

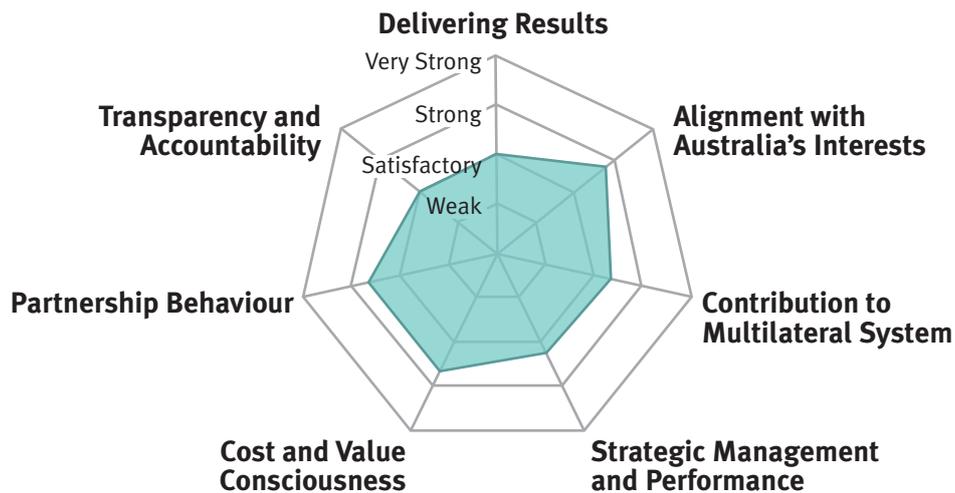


Australian Multilateral Assessment March 2012

United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Secretariat (UNISDR)



OVERVIEW OF ORGANISATION RATINGS



ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

The United Nations (UN) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Secretariat (UNISDR) was established in 1999 as the successor to the Secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. UNISDR leads the organisation of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, which meets every two years and has become the main global forum for guidance on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) and share experience among stakeholders.

The formal mandate of UNISDR is given by the UN General Assembly, and is to serve as the focal point in the United Nations system for the coordination of disaster reduction and to ensure synergies among the disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system and regional organisations and activities in socio-economic and humanitarian fields.

UNISDR is under the leadership and oversight of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, who reports to the UN Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. UNISDR is a separate entity from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. UNISDR and its activities are funded wholly by extra-budgetary resources through the trust fund for disaster reduction. It has an annual estimated budget of US\$27 million in 2010 managed by a worldwide staff of about 80. Its secretariat is in Geneva, with a liaison office in New York. It works through a network of five regional offices (Bangkok, Brussels, Cairo, Nairobi and Panama) and operates subregional offices in five other countries.

UNISDR and Australia have a multi-year agreement based on jointly agreed UNISDR activities in the Asia-Pacific region. This partnership framework provides for \$6 million over 2010–13. Funding of \$2.2 million was provided to UNISDR through the aid program in 2010–11, including \$2.0 million as voluntary core contributions and \$0.2 million in non-core funding.

RESULTS AND RELEVANCE	
1. Delivering results on poverty and sustainable development in line with mandate	SATISFACTORY

UNISDR operates under a clear mandate that guides its advocacy and coordination operations. Its annual report points to a range of achievements such as the establishment of a network of more than 900 parliamentarians from 130 countries supporting disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, and the Making Cities Resilient: My City is Getting Ready program in which more than 600 cities and local governments have agreed to develop and implement local resilience strategies. But the annual report has no information about the impact of these achievements on development outcomes, in part as the demonstration of results of coordination and advocacy can only be assessed over the medium term. This reflects a general issue with UNISDR's capacity to monitor and communicate links between successful advocacy and coordinating improved development outcomes. It makes it difficult to make an overall assessment of the effectiveness of UNISDR in delivering results.

UNISDR supports results monitoring by governments and has developed an online system for countries to monitor and self-assess progress towards Hyogo Framework for Action targets.

While UNISDR does not have a specific poverty focus, the most significant impact of its work will be on countries and populations least able to withstand the effect of economic and social disruption from natural or other disasters.

a) Demonstrates development or humanitarian results consistent with mandate	SATISFACTORY
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A core function of UNISDR against its mandate is to monitor and coordinate the implementation of the HFA. However, as UNISDR's mandate tasks it to be a coordinating and advocacy body, the organisation does not directly implement programs. This in itself

can make the demonstration of results more challenging as coordination and advocacy can only be assessed over the long-term.

Its annual report points to a range of achievements such as the establishment of a network of more than 900 parliamentarians from 130 countries supporting disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, and the Making Cities Resilient: My City is Getting Ready program in which more than 600 cities and local governments have agreed to develop and implement local resilience strategies.

But the annual report has no information about the impact of these achievements on development outcomes. It makes it difficult to make an overall assessment of the effectiveness of UNISDR in delivering results.

A 2010 independent evaluation (by Dalberg) found that UNISDR has made important contributions to international discussions through the global platform sessions. It also concluded that the global assessment report has been effective in raising awareness on disaster risk reduction. Advocacy and general awareness-raising for the HFA are seen as key achievements by stakeholders.

b) Plays critical role in improving aid effectiveness through results monitoring	SATISFACTORY
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UNISDR is currently developing a results-based management system. This should help improve the monitoring and reporting of results and address concerns expressed by some donors about a lack of results focus.

A constraint to effectively implementing the new results-based management system will be UNISDR's reliance on partners. UNISDR relies on information reported on by partners and collaborators to inform progress. How it manages the risks this may pose to reliable use and reporting of information will be important.

UNISDR supports results monitoring by governments and has developed an online system for countries to monitor and self-assess progress towards HFA targets. In the 2007–09 period some 102 countries participated in this review process, which grew to 133 countries for the 2010–11 period. For the 2012–13 period, UNISDR will establish a peer review mechanism for monitoring the effectiveness of implementing the HFA.

c) Where relevant, targets the poorest people and in areas where progress against the MDGs is lagging	SATISFACTORY
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UNISDR does not have a specific poverty focus. Its documents do not identify specific target groups or countries according to poverty indices. UNISDR has produced evidence (for example, the global assessment report in 2009) that there is higher risk exposure in most low income countries. Therefore, the most significant impact of its work will be on countries and populations least able to withstand the effect of economic and social disruption from natural or other disasters.

UNISDR has specifically supported a number of governments in the Asia-Pacific region which are vulnerable to disasters and/or where capacity is weak. These include the Cook Islands, Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, Nepal and Pakistan.

2. Alignment with Australia’s aid priorities and national interests	STRONG
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UNISDR’s mandate is aligned with the Australian aid program’s strategic goal of sustainable economic development. It provides a significant level of resources to countries in the Asia-Pacific region, which are highly vulnerable to natural disasters. Progress in disaster risk reduction can therefore reduce the high and recurrent costs of recovery. Australia’s partnership with UNISDR also complements regional and bilateral programming for disaster risk reduction through the aid program. It also helps the Australian Agency for International Development to fulfil commitments made in its disaster risk reduction policy, specifically to foster leadership and advocacy for disaster risk reduction and support implementation of the HFA.

Crosscutting issues are generally well applied in programs. UNISDR has developed effective guidance on incorporating gender and other crosscutting issues into international platforms and national action plans. It is conducting a high-level advocacy campaign to promote the importance of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in sustainable development at the upcoming Rio+20 Earth Summit (2012).

Through collaboration with partners UNISDR works effectively in fragile states and strengthens regional platforms and agreements, particularly in regions vulnerable to disasters. Indeed, the 2009 Global Assessment Report, *Disaster Risk Reduction: Risk and poverty in a changing climate*, featured analysis of risk in fragile states and in its *Disaster Risk Management Program for Priority Countries* (second edition published in 2011), the UNISDR/World Bank partnership (the Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction) includes country programs for all fragile and risk-prone countries.

a) Allocates resources and delivers results in support of, and responsive to, Australia’s development objectives	SATISFACTORY
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UNISDR has a demonstrated commitment to regional initiatives and allocates the largest portion of its budget for regional programs to the Asia-Pacific region. In the Asia-Pacific region it has supported regional frameworks for coordination and information exchange on disaster planning and preparedness.

UNISDR supports a range of activities (sometimes jointly with others) that advance Australia’s objective of promoting greater attention to disaster risk reduction issues in the Asia-Pacific region, including:

- > ministerial conferences to exchange information and lessons learned and agree on prioritisation
- > assistance in the preparation of regional plans to enable better preparedness and coordination strategies
- > support for the development of national action plans which map out the roles and responsibilities of key players for when disaster strikes
- > the Indian Ocean Tsunami Early Warning System, and
- > the development of risk databases.

These contributions to disaster prevention and capacity building for preparedness in the Asia-Pacific region indirectly reduce the economic and social cost to countries of a disaster and reduce the reliance on assistance from Australia and other regional donors.

Australia is an influential donor to UNISDR. In the UNISDR 2010 annual report, Australia is shown as one of the larger donors, providing \$1.7 million. An initial three-year partnership framework with UNISDR (2008–10) was renewed for an additional three years (2010–13) in mid-2010. In 2010, Australia sat on the advisory group for the HFA mid-term review at UNISDR’s request.

b) Effectively targets development concerns and promotes issues consistent with Australian priorities	STRONG
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The mandate and strategies of UNISDR are aligned to some degree with all five strategic goals of Australia’s aid program: saving lives; promoting opportunities for all; sustainable economic development; effective governance; and humanitarian aid and disaster response.

UNISDR actively supports implementation of Australia’s disaster risk reduction policy through its role in advocating for and coordinating disaster risk reduction activities. Its mandate and activities support *Investing in a Safer Future: A Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) policy for the Australian aid program*, launched in 2009, which commits the Australian aid program to fostering leadership and advocacy for disaster risk reduction and supporting implementation of the HFA.

c) Focuses on crosscutting issues, particularly gender, environment and people with disabilities	STRONG
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Given UNISDR’s inherent focus on disaster risk reduction, it is not surprising that crosscutting issues are generally well applied in UNISDR’s programs.

UNISDR works closely with environment partners and has prepared technical and policy documents stressing the integration of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. For example, UNISDR conducted a high level advocacy campaign to recognise the importance of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in sustainable development at the Rio+20 summit. UNISDR also contributed to the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report, *Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation*, with senior UNISDR staff as lead authors as well as providing expert authors.

UNISDR began work on addressing gender issues in 2007 and a specific reference to gender was included in the the HFA. UNISDR has also published *Gender Perspectives: Working Together for Disaster Risk Reduction*, a compilation of good practices and lessons on incorporating gender issues and perspectives into the disaster risk reduction process. The document drew heavily on experiences of NGOs, community groups and UN country offices.

UNISDR has actively collaborated with UNDP and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to prepare a policy and guidelines on gender sensitive disaster reduction planning (*Making disaster risk reduction gender-sensitive: policy and*

practical guidelines). Included in the publication is a policy guideline on gender mainstreaming, and practical guidelines on how to institutionalise gender-sensitive risk assessments, implement gender-sensitive early warning systems, and use gender-sensitive indicators (linked to the HFA) to monitor progress towards gender mainstreaming. The publication has been translated into several languages and has been widely used by partners as reference for training of professionals from 107 countries.

d) Performs effectively in fragile states

STRONG

Through collaboration with partners UNISDR works effectively in fragile states and strengthens regional platforms and agreements, particularly in regions vulnerable to disasters. Indeed, the 2009 *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction: Risk and poverty in a changing climate* featured analysis of risk in fragile states and in its *Disaster Risk Management Program for Priority Countries* (second edition published in 2011) the UNISDR/World Bank partnership, the GFDRR, includes country programs for all fragile and risk-prone countries.

UNISDR has supported activities in a range of fragile states, including working with partners in East Timor, Nepal, Haiti, Yemen, Somalia, Burma and Afghanistan.

3. Contribution to the wider multilateral development system

SATISFACTORY

UNISDR's role is primarily in coordination, knowledge and advocacy in the core area of disaster risk reduction. It has been effective in bringing key stakeholders regularly together at global and regional levels. The mid-term review of the Hyogo Framework for Action (March 2011) underscored the critical contribution made by the function of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Disaster Risk Reduction in leveraging international cooperation, increasing political focus for disaster risk reduction, and fostering 'a higher degree of coherence and commitment to risk reduction globally, nationally, locally and within the UN system'.

However, a 2010 independent evaluation commented that stakeholders lacked clarity on the roles and responsibilities of UNISDR vis-à-vis other entities and some of its work duplicated that of other agencies. The evaluation also noted that UNISDR had not taken a strong enough role in setting the agenda for meetings and in ensuring appropriate follow up, preventing it from more strongly coordinating and stimulating concrete actions.

Subsequent to the evaluation, UNISDR has sharpened its reporting and enhanced its coordination roles, including by hosting a 2010 detailed and comprehensive mid-term review of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

UNISDR has collaborated effectively with other humanitarian agencies, particularly within the UN system and in regional and national efforts to support countries manage disasters and strengthen preparedness measures. It also has a strong and growing level of activity through regional and sub-regional organisations, including the Association of South-East Asian Nations.

UNISDR has published a range of useful knowledge products including the *Disaster Risk Reduction in the United Nations*, which documents the differing and distinct roles each actor plays and provides a glossary of terms common to disaster and risk reduction work.

a) Plays a critical role at global or national-level in coordinating development or humanitarian efforts

SATISFACTORY

UNISDR plays a unique role in coordinating disaster risk reduction within the UN system. It supports the UN Delivering as One approach to disaster risk reduction. It has also worked effectively with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the region to develop standardised approaches to disaster risk assessment for adoption in all ASEAN member states.

The 2010 independent evaluation commented that stakeholders lacked clarity on the roles and responsibilities of UNISDR in respect to other entities and that in some cases it was duplicating the work of other agencies. The evaluation also noted that UNISDR had not taken a strong enough role in setting the agenda for the meetings and in ensuring appropriate follow up.

Subsequent to the evaluation, UNISDR has sharpened its reporting and enhanced its coordination roles, including by hosting a 2010 detailed and comprehensive mid-term review of the HFA. The creation of the global platform in 2007 in addition to the regional platforms and ministerial conferences has also improved the ability of UNISDR to coordinate among the various actors.

UNISDR also has strong and growing level of activity through regional and sub-regional organisations, including ASEAN.

UNISDR works through national partners to develop national platforms for action under the HFA. However, the effectiveness of these is constrained by limited resources and insufficiently strong compliance mechanisms.

b) Plays a leading role in developing norms and standards or in providing large-scale finance or specialist expertise

SATISFACTORY

UNISDR provides specialist expertise through its regional offices to UN agencies, regional organisations and to the Secretary-General and UN General Assembly committees.

UNISDR has developed guidelines for integrating thematic issues into the HFA and disaster risk reduction process (for example, gender guidelines for disaster risk reduction).

The 2011 UNGA resolution on UNISDR requested UNISDR ‘to facilitate the development of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction’.

Advocacy for disaster risk reduction is a central element in the strategy and work plan of the organisation. UNISDR has published an information booklet for parliamentarians to highlight the links between disaster risk reduction investments and the MDGs (Disaster Risk Reduction: An Instrument for Achieving the MDGs). UNISDR works closely with the OECD and donor governments in creating the enabling conditions for increased

investment in risk reduction. In 2011, this collaboration succeeded in seeing a commitment to risk management and resilience in the Busan partnership for effective development cooperation, which included a call for additional resources.

UNISDR is working to achieve development outcomes at the national and local level through supporting the establishment and development of national disaster loss databases (for example in Indonesia, Laos, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam) and piloting a local government self-assessment tool.

c) Fills a policy or knowledge gap or develops innovative approaches	STRONG
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UNISDR’s publications and reports fill a gap in information.

The *Global Assessment Report* (GAR) makes a significant contribution to international knowledge and awareness of disaster risk reduction situations and strategies. The 2010 independent evaluation noted the GAR was an effective vehicle for raising awareness. It recommended increased effort by UNISDR in promoting the GAR at regional and national-levels.

First published in 2009, and updated in 2011, UNISDR produced a compendium of the roles, mandates and areas of work of key UN entities (and the World Bank) in responding to or managing disasters and disaster risk reduction. The report, *Disaster Risk Reduction in the United Nations*, is a valuable contribution to documenting the differing and distinct roles each actor plays.

UNISDR’s PreventionWeb website is a comprehensive and widely used source of information on disaster planning and risk reduction.

ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR	
4. Strategic management and performance	SATISFACTORY

UNISDR has recently released a new strategic framework designed to strengthen its focus on strategic management throughout the organisation. The framework crystallises the series of reforms recently implemented, all designed to establish a more robust and effective results-based management system and more coherently link strategies to mandate. These changes should position UNISDR to provide better results statements to members on performance against strategic objectives, although it is far too early to judge success.

UNISDR reports, through the Secretary-General, to the Second Committee of the General Assembly. UNISDR has productive interactions with members through the global platform and regional platforms, which provides direct feedback to the secretariat on its operations and strategic direction.

UNISDR has a sound system of monitoring and evaluation that extends to its partners to help them monitor and self-assess their own progress towards implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action targets goals and priorities for action.

Leadership actively drives reforms at headquarters and at regional level. Human resources policies and practices are in line with UN standards.

a) Has clear mandate, strategy and plans effectively implemented

SATISFACTORY

UNISDR's mandate is clear, but there have been criticisms in the past that UNISDR's strategies and plans have not presented a clear and coherent strategy for implementing its mandate.

In October 2011, UNISDR released a new strategic framework 2025 designed to strengthen its focus on strategic management throughout the organisation.

The framework crystallises the series of reforms recently implemented, all designed to establish a more robust and effective results-based management system and more coherently link strategies to mandate. These changes should position UNISDR to provide better results statements to members on performance against strategic objectives, although it is far too early to judge success.

b) Governing body is effective in guiding management

SATISFACTORY

UNISDR was established under the aegis of the UN General Assembly. As with all entities of the UN Secretariat, the UNISDR reports to its governing body, the General Assembly through the Secretary-General.

This governance structure has not been fully effective. The 2010 independent evaluation identified the need to clarify the lines of responsibility and recommendations for a revision to the operating structures have been made.

The 2010 audit report on the governance of the UNISDR identified the need to tighten the link between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Secretary-General through a compact.

UNISDR has productive interactions with members through the global platform and the UNISDR support group, which provides direct feedback to the secretariat on its operations and strategic direction.

c) Has a sound framework for monitoring and evaluation, and acts promptly to realign or amend programs not delivering results

SATISFACTORY

UNISDR has a sound system of monitoring and evaluation that extends to its partners to help them monitor and self-assess their own progress towards implementing the HFA targets.

The development of the results-based management framework will provide for an improved approach to monitoring and reporting on performance against the strategic objectives. The new framework will help to reduce complexity and strengthen links between activities and strategic objectives. It will provide a basis to transition from reporting on outputs to reporting on outcome-level indicators. It should also enable better

measurement and reporting on successes that are attributable to UNISDR's own interventions.

d) Leadership is effective and human resources are well managed	STRONG
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The current leadership of UNISDR has been effective in pushing through reforms to develop a stronger results-based management and results oriented culture, and in pursuing a more effective operational and management structure.

The advocacy work of senior management has assisted in developing an increasing awareness of the importance of disaster risk reduction efforts across the UN system and across the international community more broadly. Embedding these gains will require continued strong leadership.

Human resource policies and practices are in line with UN standards.

5. Cost and value consciousness	STRONG
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UNISDR has responded to identified weaknesses in its financial and resources management systems with measures to strengthen financial accountability, more effectively monitor disbursements and more accurately analyse cost structures. Implementation of reforms has been hampered in part by limitations to its funding flexibility but there is evidence it is moving in the right direction.

UNISDR has achieved some cost savings and taken steps to strengthen its analytical basis for assessing the economic costs of disasters. It has also improved its cost analysis in the context of disaster and risk assessments. The changes have enhanced UNISDR's use of probability risk assessments to measure the costs, benefits and trade-offs involved in investing in risk reduction.

UNISDR challenges partners to prove whether their procurement procedures are based on market-based competitive bidding. Partner budgets have often been revised downwards (particularly for consultancy fees and travel costs), based on value for money.

a) Governing body and management regularly scrutinise costs and assess value for money	SATISFACTORY
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The Office of Internal Oversight Services 2010 audit report of the governance and organisational structure of UNISDR reported that UNISDR's efficiency is constrained by unpredictable resourcing and administrative inefficiencies.

The secretariat has responded by improving its strategic planning framework and introducing a resource mobilisation strategy.

The Director's office and the senior management team regularly review costs and assess value for money within the biennial work planning and preparation process. UNISDR has implemented a standardised reporting system, with quarterly work plans, with access to the UN financial accounting system.

UNISDR has reduced staff costs in its regional offices by recruiting locally through an open competitive process rather than exclusively recruiting international experts. It is implementing a decentralisation policy and strengthening regional offices, prioritising funds to the regional offices over headquarters, and is gradually moving posts to the regions. Further scrutiny of staff positions and adjustments to the location of positions between headquarters and the regional offices has also resulted in some cost savings.

A human resources development plan was developed which includes improved staff training and better use of in-house expertise and knowledge.

A donor working group for UNISDR has been formed and UNISDR has indicated it will engage with the donors as a priority on financial and strategic issues. This is part of the longer-term strategy of the secretariat management to ensure predictability and stability of the financial and resource base of the organisation.

b) Rates of return and cost effectiveness are important factors in decision making	STRONG
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UNISDR examines cost effectiveness through an internal program review committee and an external and independent grants committee.

UNISDR has achieved some cost savings and taken steps to strengthen its analytical basis for assessing the economic costs of disasters. It has improved its cost analysis in the context of disaster and risk assessments. The changes have enhanced UNISDR's use of probability risk assessments to measure the costs, benefits and trade-offs involved in investing in risk reduction.

c) Challenges and supports partners to think about value for money	STRONG
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UNISDR has taken a proactive position on value for money in disaster risk reduction. It commissioned research that examines disaster risk reduction policies and programs in relation to this concept, and advocates for a more holistic and accurate measure of cost effectiveness.

UNISDR challenges partners to prove whether their procurement procedures are based on market-based competitive bidding. Their budgets have also often been revised downwards (particularly for consultancy fees and travel costs), based on a value for money approach.

6. Partnership behaviour	STRONG
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Through its advocacy and information-sharing processes UNISDR has established an extensive network of international and national partners. It works with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, World Food Programme and the World Health Organization to share information and build on institutional knowledge as a basis for crisis response. It also works effectively with the ASEAN and World Bank to coordinate a regional approach to disaster risk management. There is, however, a need for

the working relationship between UNISDR and the World Bank-managed Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery to be more transparent and for results from the collaboration to be reported on.

UNISDR does not deliver programs so its approach is always through national and local systems. Its consultative processes and methodologies for needs assessment and risk analysis are firmly entrenched within national organisations and systems.

There is an effective voice for civil society, non-government organisations and other actors to engage with UNISDR and, recently, it has established new opportunities for wider engagement with the private sector.

a) Works effectively in partnership with others	SATISFACTORY
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UNISDR delivers through collaboration with a wide network of partners across sectors and geographic areas. A collaborative approach is an essential aspect of its modus operandi. Nevertheless the 2010 (Dalberg) independent evaluation found that some of its roles and responsibilities with partners needed to be clearer.

UNISDR has subsequently strengthened a range of its partnerships:

- > it has been collaborating closely with UNOCHA to clarify the specific roles among the agencies for strategic and operational preparedness
- > it has been working with UNOCHA, World Food Programme and the World Health Organization to share information and build on institutional knowledge as a basis for crisis response
- > it established the private sector advisory group in 2010, composed of industry representatives to provide guidance in engagement of the private sector in promoting risk reduction in business models and operating environments
- > it has been working closely with UN resident coordinators to support the integration of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in the highly vulnerable countries, and
- > partnerships exist with the (sub) regional inter-governmental organisations worldwide, for instance UNISDR has also worked with ASEAN and the World Bank to coordinate a regional approach to disaster risk management.

UNISDR and the World Bank have developed a unique partnership through the World Bank-managed Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery. It seeks to combine the strengths of both organisations and has harnessed partnership opportunities with a wide range of stakeholders in the multiple areas of disaster risk reduction. There remain, however, some questions around the clarity of roles of UNISDR and GFDRR in the global disaster risk reduction field. GFDRR has allocated US\$24 million to working with UNISDR, but the agencies have sometimes had difficulty in demonstrating how the partnership achieves results. Both agencies are making efforts to address this.

b) Places value on alignment with partner countries' priorities and systems	STRONG
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UNISDR does not deliver programs itself so its approach is always through national and local systems. It operates at the national and regional-level to support and assist governments, organisations and local authorities enact and implement strategies and plans to manage risks and to strengthen preparedness against disasters. UNISDR does not appear to have any issues in aligning effectively with partner government systems.

c) Provides voice for partners and other stakeholders in decision making	STRONG
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UNISDR gives an effective voice for civil society, non-government organisations, parliamentarians, science and technology, private sector, local and other actors.

NGOs and civil society contribute to the work of UNISDR through a number of consultative mechanisms and are active participants in the global platform and the preparation of national and regional disaster risk reduction plans. There is an explicit requirement in the HFA that communities and local authorities should be involved in the planning for and development of disaster reduction strategies. Their contribution to the HFA mid-term review was also explicit and this voice was encouraged by UNISDR.

UNISDR has engaged little to date with the private sector but has recently launched a new initiative for engagement through a private sector advisory group representing a cross-section of industries relevant to disaster reduction. This will provide UNISDR with an opportunity to develop stronger links to key business and corporate players and widen the diversity of its constituency feedback.

7. Transparency and accountability	SATISFACTORY
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UNISDR provides access to the information, documents, work plans, budgets and other reports prepared under its portfolio mandate. Nevertheless, the 2010 independent evaluation recommended a number of improvements to its publication and dissemination program. It is not yet evident what action UNISDR has taken as a result.

UNISDR does not have a formal disclosure policy and is not a signatory to the International Aid Transparency Initiative.

UNISDR does not have a clear or transparent process for allocating resources, although this is in part driven by its ongoing funding limitations.

The rationale for resource allocation is not clear because annual budget plans are often constrained due to shortfalls and unpredictability of available finance. A 2010 independent evaluation recommended management prioritise the allocation of its extra budgetary resources or request regular budgets for new initiatives or to extend ongoing work.

UNISDR complies with all UN requirements for audit and financial management although it needs to develop better systems to enable more effective budget planning and tracking systems and reports.

UNISDR organised for an external independent evaluation of its compliance standards and additional measures it should implement to improve its financial management systems. Resulting recommendations are being implemented and should help improve its accountability framework.

All recipients of grants and consultants are required to submit financial and narrative reports. Partners are monitored for compliance before funds are released.

UNISDR also encourages partners to be externally reviewed for accountability, such as working and complying with the humanitarian accountability partnership.

a) Routinely publishes comprehensive operational information, subject to justifiable confidentiality	SATISFACTORY
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UNISDR has a comprehensive website and regularly publishes reports and other documents on its activities. UNISDR's PreventionWeb website also serves as a portal for progress reporting on the HFA monitor. UNISDR has included in the work plan for 2012–13 an external assessment of the PreventionWeb website to assess its effectiveness in meeting the information needs of target audiences, including national disaster risk reduction actors, donors and practitioners.

The 2010 independent evaluation recommended a number of improvements to the publication and dissemination program. As part of an overall strengthening of communications and advocacy, the UNISDR has streamlined publication output, invested in improved design and higher impact dissemination strategies.

UNISDR does not have a formal disclosure policy and is not a signatory to the International Aid Transparency Initiative.

b) Is transparent in resource allocation, budget management and operational planning	WEAK
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The 2010–11 biennial workplan provides detailed information on the work program and the budget allocation associated with the activities including at the regional-level. An ongoing difficulty UNISDR faces with reallocating resources and operational planning is the limitations on its funding and annual budget plans which are often constrained because of shortfalls in available finance.

The 2010 audit recommended that management prioritise the allocation of its extra budgetary resources or request a regular budget for new initiatives or to extend ongoing work. In response to the recommendations of the audit, UNISDR is strengthening its financial tracking system for investments in disaster risk reduction.

The implementation of the results-based management framework will support better alignment of resources with work plans.

c) Adheres to high standards of financial management, audit, risk management and fraud prevention	SATISFACTORY
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UNISDR is subject to UN controls and risk management measures and is subject to internal and external audits. UNISDR uses the UN accountability framework which provides checks and balances to ensure fiscal responsibility. UNISDR issues audited financial statements made available publicly through the website.

The 2010 audit by OIOS recommended strengthening financial management following an analysis of current administrative and financial management processes. Management has addressed many of the report’s recommendations and provided statements of progress in implementation. This should help to improve its accountability framework.

The UNISDR has received the delegation of financial authority by the UN Controller. This is an indicator and consequence of its adherence to standards. It also the result of the UNISDR having implemented the relevant recommendations of the 2010 audit report on the financial governance of the UNISDR.

UNISDR is bound by UN rules on procurement. The principles underpinning the procurement function of the UN are: best value for money; fairness, integrity and transparency; effective international competition; and the interests of the UN.

d) Promotes transparency and accountability in partners and recipients	STRONG
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UNISDR requires financial and narrative reports from all recipients of grants and consultants. Partners are monitored for compliance before funds are released.

UNISDR also encourages partners to be externally reviewed for accountability, such as working with or compliant to the humanitarian accountability partnership.