

BREAKING DOWN GLOBAL FRAMEWORKS FOR LOCAL ACTION

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THE AIM OF THE WORKSHOP

As part of the disaster-prone South Asian region, Sri Lanka is particularly vulnerable to various risks. In light of the many frameworks that have emerged in the last year, discussing an integrated approach to resilience was essential. This included frameworks on disaster risk reduction (Sendai Framework), climate change (Paris Agreement), sustainable development (Sustainable Development Goals) and upcoming seminars on the urban agenda and World Humanitarian Summit.

The half day event convening members of the public sector, private sector, I/NGO sector and civil society alike, creating a platform on which to breakdown the various frameworks for local action, unearthing in its wake, issues of various magnitude as well as the parallel solutions and calling out to various stakeholders to make a commitment to aid in their implementation.

This workshop aimed to deliberate on the way forward to implement these global frameworks in Sri Lanka and the role that these various stakeholders can play in making them real. It looked at setting priorities and gaining inputs on actions to turn risk to resilience.

A DIVERSITY OF PARTICIPANTS

The workshop drew over 110 participants from across the country representing eight Districts, namely Batticaloa, Colombo, Gampaha, Hambantota, Jaffna, Vavuniya, Mannar and Ampara. Expertise from various actors in humanitarian response and disaster resilience contributed to the dialogue that followed. The discussion was multi-layered and rich thanks not only to the participation of various sectors, but also different levels of perspectives – from the grassroots to the government.



SETTING THE CONTEXT



“The test is already on us in Sri Lanka. The poor will suffer most from the effects of climate change. Can we now be more inclusive in our approach by following the UN Secretary-General’s core responsibilities – moving from delivering aid to ending need?” – Jeevan Thyagaraja, Executive Director, CHA

Focussing on the UN Secretary-General’s ‘One Humanity – Shared Responsibility’ report, the tone was set through these five core responsibilities put forward. This includes political leadership to prevent and end conflicts; upholding the norms that safeguard humanity; leaving no one behind; changing people’s lives from delivering aid to ending need; and investing in humanity.

Breaking it down further in relation to the South Asian region, he elaborated on a few themes. ‘Leave no one behind’ was a responsibility that echoes in the SAARC Social Charter established in 2004. He also talked of how in looking after humans, we selfishly leave the environment and animals behind; asking if we could now be more inclusive in our efforts.

He talked about how we – all of us – need to find a new way of working if we are to effectively tackle the humanitarian and development challenges of today and tomorrow: Ending need puts us in the centre of the Sendai Spring call turning risk to resilience. In literally all our interventions we fail nearly always to recognise and value the knowledge that people in disasters inherently possess. This is a lesson learnt from those affected by conflict and tsunamis. If we were to appreciate this aspect building “further resilience” to what people already possess becomes an objective which can be realised. It means *people are partners and leaders in ending need*. We also need to reinforce rather than replacing local and national systems; and overcoming the age-old “humanitarian-development divide” by working towards collective outcomes

In Sri Lanka, it is impossible to ignore the capacity we have and systems in place led by Government supported by other sectors for dealing with crisis. But we do. We have also fared very poorly in linking recovery to development. It is a global malady where literature in the humanitarian world remains blind, partially deaf and mostly illiterate. A deficit requiring attention.

Finally, he talked about how it will not be possible to transcend the humanitarian-development divide and achieve the UN SG’s vision of working to collective outcomes if we stay stuck on individualism and working in silos.

“In the Sendai Framework, responsibility also lies with the CSOs. We need to lead from the front in showing what action we can take. Sendai Spring presents an opportunity to start building this capacity.” – Mihir Joshi, Coordinator, ADRRN

The Road to Sendai campaign in the run-up to the World Conference on DRR reached over 155 countries to make vulnerable communities aware of the upcoming framework and to amplify their voices.



Now with three major global frameworks in place and upcoming events such as the World Humanitarian Forum and Habitat III, the global outline could be set for humanitarian and development-oriented action.

Solutions cannot be brought forth by working in isolation, as governments too have limitations. Sendai Spring is an open platform for collective and collaborative efforts. It tries to bring in the private sector, parliamentarians and civil society to come up with cohesive action-plans to address resilience issues.

Mr. Joshi elaborated on the need to invest in resilience when considering economic losses due to disasters in recent times. He also spoke of how resilience strategies at local levels can make a positive impact on a country's economy. Quoting from a 2013 UK government report on the economics of early response and resilience, he emphasised how a good resilience strategy can save up to 12 million dollars over 20 years.

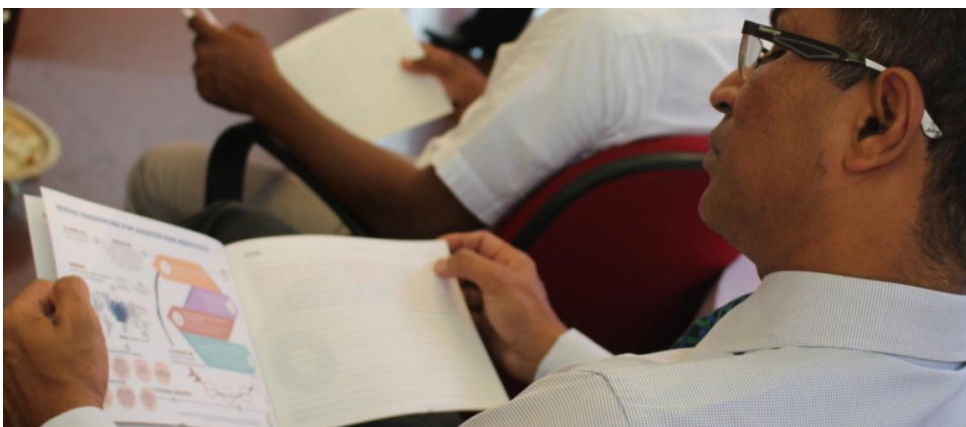
THE GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE



“Sendai Spring will contribute to the convergence of resources and mindsets to help achieve resilience. Its outcome will certainly be of importance to the government in building a resilient country.” – Dunesh Gankand, Hon. Deputy Minister for Disaster Management, Sri Lanka

The frequency and intensity of Sri Lanka's disasters is frequency is affected by climate change, landslides, floods and droughts. This also contributes to the spread of dengue, malaria and communicable diseases. The Sri Lankan government is invested in disaster risk reduction and this commitment was spelled out at COP 21.

Mr. Gankand talked about how we need solutions “for the people by the people” taking into consideration the consolidated opinions of all those present. He felt this event will help to ensure that local action is cohesive and not done in isolation. Mr. Gankand was empathetic about the commitment of the ministry and its corresponding institutions to implement the frameworks and building resilient communities across Sri Lanka.



DEMYSTIFYING GLOBAL FRAMEWORKS FOR THE RESILIENCE AGENDA

An eminent panel of speakers presented short introductions to the Paris Agreement, Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework and World Humanitarian Summit. These were focussed on the resilience angle of the agreements and the Sri Lankan perspective. The key messages emerging from each presentation are highlighted below.

Paris Agreement

“The effects of climate change are not limited to one sector. The agreement recognises the ‘right to development’ and the need to integrate SDGs into the process.”

– Ms H N K Thamila Dulani,
Assistant Director, Climate Change Secretariat, Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment



Climate change has become one of the biggest environment challenges in the world. Global warming is the main issue caused due to increase concentration of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Therefore to maintain the safest level of greenhouse gas in the environment is essential. The United Nation Framework for Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted in 1992 at the Rio de Janeiro with the objective of the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climatic systems. Sri Lanka is one of the countries that ratified the UNFCCC on 23rd November 1993.

The 2015 Paris Climate Conference, also known as COP 21, was the largest international conference held to achieve a legally binding and universal agreement on climate change.

The following is considered as a way forward for Sri Lanka: Ratification of the agreement and how it could be applied provisionally to take fast actions to address climate change and domestic vulnerabilities | Moving away from fossil-fuel burning and towards renewable energy as much as possible | Tapping possible climate finance (Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund, Global Environmental Facility, etc.)

World Humanitarian Summit



“With the increasingly finite resources and attention turning to a few conflicts, it is no longer going to be the case that funds will instantly be available when a big disaster strikes.” - Mr Amjad Saleem, Country Director, International Alert Sri Lanka

The first humanitarian summit will be held on 23rd - 24th May 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey as a platform for Heads of State and Government,

leaders from civil society, the private sector, crisis-affected communities and multilateral organizations, to reform the humanitarian sector.

One of the major humanitarian crises faced by the world in this decade is displacement of people. According to the UN statistics 60 million people have displaced and this was recorded as the highest

number of the displacement since 1945. 80% of the aids are distributed to conflict areas and the average number of years of displacement recorded is 17 years. Conflicts have increased and out of the 33 current active conflicts, just 3 conflicts: Syria, South Sudan and Iraq account for more than a 25% of the people displaced around the world.

However, WHS has not been a governmental process, but rather one led from the grassroots. It has involved a consultation process with 23000+ people, events hosted in 151 countries and 5500+ online comments. The five key priority areas that have emerged are dignity, safety, resilience, partnership and financing. Adding to this are the five core responsibilities as stated in the Secretary-General's report under his vision of 'one humanity – shared responsibility'.

The presentation also emphasised the implications for Sri Lanka. This included the following: A need to re-examine the context of humanitarian aid and re-thinking response | Preventing conflict by acting early, investing in stability, and developing solutions with and for people | Meaningfully addressing the needs of internally displaced persons, refugees, migrants, the stateless, the disabled and vulnerable groups | Bridging the silos of development, humanitarian (as well as peace building) | Diversifying and optimising financing

Sendai Framework

“What is the common issue that can seriously impact all three pillars of the SDGs – environmental, economic and social? It is disasters! So disaster risk reduction is like a foundation for development.” – Ms Anoja Seneviratne, Director Mitigation and Planning, Disaster Management Centre Sri Lanka

The Sendai Framework is the successor of the Hyogo Frame Work for Action which was introduced as a priority agreement of the post 2015 development agenda. The major difference is a targeted shift from disaster management to risk reduction. Four priority actions and seven clear targets have been introduced in the Sendai Framework to reduce the risks of disasters and improve resilience. It also has a stronger focus on reconstruction and health.

The four priorities include: Understanding disaster risk; strengthening disaster risk reduction for resilience; investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience; and enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to build back better.

Sustainable Development Goals

17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets have been introduced at the Sustainable Development Summit in 2015 to address the main global crises. Most of the targets are in relation with the disaster management concept.

Touching upon major challenges from the Sri Lankan context, the following issues were highlighted. Disparities across regions and between social groups | High levels of poverty, hunger and malnutrition in parts of the country | Health Sector development: Improvement of quality and comprehensive health services in deprived locations; responding to non-communicable and other emerging diseases; attention to special health needs of elderly, disabled, people affected by conflict | Education: Access for the most deprived population; matching skills to demands of the competitive economy | Employment: High dependence on agriculture outside the western province even with low agricultural productivity; Inadequate representation of women





District consultations in Jafna and Hambantota

Similar workshops and local level consultations were carried out in Jafna and Hambantota districts in January 2016. It was emphasised that preparedness/mitigation activities will be successful only if users, beneficiaries, decision makers and stakeholders understand the purpose of the initiatives. The key messages from those discussions are highlighted below and were also taken into consideration. Representatives from the district consultations also participated in the Colombo workshop.

- Safety education and encouragement of volunteerism
- Safety education certificates for business organisations
- Ensuring follow up which is severely lacking in the district
- Everyone should know the emergency contacts. Already initiatives are being carried out in the Jaffna district.
- Health and kidney issues are rising due to contaminated water. More water management and environment conservation Programmes' to be implemented.
- Awareness programs targeting school students
- Better coordination amongst Government bodies, CBO's and Private Organisations in the different DS divisions.
- Disaster response service officers
- A better mechanism of fund disbursement for response



MAPPING THE SRI LANKAN CONTEXT AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

The diverse participants broke into three groups by language preference. The Sinhala, Tamil and English groups each debated three core questions: What were the local resilience priorities; what were the barriers to action; and what suggestions did they have for actions at the frontline.



10 KEY PRIORITIES

Aggregated together, there were eleven key issues that resonated across groups.

1. **Be inclusive** – The necessity for inclusivity at all levels, listening to grassroots representations in the decision making process, prioritising and implementing people-oriented development.
2. **Spread 'resilience' thinking** – People need to be sensitized to the concepts of resilience and sustainable development; and this needs to be institutionalised across all sectors.
3. **Be sensitive** – There is a need to be culturally sensitive in the development process. Engagement with locals in implementing development programmes will secure cultural identity. Media sensitivity in reporting and highlighting issues related to development, social and cultural aspects is vital.
4. **Overcoming lack of political will** – Commitment and genuine political will in ensuring sustainable development and creating resilient communities must be cultivated by civil society.
5. **Education** – Target school children at an earlier stage in the quest to create resilient communities; DRR to be mandatory in the school curriculum.
6. Leveraging the use of **technology**
7. **Coordinate** – Coordination and partnership is fundamental. Whether among sectors or within, maximize knowledge and resources.
8. **Monitoring and accountability** – An inclusive transparent, accountable and monitoring mechanism to ensure proper decision making and implementation
9. Prioritise **health and sanitation** – particularly clean drinking water
10. **Build Better Before** – Whilst are opportunities and need to build back better after disasters, we should focus more on the concept of 'build better before' so we don't need to build back at all.



BARRIERS TO ACTION

The collective barriers discussed exhumed some commonalities which resonated through each of the groups discussions. These were as follows:

Lack of inter-ministerial coordination among the relevant line ministries and other government agencies | **Lack of political view, will and awareness** | **Inadequate mechanisms to identify risks** | **Lack of funding and resources** | **Insufficient utilization of research findings in planning and implementation** – partly due to lack of institutional knowledge | **Exclusion of the private sector** | **Lack of implementation, even where policies exist** |

THE EMERGING ACTION ROADMAP

The plenary sessions identified, in summary, the following key issues as being necessary areas for immediate attention:

- Development and broad dissemination of resilience framework and guidelines
- Behaviour change efforts tied to the prioritisation of indigenous local knowledge
- Use of various channels for advocacy and dissemination including the media and the education sector.
- Focus at national level for policy advocacy; and at divisional and local government level for action planning, capacity building and implementation
- Increase coordination and partnership



“All three groups have emphasised awareness in order to control the unfortunate misapplication of funds and the need for better political understanding.” – Dr. Mohamed Saleem, Mahatma Gandhi Centre

Dr. Mohamed Saleem of the Mahatma Gandhi Centre gave a collective humanitarian perspective on what the plenary unearthed, which was the

responsibility of all towards building resilience. We have been fortunate that people in Sri Lanka have been adapting to handle disasters within their own capacity. Building on that theme, coordination is the primary requisite. We need to establish and strengthen accurate early warning systems; build awareness and resilience at grassroots levels; identify genuine beneficiaries for social safety nets; and work on collective ideas of different stakeholders.



BROADER OUTREACH, PERSONAL COMMITMENTS AND BOOK LAUNCH

The Sendai Spring platform (www.sendaispring.net) was discussed as a way to spread awareness and help broader outreach. Participants also made personal 'my risk, my commitment' statements that connected directly to their lives.



A compilation of in-depth analyses of statistics on various disasters and their impacts on Sri Lanka was also published and launched. Titled 'Impacts of Disasters in Sri Lanka', it is a collaborative effort of the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) of the Ministry of Disaster Management in Sri Lanka and the Asia Pacific Alliance for Disaster Management (A-PAD) Sri Lanka; and published by Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies (CHA). The information in the publication is of considerable importance to all sectors, specifically the public and private sectors. Considering the need for development-sensitive and resilient investments; the book allows a comprehensive view of over fourteen of Sri Lanka's hazards, thus acting as a country-wide hazard profile for the island. The book is now available at the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies or at the A-PAD E-Library (<http://elibrary.apadsl.org/category/publications/books>)

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57	Mr. D. D. Gunawardhane	DMC Hambantota	Govt
58	Mr. K. M. S. P. Abeyrathne	DMC Hambantota	Govt
59	Mr. H. M. N. K. Herath	DMC Hambantota	Govt
60	Ms. L .M. N. Apsara	Navajeevana	NGO
61	Mr. P. G. A. Kumara	DMC Hambantota	Govt
62	Mr. H. M. A. B. Herath	District Forest Department	Forest Dept
63	Mr. D. M. M. Dinesh	DMC Hambantota	Govt
64	Mr. K. Lalith	DMC Hambantota	Govt
65	Mr .T. G. N .J Gunasinghe	DMC Hambantota	Govt
66	Mr. K. G. Chaminda	DMC Hambantota	Govt
67	Mr. K. G. D. G. Chaminda	DMC Hambantota	Govt
68	Mr. A. P. A. Prasanna	DMC Hambantota	Govt
69	Mr. W. P. Priyantha	DMC Hambantota	Govt
70	Mr. Samantha Wickramage	DMC Hambantota	Govt
71	Mr. Nipuna Arachchige	Teaching	Education
72	Mr. Athula Priyanakara	Agraraian Service Office	Govt
73	Ms. Anoja Seneviratne	DMC - Colombo	Govt
74	Ms. Sonali Senevirathne	CHA - Colombo	NGO
75	Mr. Srimal Liyanage	CHA - Hambanthota	NGO
76	Mr. U. A. Amila Nadun	CHA - Hambanthota	NGO

PARTICIPANT LIST - JAFNA

No.	Name	Organization	Sector
1	N. Ratnarajah	Association for Rehabilitation of the disabled (AROD)	NGO
2	A. Thavasoathy	Vaddukkodai Development Foundation (V.D.F)	CBO
3	T. Vatsala	Women Rural Development Society	CBO
4	K. Sajeevan	Viluthu	NGO
5	T. Sanmuganathan	Institute of Human Rights	NGO
6	S. Yougendra	Sarvodaya	NGO
7	V. Suntharamoorthi	Thiyagi Charitable Trust (TCT)	NGO
8	K. Paramsothy	Vadamaratchi Organisation Good Templers (VOGT)	NGO
9	A. Kema	Home for Human rights	NGO
10	P. A. C. Gunendroy	Social Development Foundation(SDF)	CBO
11	K. Mugunthan	Y gro Ltd	Pvt
12	A. Mukunthan	AHavoli	NGO
13	K. M. Rajenthran	Council of NGOs	NGO
14	S. Lalitha	Women In Need	NGO
15	K. Chitra	Women In Need	NGO
16	N. Sivarajah	Association for Rehabilitation of the disabled (AROD)	NGO
17	S. Yoganathan	Centre for Child Development (CFCD)	NGO
18	Gayan Nalinda	DMC Jaffna	Govt
19	Kandiah Visvalingam	City Hardware	Pvt
20	S. Janarthany	Rural Development Society	CBO
21	W. Ransithamalar	Rural Development Society	CBO
22	S. Easwaery	Northern Women Society (NWS)	CBO
23	S. Rodric Arulselvam	Social Organisation Networking for Development(SOND)	NGO
24	T. Dorin Kowsalya	Centre for Women Development (CWD)	NGO
25	K. Vignesh	Chamber of Commerce and Industries Yarlpanam (CCiy)	Pvt
26	P. Inthiracasan	Chamber of Commerce and Industries Yarlpanam (CCiy)	Pvt
27	Ravi Sangarapillai	DMC - Jaffna	Govt
28	Sharuka Selvarajah	Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies (CHA) - Jaffna	NGO
29	Kilta Sriranganathan	Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies (CHA) - Jaffna	NGO
30	T. Balasubramaniyam	Northern Water Supply and Drainage Board (NWSDB)	Govt
31	A. Payas	Thanu Electricals	Pvt
32	Firzan Hashim	Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies (CHA) -Colombo	NGO
33	S. Jayanthi	Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies (CHA) -Colombo	NGO



