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Guidance Note: Coherence Concepts and Practices

Coherent pursuit of the Sustainable Development Agenda, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and Paris Agreement on Climate Change at national, sub-national, and local levels: A discussion paper for development partners in the Asia-Pacific region

This document was prepared by Gregory Pearn for the Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management (GIDRM) as a contributing document for the 14th Regional Consultative Committee Meeting on Disaster Risk Management.

Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC)



The RCC serves as a non-binding regional mechanism to promote peer advocacy and exchange of expertise in disaster and climate risk management. The meetings provide an opportunity for the member countries to showcase good practices and discuss ways to transform policies and frameworks into practice. Established in 2000, the RCC is comprised of National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs) of 26 member countries from the Asia and the Pacific region. Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) serves as the RCC Secretariat.

The Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management (GIDRM)



GIDRM, commissioned by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, supports selected international and national, governmental and non-governmental actors in their ambition to achieve coherence between the Sendai Framework and the Paris Climate Agreement, as well as the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda, with regards to planning, implementing and reporting on disaster risk management. More information about the GIDRM and practical coherence can be found on www.gidrm.net.

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Background

Countries around the world adopted three major frameworks in 2015 which promote and support the pursuit of sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, and climate change action. The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change guide social, economic, and environmental progress towards a more sustainable, resilient, equitable, and prosperous future. Although not the only global agreements which support such aims, there is a broad consensus that these three frameworks have significant influences on policy-making and action at international, national, and local levels.

The three global frameworks refer to their respective objectives and mandates for sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, and climate change action. However, these different themes which the frameworks address are inextricably linked with one another; the overlapping areas have gradually gained prominence, especially over the last decade. This increased attention resulted in more emphasis before, during, and after the adoption of the global frameworks on why, how, and to what extent the frameworks (and themes) can be pursued with an integrated - or coherent - approach. The table below provides a brief summary of the three frameworks, and the common goals or linkages.

Since 2015, several organizations (e.g. GIZ/WRI, 2018; ODI, 2016; OECD, 2018) have conducted research on why and how coherence could be pursued within countries. This research has provided solid rationales and recommendations for coherence, especially at the national policy-planning level. However, there has been less focus on the practical operationalization of coherence - for example, to address the question: *“how do we recognize if, and to what extent, coherence is taking place within a country at local, sub-national, and national levels”*? Greater clarity in answer to this and other questions could support countries to implement the frameworks in a more coherent approach, in order to gain the associated benefits.

	Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015)	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015)	Paris Agreement on Climate Change (2015)
Objectives	<p>The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. end poverty and hunger b. protect the planet from degradation c. ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives d. foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies e. mobilize a global partnership for sustainable development. <p>Pages 1, 2.</p>	<p>Prevent new and reduce existing disaster risk through the implementation of integrated and inclusive economic, structural, legal, social, health, cultural, educational, environmental, technological, political and institutional measures that prevent and reduce hazard exposure and vulnerability to disaster, increase preparedness for response and recovery, and thus strengthen resilience.</p> <p>Para 17.</p>	<p>Strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. holding the increase in the global average temperature ... b. increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change ... c. making finance flows consistent ... towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development. <p>Article 2, Para 1.</p>
Linkages and Common Goals	<p>Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere</p> <p>Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.</p> <p>Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p> <p>Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</p> <p>Page 14.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Understanding disaster risk.</p> <p>Priority 2: Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk.</p> <p>Priority 3: Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience.</p> <p>Priority 4: Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.</p> <p>Para 20.</p>	<p>Parties hereby establish the global goal on adaptation of enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change ...</p> <p>Article 7, Para 1.</p> <p>Parties recognize the importance of averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change ... and the role of sustainable development in reducing the risk of loss and damage.</p> <p>Article 8, Para 1.</p>
References	UNGA (2015), summarized.	UNISDR (2015a), summarized.	UNFCCC (2015), summarized.

* Due to the interconnection of the three themes which the global frameworks address (sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, and climate change), other linkages between the frameworks may also be identified.

Introduction to the Guidance Note

The purpose of this guidance note is to explore how coherence of the post-2015 global frameworks - especially the Sustainable Development Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change - may be pursued in practice in Asia-Pacific countries. The document intends to promote reflection and discussions on coherent planning, implementation, and reporting at all levels within countries¹ – at local, sub-national and national levels - and on the role that development partners may have in supporting government institutions and mechanisms.

The objectives of this guidance note are therefore:

1. To examine the what, why, and how of coherent pursuit of the global frameworks – with particular focus on countries in the Asia-Pacific region.
2. To propose characteristics which would recognize if, or to what extent, coherence is present in planning, implementation, and reporting of the global frameworks in a country.
3. To highlight emerging themes and questions relating to coherent practices, which may stimulate further discussions among development partners.

The primary audience of this guidance note are development partners in the Asia-Pacific region which actively support government institutions and mechanisms at the country level, to pursue one or more of the three global development frameworks. The broader audience which may derive value are the government focal/coordinating agencies for the respective frameworks in a country, as well as other stakeholder groups at the regional and country level (e.g. research institutions, chambers of commerce, civil society fora), which have an interest in the coherent pursuit of the frameworks.

In terms of scope and approach of this guidance note, this research is based on a desk review of “coherence” literature from the international and regional perspectives, and supplemented with key informant interviews with practitioners from the Asia-Pacific region who are supporting the coherent pursuit of the frameworks.

Several issues were considered for the approach to prepare this guidance note. One important consideration was that the implementation of each global framework in many countries is still relatively nascent, and evidence of the coherent pursuit of the

¹ For clarity, within this guidance note the term “country” refers to all governance levels within a country (from local, to sub-national, to national levels) - not only the national level.

frameworks is therefore still emerging. However, it is also relevant to note here that coherent operationalization of the three themes (sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, and climate change) is not new as a concept or practice in the region, and therefore contributes – if indirectly – to the coherent pursuit of the frameworks.

Another significant consideration is that the implementation of each framework is country- and context-specific, and therefore there is unlikely to be a one-size-fits-all solution for coherence. Nevertheless, there may be enabling factors and common characteristics, indicators, or actions which could signal if, and to what extent, coherence is occurring in a country.

The third consideration in the preparation of this guidance note was to avoid focusing on or promoting the relative significance of one of the frameworks and respective themes, but rather to take a broader perspective of the coherent pursuit of the frameworks.

The following sections of this guidance note are: a working definition of “coherence” based on the relevant literature; discussion on why coherence should be pursued; discussion on how (generally) coherence could be pursued; a proposed coherence model at the country level; presentation of characteristics of coherence operationalization at the country level; summary of discussion points; and annexes.

Working definition of “coherence”

“the approach and deliberate processes and actions within a country to integrate – as appropriate – the implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and Paris Agreement; in order to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and the achievement of both common (e.g. resilience) and respective goals.”

This working definition intends to provide a shared understanding for what we mean by “coherence” in the context of the three post-2015 global frameworks. It is a brief consolidation formed from the key themes and ideas discussed in the relevant literature². Although often not precisely defined, “coherence” is referred to as:

² Please refer to the references section for the relevant literature which was reviewed for this purpose.

- An approach to integrate, as appropriate, the objectives of the global frameworks and the pursuit of sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, and climate change adaptation.
- Not an outcome or goal in itself, but a means to improve the processes and achievement of the frameworks' goals - in terms of maximising efficiency, effectiveness, and synergies; and minimising trade-offs, gaps and redundancies in delivery.
- Occurring not only in policy definition and planning, but also in implementation, monitoring and reporting.
- Pursued both horizontally across sectors and vertically at different governance levels – at local, sub-nationally, national, regional, and global levels.
- Operationalised through different actors including through coordination between government institutions, the private sector, civil society organisations, and citizens.
- Context-specific and dependent on country conditions, structures, and mechanisms; coherence should be pursued in a flexible manner.

Defining “alignment” and “mainstreaming”

Alignment: *“...a process of identifying synergies among policy processes with common objectives to increase coherence, efficiency and effectiveness for improved outcomes.”* (NAP Global Network, 2018). Alignment is therefore, in this definition, about analyzing different policies or plans, and coordinating the pursuit of common aims.

Mainstreaming: *“Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction is implemented by embedding steps/practices/measures to reduce risk (risk assessment, risk evaluation, risk prioritization, and risk management) into the development planning processes.”* (ADPC/GoM/UNDP, 2014). Mainstreaming is therefore the integration of particular themes (e.g. climate change adaptation, gender equality) into existing systems.

Part 1: How much coherence?

In discussions surrounding “coherence” of the three post-2015 frameworks, a frequently-expressed challenge is the perception of horizontal fragmentation and institutional siloes among the specialized government institutions (and related stakeholders) which are

associated with particular frameworks. This challenge is not limited to sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, and climate change adaptation; it is also found in other cross-cutting agendas (e.g. green growth, public health) which require more than one government institution to achieve goals. Therefore, in the wider debates in public policy and service delivery, coherence or “integration” is also a significant topic.

Through their study about horizontal integration of public services, Keast, Brown, and Mandell (2007) analyzed the different levels of possible integration. From the research, the authors identify a continuum of integration:

- from cooperation (“... organizations simply take each other’s goals into account and try to accommodate those goals”)
- to coordination (“... processes requiring organisations to ‘work together’ via already established, often external-to-the-group goals, and more structured mechanisms”)
- to collaboration (“... a more intensive process than the preceding integration forms and one that required much closer relationships, connections and resources ...”)

The authors contend that each level of integration has its own characteristics (e.g. purpose, relationship types, required resources) and is more appropriate in certain circumstances. Each level has value: “the key to implementing successful integration mechanisms is to decide upfront what results are to be achieved”. Significantly, the authors propose that “collaboration” should not be necessarily viewed as the ideal level of integration.

This model developed by the authors offers an intuitive tool to consider how much coherence we expect in the pursuit of the three post-2015 global frameworks at country level.

Extract from table “Unpacking Horizontal Integration Forms”*

Relationship	Time taken to establish	Goals/Perspective	Structural linkages
Cooperation	Short term	Purpose: dialogue/ information sharing; base of support. Independent/ autonomous.	Movement in and out by members, loose links/ low intensity level
Coordination	Medium term	Purpose: align resources to meet (predetermined) goal. Retains autonomy but gives some element to joint effort, joint planning and programming – semi-autonomous.	Some level of stability of membership, medium links.
Collaboration	Longer term	Purpose: synergize to create something new/ systems change. Highly interdependent with sharing of power.	Members move outside traditional functional areas, tight/ dense links.

* Other factors are “formality” and “risks/rewards”.

Source: Keast, Brown, and Mandell (2007).

Why do we need coherence?

In a review of the literature about the importance of coherent operationalisation of the three frameworks – or, “why do we need coherence (and to what extent)?” – the following themes emerge³:

- **The topics which the frameworks primarily address - sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, and climate change (adaptation) - are inextricably linked with each other** and are associated with various common underlying factors including poverty, weak land management, climate variability, and declining ecosystems (UNDP, 2017; UNISDR, 2015a). However, there has been less success observed during the last decade to integrate and tackle such factors (UNESCAP, 2017; UNISDR, 2015a).
- **There are shared concepts which are drivers behind the three global frameworks, for example: “building resilience”, “risk reduction”, or “reducing vulnerability”** (GoI/UNISDR, 2016; GoM/UNISDR, 2018b; ICSU, 2017; ODI, 2016; UNCC Secretariat, 2017). However, the definition and usage of these terms differ in each agreement, and acknowledging and understanding these differences is important when integration or coherence is pursued.
- Despite the differing perspectives on shared concepts in the frameworks, **the importance of working together to achieve related goals is highlighted in the literature**. The implementation and achievements of each framework depend on each other, and are mutually-reinforcing (GoI/UNISDR, 2016; UNISDR, 2017a).
- **Key benefits of enhanced integration between the three frameworks may include increased coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness** (NAP Global Network, 2018; UNCC Secretariat, 2017). Increased coherence refers to ensuring complementarity between actions in the pursuit of each framework (GoI/UNISDR, 2016; ICSU, 2017; ODI, 2016); increased efficiency refers to recognizing that because of the limited human, technical, and financial resources to achieve the global frameworks, countries could make better use of available capacities through an integrated approach e.g. in monitoring processes (GIZ, 2017; ICSU, 2017); and increased effectiveness refers to the acknowledgement that effectively achieving the goals of one global framework will necessarily involve substantial progress towards the other two (ODI, 2016).

³ This and the following section are a development of earlier research conducted by the author.

- **Benefits of the integrated pursuit for disaster risk reduction, sustainable development, and climate change adaptation are all realised at the local level** (UNISDR, 2017b); there needs to be coherence at this level (GoM/UNISDR, 2018b; UNISDR, 2017a). At the local level, the pursuit of the themes (or frameworks) may not be perceived or implemented as separate issues. “Coherence” in implementation should be people-centred and rooted in local realities (UNCC Secretariat, 2017).
- There are limitations to coherence. It could be viewed not as an outcome in itself, but as a coordination problem, whereby the various stakeholders must work together to deliver outcomes and eliminate redundancies or gaps in services. **Too much policy integration may actually undermine policy-making processes to achieve respective goals for each framework: “partial but robust policy integration is preferred”** (UNCC Secretariat, 2017). In discussions of “good enough” policy coherence for sustainable development, Vanheukelom et al. (2018) reach similar conclusions. Furthermore, despite shared themes, distinction between the frameworks remains necessary; and the distinctions in purpose and mandate are made clear within each framework (e.g. UNGA, 2015; UNISDR, 2015a).
- In addition to the reviewed literature, an **analysis of national government focal (coordinating) agencies and frameworks for the pursuit of each global framework indicates the diversity of implementation approaches**, and the associated challenges and opportunities of “how much” integration between the three frameworks at the country level:

Table 1 National Government Focal Agencies and Frameworks in 26 Asian Countries⁴ for the pursuit of the three post-2015 global frameworks

	National focal/ coordination agencies	National frameworks (laws, policies, strategies, plans)
Sustainable Development Agenda	15 countries: Ministry / Agency / Commission of Planning or Development 5 countries: Ministry / Agency of Environment 6 countries: other or unspecified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most [21 of 26] countries identify the national medium-term development plans as the key national framework to pursue the country’s sustainable development goals, with integration into related national sectoral and sub-national policies, plans, and targets. • More than half [15 of 26] of countries refer to a central long-term vision, plan,

⁴ Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Korea (Republic of), Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste, Vietnam.

		<p>or guiding development philosophy, in relation to achieving wider sustainable development in the country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In or after 2015, several [9 of 26] countries have prepared (or are currently preparing) specific multi-year national and/or sub-national SDG action plans.
Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction	<p>15 countries: Ministry / Agency / Council of Disaster Management 8 countries: Ministry / Division of Home or Interior 3 countries: other or unspecified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority [20 of 26] of countries have a disaster management law, national policy or similar supportive disaster risk management legislation enacted before or in 2015; • Most [18 of 26] countries have also prepared a multi-year disaster risk management strategy, framework, and/or action plan in or after 2015 (or are currently developing new or reviewing earlier strategies). • In addition, in recent country statements, several [6 of 26] national disaster management organizations directly refer to the national socio-economic development process and/or sector plans as one of the paths to pursue the SFDRR implementation in the country.
Paris Agreement (Adaptation)	<p>17 countries: Ministry / Agency / Commission of Environment, Climate Change, or Forestry 9 countries: other or unspecified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most [18 of 26] countries have a national climate change adaptation policy, strategy, and/or action plan enacted before 2015 • Several [4 of 26] countries have also enacted a specific climate change law.

Source: Adapted from ADPC (2018), which contains the research methodology⁵.

⁵ Original sources: Sustainable Development Agenda - UN-DSD (2018), original country sources; Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction - SFDRR Focal Agency Website, UNISDR (2017c), UNISDR (2017d), UNISDR (2018), original country sources; Paris Agreement (Adaptation) - UNFCCC Secretariat (2018), Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment and Sabin Center for Climate Change Law (2018), original country sources.

How do we pursue coherence?

In a review of the literature about the approaches to pursue coherent operationalization of the three frameworks – or, “how do we pursue coherence?” – the following themes emerge:

- **The common concepts or themes which the frameworks address (e.g. “resilience”) can provide a shared starting point for coherent planning and implementation.** These common themes can provide a basis for coordinated actions which contribute to all three frameworks (GoM/UNISDR, 2018b; ODI, 2016; UNCC Secretariat, 2017). This approach requires a clear strategic direction at the country level (ODI, 2016; UNESCAP, 2017).
- The desire to support and engage people and communities is a common objective across the frameworks, and the benefits of coherence will be realised mostly at the local level. Therefore, **people-centred, inclusive, and locally-oriented approaches can support coherence in practice** (GoM/UNISDR, 2018a/b; Government of Indonesia, 2017; NAP Global Network, 2018; UNCC Secretariat, 2017; UNISDR, 2017b). Moreover, compared to national governments, local governments have more opportunities to pursue coherent “win-win solutions” - due to smaller size, greater flexibility, and proximity to local people and issues (GIZ/WRI, 2018; OECD, 2018).
- **Clear government leadership, long-term commitment, appropriate governance arrangements, defined roles and responsibilities, and collective accountability for pursuing coherence are important** – both within and outside government institutional structures – is a common reference throughout the literature (e.g. ADPC, 2017; ECDPM, 2017; GIZ/WRI, 2018; ICSU, 2017; ODI, 2016; OECD, 2018; UNESCAP, 2018; UNISDR, 2017b).
- The frameworks and respective topics have common scopes for successful implementation - across sectors and scales, horizontally and vertically. **Implementation of climate change adaptation, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction measures all require coordinated action among many different stakeholders** (UNCC Secretariat, 2017). Coherence through coordinated implementation within and between governments, international and regional organizations, development partners, academic institutions, non-government organizations, civil society organizations, and the private sector is highlighted across the literature (e.g. GIZ/WRI, 2018; NAP Global Network, 2018; OECD, 2018; UNESCAP, 2017; UNISDR, 2015b; UNISDR, 2017a).
- **In practice, it can be challenging to pursue coordinated action towards a common goal across, and within, sectors** - due to lack of clarity about

interrelated activities, and different institutional structures and perspectives, for example (UNCC Secretariat, 2017). However, there are examples of successful coordinated action across the topics (UNESCAP, 2017).

- From the disaster risk reduction perspective, **the SFDRR’s “Target E: Development of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020” provides an opportunity** to integrate climate change adaptation and sustainable development issues within disaster risk reduction strategies (UNISDR, 2017b). Similarly, from the climate change adaptation perspective, **the National Adaptation Plans - and the coordinated process to formulate the plans - provide a demonstrated successful approach** for greater coherence with disaster risk reduction (UNCC Secretariat, 2017).
- The literature identifies **several opportunities to integrate climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies into national sustainable development strategies**, including reflecting the actions in national sustainable development goals (GIZ, 2017), in national development planning and investment processes (GIZ/WRI, 2018; UNISDR, 2017b), and mainstreaming into specific sectors (UNESCAP, 2018). Country level examples of such integration are identified in Indonesia and the Philippines (Government of Indonesia, 2017; UNESCAP, 2017).
- There are common data and information requirements for implementation of the three global frameworks at the country level. **Effective use of knowledge, innovations, technical information (e.g. risk assessment) – and the related sharing mechanisms - could support more coherent policy-making and actions across the frameworks** (ICSU, 2017; OECD, 2018; UNISDR, 2017a). However, lack of quality data and at high-resolution (particularly significant for application at the local level) is a limiting factor (UNCC Secretariat, 2017; UNESCAP, 2017).
- **More integration of tracking and monitoring processes for the three frameworks at the country level** could help improve reporting efficiency and enhance dynamic understanding of linkages and coherence (GIZ, 2017; GIZ/WRI, 2018; ODI, 2016; OECD, 2018; UNESCAP, 2018; UNISDR, 2017b). However, the opportunities for integrated monitoring of the SFDRR and SDG implementation with the Paris Agreement implementation is more limited, due to different framework designs (GIZ, 2017).
- **Joint analyses of financing requirements and corresponding funding mechanisms for the pursuit of the three frameworks can promote coherent planning and implementation** (e.g. for financing “resilience”), as well as expanding the available pool of resources (GIZ/WRI, 2018; ODI, 2016; UNESCAP, 2018). This is particularly important for developing countries (ODI, 2016; UNCC Secretariat, 2017).

- The literature promotes **higher awareness, clarity, and lessons-sharing of the concept and practice of “coherence” itself at the country level**, because increased understanding of the interrelationships and benefits is an important enabling factor for integration and coherence (ICSU, 2017; UNESCAP, 2017; UNISDR, 2017a). In the context of “policy coherence for sustainable development”, ECDPM (2017) also emphasises the importance of communicating the added value of coherence.

Part 2: How much coherence?

Governments around the world have committed to the three post-2015 global frameworks, and in the Asia-Pacific region, most governments have already developed strategies, institutional mechanisms, and assigned coordinating (or focal) agencies for the pursuit of each framework [see “National government focal agencies and frameworks” table above]. In almost all countries, these assigned agencies were in existence prior to the start of the global frameworks, and as institutions had defined missions and objectives. This is to say, the existence and main purpose of the focal agency is not to achieve the goals of a particular global framework in the country. For example, a national disaster management organization is often the institution assigned for coordinating SFDRR implementation within a country, but SFDRR implementation is arguably not, in itself, a core objective of the institution. This logic can also apply for most assigned national focal agencies for the Sustainable Development Agenda and the Paris Agreement, as well other government institutions that have roles in the implementation of each framework.

Therefore, in discussions surrounding both implementation of a particular framework, and degree of coherence in pursuit of the three frameworks, it should be beneficial to maintain a grounded perspective. Recommendations to governments of “more collaboration” or a “whole-of-government approach”, for example, are well-intentioned. However, a more nuanced view would be that in the pursuit of more coherence, it is always necessary to recognize the context and existing roles, responsibilities, interests, and priorities of different institutions. This more measured approach could promote realistic, yet ambitious, degrees of coherence - across sectors and between governance levels – and could also ensure that institutions are neither overburdened.

Coherence model

The coherence model proposed here focuses on relevant elements within a country which could enable the coherent pursuit of the Sustainable Development Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Levels of Coherence		"How" of Coherence		
		strategies, policies, plans and their resources	mechanisms, relationships, and information-sharing processes	technical capacities and tools/guidelines
Horizontal Coherence	Local			
	Sub-National			
	National			
	Regional			

Building on the research conducted for this guidance note, three governance elements associated with the "how" of coherence within a country are included:

1. Strategies, policies, plans, and the financial resources required for implementation.
2. Coordination mechanisms, inter/intra-organisational relationships, and information-sharing processes.
3. Technical capacities and tools and/or guidelines for implementation.

These elements may influence the extent to which the three frameworks are pursued more, or less, in coherence and consistently with each other. For example, a national strategy for implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda in a country can promote, or discourage, coherence together with implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and Paris Agreement. Or a public investment guideline for local governments on infrastructure projects can include, or not include, screening processes for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation measures in the proposed project. In order to promote this broader consideration of coherence, the elements in the model intentionally do not distinguish between the different frameworks.

Elements within the model: The model does not discount the importance of other country-level coherence factors highlighted in the literature, such as political commitment or recognition of common concepts (e.g. “resilience”). However, these factors arguably do not directly lead to more coherence, but instead are the foundations for the pursuit of coherence. These foundations may then be manifested in the “how” (elements) of coherence: through policies, strategies, plans, financial resources, coordination mechanisms, personal and organizational relationships, technical capacities, tools and guidelines for the operationalization of coherence at all governance levels within a country.

The model also demonstrates that the three elements are applicable within different sectors and stakeholders (horizontally) and between (vertically) different governance levels: at local, sub-national, and national government levels. By inverting the levels, focusing more attention at the local level, the model further reflects – as asserted in the literature – that the key benefits of coherence are realized at the local and sub-national levels.

This coherence model does not attempt to provide defined “results” of coherence, which is context-specific and has no one-size-fits-all solution for all countries. However, the model can offer a simple starting perspective to stimulate discussions between development partners, government institutions, and other stakeholders associated with the implementation of one or more global frameworks.

The main question: At different levels within a particular country, to what extent do these elements promote the coherent pursuit of the global frameworks for sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, and climate change adaptation?

How do we know if and how much coherence is pursued?

The following analysis draws on country presentations at the 14th Regional Consultative Committee for Disaster Management meeting in Kathmandu in December 2018, where national disaster management organization and other government representatives were requested to present their country’s coherence initiatives, achievements, challenges, cross-sectoral collaboration, and cross-framework reporting. In addition, the analysis draws on key informant interviews with development partners in the Asia-Pacific region, who were requested to provide country examples of coherence, or examples which enable cross-framework cooperation between government institutions and with/between primary stakeholders. These examples are not limited to a specific “purpose” or “label” of promoting the coherent pursuit of the three global frameworks - and may well have existed before 2015.

The examples are categorized according to the elements presented in the coherence model above, with the addition of “other” - to include responses which do not directly correspond to the elements or are common to the Asia-Pacific region. Based on these examples, general characteristics or indicators were proposed.

	Specific country example(s)	What are the characteristics of “coherence”?
Strategies, policies, plans and the financial resources to implement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bangladesh: national medium-term socio-economic development plan includes umbrella of “resilience” to integrate DRR and CCA. 2. Bhutan: medium-term socio-economic development plans mainly reflect SDGs - and SFDRR & Paris Agreement implementation specifically integrated into plans’ priorities. 3. India: national disaster management plan revised, explicitly addressing coherent implementation of three global frameworks. 4. Indonesia: DRR and CCA brought together under “environment” within medium-term national socio-economic development plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of common concepts (e.g. “resilience”, “environment”) as a unifying umbrella, and regular reference of these concepts in national plans associated with the pursuit of each global framework. • Evidence of CCA and DRR issues specifically included in national, sub-national, and local level socio-economic development plans. • Evidence of sections and/or specific integration of SD and CCA actions into national, sub-national, and local disaster management plans. • National CCA frameworks and adaptation measures directly refer to, and are resource-linked with, national disaster

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Indonesia: integration of risk index into government financial resource allocations from national to local levels. 6. Mongolia: national CCA framework (with associated finances) and adaptation measures are mostly pursued through DRR actions. 7. Myanmar: national action plan for DRR aligned with regional and global frameworks, including for CCA and SD. 8. Myanmar: agriculture sector action plan for DRR is aligned with national action plan for DRR (therefore also CCA and SD). 9. Pakistan: national disaster management plan is closely aligned with national climate change policy. 10. Philippines: SDGs and SFDRR are embedded in the national medium-term development plans. 11. Philippines: at national level, understanding of “building resilience” as a common denominator for SD, CCA, DRR policies. 12. Thailand: national medium-term development plan (aligns to SDGs) integrates DRR; national climate change adaptation plan integrates DRR. 	<p>management plans and DRR actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially-vulnerable development sectors (e.g. agriculture) prepare and implement coherent SD, DRR, and CCA policies and programmes. • Financial resource allocations for implementation of national, sub-national, and local level socio-economic development plans are informed by functioning mechanisms for disaster and climate risk information.
<p>Coordination mechanisms, relationships, and information-sharing processes</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bhutan: district disaster management committees promote local cross-sectoral collaboration. 2. Cambodia: support from national disaster management organisation to line ministries for internal DRR operationalization. 3. China: increased understanding of disaster risk reduction in government bodies at all vertical levels. 4. India: standardized templates for data collection that allows interaction with other data sets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of national, sub-national and local government socio-economic development committees conducive to coherence - and evidence of their decisions including SD, CCA, DRR actions. • Composition of national, sub-national and local disaster management committees conducive to coherence - and evidence of their decisions including SD, CCA, DRR actions.

	<p>such as health and education data sets and contribute to SDG reporting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Indonesia: information management and sharing through use of risk index from national to local levels. 6. Indonesia: local development conferences at all levels held to prepare development plans and annual work plans – for all sectors. 7. Maldives: national SDG committee includes active participation of national disaster management organisation. 8. Pakistan: national disaster management organisation coordinates a regular “DRR mainstreaming” national working group of government, non-government, and donor agencies. 9. Philippines: “minimum basic services” provision from government at local level allows resource pooling for common projects. 10. Philippines: multi-sector DRR councils with government and non-government membership at all levels promote cross-sectoral collaboration. 11. Thailand: DRR focal points across national government sectors, and at provincial levels, promote collaboration for resilience. 12. Thailand: Consultation meetings between global framework national focal points for more coherent actions, including reporting processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular technical assistance and awareness-raising activities conducted by DRR and CCA national focal agencies for sectoral government departments. • Designated and qualified DRR and CCA focal points active in national sectoral ministries, and regular consultative meetings conducted between focal points. • Policy and administrative processes present for local government departments to pool financial resources for projects which integrate SD, CCA, DRR.
<p>Technical capacities and tools/guidelines</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bangladesh: tools available and capacity-building for DRR and CCA integration into local development mechanisms. 2. Cambodia: availability and application of storm/flood resilient housing guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of guidelines which facilitate translation of concept of “coherence” into practice - including mainstreaming⁶ of CCA and DRR into sectoral development project planning, implementation, and reporting.

⁶ See earlier definition of “mainstreaming” within this paper.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. India: wide range of technical guidelines to enable DRR implementation at different levels. 4. Pakistan: national institute of disaster management builds DRR technical capacities of government and non-government personnel. 5. Pakistan: integration of DRR checklist into public sector development project proposal format. 6. Philippines: climate and disaster risk tool for local government bodies provides a simple process to integrate DRR and CCA into local SD. 7. Vietnam: planning ministry developed guidelines to integrate DRR into local and sectoral socio-economic development plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of regular capacity-building activities for sub-national and local government officials on how to integrate SD, CCA, DRR issues and concept of “coherence” into practice. • Policy and screening tool/checklist present and in use for sub-national and local government agencies to specifically integrate CCA and DRR into development decisions and actions.
<p>Other examples</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Common to regional countries: at local government level, pursuit of SD, DRR, CCA actions often involve similar processes and the same individuals. 2. Common to regional countries: at national level, key institutions of planning and finance identify “coherence” as a priority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of integrated pursuit of SD, CCA, DRR at the local level, manifested through human resources, financial resources, coordination meetings, and reports. • Central national-level planning and finance documents include “coherence” as a priority in principle and evidenced in specific measures and financial resources.

Questions and discussion points

This section intends to highlight emerging themes and questions relating to coherent practices, which may encourage further discussions among development partners about their approach and support to countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Drawing from the research and key informant interviews, this section includes general coherence topics and the potential roles of development partners.

General discussion points

- **To what extent can the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and Paris Agreement be integrated into national sustainable development strategies?** Most governments in the Asia-Pacific region [see “National government focal agencies and frameworks” table above] have decided to pursue the national Sustainable Development Goals through integration into the national medium socio-economic development plans, and corresponding sectoral, sub-national plans - and associated coordination mechanisms. These existing frameworks have significant influence on government decision-making, priority-setting, and action; perhaps more so than a specific framework or mechanism for the implementation of the SFDRR or Paris Agreement.
- **How can the private sector be effectively engaged in the coherent pursuit of the global frameworks?** Recognizing that the private sector has a very large role in implementation of each global framework within many countries in the region, it could be helpful to focus on the extent to which government policies, regulations, and projects actively promote coherence – and how private companies respond to the opportunities and challenges. This could be addressed at different levels: from the small civil engineering contracting companies which execute local infrastructure development projects, to multi-national service companies with large national operations.
- **Especially at the local level, what is required to promote coherence within regular public service delivery as well as public investment projects?** As the literature on coherence highlights, the benefits of coherence are mostly realised at the local level. From the government perspective, it may be useful to review and increase the availability and application of tools, guidelines, and technical capacities for coherent pursuit of the three frameworks within different sectors - not only within public investment projects, but within regular public service delivery.
- **How can non-government actors - such as civil society organizations, academic institutions, non-government organizations – be effectively engaged in the coherent pursuit of the global frameworks within a country?** Governments in the Asia-Pacific region are committed to lead the implementation of the global

frameworks at country level, and have developed corresponding approaches, strategies, and mechanisms for their country. However, the frameworks and recent research emphasise that successes also depend on non-government participation and action. Therefore, governments at national, sub-national, and local levels could have an important role to actively guide, promote and support non-government actors to pursue the frameworks in a coherent manner. This may include clear communication - which emphasises the importance and practice of coherence - as well as the provision of coordination platforms between government and non-government actors.

Roles of development partners

The following discussion points are based on the responses from the key informant interviews:

- **Can development partners provide governments with more information and analysis that supports translation of national-level coherence commitments to operationalised coherence?** Development partners are engaged with, and have access to, international and regional perspectives for the coherent pursuit of the global frameworks – and are therefore uniquely positioned to facilitate government to prepare coherent strategies and plans.
- **How can development partners more effectively share coherence practices from one country to another?** Development partners are often active in multiple countries, and so have access to examples, lessons learned, good practices, and innovative approaches for coherent operationalisation of the global frameworks. It is especially relevant to share coherence practices at sub-national and local levels, where there are different ways to respond to the challenges.
- **How can development partners work together to provide complementary financial resources to stimulate coherent planning?** While governments may face budgeting challenges to allocate resources for coherent pursuit of the global frameworks, development partners have the potential to coordinate their financial mechanisms and resources to promote innovative planning and implementation, across the frameworks.
- **At the national level, can development partners explore the meaning and broad strategy for coherence in a particular country context?** This process could engage United Nations agencies, NGOs, Red Cross/Crescent Societies, donor agencies, and other national organisations involved in the pursuit of one or more of the global frameworks. These discussions would also involve a stocktake of coherence in the

form of plans (e.g. national organisational strategies) and implementation (e.g. projects and programmes).

- **Can development partners increase their own abilities to demonstrate coherence?** If development partners are able to enhance their own coherent pursuit of the three global frameworks – between and within organisations – this would be a demonstration of “leading by example”, and could also enable more coherent support in practice to countries.
- **How can development partners stimulate demand for coherence at local, sub-national, and national levels?** Development partners could highlight the credible and practical benefits, incentives, quick wins, and long-term advantages of coherence.
- **Could development partners collaborate to prioritise a “coherence” initiative in two to three countries in the region?** This could result in robust case studies, which provide approaches and sources of inspiration for the pursuit of coherence in other countries.

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Annex

Annex I: Regional initiatives on “coherence” promotion

This table remains open to expansion for other Asia-Pacific regional initiatives which relate to the promotion of coherence.

	Initiative	Brief description
1	ESCAP/ADB/UNDP “Asia Pacific SDG Partnership”	Building on the long-standing work of the regional partnership on MDGs since 2001, has now moved into a new direction to address the breadth and complexity of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 sustainable development goals.
2	NRC/CARE/Cordaid/Climate Centre/Wetlands International/Dutch Government “Partners for Resilience Programme – Two”	Foresees resilient families and communities by integrating ecosystems and climate change in disaster risk reduction. This integrated approach enables communities to withstand shocks from natural hazards and sustain development by securing or transforming their livelihoods.
3	UNDP/UNISDR/UNESCAP “TWG-D3R”	Co-chaired by ESCAP, UNDP and United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the dedicated Thematic Working Group aims to support the regional implementation of those disaster-related elements of the 2030 Agenda.
4	UNESCAP “Regional Learning Platform on Policy Coherence for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience”	Has been convening a Regional Learning Platform (RLP) series on policy coherence for disaster risk reduction and resilience annually since 2016. The learning platform brings together National Disaster Management Agencies with various sectoral ministries to coherently address the social and economic stressors created through the impacts of natural disasters and climate change.
5	IFRC “Resilience Library: South East Asia Resources”	Supports the Southeast Asian Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in promoting integrated approach in all their activities, in order to strengthen community safety and resilience through regional learning, sharing and collaboration.
6	UNESCAP “Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD)”	The APFSD is the preeminent platform for follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals in the Asia-Pacific region. First convened in 2014 as a regional preparatory meeting for the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the



		APFSD will strengthen support national and global implementation efforts.
7	UNESCAP “Sustainable Development Goals Help Desk”	Is a one-stop online service providing access to tools, knowledge products, expertise, advice and opportunities for peer-learning and regional South-South cooperation through thematic areas, covering a multitude of topics.
8	IISD “SDG Knowledge Hub”	An online resource centre for news and commentary regarding the implementation of the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
9	Oxfam “Asia Resilience Hub”	Through Oxfam’s global network, technical expertise and knowledge – aims to support in making Asia resilient to disasters, the best way possible.
10	WB: “Pacific Resilience Program (PREP)”	A series of projects to strengthen Pacific Island countries’ resilience to natural disasters and climate change.
11	IISDR “NAP Global Network”	Aims to enhance national adaptation planning and action in developing countries through coordination of bilateral support and in-country actors. The Network also facilitates international peer learning and exchange.
	For expansion.	