



UNITED NATIONS



IATF10/ISDR/Working doc/Nr. 4

Reports from the Working Groups
b) Climate Change and Disaster Reduction

**INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE ON DISASTER REDUCTION
TENTH SESSION
GENEVA, 7-8 OCTOBER 2004**

draft

Report of the Meeting

Geneva, room A662, Palais-des-Nations

6 October 2004

The meeting was chaired by WMO, as the co-chair, of the Working Group, along with UNDP. The representative for WMO is Ken Davidson (represented by Amir H. Delju) and Kamal Kishore for UNDP (represented by Andrew Maskrey). The work of the group is supported by a backstopper in the ISDR Secretariat.

The chair welcomed the participants and set out the objectives of the meeting. In particular the meeting agreed it would focus on the proposed Terms of Reference, the membership, as well as future arrangements and modalities of work of the Group to achieve its expected results.

The Draft Terms of Reference of the Working group include an activity linked to the Vulnerability Adaptation Resource Group (VARG) hosted by the World Bank, with support of a number of ISDR partners on a consultative policy paper initiative. This consultative policy paper will explore the interlinkage between climate change, disasters and development. For this reason the Working Group invited a representative of the VARG to make a presentation.

The WG was informed that following a preparatory scoping project undertaken by the ISDR secretariat over the last six months with the assistance of a consultant and the support of the Government of the United Kingdom the VARG has include the development of a policy paper in its workplan for 2005. The group recognized the opportunity of linking part of its activities with this process.

The participants broadly agreed on the draft Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction that were prepared by UNDP and WMO and circulated prior to the meeting. The need was stressed to enhance the focus on capacity building at national level to enhance resilience and preparedness to climatic disasters. It was also agreed to include in the TORs a component to support the disaster reduction community (agencies in the IATF/DR and others) to dialogue and contribute their experiences to the climate change community.

On the membership the group heard from the secretariat that a number of IATF members had expressed interest in contributing to the WG, although not all are represented at this meeting. It was pointed out that further expressions of interest to participate might be made at the IATF10 meeting, following the briefing on the WG.

So far expression of interest in participating in the WG have been received from the following Task Force members; World Health Organization (WHO), Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), United Nation University (UNU), Drought Monitoring Center Nairobi (DMC).

On the membership it was recognized that the group would benefit from a broader contribution from experts beyond the IATF memberships. Initial suggestions made include the Secretariat of the Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC), who has already expressed interest in contributing, and a number of experts from institutions such as the International Research Institute for Climate Prediction (IRI), the University of Colorado at Boulder Program in Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) and the International Center for Research on the El Niño Phenomenon (CIIFEN). The list of members will be provided after the discussion during IATF/DR-10.

On the future working arrangements of the group, two members volunteered to develop initial suggestions of modalities to carry the work forward and to share with the rest of the group for comments and feedback. These suggestions would serve to develop the work plan of the group. In particular:

- UNDP to lead on modalities of the WG to facilitate the process of consultations to support the Policy Paper planned in the context of the VARG.
- WMO (to be confirmed) to lead on modalities of the WG to prepare a systematic inventory of regional and national, sub-national initiatives and experiences of building capacities for adaptation to changing climate extremes.

With regard to the reporting back to the IATF/DR-10 the group recognized that the feedback of the IATF/DR members would be useful to strengthen the TOR's and the membership of the group and requested WMO to present the proposed TOR's and way forward at the relevant IATF/DR10 session with a view to initiate input.

Finally under other issues the group strongly approved that DR+CC infolink, a newsletter to expand interaction between the disaster reduction and the climate change community initiated by the IFRC Climate and Disaster Preparedness, UNDP and the ISDR Secretariat, and recommended that it be seen as an activity of the group with a view to strengthening and sustain its production.

List of Participants

Amir H. Delju, WMO (chair)	adelju@wmo.int
Andrew Maskrey, UNDP (chair)	andrew.maskrey@undp.org
Isabelle Pistone, UNDP	isabelle.pistone@undp.org
Frank Sperling, World Bank	fsperling@worldbank.org
Carlos Corvalan, WHO	corvalane@who.int
Glenn Dolcemascolo, consultant	glennd@pdc.org
Katherina Thywissen, UNU	thywissen@ehs.unu.edu
Loy Rego, ADPC	ajrego@adpc.net
Otto Simonett, UNEP	otto.simonett@unep.ch
Solveig Olafsdottir, IFRC	Solveig.Olafsdottir@ifrc.org
Reid Basher, ISDR Secretariat	reid.basher@un.org
Yuichi Ono, ISDR Secretariat	onoy@un.org
John Harding, ISDR Secretariat	harding@un.org

ANNEX I

Meeting of the Working Group on climate change of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR)

Geneva, room A662, Palais-des-Nations
6 October 2004

TENTATIVE AGENDA

- 1- Opening (WMO, UNDP, ISDR) (5 minutes)
- 2- Terms of Reference of the Group (10 minutes)
- 3- Membership (10 minutes)
- 4- Presentation by the VARG (5 minutes)
- 5- Future Working Arrangements of the Group (40 minutes)
- 6- Reporting Mechanism to IATF (10 Minutes)
- 7- Any Other Business

Terms of Reference
IATF Working Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

1. Background

Over the last several years, a general consensus has emerged among the scientific community regarding the fact that the earth's climate is changing due in part to anthropogenic factors. While the search for ways to contain the rate of climate change through measures such as reduction of greenhouse gas emissions continues, it is also being recognized that the reductions in emissions over the next several years cannot be achieved at a rate that is sufficient. There is increased emphasis now on anticipating the potential impacts of climate change across various geographical scales, locations and sectors and devising ways and means of adapting to these changes. Hence increasing attention is now being given to enhance adaptive capacities of populations at risk. Referred to as "adaptation" within the climate change community, work in this area has gained prominence over the last five years. A number of conceptual frameworks have been suggested to outline how adaptation might work at different geographical levels and across different sectors.

Meanwhile, the disaster management community has developed over many decades a significant body of knowledge and technique for managing climate related risks associated with natural variability in the climate system especially for the storms, floods, droughts and extreme weather and climate events that are of greatest concern in a change future climate. Hydro-meteorological hazards lie at the heart of about 80% of all disasters. As the discussion on adaptation to climate change moves from a conceptual to a more operational level, it is being recognized that a lot can be gained from this disaster management experience, and equally, that disaster reduction goals can be strengthened by the raised concern about climate change.

Recognizing the need for greater integration between approaches to adaptation to climate change, disaster reduction and sustainable development, the Inter-Agency Task Force of the ISDR at its ninth meeting constituted a Working Group on Climate Change and Disaster Reduction. The Working Group is jointly chaired by UNDP and WMO.

2. Objectives

The IATF Working Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction will advise the IATF and the broader disaster reduction community on the needs to

promote a greater integration between adaptation to climate change, disaster reduction and sustainable development, both at national and international levels.

The WG will review existing institutional mechanisms in the international policy arena to provide recommendations on how to promote an integrated approach to dealing with the climate related risks.

The activities of the WG will build on, and contribute through its findings to existing programs and projects led by different IATF members as well as other partners, the WG itself is not expected to manage projects.

3. **Key activity areas**

The Working Group's timeframe is 2004-2005. Within this period the following activity areas have been identified for the Working Group:

- *Facilitate a process of consultations to develop a Policy Paper on adaptation to climate change, disaster reduction and sustainable development.*

The consultative Policy Paper on inter-linkages between adaptation to climate change and disaster reduction that was initiated under the ISDR framework is now being prepared and supported by the Vulnerability and Adaptation Resources Group (VARG). The Policy Paper is expected to provide guidance to institutions and professionals working at the policy level towards an integrated approach to climate risk management. The Paper will draw upon earlier conceptual work in this area as well as on a series of consultations. The Working Group will facilitate these consultations and draw inputs from these consultations to contribute to the Policy Paper.

- *Prepare a systematic inventory of regional, national and where possible sub-national initiatives that aim at building capacities for adaptation to changing climate extremes.*

Communities around the world are already adapting to climate extremes as well as to local manifestations of climate change. Almost in all parts of the world, a number of national and sub-national initiatives are underway to deal with climate related risks – both associated with natural climate variability as well as change. In addition, there is much relevant activity in the meteorological and disaster management community that is not ordinarily identified as adaptation-related. It is important that the experience of this ongoing work is reflected in the policy formulation process. At the same time an exchange of ideas and experiences amongst these initiatives can be of immense value. A systematic inventory of these initiatives will help facilitate this.

- *Make recommendations at the IATF12 to strengthen the integration between adaptation to climate change and disaster reduction at policy, program design and operational levels through existing institutional mechanisms.*

Based on the two proposed activities above the WG will develop a set of recommendation to be presented and discussed between the IATF members at IATF12.

Contact persons

UNDP: Kamal Kishore, kamal.kishore@undp.org

WMO: Kenneth D Davidson, KDavidson@wmo.int; Amir Delju, ADelju@wmo.int

ISDR Secretariat: John Harding, harding@un.org