adaptation characteristics ahead of Global Platform-DRR 2011 as a means to independently audit disaster risk and climate adaptation progress.
8. Maximise the potential of existing traditional social networks and investigate potential of social networking and internet-based communications innovations as approaches to communicating and sharing information, raising critical awareness, building broad-based constituencies and coalitions and mobilising social demand for DRR.
9. Invest in networks at all levels that improve the exchange of good practice and learning, promote civil society harmonisation and coordination, and foster dialogue and collaboration between state and non-state actors.
10. Carry out reform of the humanitarian response system, making it one committed to engaging with and strengthening local and national preparedness and response / recovery capacities, and one that bases programme interventions on assessments of people's own perceived priority needs in relation to their capacities and vulnerabilities.

## Specific recommendations for each HFA PFA

### **HFA PFA 1: Governance**

1.1 Mandate and support local level hazard – vulnerability assessments and associated mapping in public policies and legal frameworks.

1.2 Adopt innovative and alternative financial strategies for supporting local level partnerships (government – civil society – community) including direct local level access to disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation funding, and technical resources.

1.3 Delegate DRR roles and responsibilities, authority and dedicated resources to lowest administrative level (i.e. point of action).

1.4 Support the establishment of local level government – civil society – community partnerships to coordinate and manage DRR planning and practice – including equitable representation from at-risk communities and associated civil society organisations.

1.5 Invest in networks and actions that improve the exchange of good practice and learning, promote civil society harmonisation and coordination, and foster dialogue and collaboration between state and non-state actors.

1.6 Establish financial tracking systems that connect measurable inputs at the international / national level with measurable outputs at the local level.

1.7. In order to facilitate all of the above, define and explicitly recognise in policy, legal and institutional provisions the rights of all groups in society to participate in DRR decision-making, policy setting, planning and implementation; also define the ways and means of participation.

### **HFA PFA 2: Risk Assessment, Monitoring and Warning**

2.1. Undertake periodic climate-sensitive hazard and vulnerability assessments at the local level with inputs from high risk groups – a strategic entry point for building community resilience.

2.2 Develop information management systems to collate, map and analyse local risk assessment data and to disseminate information for development of local risk reduction strategies.

2.3 Establish an independent, transparent local level system for monitoring the progress of risk reduction and associated baselines with active participation from high-risk groups (e.g. women and other marginalised groups).

2.4 Set clear, time-bound outcome targets and milestones for measuring the effectiveness of DRR investments at the local level.

2.5 Civil society organisations, government, international organisations should provide technical and training support for local risk assessments, data mapping and analysis.

### **HFA PFA 3: Knowledge and Education**

3.1 Set out in public policy and legislative frameworks the right to information about hazards and risks and right to information about the government's duties and responsibilities, policies and procedures to address them.

3.2 Mount sustained public education media campaigns amongst at-risk communities including information on risks, rights and entitlements, duties and responsibilities, policies and practices of state and non-state actors.

3.3 Teach primary and secondary children how to undertake hazard – vulnerability assessments and local risk maps.

3.4 Investigate potential of social networking to share information, build coalitions, raise critical awareness, mobilise public demand and strengthen public advocacy.

### **HFA PFA 4: Underlying Risk Factors**

4.1 Use local disaster risk knowledge to inform local programmes and action planning of key development sectors, including: agriculture, natural resource management, trade and industry, transport, health, education, poverty reduction, climate adaptation, infrastructure and housing development, rural and urban planning.

4.2 Make disaster risk reduction strategies and climate adaptation strategies appropriate and accessible to people living and working in the informal sectors, outside the mainstream economy – small scale and family farmers, pastoralists, artisanal fishers, small scale manufacturers and petty traders, etc.

4.3 Delegate DRR, climate change and poverty alleviation decision-making to lowest administrative level in support of greater sectoral integration and more effective programming as well as strong participation by affected people themselves.

### **HFA PFA 5: Preparedness and Response**

5.1 Re-orient the humanitarian response system towards one based on engaging with and strengthening local and national capacities.

5.2 Undertake post-disaster learning reviews with affected communities to capture accrued experience and inform future disaster preparedness planning.

5.3 Incorporate local risk / vulnerability assessment factors into design of disaster response and recovery interventions so that risk reduction can begin immediately and simultaneously with response and recovery.

## 5 Moving forward – next steps for VFL





## 5. **Moving forward** – next steps for VFL

This VFL pilot project shows that by combining their efforts, a global network of civil society organisations can develop and apply rigorous measures of progress at an international scale. However, its findings are preliminary, and like any good research, new questions have arisen in the course of the work. Further refinements are planned and VFL has the potential to be expanded, developed and rolled-out further to support ongoing monitoring and evaluation activity with the ultimate aim of improving policy and practice in order to reduce disaster losses.

Presentation of these VFL findings at the Global Platform-DRR in June 2009 is a key part of the project. Further steps will include:

- A series of regional and global learning reviews with network members to learn from the VFL pilot experience; drawing out recommendations for the future
- Further country consultations and thematic analysis to critique findings and draw out policy implications at national and regional levels
- Adapt indicators to incorporate climate adaptation considerations
- Extend review within participating countries and geographically expand into more countries ahead of Global Platform-DRR 2011 – VFL to serve as an independent periodic audit of progress towards risk reduction
- Form strategic alliances with relevant networks and coalitions in support of extending coverage and building a broad-based constituency active in risk reduction and climate adaptation
- Develop links with respected academic institutions to strengthen policy – practice – research linkages
- Research social networking innovations as means to engage and foster active citizenry, raise critical awareness, build social demand and strengthen public accountability for risk reduction
- Establish multi-donor trust fund to support the development of VFL.

# 6 Acknowledgements

**The GNDR would like to acknowledge the support given to Views from the Frontline helping turn an idea into reality. The project has grown from strength to strength due to the involvement and commitment of people and organisations from right around the world – a great example of what can be achieved when committed people come together under a common cause – to substantially reduce the loss of lives and livelihoods caused by disasters. So, a big thank you to...**

All the participants in this pilot review from local government, civil society organisations and community representatives – over 7200 and counting...

All the Participating organisations who helped conduct this research (see annex for a full list)

All the Regional and National Coordinating Organisations (see annex for a full list)

To Plan International and World Vision International for conducting the child-centred DRR survey

To the Huairou Commission for conducting the women-centred DRR study

To Tearfund for hosting the secretariat and underwriting the financial costs during a difficult financial period

To UNISDR for their support in getting the GNDR established and providing the formal space for us to present at GP-DRR.

To all our financial supporters including:

- Disaster Emergencies Committee
- OFDA – USA government
- Irish Aid
- The European Union
- Iran - University of Tehran's Health Research Institute
- World Vision Switzerland
- Swiss Development Cooperation
- Oxfam America
- Oxfam UK
- Muslim Aid
- Practical Action UK

To everyone who has hosted the various training workshops and field visits, and participated in the VFL process by providing advice, feedback, challenge, support and encouragement

To the VFL project team and advisors, particularly Janine Schall-Emden, Terry Gibson, Andrew Bidnell from InsideOut Consulting, our in-house Professor Ben Wisner, Anne Castleton, Keystone Accountability, Mark Pelling and the GNDR Steering Group,

**But VFL is just beginning, not ending... More energy, more commitment, more funding and more support is needed to continue developing the VFL concept.**

So as well as thank you, we encourage you to maintain your commitment as we move to the next phase....

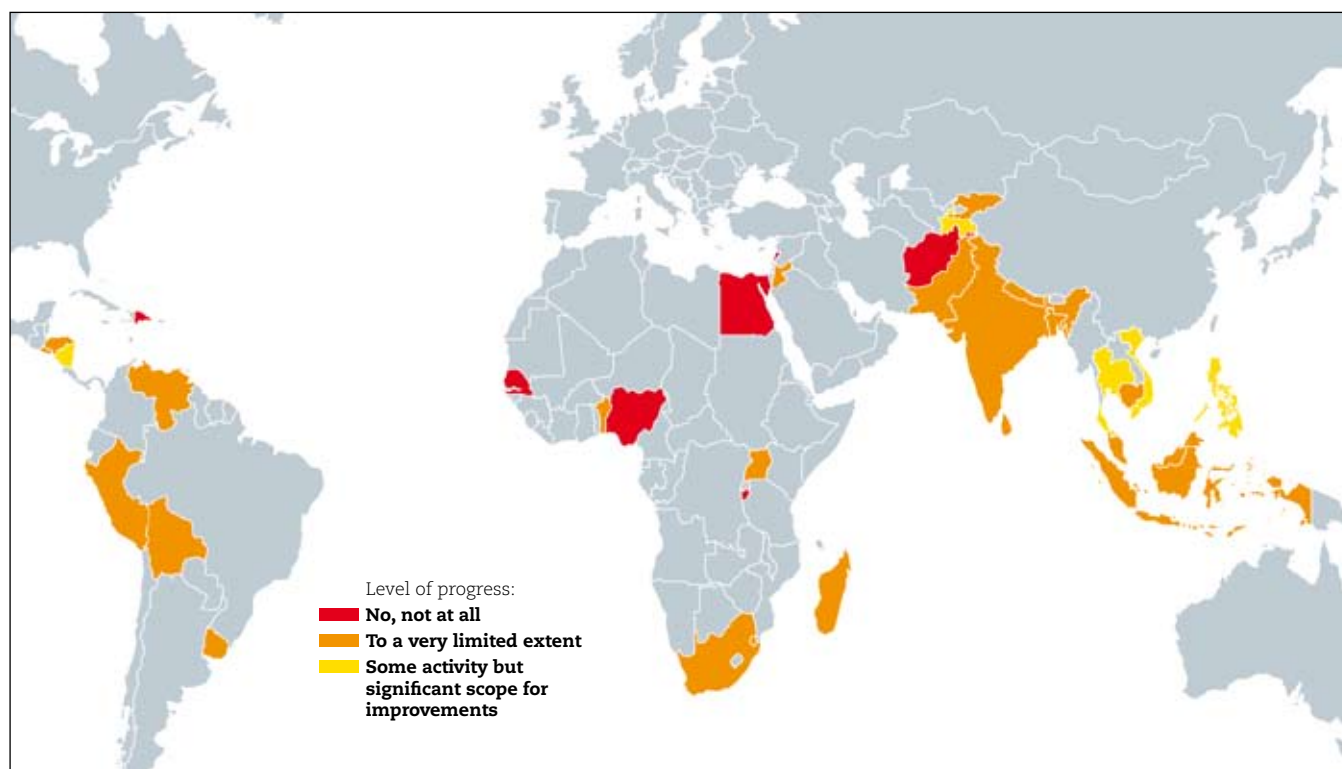
On behalf of all those at the frontline of disasters who have contributed to this research, we urge you to listen to their views and consider how you can use them to reduce the loss of lives and livelihoods caused by disasters in your part of the world.

Marcus Oxley  
Chair, Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction

# Annexes

## a. Scope

### Map of VFL coverage



### Countries contributed data to the following studies:

- v: Views from the frontline (indicated on map)
- w: Women's views from the frontline
- c: Child centred survey

#### South America

Peru, v, w  
Venezuela, v  
Bolivia, v, w, c  
Brazil, w  
Uruguay, v

#### Central America/Caribbean

El Salvador, v, c  
Jamaica, w  
Honduras, v, w  
Nicaragua, v  
Guatemala, v  
Haiti, c  
Dominican Republic, v

#### Southern Africa

South Africa, v  
Swaziland, v, c  
Malawi, c  
Madagascar, v

#### East Africa

Uganda, v  
Burundi, v  
Kenya

#### West Africa

Nigeria, v  
Cameroon, w  
Ghana, v  
Senegal, v, c  
The Gambia  
Sierra Leone, c  
Benin, v

#### Middle East

#### North Africa

Egypt, v, c  
Syria  
Iran  
Yemen  
Jordan, v  
Turkey, w

Lebanon, v  
Central Asia,  
Kyrgyzstan, v  
Tajikistan, v  
Uzbekistan

#### South Asia

Afghanistan, v  
Nepal, v, w, c  
India, v, w, c  
Pakistan, v, c  
Bangladesh, v, w, c  
Sri Lanka, v

#### South East Asia

Indonesia, v, c  
Vietnam, v  
Philippines, v, w, c  
Malaysia, v, w  
Cambodia, v  
Thailand, v

## Participating organisations

### South America:

RCO. Soluciones Practicas Peru

**Peru:** Asociación Ministerio Diaconal Paz y Esperanza (NCO), PREDES, Soluciones Prácticas – ITDG PERU, SHALOM PERU, S.O.S. VIDA PERU, GRIDES LAMBAYEQUE, PIURA, ANCASH

**Venezuela:** NCO. CESAP

**Bolivia:** Soluciones Practicas Bolivia (NCO), World Vision Bolivia. Municipios de Arbieta, Pojo y Tapacari – Cochabamba, Fundación ATICA – Cochabamba, Fundación ASOHABA – Potosí, Fundación ATICA – Sucre

**Uruguay:** Amigos del Viento (NCO), Red Organizaciones Ambientalistas del Uruguay, ANONG, Scoutismo, Cruz Roja, Escuela de la Comunidad Animista, Dirección, Planificación y Educación, Sistema Nacional de Emergencia, CECOED, DNM, MGAP, OPYPA, MIDES, Universidad de la República - Extensión Universitaria (SCEAM), Red de Educación Ambiental del MEC, ADASU

### Central America/ Caribbean:

RCO. Concertación Regional para la Gestion de Riesgo, El Salvador

**El Salvador:** MPGR - FUNDESA (NCO), Plan El Salvador, PROVIDA, PROCOMES, FUMA, Comandos De

Salvamento, Sinodo Luterano, JPIC, CRD, REDES, FUNDESA, APROCSAL, UNES, FUDECOM, CRIPDES, CORDES, Servicio Jesuita, VAMOS.

**Honduras:** ASONOG (NCO),

**Nicaragua:** Mesa Nacional de Gestión de Riesgos (NCO), Centro Alexander von Humboldt, Plan International Plan Nicaragua, Federacion Luterana Mundial (FLM), Acción Medica Cristiana (AMC), Centro de Informacion y servicios de asesoria en salud (CISAS), Centro de Investigación y estudios de la Salud (CIES), Asociación de Municipios de Nueva Segovia (AMUNSE), Asociación de Municipios del Norte de Chinandega (AMUNORCHI), Asociación de Municipios de León Norte.

**Guatemala:** Comunidades Cristianas de Apoyo –CCAPOYO (NCO), Coordinadora Nacional para la Reducción de Desastres –CONRED- Región V, El Programa Ejercicio Profesional Supervisado Multiprofesional (EPSUM) de la Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, Consorcio de ONG para el desarrollo Comunitario y del medio ambiente, del altiplano y sur de Guatemala (Asociación CORCI; Asociación para el Desarrollo Comunitario –Nuevo Amanecer-, ASDENA; Programa de Atención Movilización

e Incidencia por la Niñez y la Adolescencia, PAMI; Asociación de Mujeres Tejedoras, LEMA

**Dominican Republic:** República Dominicana del Servicio Social de Iglesias Dominicanas, Inc. (SSID) (NCO), World Vision Dominican Republic

**Haiti:** Plan Haiti,

### Southern Africa:

African Centre for Disaster Studies (RCO)

**South Africa:** African Centre for Disaster Studies (NCO), Khumalani support, Funanani Trust, South African Red Cross.

**Swaziland:** Associated Christians International (NCO), World Vision Swaziland

**Malawi:** Plan Malawi

**Madagascar:** Care Madagascar (NCO) Eastern Africa: DENIVA (NCO), OXFAM Uganda, Uganda Red Cross Society, Uganda Coalition for Crisis Prevention (UCCP), Kapchorwa Civil Society Network, World Vision, Busiu Development Foundation, Matheniko Development Forum, Foundation for Urban and Rural Advancement (FURA)

**Uganda:** DENIVA (NCO)

**Burundi:** Youth Strategy for Disaster Reduction (NCO), Association pour la Paix et les Droits de l'Homme (APDH), Croix Rouge Burundi, Ligue iteka, Association des Bibliothequaires, Archivistes et Documentalistes du Burundi (ABADBU)

### Western Africa:

ActionAid – Ghana (RCO)

**Nigeria:** African Youth Movement (NCO), African Youth Movement, Nigeria, National Emergency Management Agency, NEMA, Nigerian Environmental Society, Pan African Vision for the Environment [PAVE], United Nigeria Network, Ikono-Ini Youth Consultative Assembly, Groups against Corruption in Africa, State Emergency Management Agency, Cross River State, Onna Local Government Council, Itu Local Government Council, Esit Eket Local Government Council

**Senegal:** Shalom International (NCO), Plan Senegal, WWF – World Wide Fund for Nature, ANCS - Alliance Nationale contre le SIDA, Union des Amicales et Sections de Enampore, APRAN-Senegal, CEM Koguitte - Ziguinchor, ASC Karantaba, GIE Djijito, CEM Boucotte Sud - Ziguinchor, ASC Lydiano Ziguinchor, Comite d'Animation Maison Quartier Lydiane, Groupe St. Augustin de Lydiane (Scouts), Tendieme, ASC Briou, AFRICARE, YMCA Ziguinchor, PKUME, Amicale des Jeunes de Enampore, CEM Enampore, Elemntaire Enampore Affiladio, Elementaire Kamobeul, Ecole Pierre Bassene, ANCAR, PACTE, Ecole Sara Yoro, ONDH, Service Peche Ziguinchor, Chorale St. Augustin, Universite Cheikh Anta Diop, FASTEF,

Direction d'Enseignement Elementaire, Direction Ressources Humaines Ministere de l'Education, INEADE, IDEN – Dakar Ville, College Ouakam, Ecole Elementaire Medina, Direction d'Education Prescolaire, Lycee Blaise Diagne, College d'Enseignement Moyens, Bloc Scientifique Point E, Ministere de Education, SWAA Senegal, Hope for African Children (HACI), HSCE, GRADB, Agence Nationale pour la Reconstruction en Casamance (ANRAC), Association des Jeunes pour le developpement pasteef, Mouvement contre les Armes Legeres en Afrique de l'Ouest (MALAO), SIDA SERVICE, Handicap International, Collectif des Artistes du Senegal (CARTIS), Konrad Adenauer Foundation, World Vision, KARAN Senegal, TARBES, IASCO Senegal, UASE Enampore, DIAMANO Kolda, FRIEL Pikine, PADEC Senegal, ANDEGGO Pikine, Programme National de Prevention de Reduction des Risques Majeurs et de Gestion des Catastrophes Naturelles au Senegal, (National Focal Point)

**Sierra Leone:** Plan Sierra Leone

**Gambia:** Children for Children Organisation (NCO), Youth Ambassadors of Peace, Gambia Redcross Society, National Federation of The Gambia UNESCO Clubs

and Centres, WANEP-The Gambia, Action Aid-International The Gambia, ADWAC, World View The Gambia, Child Protection Alliance, Association of Women Against HIV/AIDS and Malaria, Ma-Juwara KUNDA Women's Group, Concern Universal-The Gambia, Global Unification-The Gambia, TOSTAN, National Youth Parliament, Gambia National Youth Council, Gambia Scout Council, UNESCO, Soma Community Radio Station

**Benin:** WANEP (NCO), DEDRAS-ONG, Alpha et Oméga ONG, ALAFIA ONG, ALHERI ONG, Association des Volontaires pour le Triomphe des Initiatives de Développement (AVOTRIDEB ONG), Espace et Vie ONG, Fondation Moussè pour la paix et le développement

### Middle East and North Africa:

Arab Network for Environment and Development- RAED (RCO)

**Egypt:** Plan Egypt (NCO)

**Jordan:** Land and Human to Advocate Progress (NCO), Amman Chamber of Industry, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Health, Jordanian Cooperative Foundation, Jordanian Engineering Association, Civil Defense Directorate, Amman chamber of Commerce, National Union of

Charity Societies, Women Commissions Forum, Jordanian Red Crescent, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Interior, Greater Amman Municipality,

**Lebanon:** World vision Lebanon (NCO), Marjeyoun Emergency Response and Disaster Management Committee, WVL volunteers in Beirut (active community members), WVL volunteers in Akkar (active community members), Civil Defense department in Bsharre, Municipality of Koussaya, Municipality of Kab Elias, Education committee of Kab Elias, Social and Health center in AinKfarzabad

### Central Asia:

Netherlands Red Cross (RCO)

**Tajikistan:** Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development: Tajikistan (NCO), Mission East, Focus Humanitarian, Tajik Red Crescent

**Kyrgyzstan:** Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development: Kyrgyzstan (NCO),

### South/South East Asia:

National Society for Earthquake Technology-Nepal (NSET) (NCO)

**Afghanistan:** Church World Service – Pakistan/Afghanistan (NCO), Afghan Development Association (ADA), Cooperation Center

for Afghanistan (CCA), Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance(CHA/OHRD), Coordination for Afghan Relief (CoAR), Helvetas, Norwegian Project Office - Rural Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan (NPO/RRAA), Save the Children - Sweden/Norway (SC-S/N), Skill Training and Rehabilitation Society (STARS)

**Nepal:** National Society for Earthquake Technology-Nepal (NSET) (NCO), Plan Nepal

**India:** Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS) India / NADRR (NCO), Gorakhpur Environmental Action Group (GEAG), Udyama, Kanchan Seva Ashram, Covenant Centre for Development (CCD), Development of Humane Action (DHAN) Foundation, ROSE, Saritsa Foundation, Swayam Shikshan Prayog, Saurashtra Voluntary Actions, and Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS), World Vision India

**Pakistan:** Participatory Development Initiatives (NCO), Doaba Foundation, Sindh Forestry Workers Cooperative Organization, Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, NGOs Development Society, Sangat Development

Society, PDI: Balochistan Chapter, World Vision Pakistan

**Bangladesh:**

Participatory Research and Development Initiative (PRDI) (NCO), Plan Bangladesh, COAST Trust, Rupantar, Shariatpur Development Society-SDS, Young Power in Social Action-YPSA, PRADIPAN, BARASA, SAP Bangladesh, and PRADIP. Resource Integration Organization

**Sri Lanka:** Practical Action Sri Lanka (NCO), Action Aid Sri Lanka, Christian Aid Sri Lanka, Sarvodaya Women's Movement, UNDP-DRM

**Indonesia:** YAKKUM Emergency Unit (NCO), YEU Yogyakarta, YEU Nias, YEU Meulaboh, YEU Lhokseumawe and YEU Banda Aceh, Lingkar Association, Safer Community through Disaster Risk Reduction (SC-DRR) Yogyakarta, Forum Suara Korban Bencana, Pengurangan Resiko Bencana Yogyakarta, Plan Indonesia, World Vision Indonesia

**Vietnam:** Development Workshop France (NCO), CARE, OXFAM

**Philippines:** Centre for Disaster Preparedness (NCO), Plan Philippines, Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) (Camiguin, Surigao, Agusan, Quezon Areas), Mahinog Response 143, Ranaw Disaster Response and Rehabilitation

Assistance Center (RDRRAC)(Iligan City), Lihuk Pilipina (Cebu, Bohol, Negros Oriental, Leyte Areas), Plan International (Southern Leyte Areas), Buklod Tao (San Mateo, Rizal), Panay Rural Development Center (Iloilo), Eastern Rizal Parents Association (Teresa, Rizal), Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP), Citizens Disaster Response Center (CDRC), World Vision, Save the Children, Hope Worldwide, Tambuyog, Lasalle Institute of Governance, Naga College Foundation, Coastal Core, Philippine Association of (PAEPI), GDFI, Technical Working Group, Children International, I-Core, Philippine National Red Cross, Calamba, Immaculate Homeowners, Dagupan Pract Shot Association, Bantay Lawa, God's Covenant Bible Christ Center, Barangay Ibabang Iyam, Patropa Farmers Association, Kagsabua, Inc, RCJP, Democratic Youth Lea Forum for Peace, PSK, LUMAD, PUP-Student Org, Day Care of Teresa, Heifer International-Philippines, Kabalikat, Urban Poor Association, JCIP, TK, Rincomesa, PTA, CCT, CFCA,

**Malaysia:** Mercy Malaysia (NCO)

**Cambodia:** Save the Earth Cambodia (NCO)

**Thailand:** Sustainable Development Foundation Thailand (NCO) Sustainable Development Foundation, NGO- Coordinating Committee

on Development, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Ministry of the Interior, Association of Sub-district Administrative Organizations, Southeast Asia START Regional Center, Southeast Asia Regional Committee for START, Global Change System for Analysis, Research and Training, World Vision Foundation Thailand, Good Life Foundation, Lampang Province, Peasant Organizations for Environmental Rehabilitation Development Center, Utaradit Province, Mountain Friends Association, Khon Kaen Province, Pa Dong Lan Development and Rehabilitation Project, Khon Kaen Province, Agricultural Reform and Rural Development Project, Nakhon Sawan Province, Agricultural Reform and Rural Development Project, Phichit Province, Community Capacity Building Project, Pitsanulok Province, Department of Environment Quality Promotion, Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment, Community Resource Management Development Institute, Sukhothai Province, Conservation and Sustainable Development Foundation, Pitsanulok Province, Kamphaeng Phet Homeland Conservation Institute, Kamphaeng Phet Province, Peasant Organizations for

Environmental Rehabilitation Development Center, Pitsanulok Province, Raksthai Foundation, Phang Nga Office, CARE International Member Organization Thailand, Save Andaman Network Foundation

**Women's study:**

Huiarou commission. Participating organizations: Bolivia: Centro de Mujeres Candelarias/ Fundacion Apachita, Brazil: Rede Pintadas, Honduras: Comite de Emergencia Garifuna, Jamaica: Construction Resource and Development Center, Peru: CONAMOVIDI, Servicios Educativos El Augustino, Central de Bancos Comunales De El Agustin and Sta. Anita, Mujeres Unidas Para Un Pueblo Mejor, SE. Asia, Philippines: Lihok Pilipina/ Bantay Banay, DAMPA - Damayan ng mga Pilipinong Api, PHLSSA Partnership of Agency, S. Asia, Bangladesh: Participatory Development Action Program. India: Rural Organization for Social Education, Covenant Center for Development, Swayam Shikshan Prayog, Nepal: Lumanti Support Group for Shelter, Himawanti Nepal, Sri Lanka: Sevanatha Urban Resource Center, C.Asia /EU, Turkey: Foundation for the Support of Women's Work, Africa, Cameroon: Ntankah Village Women's Common Initiative

# b. Methodology

This annex describes the Views from the Frontline (VFL) methodology and analytical framework as well as highlighting complementary studies that have been implemented alongside the main project. These include the Huairou Commission's Gender and DRR study, as well as a Child and Youth-focused survey led by Plan International and World Vision.

## Introduction

Views from the Frontline provides a measure of progress towards implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) at the local level through the active participation of different stakeholders across developing countries and regions. This review is coordinated by the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR) and implemented by civil society actors across the world.

VFL complements the UNISDR's biennial national level HFA Monitoring and Progress Review. Results from both the governmental and non-governmental initiatives provide a picture of progress within the participating countries and reinforce one another in focusing attention on key challenges, constraints and critical success factors.

The present VFL study is a pilot or 'test of concept'. Following on from the GP-DRR June 2009, GNDR network members will participate in an evaluation of the project method and implementation to shape the future development of the survey.

## Goals and Objectives

The main goal of the VFL is to support the effective implementation of the HFA to build the resilience of at risk people and communities to disasters.

The project is composed of two main elements: research and learning; The research element focuses on face-to-face interviews or self-evaluations by local government officials, civil society organisations and local community representatives to assess their perceptions on progress made towards disaster resilience and risk reduction as part of the HFA five PFAs and cross cutting issues. The learning

phase of the project aims to use the research findings to develop consensus on policy positions and associated recommendations to take forward to national, regional and international levels - including the Global Platform-DRR review process. It will also take these findings back to network members to assess them collaboratively, VFL aims to stimulate a new level of dialogue, contributing towards forming partnerships between the key stakeholders to strengthen local level disaster risk reduction.

The project's specific objectives are:

1. To provide an independent global overview of progress towards implementation of key aspects of the HFA at local level that will provide a provisional baseline to measure future progress
2. To strengthen public accountability for effective HFA implementation by enhancing the ability to measure progress.
3. To enhance civil society ability to monitor progress, share information, formulate policy positions, develop advocacy coalitions and contribute towards multi-stakeholder efforts to implement the HFA on the ground.

The project outcomes at the country and regional level include:

1. Increased political commitment and investment of resources at the local level to build resilience
2. Improved understanding of the level of disaster resilience at the local level in participating countries and regions
3. Improved dialogue between public, civil society and community stakeholders responsible for disaster risk reduction
4. Improved understanding on progress towards implementation of the HFA within governmental and civil society bodies
5. Increased research, analytical and advocacy capabilities among project participants.

## Project Actors

To implement VFL, national focal points were established in the participating countries – referred to as **National Coordinating Organisations (NCO)**. NCOs coordinated the implementation of the review in their respective country and drafted country reports on the basis of the findings. A comprehensive implementation handbook was developed to provide guidance to implementing organizations and to provide consistency across countries. Six regional two-day workshops were held between November and December 2008 with two facilitators from the Global Network. The aim of the workshops was to introduce and discuss the research method and implementation process with NCOs and RCO as well as Participating Organizations and other key stakeholders (donors, experts, advisory group members).

The NCOs were coordinated by **Regional Coordinating Organisations (RCO)** who provided support to their regions' NCOs in the implementation process and drafted regional reports based on a synthesis of country-level findings. The RCOs' role was also crucial to further cross-country linkages and learning between participating countries within the region.

Both NCOs and RCOs were selected through a competitive open call announced over various relevant listservs and websites. Applications were

reviewed on the basis of key criteria, including the organisations' capacity and commitment to the topic. Completed applications also required two peer reviews and the selection process was finalized over a two-month period (August-September 2008). Countries had not been pre-selected, and therefore a country's inclusion in the project was based on 1) receiving a qualified application for NCO and 2) its status as middle to low-income country.

In each country, selected NCOs implemented the review process with the assistance of a **National Advisory Committee** who served as ambassadors for the project and advised the NCO during the project implementation. NAC members included academics, CSOs, policy-makers, members of the donor community as well as other key stakeholders for DRR in the given country.

NCOs promoted participation of a broad range of civil society organisations at the national and local levels in the review process. These '**Participating Organisations' (PO)**, were primarily responsible for conducting the survey through a series of face to face interviews and focus group discussions with key informant groups following a questionnaire format based on the HFA five PFAs and key cross cutting issues. An abridged handbook was developed for them by the GNDR and NCOs held a PO briefing as soon as they returned from the regional training workshop.

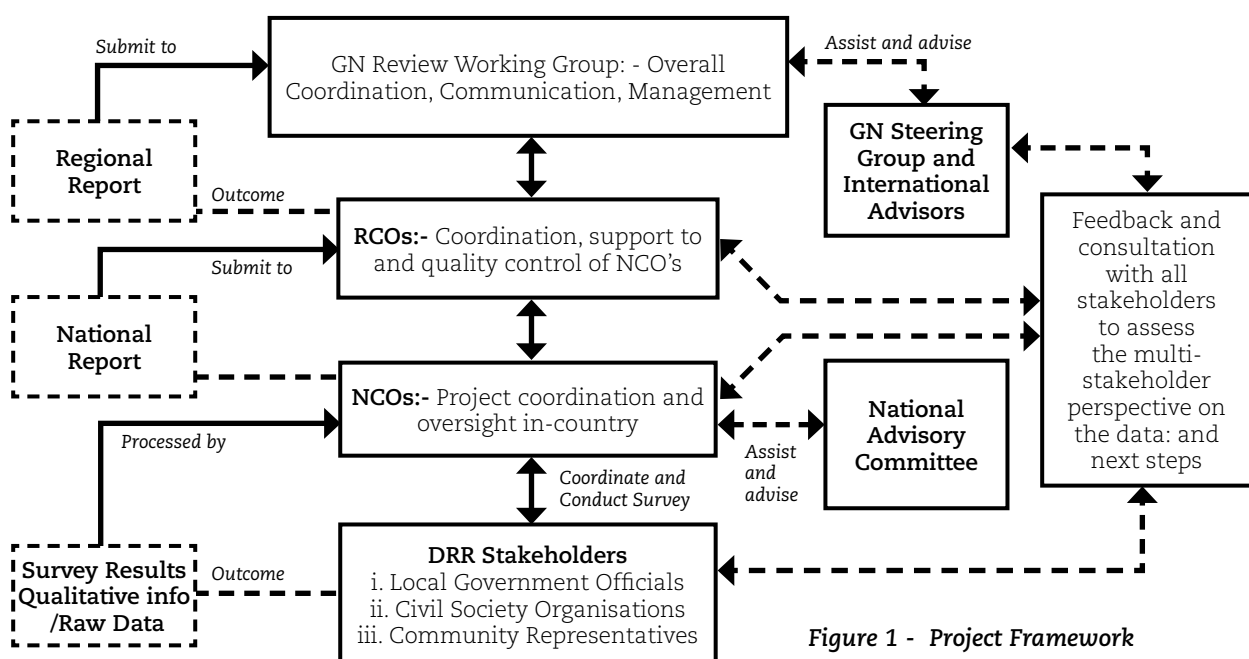


Figure 1 - Project Framework



The **Global Network of CSOs for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)** devised the approach<sup>1</sup> and provided overall support and communication while analysing the overall findings across countries and regions. The review aims to raise awareness and create dialogue at the international level regarding the locally identified needs and recommendations.

### **Selection of ‘at-risk’ Communities and Questionnaire Respondents**

NCOs developed country risk profiles, identifying (with the help of key informants including National Advisory Group members as well as secondary information) the main at-risk communities within each country. They identified the main aspects of disaster risks related to the particular hazards and vulnerabilities of each country. They took account of vulnerable groups, topography, urbanisation, physical infrastructure and housing, livelihoods patterns, knowledge & education and governance. The selection of communities included in the study also took account of different disaster risks and vulnerabilities, selecting both intensive as well as extensive risk areas.

Once the main at-risk communities at the country-level had been selected, NCOs identified the relevant local government structures and line ministries responsible for each at-risk community as well as local Civil Society Organisations to collaborate as Participating Organisations<sup>2</sup>. These Participating Organisations, at least one per selected at-risk community, assisted the NCO directly in the selection of respondents in the respective community. The respondent groups included the following:

1. Local Government Officials (at least 60 representatives): the following three types of public officials were to be represented equally within the sample: 1) Senior officials, i.e, top representatives of local government (mayors, or deputies, senior district officials; knowledgeable councillors at the municipal or provincial level, for example). Officials with experience of the healthcare situation in the respective

communities were also covered within this sample. 2) Officials in charge of urban/ agricultural planning overseeing processes concerning urban activities (such as building infrastructure, residential and commercial areas.) and agricultural processes (such as land use, land reforms, access to common lands). 3) Officials in charge of education (such as school principals) overseeing the management of public education institutions (e.g. local schools, colleges).

2. Civil Society Organisations (at least 50 representatives): The selection criteria for this group included regional coverage (to cover main disaster risk profiles in intensive and extensive risk areas), and diversity. i.e. staff in selected CSOs should be as representative as possible of gender, age, ethnicity and other demographic variables of the country.
3. Community Representatives (at least 50 representatives): NCOs and POs placed an emphasis on this in the sampling process as local communities are generally more difficult to reach than government or civil society groups, and participating organisations played a key role in selecting communities and conducting the interviews. Regional coverage and diversity were key criteria; the inclusion of vulnerable or marginalised groups was particularly encouraged.

Selection guidelines for respondents underscored the importance of gender balance as well as the coverage of particularly vulnerable populations among community and civil society representatives.

### **Analytical Framework**

A common survey method has been designed by the GNDR in order to ensure high-quality standards and cross case comparability. The questionnaires are a mix of quantitative questions using a five-point scale followed by qualitative (open ended) questions (see Figure 2 overleaf). The survey allows for flexibility to meet local demands and context differences.

<sup>1</sup> The project method was drafted and conceptualised by a Keystone ([www.KeystoneAccountability.org](http://www.KeystoneAccountability.org)) consultancy team composed of Natalia Kirytopoulou, David Bonbright, Janine Schall-Emden and Lorenzo Fioramonti, working in close coordination with Marcus Oxley, chairman of the Global Network of NGOs for Disaster Reduction. An International Advisory Working Group of key stakeholders and experts also provided guidance and feedback. A number of tools used in this handbook, in particular those used for the project’s consultative activities and some of the management structures, draw on and were inspired by the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (see [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org) for details).

<sup>2</sup> The relevant local government entity might be a local municipality, a district or a province.

The VFL review process and survey uses a total of 102 indicators distributed across the three key informant groups: local government officials, civil society organisations (CSOs), and community representatives.

These three groupings had been selected as the key target groups most appropriate for analysing the state of disaster risk reduction at the critical interface between local governments and at-risk communities. The indicator matrix is modelled on the Hyogo Framework for Action; based on five main PFAs or 'strategic areas' in addition to a set of cross cutting issues. The five PFAs are:

**1. Governance**

This PFA measures the extent to which disaster risk reduction (DRR) has been a) institutionalised through government legislation and practices, b) operationalised through the activities of civil society organisations and c) incorporated within the formal and informal systems within local communities.

**2. Risk Assessment, Monitoring and Warning**

This PFA measures the extent to which risk assessment, monitoring systems and early warning mechanisms have been developed to alert local government, civil society and local communities about potential disasters.

**3. Knowledge and Education**

This PFA measures the extent to which knowledge, innovation and education have been used to build a culture of safety and resilience at the local level.

**4. Underlying Risk Factors**

This PFA measures the extent to which underlying risk factors, such as social, economic, environmental conditions and land utilisation have been addressed in order to reduce the causes of vulnerabilities and disaster risks.

**5. Disaster preparedness and response**

This PFA measures the extent to which progress has been made toward strengthening disaster preparedness for effective response (in terms of capacity and resources) of sub-national authorities, organisations and local communities.

**6. Cross cutting issues**

A set of Cross cutting Issues also covers a number of areas that, although not directly included in the five thematic areas, will impact the effective implementation of the HFA. These topics include: participation, gender, encouraging volunteers and cultural diversity.

Respondents to the survey assess the various indicators by completing a standardised questionnaire (primarily by face-to-face interviews). The questionnaire is divided into closed questions and open-ended questions. Responses to the closed questions follow a five-point scale which provide an indication of progress as defined below:

**1 = No, not at all**

**2 = To a very limited extent**

**3 = Some activity but significant scope for improvements**

**4 = Yes, but with some limitations in capacities and resources**

**5 = Yes, with satisfactory, sustainable and effective measures in place**

For visual purposes, each overall Priority Score is colour-coded to facilitate communicating the results to a broader audience.

**Frameworks and structures**

**Question A.1** **[LG 1.1]**

*Are there institutional capacities for DRR at the local level?*

Score: \_\_\_\_\_ (1 to 5)

**Planning**

**Question A.2** **[LG 1.2]**

*Is disaster risk reduction incorporated into overall planning at the local level in key sectors such as education, health, agriculture, housing and environment?*

Score: \_\_\_\_\_ (1 to 5)

**Figure 2 - Sample questions (from Questionnaire to Senior Government Officials):  
HFA Priority for Action 1 – Governance**

## Colour-Code Results

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
RED	ORANGE	YELLOW	LIME	GREEN

### Local Community Consultations and National Workshop

VFL uses participatory tools including community consultations and national workshops to provide an opportunity to review the level of progress against the HFA as well as to discuss critical success factors and challenges between key stakeholders. While the survey implementation provides opportunities to open up dialogue between civil society organisations, local government, and community representatives; the consultations and workshops expand the dialogue between the three stakeholder groups.

Community consultations involved the three respondent groups in each of the selected communities. National workshops engaged stakeholders who had not participated in the survey. The objective of the workshops was to validate the findings and recommendations for each country, scaling them up to the national level.

Whilst the research provided information on disaster resilience at local level, the consultations aimed at providing a forum to learn, to empower communities, and essentially, to do something with the newly gained awareness at the local and community levels.

VFL thus fulfils two roles:

1. It provides the necessary evidence and knowledge base from which CSOs can develop joint advocacy actions for more effective DRR policy and practice at national and international levels within the context of the HFA framework negotiations.
2. It promotes a bottom-up learning and planning approach to identify the main challenges and constraints facing at-risk communities and to develop practical recommendations and ways forward to improve progress within the Hyogo Framework for Action.

### Implementation Infrastructure

At the time of going to press, the full VFL survey has been completed by 33 countries worldwide, led by in-country National Coordinating Organisations and assisted by eight Regional Coordinating Organisations. At the local level, NCOs drew on over 400 Participating Organisations constituted of a broad range of Civil Society Organisations and community leaders at the national and local levels who in turn administered the survey questionnaire with the three informant groups. While POs have assisted NCOs in cascading the survey at a wide scale in-country, NCOs have led the analysis and drafting of the national report, outlining the main findings and recommendations. In addition to supporting NCOs at the regional level, RCOs assist in furthering cross-country linkages and learning between participating countries within the region.

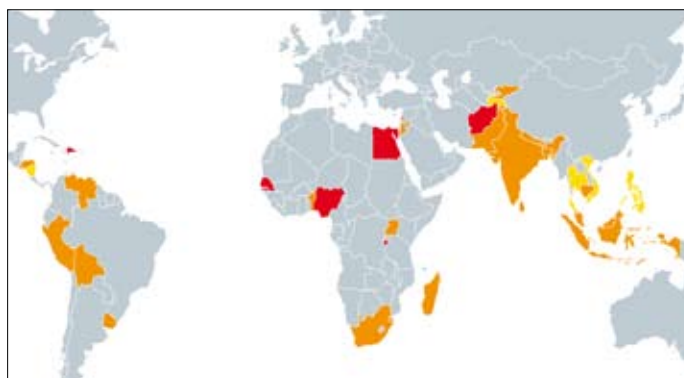


Figure 3 – Map of Participating Countries and Regions

### Survey Implementation

Internationally, and through the use of local level participating organisations, 5290 respondents from Local Government (1909), Civil Society Organisations (1434), and Community Representatives (1947) provided information for VFL, covering 33 countries.

National Coordinating Organisations highlighted the value of providing amplification for voices from the local level regarding DRR within an international study. Although the findings are certainly important, the participatory implementation process was seen as particularly meaningful as it creates a forum for dialogue between different stakeholder groups on the topic. Furthermore, as the HFA is little known beyond some CSOs and government officials, the project has also had the unintended effect of raising awareness on commitments countries have made within this framework, and the rights that this presupposes for its citizens.

One note of caution that has to be raised however is that due to the short time span available for implementing the VFL ahead of the Global Platform 2009, not all countries have been able to conduct community consultations or national workshops. These are still ongoing and form part of the learning and collaboration which the project has generated<sup>3</sup>.

### **A Gender Focused Perspective**

The Huairou Commission (HC) is a global coalition of women's networks and partners that work

together to empower organized groups of grassroots women to advance their settlements development priorities and has led a gender-focused version of the VFL. The methodology was similar to that of the main VFL survey, with the main difference being that the questions were discussed through focus-group meetings.

The gender perspective on 'Views from the Frontline' was implemented in 12 countries with a total of 1181 respondents<sup>4</sup>.

### **Children and Youth's Perspective on Disaster Risk Reduction**

Plan International's Child-centred disaster risk reduction survey extended the main VFL survey to children and youth. Plan International included specifically child-centred questions in each section, and generated one separate survey to be covered in children's focus groups. During the focus group interviews, children were handed cards with the different possible score in order to provide their responses. It was specifically requested that, where possible, girls take part in the focus groups, and preferably boys' and girls' focus groups would be separate.

<sup>3</sup> Additional data and country reports from participating countries are expected and will be integrated into future reports; however, a cut off date had to be enforced for purposes of working up analysis and writing this present report. Further updates will be available at [www.globalnetwork-dr.org](http://www.globalnetwork-dr.org)

<sup>4</sup> Afghanistan Bangladesh, Brazil, Cameroon, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Nepal, Cambodia, Turkey, Philippines, and Peru

## 1. Local Government – Indicator-Questionnaire Reference Matrix

NB: Each respondent should use their own point of view when completing the questions

Respondent types	Indicator No	Indicator name	Questionnaire
			<b>SCORES</b> 1 = No, not at all 2 = To a very limited extent 3 = Some activity but significant scope for improvements 4 = Yes, but with some limitations in capacities and resources 5 = Yes, with satisfactory, sustainable and effective measures in place
		<b>Priority for Action 1: Governance</b>	<i>In this section of the questionnaire, we would like you to assess the extent to which disaster risk reduction (DRR) has been a priority, in particular at local level.</i>
All	LG1.1	Frameworks and structures	Are there institutional capacities for disaster risk reduction at local level?
All	LG1.2	Planning	Is disaster risk reduction incorporated into overall planning at the local level in key sectors such as education, health, agriculture, housing, health, and environment?
All	LG1.3	Financial resources	Is an adequate budget allocated to local government and other local institutions to enable disaster risk reduction to be incorporated in planning and actual activities?
Senior officials	LG1.4	Financial resources (for partnerships)	Are financial resources available to build partnerships with civil society for disaster risk reduction?
All	LG1.5	Human resources	Does government provide training in disaster risk reduction to local officials and community leaders?
		<b>Priority for Action 2: Risk Assessment, Monitoring and Warning</b>	<i>In this section of the questionnaire, we would like you to assess the progress made by local-level government in monitoring risks and providing information to local communities.</i>
All	LG2.1	Disaster risk assessments	Do you carry out regular hazard / risk assessments with the participation of representatives of all sections of the local communities (including women and the most vulnerable groups)?
All	LG2.2	Early warning systems	Are there effective early warning systems in place, which are able to reach local populations and which take local conditions into account?

All	LG2.3	Risk management systems	Are there risk management systems in place to regularly monitor hazards and risks? Are information updates on key risks shared effectively with communities that might be impacted?
		<b>Priority for Action 3: Knowledge &amp; Education</b>	<i>In this section of the questionnaire, we would like you to assess how effectively local-level government has used knowledge and education to ensure key stakeholders are well informed in order to build up their coping capacity.</i>
All	LG3.1	Information management & exchange	Is information on disaster risks and how to both reduce and respond to them, readily available and accessible to key stakeholders including government officials, general public, private sector and local leaders in affected communities?
Education	LG3.2	Formal education (curriculum)	Are topics related to disaster risk awareness and reduction taught as part of the formal education curriculum and through school-based activities and projects?
Education	LG3.3	Formal education (training of teachers and materials)	Are school and college teachers trained on topics related to disaster risk reduction and provided with appropriate educational material?
All	LG3.4	Community training	Is community-based training on disaster risk reduction (highlighting the role of volunteers) open to all members of local communities, including the most vulnerable groups?
All	LG3.5	Public awareness	Are there public education initiatives informing communities about disaster risk, how to reduce exposure, protect themselves from, and respond to disasters?
		<b>Priority for Action 4: Underlying Risk Factors</b>	<i>In this section of the questionnaire, we would like you to assess how much progress has been made toward changing social, economic, environmental conditions and land use at local level to reduce disaster risks.</i>
Senior officials and Planning	LG4.1	Environmental and natural resource management	Do policies at local level support the sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems?
Senior officials and Planning	LG4.2	Adaptation to climate change	Does local-level government support communities to adapt to actual or expected climate change?
Senior officials and Planning	LG4.3	Food security	How much does local-level government strengthen food security in communities prone to drought, floods, cyclones and other hazards?
All	LG4.4	Social protection	Is social protection available to help vulnerable groups (such as poor people, women who are pregnant or with young children, the elderly and disabled) respond to, and recover from disasters?
All	LG4.5	Economic protection	Does local-level government reduce the dependence of high-risk communities on unsafe livelihoods and agricultural practices and activities that are vulnerable to hazards (such as farming in flood plains, coastal fisheries on cyclone prone coastlines)?

Senior officials	LG4.6	Poverty alleviation	Is disaster risk reduction included in poverty reduction strategies at local level, including targeting of vulnerable groups?
Planning	LG4.7	Land use	Is disaster risk reduction included in formal land use planning and rural / urban development planning procedures
Planning	LG4.8	Urban planning	Do urban planning and land use regulations include issues of informal unregulated housing, particularly in hazard-prone urban areas with high populations and rapid developments?
Planning	LG4.9	Overall planning	Are disaster risk reduction impact evaluations required when planning for major development and infrastructure projects?
Planning	LG4.10	Building codes and standards	Are new building codes and construction standards applicable to construction practices for informal or non-permanent human settlements?
Planning	LG4.11	Building codes and standards (enforcement)	Do local authorities have the capacity to implement, monitor and enforce building codes and standards?
All	LG4.12	Protection of critical public facilities	Are key public facilities (such as schools and hospitals) re-built or strengthened to protect against the threat of major hazards, especially in areas of high risk?
Senior officials Planning	LG4.13	Public-Private Partnerships	Are there any local-level government initiated public-private partnerships to support private sector involvement (e.g. business associations, chambers of commerce) in disaster risk reduction -related activities?
		<b>Priority for Action 5 : Preparedness and Response</b>	<b>In this section of the questionnaire, please assess how much progress has been made in strengthening disaster preparedness for effective response (in terms of capacity and resources) of sub-national authorities, communities and individuals.</b>
All	LG5.1	Disaster preparedness capacities (future risks)	Are there measures to strengthen disaster preparedness and response capacities at the local (sub-national) level?
Senior officials	LG5.2	Disaster preparedness and response planning	Are there disaster preparedness plans or disaster contingency plans in place at local and community levels?
Senior officials	LG5.3	Disaster response and recovery	Are disaster response and recovery programmes designed to reduce the risk of future disasters (build back better)?
All	LG5.4	Training drills and rehearsals	Are regular training drills and evacuation rehearsals done with local civil society organisations and at-risk communities?
All	LG5.5	Financial reserves and aid	Do local authorities have access to financial reserves and / or contingency funds that can be made available quickly to support a rapid response to disasters?

Senior officials	LG5.6	Coordination and information exchange	Are positive procedures in place to facilitate exchange of information and coordination between sub-national authorities, affected communities and/or civil society organisations during disaster situations?
		<b>Cross-cutting Issues</b>	<b>In this section of the questionnaire, we would like you to assess how much progress has been made in addressing important cross-cutting issues that impact overall disaster risk reduction strategies.</b>
All	LG CC 1	Community participation and information	Are citizen's rights to participate in disaster response and prevention measures effectively promoted in legal policies and laws?
All	LG CC 2	Actual and fair participation	Are affected populations, especially vulnerable groups, able to play an equal role in disaster risk reduction decision-making, planning and implementation?
All	LG CC 3	Encouraging Volunteers	Are there specific activities that support and encourage the voluntary participation of communities in reducing disaster risks?
All	LG CC 4	Training activities	Are communities and civil society organisations trained to participate in disaster risk reduction?
All	LG CC 5	Gender	Are women, particularly at grassroots level, given specific public roles in decision-making and implementation of disaster risk reduction activities?
All	LG CC 6	Gender (resources)	Are resources set aside to build partnerships with women's groups, particularly at grassroots level?
All	LG CC 7	Cultural sensitivity (diversity)	Does information about reducing disaster risks take into account key characteristics (such as population structure, gender issues and vulnerable livelihoods) within at-risk communities?
All	LG CC 8	Cultural sensitivity (traditional knowledge)	Are traditional practices and local customs (such as indigenous knowledge and traditional leaders) recognised in developing disaster risk reduction activities?
All	LG CC 9	Cultural sensitivity (languages)	Are indigenous and minority languages used in publications and training courses for disaster risk reduction at local level?

## 2. Civil Society Organisations – Indicator-Questionnaire Reference Matrix

NB: Each respondent should use their own point of view when completing the questions

Indicator No	Indicator name	Questionnaire
		<b>SCORES</b> 1 = No, not at all 2 = To a very limited extent 3 = Some activity but significant scope for improvements 4 = Yes, but with some limitations in capacities and resources 5 = Yes, with satisfactory, sustainable and effective measures in place
	<b>Priority for Action 1: DRR prioritisation</b>	<b>In this section of the questionnaire, we would like you to assess how much of a priority your organisation gives to disaster risk reduction (DRR).</b>
CS 1.1	Frameworks and structures	Have national and local Civil Society Organisations in your country included disaster risk reduction in their relief and development policies and planning?
CS 1.2	Planning	Has your organisation included DRR in its relief and development policy and planning?
CS 1.3	Financial resources	Does your organisation set aside specific financial resources for including DRR in its development and relief work?
CS 1.4	Human resources	Does your organisation provide training on DRR and technical resources to staff members?
	<b>Priority for Action 2: Risk Assessment, Monitoring and Warning</b>	<b>In this section of the questionnaire, we would like you to assess how effectively your organisation raises awareness and shares information on DRR among staff members.</b>
CS 2.1	Disaster risk assessments	Does your organisation have adequate skills to carry out participatory risk assessments on potential hazards and vulnerabilities within disaster-prone communities?
CS 2.2	Early warning systems	Do staff members located in high-risk areas have access to an early warning system?
CS 2.3	Risk management systems	Does your organisation monitor hazards, share information on potential risks and have an emergency plan of action?
	<b>Priority for Action 3: Knowledge &amp; Education</b>	<b>In this section of the questionnaire, we would like you to assess how effectively your organisation has shared knowledge and education with key stakeholders to build their capacity to respond to hazards.</b>
CS 3.1	Information management & exchange	Is key information on DRR readily available to local staff and high-risk beneficiaries?
CS 3.2	Formal education (training of staff)	Is DRR included in staff induction packages and training materials?
CS 3.3	Community training	Do community training initiatives in high risk areas (particularly for women and vulnerable groups) include DRR knowledge and practice?
	<b>Priority for Action 4 : Underlying Risk Factors</b>	<b>In this section of the questionnaire, we would like you to assess how effectively your organisation encourages awareness of, and adaptation to, changing environmental conditions</b>
CS 4.1	Environmental and natural resource management	Does your organisation have effective and sustainable environmental policies and practices?
CS 4.2	Adaptation to climate change	Does your organisation support communities to cope with climate change and to adapt to future conditions?
CS 4.3	Protection of facilities	Are your office buildings and facilities protected and strengthened to cope with known hazards in your area?
	<b>Priority for Action 5 : Preparedness and Response</b>	<b>In this section of the questionnaire, we would like you to assess the general situation in your country. How well prepared are local communities to respond and take action in case of disaster?</b>
CS 5.1	Disaster preparedness capacities (future risks)	Do local communities have the capacity to carry out emergency measures and recovery programmes in case of disaster?
CS 5.2	Disaster Response	Do members of your organisation have the necessary range of response skills needed in disaster situations such as first aid, search and rescue, water rescue, wireless and radio communications, fire suppression, water purification, and similar skills?
CS 5.3	Disaster preparedness and response planning	Does your organisation have a plan of action for emergencies (such as access to first aid, personal contact information, family reunification)?

CS 5.4	Disaster response and recovery	If you have experienced a disaster, have post-disaster reviews involved the affected communities so that learning gained can strengthen future responses?
CS 5.5	Emergency resources	If you have experienced a disaster, does humanitarian aid incorporate disaster risk reduction measures as part of disaster recovery and rehabilitation programmes?
CS 5.6	Coordination and information exchange	Do civil society organisations work in coordination with local/national government's disaster management plans?
	<b>Cross-Cutting Issues</b>	<b><i>In this section of the questionnaire, we would like you to assess how effectively your organisation has included cross-cutting issues (such as gender, and culture) which may impact overall DRR strategy</i></b>
CS CC1	Community participation and information	Is detailed information about your organisation (such as aims, programme objectives and contact details) available to all local stakeholders?
CS CC2	Actual and fair participation	Do local community members (including vulnerable groups) participate in decision-making, planning and programme activities within your organisation?
CS CC3	Training activities	Does your staff have the necessary knowledge and skills in participatory approaches to ensure open participation and good performance?
CS CC4	Gender	Are women appointed to leadership positions within your organisation's development and disaster-related programmes?
CS CC5	Gender (resources)	Are training and resources accessible to community groups, particularly women's groups?
CS CC6	Cultural sensitivity (diversity)	Does the gathering of disaster risk information take into account the culture, livelihoods and population structure of vulnerable communities?
CS CC7	Cultural sensitivity (traditional knowledge)	Does your organisation consider traditional practices and local customs (such as indigenous knowledge and traditional leaders) when developing disaster risk reduction activities?
CS CC8	Cultural diversity (languages)	Are indigenous and minority languages used in your organisation's publications and training courses for DRR at the local level?

### 3. Community representative – Indicator-Questionnaire Reference Matrix

NB: Each respondent should use their own point of view when completing the questions

Indicator No	Indicator name	Questionnaire
		<b>SCORES</b> 1 = No, not at all 2 = To a very limited extent 3 = Some activity but significant scope for improvements 4 = Yes, but with some limitations in capacities and resources 5 = Yes, with satisfactory, sustainable and effective measures in place
	<b><i>Priority for Action 1: DRR prioritisation</i></b>	<b><i>In this section of the questionnaire, we would like you to assess to what extent disaster prevention is a priority within your local community</i></b>
CO 1.1	Frameworks and structures	Does your community have well organised groups or committees ready to decide what to do in case of disasters?
CO 1.2	Right to participation	Are members of your community aware of their rights and the legal obligation of government to provide protection from disaster risks?
CO 1.3	Financial resources	Does your community have access to financial or physical resources from local government to reduce the impact of disasters or to help recover from disasters?
CO 1.4	Human resources	Are representatives of the community provided with training both on how to reduce risks from disasters and on how to respond in case of disaster?
CO 1.5	Schools and Health Facilities	Do schools and hospitals in your community have functioning committees that plan and carry out disaster prevention measures as well as prepare for response to disasters?
	<b><i>Priority for Action 2: Risk Assessment, Monitoring and Warning</i></b>	<b><i>In this section of the questionnaire, please assess progress made in raising your community's awareness, and in sharing information, about hazards.</i></b>
CO 2.1	Disaster Risk assessment	Are community meetings held which involve representatives of all sections of the community, including women and vulnerable groups, to assess disaster risks?
CO 2.2	Early warning systems	Does your community have early warning systems in place to raise awareness of potential risks?



	<b>Priority for Action 3: Knowledge &amp; Education</b>	<b>In this section of the questionnaire, please consider how well informed your community is about how to prepare for, avoid or respond to disasters</b>
CO 3.1	Information management and exchange	How effectively is key information on local hazards and potential disasters communicated to your community?
CO 3.2	Formal education	Do young people learn about ways of preventing and dealing with disasters in local schools or colleges?
CO 3.3	Public awareness and understanding	Does your community know enough about the potential risks of hazards to be able to respond in case of danger?
CO 3.4	Community Training	Are there public awareness campaigns that teach people about how they can take practical measures to protect themselves from the impact of hazards?
CO 3.5	School Safety	Does the community know how safe the school buildings are, and the practical steps to take to ensure that all new and existing schools are strengthened to provide protection from the impact of hazards?
	<b>Priority for Action 4: Underlying Risk Factors</b>	<b>In this section of the questionnaire, please consider progress made in changing local social, economic and environmental conditions and land use to reduce risk from potential disaster.</b>
CO 4.1	Environmental and natural resource management	Do your community's agricultural practices aim to protect the local environment?
CO 4.2	Adaptation to climate change	Is your community trying to adapt to future changes in climate and weather?
CO 4.3	Food security	Does your community have enough reserve food supplies for use in times of emergency?
CO 4.4	Social protection	Do vulnerable groups (such as the poor, women, elderly and disabled people) have access to basic social services during and after disasters?
CO 4.5	Economic protection	Are community-based savings and credit schemes available to vulnerable groups?
CO 4.6	Poverty alleviation	Does your community have a high level of economic activity and work which helps to reduce poverty, particularly of vulnerable groups?
CO 4.7	Overall planning	Is your community involved in local development planning (including how land must be used)?
CO 4.8	Building codes and standards	Does your community follow recommended standards so that all buildings are resistant to disasters?

CO 4.9	Protection of public facilities	Does your community have the capacity to build and maintain community facilities such as water supplies, roads, health centres and evacuation centres?
	<b>Priority for Action 5: Preparedness and response</b>	<b>In this section of the questionnaire, please assess how well individuals and communities are trained, equipped and resourced for effective disaster response and recovery</b>
CO 5.1	Disaster preparedness and response planning	Does your community have a clear emergency response plan in case of disasters?
CO 5.2	Disaster response (skills)	Do people in your community have the range of response skills that you may need in a disaster situation: first aid, search and rescue, water rescue, wireless and radio communications, fire suppression, water purification, and similar skills?
CO 5.3	Evacuation	Does your community have clearly marked and accessible evacuation routes and safe havens? Are there plans for evacuating people with limited mobility?
CO 5.4	Training drills and rehearsals	Are your community's emergency response plans tested regularly with rehearsal exercises?
CO 5.5	Emergency resources	Are there emergency supplies in place managed by communities or in partnership with local organisations?
CO 5.6	Coordination and information exchange	Does your community have plans to coordinate with neighbouring communities, local authorities, NGOs in case of emergency?
	<b>Cross Cutting Issues</b>	<b>In this section of the questionnaire, please consider whether issues such as gender, culture and language are considered when planning to reduce the impact of disasters.</b>
CO CC1	Community participation and information	Does your community have clear systems to communicate, make requests and complain with local government?
CO CC2	Actual and fair participation	Is your community, including vulnerable groups, involved in planning with local government?
CO CC3	Actual and fair participation	Is your community, including vulnerable groups, involved in decision-making, planning and activities with local organisations?
CO CC4	Volunteering	Do community members volunteer in disaster-related activities?
CO CC5	Gender	Does your community support the participation of women in community-based activities?
CO CC6	Cultural sensitivity (traditional knowledge)	Does your community make use of traditional knowledge and cultural practices to reduce the impact of disasters?
CO CC7	Cultural sensitivity (languages)	Is your community able to use indigenous and minority languages to discuss issues relating to disasters?

## c. Acronyms

CCA	<b>Climate Change Adaptation</b>
CSO	<b>Civil Society organisation</b>
DRR	<b>Disaster Risk Reduction</b>
GAR	<b>Global Assessment Report</b>
GNDR	<b>Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction</b>
GP-DRR	<b>Global Platform - Disaster Risk Reduction</b>
HFA	<b>Hyogo Framework for Action</b>
ISDR	<b>International Strategy for Disaster Reduction</b>
NCO	<b>National Coordinating Organisation</b>
NGO	<b>Non Governmental Organisation</b>
PFA	<b>Priority for Action</b>
PO	<b>Participating Organisation</b>
RCO	<b>Regional Coordinating Organisation</b>
UNISDR	<b>United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction</b>
VFL	<b>Views from the Frontline</b>







