

## Evaluation Report

# Outcomes evaluation of the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR) 2012 - 2015

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### A mixed-method evaluation using Outcome Harvesting

This evaluation was commissioned by GNDR and undertaken by the independent evaluators Kornelia Rassmann and Richard Smith. Next to interviews and surveys, the evaluation mainly used an Outcome Mapping (OM) inspired method: Outcome Harvesting (OH), a participatory evaluation approach where a major role of the evaluators is to facilitate an iterative consultative process during which the organization or network provides and contributes to the verification of data used as evidence in the evaluation. The evaluative judgements made in this report are those of the external evaluator team.

### How to use this report

To increase the usability of the report, the Methods Section 3 includes only a brief overview on OH with links to further reading. In Section 4 we provide learnings from the evaluation process. We present overall findings and summarise the data collected in Section 5; most summary tables are in Annex A. The findings with respect to the three evaluation questions are described in Section 6, while Section 7 gives the evaluators' recommended points for discussion. There are two annexes: Annex A is attached to this document; Annex B is separate and contains the survey and outcomes Excel data bases, the Powerpoint presentations developed to guide the internal staff, and the survey and substantiation questionnaires used in this evaluation.

**For a quick overview on conclusions and recommendations see Section 6 (the paragraphs marked with a blue arrow point to conclusions) and Section 7 (recommendations).**

**Also, the Executive Summary is longer than normal and contains excerpts of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of Sections 5, 6 & 7 in order to work as a stand-alone product.**

## Acknowledgements and roles of evaluators and evaluation supporters

The external evaluation team, Kornelia Rassmann and Richard Smith, were responsible for developing the evaluation concept and design in an iterative, consultative process with the evaluation management team at the GNDR Secretariat (Terry Gibson, Stu Solomon, Emma Kelleher). Since one of the objectives of this evaluation was, apart from the independent assessment of GNDR's achievements, to increase in house competence for potential future outcomes based monitoring and self-assessments, the internal supporting staff at the GNDR Secretariat (the above and Mohammad Abdur Rouf, Bruno Haghebaert) were heavily engaged in the outcomes harvesting process, guided closely by the external evaluators in how to draft and review these. The GNDR Secretariat committed a substantial amount of time and resources inviting the evaluators to London to present an introductory workshop on Outcome Harvesting, and the internal team conducted several briefing and discussion meetings during the evaluation to make the process as participatory as possible. We are very grateful to the GNDR Secretariat team for making space for this on top of their usual commitments and for their active support during this evaluation.

We also greatly appreciate the time invested in extensive interviews by the Secretariat staff, including the above mentioned plus Marcus Oxley, Lucy Pearson, Jesus Cordero, María Verónica Bastías, as well as the Board member Nicole Stolz. The interviews provided the external evaluators with highly valuable information and crucial insights for their analyses and interpretation of the data.

Also indispensable was the cooperation we received from 11 informants (substantiators) who took time to review the outcomes evidence, respond to our queries, or were prepared to discuss specific aspects via phone or email; we would like to express our sincere gratitude for this.

The external evaluators are solely responsible for the synthesis, analysis and interpretation of the data collected during this evaluation and for the development of this report. Their role was to ensure this evaluation was a systematic, data-based inquiry resulting in a report that answers the evaluation questions and is as useful as possible for its primary intended users. Drafts of the report were submitted to the GNDR Secretariat who provided comments that were considered before submission of this final version.

We are immensely grateful to the internal evaluation management team, Terry Gibson, Stu Solomon, and Emma Kelleher, for their engagement and support. The intensive discussions and the iterative development of evidence with these key contacts were essential for us to derive the evidence for this evaluation and develop our understanding of GNDR and its environment.

## Abbreviations

ACFID	Australian Council For International Development
AFL	Action from the Frontline
AMCDRR	Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction
CC	Climate Change
CCIC	Canadian Council for International Cooperation
CDP	Center for Disaster Preparedness, Philippines
CESAP	Centro al Servicio de la Acción Popular, Venezuela
CSO	Civil society organisation
DB1	Data base 1 (preliminary survey data with basic perceived outcomes)
DB2	Data base 2 (outcomes data)
DEAR Africa	Development Education and Advocacy Resources for Africa, Nigeria
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EQ	Evaluation question
FSPK	Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific, Kiribati
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, World Bank
GNDR	Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
JCC	Japanese Civil Society Coalition
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MNIGR	La Mesa Nacional de Incidencia para la Gestión del Riesgo, Honduras
NAWA	North Africa and West Asia
NCO	National coordinating organisation of GNDR
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OH	Outcome Harvesting
OM	Outcome Mapping
OS	Outcome Story
OSVSWA	Orissa State Volunteers and Social Workers Association, India
RAED	Arab Network for Environment & Development
REFEDE	Réseau des femmes pour les droits environnementaux, Mali
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SG	Steering Group
SMART outcomes	Outcomes described in a specific, measurable, achieved, relevant, and timely way
SRGDI	Sustainable Rural Growth and Development Initiative, Malawi
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
VFL	Views from the Frontline
VOICE	Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies
WCDRR	World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit
WOCAT	World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies

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## Executive summary

### The Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)

GNDR was founded in 2007 and is today with over 800 members the largest international network of organisations committed to working together to improve the lives of people affected by disasters world-wide. The network's first phase (2007-2011) focused mainly on piloting its 'Views from the Frontline' (VFL) programme – connecting frontline reality to national and global policies and programmes. In the second phase 2012-2015, under evaluation in this study, the network embarked on i) further strengthening the relationships among its members and the network supporting structures; ii) enhancing engagement between civil society and other key stakeholders; and iii) further advancing and developing its VFL programming to communicate the reality of people most at risk from disaster.

### Evaluation purpose and objectives

At the end of its second phase the network Secretariat commissioned two external consultants for an evaluation that should

- 1) **collect and describe the results**, at the level of outcomes, of GNDR's activities over the period 2012 to March 2015, resulting in a data base reflecting the network's achievements;
- 2) serve as a **learning experience** to increase in house competence for potential future monitoring and self-assessments; inform future programming; and facilitate sharing of GNDR's results and contribution to these across the network and thus increase participation and ownership;
- 3) **independently evaluate GNDR** in relation to its objectives and potential unintended outcomes, by assessing the extent to which the harvested outcomes contribute to agreed evaluation questions.

### The evidence: 180 'basic perceived outcomes', 21 outcomes, 6 'Outcome Stories', and interview data from 7 GNDR staff and 11 internal and external stakeholders

As an 'action and learning' network, GNDR had previously not invested much time in monitoring and documenting results. Only a limited number of reports were thus available to extract outcomes. Instead this evaluation used a mixed-method approach including a survey among various GNDR actors (members, Secretariat, Board), leveraging also from GNDR's 7 regional strategy workshops that took place during the evaluation period, resulting in 180 'basic perceived outcomes' from 73 respondents gathered in the primary survey data base. These were not sufficiently specific to be treated as outcomes as defined in the Outcome Harvesting (OH) approach. However, they indicated where to search for significant and verifiable outcomes and often these statements provided valuable personal views that could be used similar to interview data. Further inquiries resulted in 21 SMART (specific, measurable, achieved, relevant, timely) outcomes, that represented well researched exemplary case studies of significant key results GNDR achieved during the evaluation period on the global, regional and national level in various areas of its work with different social actors. From these, 6 specific outcome themes were selected and developed into extended 'Outcome Stories' for triangulation by more independent sources. Apart from assessing the accuracy of the Outcome Stories, these informants were also invited to give their opinions on GNDR's role and standing within the DRR and wider development world and on the network's influence on them and their organisations. Further, intensive interviews were held with 7 GNDR staff to follow up on some of the more personal and sometimes frank opinions found in the preliminary survey data on changes in network governance and management processes, to better understand issues and concerns and adequately address particularly evaluation question 1.

## Organisational learning through the evaluation

While we cannot evaluate the effectiveness of organisational learning through this evaluation, we believe that it will have ongoing value for learning and communication within the network – and also provided some lessons learned. One issue which we find informative for learning was that it took considerably more time than anticipated to bring and keep on board the large number of supporting staff involved in the evaluation and we faced a considerable ‘groan zone’ with team members challenging us on the value of the methodology and usefulness of the ‘biased’ internal data. At the same time, we experienced the GNDR staff to be very open and constructive in their discussion culture, not shying away from sharing critical issues which is an essential component of high-functioning, effective teams – as well as useful and successful evaluations. These attitudes may explain the relatively high number of ‘negative perceived outcomes’, i.e. personal statements in the survey data describing specific challenges the network may currently face; it also added to the impression we gained during the interviews that there was a certain ‘negative spirit’ concerning the effectiveness of the network management at the present which was influencing the process of harvesting outcomes (see below).

It took a very participatory, agile, adaptive and democratic management of GNDR’s internal evaluation lead in close collaboration with the evaluators to overcome this challenge. Generating outcomes data always ties up a substantial amount of internal capacity and engaging staff is a challenge, but we think that the increased team efforts of this joint OH learning experiment ultimately have led to several potential organisational learning benefits that we would characterize as follows: i) a description of GNDR’s management and governance situation and its current influence on the team as a basis for management decision; ii) a wealth of data to inform decisions and strategy development; iii) greater awareness of network achievements among network actors; iv) a sharpened focus on identifying behaviour changes of social actors as sustainable results; v) a clearer understanding of the role the network plays in adding value to its actors’ work; vi) greater awareness of network achievements beyond the network.

## GNDR’s achievements 2012-15 – overall findings and conclusions

**Findings.** One third of the claimed results described in the primary survey data base were relevant on the global level, two thirds on the regional or national level, especially Asia-Pacific, the focal region of this evaluation, and Latin America. A majority of cases were informative for answering evaluation question 1 (progress towards building an effective and sustainable network), and a large number of cases described potential changes in CSOs as ‘social actors’ (organisations or individuals influenced by GNDR), including national coordinating organisations and other CSO members, as well as non-members. However, there were also a substantial number of cases concerning non-CSO social actors, i.e. communities, national authorities, and global or regional policy bodies (such as the UN system). Notably, the network supporting entities (Secretariat / Board / Steering Group) were also perceived as changing, adapting their practices e.g. in response to member concerns. Most observations involved perceptions of *‘policy and practice’* changes of organisations, followed by changes in *‘knowledge transfer/sharing, awareness, learning, capacity’* and *‘collaboration’*, but many concerned also the network itself, e.g. GNDR’s membership, its structures and functions (Section 5.1).

Selected cases were researched in more detail leading to 21 exemplary outcomes. For these, too, there was a fairly good spread across evaluation questions, outcome categories and social actor categories. In addition, with more information at hand it was possible to analyse how GNDR had influenced the change (contribution) and who in the network was involved (contributor). In two thirds of the outcomes the contributor was the Secretariat (UK and/or regional development coordinators, i.e. RDCs), the other cases were mostly influenced by GNDR’s coordinating organisations (with or without the Secretariat’s support), but in two cases it was also other members contributing to the change (Section 5.2).

The 6 Outcome Stories that were developed from the outcomes data and then triangulated through more independent informants, described in even further detail the outcome, its significance for GNDR's goals and the specific evaluation questions, and GNDR's contribution. They centered on the following themes (Section 5.2):

- OS 1: The Steering Group and Secretariat responded to member requests to create a more enabling network environment through enhanced regional governance and management structures.
- OS 2: The Secretariat adapted the VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes in response to CSO member concerns.
- OS 3: Increased collaboration among DRR networks from the Global North facilitated by the Secretariat.
- OS 4: Engagement of GNDR members and capacity building in local monitoring of community risk and resilience through GNDR's Views of the Frontline (VFL) programme.
- OS 5: UNISDR and national governments recognised the role of CSOs (Sendai Framework for DRR) through the GNDR Secretariat's advocacy based on the VFL/AFL/Frontline results and collaboration with UNISDR in the run-up to and at Sendai.
- OS 6: Networks outside the DRR community (i.e. the Disability Caucus) collaborated with GNDR through facilitation of the Secretariat.

**Conclusions.** The outcomes data and Outcome Stories, supported by the vast number of claimed observations in the primary survey data, present a substantial set of results balancing both internal progress in strengthening the network and at the same time advancing GNDR's purpose. Mapping the findings onto GNDR's objectives 2012-15 (Section 6.4) we take that the network can be applauded on achieving results in many areas of what we feel is a highly ambitious Strategic Plan, though the data in this study are not comprehensive and do not allow for a more thorough analysis of the extent to which the various goals were achieved. In fact, particularly for higher level objectives involving multiple actors not under the direct management control of GNDR (e.g. Objective 2 and 3) it is problematic to monitor or evaluate progress through conventional logframe based approaches using predominantly quantitative indicators, such as those described in the Strategy. Still, the findings allow us to draw conclusions with respect to the specific evaluation questions as summarised below. In sum, we found ample evidence for four main lines of results:

- Members were successfully engaged through the Secretariat led VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes to gather local data and develop common positions;
- Such local level information was successfully used for national and global level advocacy and policy work, leading to policy and practice changes in e.g. the UN system and various national authorities;
- The VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes and/or the evidence resulting from it also had a notable influence on the implementation of DRR policies and strategies in member CSOs, as well as in non-member international NGOs;
- Along with progressing the network's goals and purpose, a key area of work in GNDR's second phase was further developing the network, increasing membership as well as its management capacity (expanding the Secretariat both regionally and in the UK), and electing a Global Board in order to develop more regionally representative management and governance structures.

#### Conclusions on the effectiveness of GNDR's structures and processes for learning (EQ 1)

The first evaluation question addressed several aspects of network effectiveness and sustainability such as membership, relationships, management and governance (Section 6.1).

**GNDR member recruitment, growth, composition.** The network has clearly been successful in attracting members, e.g. it has doubled in terms of individuals in a little over a year since February 2014, although there is no formal member recruitment process in place. Several factors seem to play

a role, among these GNDR's regional programmes, its increased regional presence through the RDCs, as well as the high visibility of the network through its global level activities during the evaluation period. As one informant said: "There is simply no alternative to GNDR". However, GNDR's membership has grown to be quite diverse, with many national and regional CSOs, a few international NGOs, as well as some grassroots organisations on the community level, all with different views and needs. This provides a great resource for GNDR, but there are also challenges: Can GNDR accomplish the task to be at the same time a network of regional CSO networks and international NGOs and speak for small, local grass roots NGOs? And how can GNDR keep the balance between local and international member organisations and accommodate for the increasing and understandable wish of the South to be represented by a voice from the South?

**Network relationships.** The ties among the various components building GNDR are manifold, connecting members, the supporting entities such as Secretariat and Board, other stakeholders such as strategic partners, and ultimately the communities and national authorities in various ways and through various strategies. We found evidence for mainly 4 types of relationships: i) the Secretariat interacting with CSOs through the VFL/AFL/Frontline programme; ii) national member CSOs working with communities or local authorities and national agencies to adapt or implement local or national risk strategies and/or increase local resilience; iii) the GNDR Secretariat maintaining strong relationships with a global policy body, namely UNISDR preparing for the World Conference on DRR in Sendai; and iv) the GNDR Secretariat facilitating strategic partnerships with international NGOs, networks and associations both within and beyond the DRR sector. There was also some limited evidence for member CSOs connecting with other CSOs at the local, national or regional level, though we suspect there might be more results after March 2015 (the end of the evaluation period) for peer-to-peer collaboration cases, e.g. through Frontline. Thus, we note that GNDR has successfully established relationships with a diverse range of members and stakeholders on several levels. It may not have achieved its goal (as formulated in the Strategy 2012-15) to establish formal coalitions with actors engaged in climate or environmental, human rights, poverty alleviation or social justice movements, but GNDR is already interacting in a substantial way with significant NGO actors for whom DRR is only one of many concerns, which will put the network in a good position to further deepen engagement with the wider development world, should this be a focus in its next phase.

**Network member engagement and communication.** The main strategies for building the network relationships described above were, as reflected by the data of this study: i) engaging and enabling members through the VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes (i.e. the organizing, coordinating and convening function of the network, promoting collective learning and action among actors); and ii) developing common positions from the local level information and engaging members as well as other stakeholders such as INGOs in advocacy and policy work (i.e. building consensus and coherence, amplifying and advocating the network's goals and results). Some evidence was also found for a further network function, knowledge management, i.e. the aggregation and sharing of information and learnings, for example, through websites, mailings and social media. This function may not have been systematically pursued during the evaluation period, but regional efforts seem to have increased recently and this work could certainly be expanded both at the UK Secretariat and the regions. However, it will depend on the overall priorities and how GNDR will position itself in the next phase, how much of a 'knowledge network' it would like to become.

**Network formal structure, management and governance.** During 2013/14, the GNDR Secretariat has almost tripled its management capacity with 5 new positions in the UK hub (now 8 staff), as well as 5 regional development coordinators. GNDR's governance body, too, has changed from a 5-strong Steering Group to an 11-strong Global Board, which was elected during 2014 and became formally functional in March 2015. This indicates important progress and shows very adaptive management responses to the growing network building more regionally representative structures. There are apparent conflicts stemming from the change from informal to formal structures, and it may need a better clarification of roles and responsibilities of Board and regional Secretariat staff, as well as suf-

ficient and carefully designed support through the UK Secretariat to help the individual regions to find a balanced distribution of power in a participatory way. But generally the network has succeeded to put its formal structures in place and now has to allow the different network entities to adapt to become sufficiently effective.

**Internal communication, culture and leadership.** The changes in GNDR's formal structure naturally entail changes in its communication structure and culture. The network has to accommodate for the larger number of staff in a diverse cultural and environmental setting and a spread over many time zones; it has to develop new line management responsibilities, new and expanded information channels, and an agile and participatory system of solution finding. The interviews with the UK and regional Secretariat staff revealed that there are still communication issues both within and among regions, as well as among regions and the UK hub. We had the impression that despite a strong engagement in and passion for GNDR's work, there was a somewhat 'negative spirit' concerning communication within network supporting entities and effectiveness of GNDR's work. This may be a sign that the process is not yet complete and the network is still in a 'groan zone', where strong personal ties and trust will be needed to keep everybody engaged in the task.

**Learning, monitoring and evaluation.** The data show clearly that the GNDR management has continuously learned from their programming experience, taking on board the feedback of their members and implementing changes and adaptations to their VFL/AFL/Frontline programming to better meet the needs of local CSOs. However, other than that GNDR has apparently invested little time and resources in documenting its activities and their outputs and/or outcomes and therefore hasn't developed an evidence base to draw on for management and governance decisions. We conclude that particularly with the growth in size, momentum and management/governance capacity in the recent years, GNDR has to invest more in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to provide an appropriate learning framework for the organization, one that supports not only Secretariat decision making but crucially also the members and Board.

#### Conclusions on GNDR's influence on the DRR practice and policy of its CSO members (EQ 2)

In order to address evaluation question 2, we looked more closely at the 14 cases in the primary survey data that dealt with '*policy and practice*' changes in member CSOs, such as organisations adapting their programming or increasing their work with national authorities or communities (Section 6.2). Half of these cases described changes in 5 national coordinating organisations (NCOs), the other half concerned other member CSOs. Two of the NCO cases were researched in more detail and turned into SMART outcomes: 'Centro al Servicio de la Acción Popular' (CESAP), Venezuela, and 'Yakkum Emergency Unit' (YEU), Indonesia. The CESAP case was further described in Outcome Story 4 showing the CSO to a) adapt their programmes to include a much stronger DRR focus; b) become an advocate for other CSOs to do the same through leading the creation of regional NGO DRR networks; c) encourage other NGOs to integrate DRR into their work; and d) engage with the Venezuelan government on DRR. Representatives of both organisations CESAP and YEU were asked to substantiate findings and strongly supported the influence the engagement with GNDR had on them.

**We conclude that**, although this based on only few cases in our data, the evidence and information considered indicate that the VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes have had a substantial effect on network actors, a) to institutionalise and/or change their DRR programming; and b) to work more effectively with communities and local/national governments. The observed key strategies influencing such policy and practice changes in network actors were i) guidance on the VFL/AFL methodology and use of data; ii) ongoing support to better understand local monitoring; iii) financial support for dissemination of monitoring results; and iv) providing opportunities for exchange and learning for NCO staff through regional workshops, teleconferences and 1:1 calls. Although, the data are too limited to make conclusions about how typical such changes are and their sustainability, the findings present strong examples of good practice to build on.

### GNDR and the non-CSO or wider development community (EQ 3)

A further key element of GNDR's 2012-15 Strategy was its interest in extending its influence beyond its members and the traditional 'DRR silo' of organisations. We defined 5 types of stakeholders to be at the periphery of the network's sphere of influence, for which we found evidence in the data: i) local and national government authorities; ii) communities; iii) INGOs and networks with a secondary focus on DRR; iv) other international organisations including the UN system; and v) donors.

#### The key findings and conclusions are:

- Nine cases in the survey data and 3 SMART outcomes (from Honduras, Venezuela, Kiribati) describe how GNDR members directly influenced the policies or practices of national authorities using GNDR tools and approaches. Together with the 10 claimed observations in communities from the survey data this suggests that GNDR has been influential at giving a voice to communities and local stakeholders, empowering them with valuable information that allows them to influence those in authority and / or act directly to identify and manage potential risks from disasters. Such achievements are clearly in line with GNDR's Strategy. However, testing the extent to which this is the case through direct engagement with communities or independent sources to understand their perceptions of work undertaken with influence or support of GNDR was beyond the scope of this evaluation.
- GNDR has also established active relationships with NGO actors with a secondary focus on DRR, such as Bond, the Swiss NGO Platform or the Disability Caucus, as affirmed by several informants during the substantiation process. While we found no evidence of agreements with key players outside the DRR community such as climate change or poverty networks, such testimonies provide examples of GNDR inspiring change beyond the DRR 'silo' through its action-learning approach, being a highly regarded source of knowledge and expertise, providing access to a community of experts, and having an ability to work collaboratively to realise mutual benefits.
- One of GNDR's key achievements during the evaluation period was the work at the UN level for the World Conference of DRR at Sendai in March 2015, where GNDR has clearly influenced UNISDR to be more inclusive of civil society and helped the parties not only to better understand civil society issues but to recognize their roles in contributing to delivering the Sendai Framework. Glenn Dolcemascolo, Climate Change Officer, UNISDR, confirmed that it is not only the issues of CSOs but of communities themselves that GNDR helps to communicate. Also, GNDR would help to explore ways that UNISDR can better support CSO engagement; to design and maximize CSO engagement in key events; and to potentially influence the ways that UNISDR builds partnerships for implementation.

### GNDR's roles and niche

Based on the above findings it was only to be expected that stakeholder interviews affirmed a high visibility of the network within the DRR community – in fact one that may be unrivaled – and that in their eyes GNDR plays several important roles for members and other stakeholders, including

1. Provide a platform for collaboration, exchange and learning amongst CSOs.
2. Strengthen capacity and local/national visibility of CSOs to enhance their work with local communities and national authorities.
3. Develop and promote common positions towards good DRR practice and provide a global presence and voice of GNDR's various constituencies.
4. Connect and advocate CSOs and their needs to regional and global policy and the wider development world.
5. Serve as a center of expertise and leadership (a one-stop shop) for DRR good practice and experts and as a vehicle for external actors.

However, there were also notions that, while GNDR fills important roles in the DRR and wider development world, its exact niche and roles will need refining, taking into account the diversity of their members, and that the network has to develop more clarity on how it can best represent and address the varying needs of its different regions and member groups.

### Recommended points for discussion

This report provides evidence and interpretations that we hope will be informative for GNDR's strategy development. However, we will refrain from making statements on concrete next steps, as we feel that such decisions would depend on many additional factors not known to us. Instead, we provide the following points for discussion and consideration for the planning of GNDR's next phase:

**1. GNDR's vision, mission and purpose.** GNDR has experienced an immense and rapid growth and it will be important to allow its purpose to evolve in line with its growing and diversifying membership. The network may benefit from a review of its high level objectives, based on an analysis of their participants and member needs, helping them to better define and communicate its niche within the DRR and the wider development world.

**2. GNDR's membership and strategic partners.** The diversification of GNDR's membership offers great opportunities, but there are also challenges. How can GNDR adequately represent its various member groups and other stakeholders, find a shared vision/purpose, and foster and maintain its cohesiveness? Is GNDR's membership system still adequate? Who are the optimal strategic partners?

**3. GNDR network functions.** There is evidence in the evaluation data that as an 'action and learning network' GNDR has successfully fostered and added value to its members work: through its VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes it has built its community, connected to other stakeholders, but also had impressive achievements in advocating the network's goals and using its evidence base at the global policy level. More recently it has expanded its activities in knowledge management. With the planning for its new phase under way it may be useful to review network type and functions and define more clearly what the best mixture of action, advocacy and knowledge management objectives and strategies will be, considering both GNDR's overarching goals and its resources.

**4. GNDR formal structure, management and governance.** The evaluation data confirmed that GNDR showed adaptive management responses to the growing network, changing from an informal, centralized management and governance form to a more regionally representative, decentralized structure. However, this process does not seem to be completed, the new structures have not yet led to the hoped for results, instead they seem to cause some confusion and tension. It will take a great level of awareness, sensitivity and openness of the network's supporting staff to respond to the different needs of the regions and provide clear guidance in order to clarify operational and governance roles and responsibilities. This also offers the opportunity to review and, where necessary, strengthen network infrastructure for decision-making and communication, and look at leadership and line management roles in order to maintain high levels of motivation, respect and trust, which is often challenging in a global, distributed, multi-cultural setting.

**5. GNDR's M&E System / Theory of Change.** While GNDR's Strategy 2012-15 was developed using a logframe for monitoring its results, we were able to evaluate GNDR mainly using an OM inspired approach (OH). Outcomes based approaches can help review or develop a program's Theory of Change and provide a framework for ongoing monitoring, reflection, learning, adaptation and evaluation of the strategies used. Measuring the specific value added by a network is always difficult, but easier when based on a clear understanding of the strategies the network uses to leverage its various network advantages. In addition, being clear about the project logic, i.e. who exactly GNDR is trying to influence, how it anticipates achieving such changes, and who in GNDR should be involved in this work, will be useful both for focusing efforts on desired results and for reflecting on challenges and celebrating achievements. Thus, as an action-learning network, we believe that GNDR may benefit greatly from expanding its M&E efforts, using the evaluation data and findings to inform an outcomes based approach to developing a Theory of Change and associated M&E framework.

## 1. The Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)

The genesis of the ‘Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction’ (GNDR) began at the World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, 2005, recognizing that a common position statement of civil society organisations (CSOs) from different regions of the world – if it could be reached – would greatly enhance their weight in intergovernmental negotiations. With this rationale – that civil society can achieve more and have more impact by working together – GNDR was formally launched in 2007 and has been operational for over 8 years.

### GNDR's vision

*“A world of resilient communities where vulnerable people are able to prepare for, mitigate against, recover from and adapt to hazards and a changing climate.”*

### GNDR's purpose

*“Enable civil society to connect local to global and speak with a collective voice that drives action which reduces risk and increases the resilience of the most vulnerable.”*

GNDR’s first phase (2007-2011) focused mainly on piloting its ‘Views from the Frontline’ (VFL) programme. This bi-annual monitoring process gathered a broad cross-section of perspectives from communities, local authorities and civil society organisations that were most affected by disasters, consolidated these and promoted their needs to national, regional and global policy bodies. This programme – connecting frontline reality to national and global policies and programmes – was highly successful and the network was presented with a Letter of Commendation from the UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction, in recognition of their rapid mobilisation of over 650 CSOs in what was the largest monitoring process to measure an international agreement.

In its second phase (2012-2015), GNDR’s objectives were to i) further strengthen the relationships among its members and the network supporting structures (governance and management); ii) enhance engagement between civil society and other key stakeholders, i.e. communities and authorities at the local level, as well as e.g. international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) working outside the DRR field (e.g climate change or poverty thematic); and iii) further advance and develop its VFL programming to communicate the reality of people most at risk from disaster (Annex 9.1).

The network has experienced significant growth and today comprises more than 1250 registered individual members from over 800 organisations (plus additional associated members, i.e. non-CSO organisations), being active in over 125 countries. Despite this significant growth, the network has only recently adapted its management and governance structures to account for this global presence by electing a more regionally representative governance structure and increasing its management team by 5 regional development coordinators (RDCs) (Annex 9.2).

As its 2012-2015 Strategy and Action Plan<sup>1</sup> drew to a close and the planning for its new phase was under way, the network Secretariat commissioned an external consultant team to guide a learning exercise assessing the network’s results during the 2012-2015 period, both from the point of view of accountability to its stakeholders and, importantly, to inform its future strategy and actions and explore how to monitor its influence.

## 2. Purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation

### 2.1. Purpose: organisational learning, internal and external assessment

*“An advocacy network is not the sum of its parts; it is the product of the parts' interaction”* (Russell Ackoff, cited in Ricardo Wilson-Grau 2007). Similarly, organizational learning in a network is more than just the sum of individual learning: individual learning impacts on and interrelates with that of others and through interaction and knowledge sharing can build collective competence and enhance

<sup>1</sup> [http://gndr.org/images/newsite/PDFs/Final\\_GNDR\\_Strategy\\_2012-2015.pdf](http://gndr.org/images/newsite/PDFs/Final_GNDR_Strategy_2012-2015.pdf)

network development. In this participatory evaluation, we sought to work with network actors to gather evidence and explore findings in order to help network actors build a collective understanding of their achievements and also their contributions to results.

The purpose of this outcomes evaluation was thus threefold:

1. Serve as a **learning experience** to i) increase in house competence for potential future (OM based) monitoring and self-assessments; ii) lead to a deeper and shared understanding across the network of GNDR's results and the contributions of network actors, thus increasing participation and ownership; and iii) provide data for evidence-based decisions about future programming.
2. **Collect and describe the results**, at the level of outcomes, of GNDR's activities over the period 2012 to March 2015, resulting in a data base reflecting the network's achievements.
3. Use the outcomes described to **independently evaluate GNDR** in relation to its stated objectives and potential unintended outcomes, by using the harvested outcomes to answer agreed evaluation questions.

## 2.2. Users and uses of the evaluation

Following Michael Quinn Patton's utilization focused approach (2008), an evaluation should be judged on its usefulness to its intended users.

**The primary users** of this evaluation – the people who will use the evaluation findings and have the capacity to effect change (e.g. with respect to GNDR's policies, procedures and strategies), are

- **GNDR Secretariat**: the findings will assist the Secretariat in their strategy development process, in building their monitoring and evaluation system, and potentially in developing relationships with funders and promoting the network and its goals to various stakeholder groups.
- **GNDR Board and Trustees**: the evaluation results will contribute to the decision-making process on the network's future work.
- **GNDR members**: the results can guide thematic or country-level work and promote engagement, self-reflection and sharing of good practice across the network.

**Other audiences** of the evaluation – stakeholders to whom the evaluation may be interesting but don't have direct influence on GNDR's governance and management – are e.g. GNDR's donors (if not on the Board) and other external stakeholders active in the DRR or wider development world, who will learn about GNDR's work and achievements, may draw lessons from its successes and challenges and will better understand the potential benefits of engaging with the network.

## 2.3. Rational for using Outcome Harvesting

The choice of the appropriate evaluation approach and methodology depends strongly on the particular organization/network and its context – “one size does not fit all”! International, voluntary networks are dynamic, evolving systems, with complex organizational forms, reflecting their open, often loose and non-hierarchical membership structures, their diverse institutional mandates, their fluctuating authorities and responsibilities flowing from and around autonomous members, and the diffuse accountability for what has been achieved by whom (Wilson-Grau and Nuñez 2007). In such settings, variables outside of the network may have as much influence on outcomes and impacts as the network itself which, at best, can influence but not control the social actors it works with.

### SMART Outcomes (Ricardo Wilson Grau)

*Observable changes in the behavior, relationships, activities and actions of individuals, groups, organizations or institutions that were influenced in a small or large way, directly or indirectly, intentionally or not by the network actors. Outcomes should be specific, measurable, achieved, relevant and timely (SMART) (Annex 9.5)*

In addition to semi-structured interviews and surveys (see Section 3 below), this evaluation therefore applies mainly 'Outcome Harvesting' (OH, Wilson-Grau and Britt 2013), an 'Outcome Mapping' (OM, Earl et al. 2001) inspired 'tool. OH specifically acknowledged the fact that it is often difficult if not impossible to determine the direct impact of an organization / network in its key areas of work – here for example the **impact** the work of GNDR had on practice and policy changes in the DRR sector – but it is possible to generate evidence and assess the merit and worth of its **outcomes**.

Thus, instead of trying to assess achievements in areas that cannot be influenced, OM draws our attention to the so-called '**sphere of influence**' of the organization/network, focusing on the people, the '**social actors**' (or 'boundary partners) the organization/network can realistically influence.

OM further acknowledges that multiple actors and factors are essential to achieving sustainable, large-scale improvements in human and ecological well-being i.e. impacts. Therefore, instead of focusing on cause and effect attribution, OM focuses on the **contribution** of an intervention towards developmental results (outcomes as defined above). OM assumes that interventions, as external agents, can only influence and contribute to outcomes and eventually impact; they do not control whether an outcome occurs or impact is realized. In line with OM's focus on people, particular attention is given to identify the actors who contributed to the interventions (the so-called '**contributors**').

Finally, in a complex and dynamic initiative like GNDR it is difficult to define or predict change as a linear process. In a network such changes are more likely to be a non-linear, collaborative process involving a range of stakeholders. OM acknowledges this and encourages the development of a **Theory of Change** suggesting underlying strategies for action ("why do we think what we're doing will have the results we're hoping for?").

## 2.4. Scope of the evaluation and evaluation questions

**Scope of harvesting GNDR's outcomes.** It is clear that even under the best circumstances, the inevitable constraints to time and budget will make an exhaustive harvesting of all the achievements of a dynamic and multi-level initiative such as GNDR impossible. In this evaluation, it was agreed from the outset that the evaluation would not seek to comprehensively identify all outcomes from the entire network, rather it would seek to describe GNDR's achievements and contributions and deliver meaningful answers by

- a) focusing on concise evaluation questions, a specific evaluation period, focal regions, and a subset of most significant outcomes, and
- b) strongly engaging the key focal points of the network in the evaluation process (with the double benefit of strengthening staff OM capacity and increasing data output).

**Evaluation design and questions.** The evaluation design and questions were developed following discussions with Terry Gibson, Operational Director, in skype calls and the Secretariat staff at the London workshop on July 7, 2015 (evaluation design see Annex 9.3). The three evaluation questions below concerned three levels: i) the effectiveness of the network's structures and processes, ii) influences observed in network actors and iii) those observed in external stakeholders and the wider development world:

1. *To what extent do the outcomes indicate any progress towards building an effective and sustainable network for facilitating learning and joint action?*
2. *To what extent do the outcomes indicate that the knowledge and collaborative approach fostered and shared among the network has influence on the behaviour of network actors in terms of DRR policy and practice, individually or across organisations?*
3. *To what extent do the outcomes indicate that GNDR's work has influenced other stakeholders in their DRR policy and practice; and how do these view GNDR and its role in the DRR or broader development landscape?*

**Evaluation period.** Outcomes, regardless whether intended or unintended, positive or negative, were harvested that emerged between January 2012 and March 2015 (GNDR's phase 2).

**Geographic range.** Outcomes were harvested on global, regional and national levels. Leveraging from GNDR's regional workshops in July, 2015, data could be collected in a participatory approach from 9 geographic regions where GNDR is active. In addition, Asia-Pacific was determined as a focal region for the evaluation with the Asia-Pacific regional development coordinator (RDC) as our main focal point. While results certainly cannot be transferred 1:1 from one region where GNDR is active to another, this exemplary exercise served to increase regional information further, obtain more specific outcomes data and gain a better understanding of GNDR's regional structures and work. The selection of the region was rather opportunistic and depended on the availability and willingness of the RDC to give a substantial amount of his time to this evaluation.

**Focus on most significant outcomes.** When reviewing the primary survey data with potential outcomes (see below), we prioritised the full description of outcomes that seemed to represent highly important changes with respect to progressing GNDR's goals and where the nature of GNDR's influence was evident and plausible.

### 3. Methods, methodology and challenges

In this evaluation, we used OH in a mixed methods approach together with i) surveys among GNDR members, Secretariat staff and Board/Steering Group to obtain "signals" of where outcomes might be found; ii) intensive skype interviews with the Secretariat staff and one Board member to follow up on potential outcomes and on important and partly strong statements made during the surveys to gain a better understanding particularly on network structures and processes; and iii) email and verbal interviews during substantiation of a selected number of outcomes to obtain personal views on the added value GNDR might bring to the DRR and wider development world. Below we explain how the OH approach as described by Wilson-Grau and Britt (2013) was adapted for this evaluation.

#### 3.1. An adapted Outcome Harvesting approach

**Evaluation work plan: Outcome Harvesting – a flexible approach (Step 1).** OH consists normally of 6 steps: 1) the evaluation design phase; 2) drafting of (exemplary) outcome statements from documents such as monitoring, donor or workshop reports; 3) engagement with internal informants to harvest and verify outcome, contribution and (possibly) significance descriptions; 4) drafting of extended outcomes and their substantiation by external sources either through email questionnaires or interviews; 5) data analysis, interpretation and synthesis; and finally 6) the drafting of the report and optionally support of the use of the findings (debriefing workshops, defining next steps)<sup>2</sup>. But OH is also a very flexible methodology that can be adapted, as we did here in order to a) accommodate the fact that GNDR's regional strategy workshops took place right at the beginning of the evaluation and provided a rare opportunity for engaging members directly in identifying results, and b) that an objective of the evaluation was to develop increased understanding of OM principles within the Secretariat and build competence for potential future self-assessment (adapted work plan, Annex 9.4).

**Familiarisation of GNDR Secretariat staff with OH (Step 2a).** A 1 day workshop was conducted in London on July 22, 2015, with 9 Secretariat staff present either online or in person with 5 objectives: i) inform key actors on the background and purpose of the evaluation; ii) introduce the OH approach and how it will deal with the challenges of conducting evaluations in voluntary, international social change networks; iii) get input and buy-in to the evaluation design; iv) elaborate the evaluation work plan and define deliverables, time line, resources, responsibilities; and v) familiarize GNDR key informants and facilitators of the evaluation with the OH methodology (how to formulate outcome,

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.outcomemapping.ca/download/ricardo.pdf>

contribution and significance statements). In addition, both before and after the workshop several staff members who would be supporting the harvesting internally and drafting outcome descriptions were trained individually via email or skype (namely Terry Gibson, Rouf Mohammad Abdur, Emma Kelleher, Stu Solomon and Bruno Haghebaert). Mentoring of staff focused on formulating specific, measurable, achieved, relevant and timely (SMART) outcomes following the guide in Annex 9.5.

**Limited harvesting from documents (Step2b).** The evaluation started with a review of a very limited number of documents (Annex 9.6.3) mainly because GNDR's documentary sources seemed rather weak for this purpose, as suggested by Terry Gibson:

- As an action network GNDR so far did not invest much time in documenting activities and formal monitoring or evaluation other than the learning reviews of Views from the Frontline.
- Any such documents were produced at the UK hub, so were not well informed by national and regional practice where much of the potential behavioural change influence of the network lies.
- At global level, similarly, much of the activity (global advocacy) was not well documented
- The documents produced were often for donors so had a particular and selective presentation.

Hence, much outcome information was likely to be held by individuals rather than in documents and it was decided to focus on surveys and interviews of key network actors rather than relying on harvesting from documents. Nevertheless, 8 documents were reviewed, 7 of these by Secretariat staff as part of the OH mentoring process.

**Participatory harvesting for 'basic perceived outcomes' (Step 2c).** Thus, in parallel to the document review, it was decided to leverage from the 7 GNDR regional strategy workshops scheduled during July. Although it was clear that there would not be much time at the workshops and the leaders of the respective sessions would not all be skilled in OH, this would still provide an opportunity to increase participation and invite a high number of GNDR members to share their perceptions of where GNDR had achieved results. A detailed guiding document and questionnaire for the harvest was developed which was used either in the sessions itself or as an online survey to collect what we called the 'basic perceived outcomes' (Annex B 12.5). Additional email surveys (Annex B 12.6) were conducted among stakeholders in the focal region Asia-Pacific, as well as among the Secretariat staff and the Board and former Steering Group. Finally, in September, a focal group session in London lead by Terry Gibson and attended either physically or online by all Secretariat staff (UK and RDCs) served to brainstorm for further perceived results. The resulting data were compiled in the primary survey data base (DB1), which provided a rich source of personal statements and signals on potential changes of network actors and other social actors. The cases in DB1 were then classified provisionally by the evaluators e.g. by outcome themes and relevance for the 3 evaluation questions.

### **Engaging with internal informants to develop and verify 'SMART' outcomes and understand strong and personal perspectives (Step 3)**

Based on the preliminary classification of the primary survey data (DB1), the evaluators in consultation with the Secretariat selected 30 cases that a) covered all 3 evaluation questions and were found to be particularly significant for these; b) presumably fell within the evaluation period; and c) were feasible for follow up with informants in order to retrieve further information and develop SMART outcomes. Both GNDR Secretariat focal points and evaluators researched the selected cases through email or verbal interviews with network informants. The evaluators conducted intensive, c. 2 hrs interviews with 7 Secretariat staff and 1 Board member (Annex 9.6). These sessions served also to explore some of the more personal and sometimes frank opinions found in the preliminary survey

#### **Box 3.1: Terminology**

**Primary survey data (DB1):** The 'basic perceived outcomes' received through the surveys at regional workshops and through email questionnaires from Secretariat, Board and Steering Committee and gathered in data base 1.

**Outcomes data (DB2):** Cases selected from the primary survey data which were further researched and developed into the 21 SMART outcomes in data base 2 with specific outcome and contribution descriptions.

**Outcome Stories:** The extended outcome narratives developed from 6 specific themes of the outcomes data including outcome, significance and contribution statements that were assessed by external substantiators.

data on changes in network governance and management processes, which could not be ignored and needed follow up in order to better understand issues and concerns and adequately address particularly EQ1. Both Secretariat focal points and evaluators then drafted outcomes for the Excel *outcomes data base (DB2)*. This required several iterations of drafting and review among evaluators and Secretariat and resulted in 21 detailed outcome and contribution descriptions, often providing more background than the short outcomes in the usual OH approach, in some cases resembling the extended outcomes of the next step, although they did not include significance statements (Annex 9.7).

#### **Extended ‘Outcome Stories’ and substantiation by ‘independent’ informants (Step 4)**

From the outcomes data base (DB2) the evaluators then selected 6 specific outcome themes – again representing important achievements in the 3 areas of interest to this evaluation – and developed these together with the Secretariat focal points into *6 extended Outcome Stories* for substantiation (Annex 9.9). For this, the Outcome Stories were sent to substantiators who were as independent from GNDR as possible but at the same time to some extent familiar with the outcome. The evaluators contacted the substantiators of the Outcome Stories via email, sending the outcome narrative and a questionnaire as well as a one page summary of the evaluation background and questions (Annex B 12.7). Where needed they followed up or asked the GNDR Secretariat focal point to encourage the substantiators to respond to the queries. The substantiators were asked to respond to 3 multiple choice questions indicating for the 3 parts of the outcome – the outcome statement itself, the significance statement and GNDR’s contribution – to what extent they agreed; they could also qualify their response if they wished to do so. All substantiators were informed that their response would formally go on public record as a part of this report (unless they objected explicitly), a measure which was intended to increase transparency in the evaluation process and enhance the credibility of the outcomes further, giving the evaluation findings more weight. Only one informant did not agree to publication of their comments. The substantiators’ names and their responses are given in Annex 9.10.

#### **Collecting individual views and opinions on GNDR’s achievements (Step 3 and 4)**

In addition, the substantiators of the 6 Outcome Stories were asked to answer two open questions: whether they believed that GNDR filled a need in the DRR or wider development world (and if so, which); and whether they personally believed that GNDR had influenced their or their organizations work (and if so, how). *Thus, individual opinions on what GNDR had achieved (or not) during the last years were retrieved through 3 channels:* i) many of the contributions to DB1 obtained through surveys or at the regional workshops were personal perceptions rather than specific descriptions of outcomes and some reflected statements on challenges and weaknesses the network might be facing; ii) extensive skype interviews were conducted with Secretariat staff (UK and RDCs) and a Board member to follow up on potential outcomes and concerns; and iii) views on GNDR’s purpose, roles and niche were obtained from the substantiators.

**Data analysis, synthesis, and interpretation (Steps 5 and 6).** For data synthesis and analysis, the two Excel data bases with the survey data (DB1) and the SMART outcomes (DB2) were classified according to geographic relevance, relevance to the evaluation questions, outcome umbrella theme, negative / positive outcome, social actor category (including where possible also CSO type, GNDR/non-GNDR member, working in DRR/non-exclusive-DRR area). The outcomes data base, including also contribution statements, was further classified with respect to the contributor type. Also, in both data bases – survey and outcomes data – we were able to identify very broad types of strategies that GNDR seemed to have employed somewhat taking into account those described in Hearn and Mendizabal’s Network Function Approach (2011). Section 5 presents the data summaries and general findings resulting from these classifications. Together the ‘basic perceived outcomes’ from the surveys (DB1), the researched SMART outcomes (DB2), the 6 substantiated Outcome Stories, as well as the interview data and comments and responses of the substantiators, contributed to the final interpretations and conclusions as to the effectiveness of GNDR as a network for action and learning during the 2012-2015 period and the recommended points for discussion.

### 3.2. Challenges and limitations of the evaluation design and data

In conducting this evaluation, we believe we successfully followed the four standards of evaluation of the American Evaluation Association: propriety, utility, feasibility, accuracy (Box 3.2). However, the following limitations and challenges should be noted:

First, following up with some of the strong, personal perspectives in the survey meant we needed to adapt the evaluations design such that we could take into account information other than specific outcome data, i.e. we needed to triangulate it through extensive interviews. Second, having to start without a thorough document review by skilled evaluators had the drawback that, instead of a large data base, there were only a few example outcomes for the client to build on. Both resulted in time delays and at the same time a relatively low number of SMART outcomes in relation to the time available for this evaluation.

However, as mentioned above, even without budget and time constraints, an evaluation of a globally active network such as GNDR is unlikely to be comprehensive of all achievements during a particular evaluation period. The intention was to use OH to examine a **representative set of outcomes and contributions of the network** to address specific, concrete and useful evaluation questions.

Evaluation in general, and identifying and formulating outcomes, does have a strong element of subjectivity and the important question is if the evidence collected is valid and credible and the interpretation of data done transparently. The sources of data for the outcomes compiled in this evaluation were all internal to GNDR. To ensure that the information was sufficiently valid and credible for the primary intended users of this evaluation, a) the evaluation design was developed and agreed with one of these, the GNDR Secretariat, b) there were several iterations of drafting and reviewing of outcome and contributions statements between evaluators and network focal points and all resulting perceived and SMART outcomes were shared within the Secretariat; and c) the main outcomes were confirmed through substantiation and interview processes such that each was triangulated.

There were two caveats, however: First, all but one internal focal points for the evaluation were staff that joined the network end 2013 / early 2014 and thus had limited knowledge of GNDR's activities before this time. Second, due to the nature of the outcomes selected for developing into Outcome Stories, we had to rely partly on close stakeholders or even members of the network instead of completely independent substantiators (which in fact are often rare in such international networks).

Still, all supporting staff and sources were informed that the report would be published widely so were aware that their contributions would be on public record. Also, this evaluation was commissioned by the network itself with one of the objectives being a critical self-assessment of their achievements. We are therefore certain that, despite these limitations and challenges, the information used in this evaluation provided a valid and credible basis to throw a light on some of GNDR's work from 2012-2015, offering useful insights into the types of actors the network has influenced, in what way these changed, and what GNDR's strategies were in order to influence change.

### 4. Learnings through the outcomes evaluation process

OH is a very participatory approach to evaluation that involves various actors of the evaluated organization or network to contribute specific information and help verify data through internal and external triangulation. In this evaluation, a major focus was – apart from the external assessment of GNDR's results 2012-15 – to guide the Secretariat staff in using an OM inspired approach as a basis

#### Box 3.2: Evaluation standards

**Propriety:** ensure that the evaluation is conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of those involved in the evaluation, as well as those affected by its results.

**Utility:** ensure that the evaluation serves the information needs of intended users.

**Feasibility:** ensure that the evaluation is realistic, prudent, diplomatic, and frugal.

**Accuracy:** ensure that the evaluation reveals and conveys technically adequate information about the features that determine worth or merit of the program being evaluated.

for their strategy development and potential future use in monitoring. A total of 9 GNDR staff and 1 Board member were involved in the evaluation as internal leads, harvesters of outcomes, and/or informants (Annex 9.6). In addition to numerous emails and skype calls, we lead a 1 day workshop in London for the Secretariat staff on OM principles, the evaluation design and plan, and conducted an all-Secretariat online meeting at a later stage to explain further the approach and process.

We cannot evaluate the effectiveness of organisational learning that has resulted from the process or that may result from use of the evaluation by the network. But from interactions and growing engagement we had with network focal points during the evaluation, we anticipate that the *process* of generating ‘basic perceived’ and SMART outcomes and Outcome Stories will have ongoing value for learning and communication within GNDR – and also provided some lessons learned.

One issue which we find informative for learning was that despite working with a very supportive and engaged GNDR team, it took longer than in our experience is normally necessary to extract information and get the team to draft sufficiently specific outcome and particularly contribution statements. There may have been several reasons for this, e.g. limited previous reporting, difficulties to retrieve specific information from the regions in this globally active network, time constraints of staff and other obligations such as grant proposals. But also, initially, the large number of staff involved in the evaluation all had to be brought on board to support the approach and we faced a considerable ‘groan zone’ with team members challenging us on the value of the methodology and usefulness of the ‘biased’ internal data. It took several skype calls and intensive email communication to convince the team that the whole basis of the OH approach would lie in retrieving very specific and thus verifiable information from knowledgeable insiders, describing SMART outcomes and the respective plausible contribution of network actors to these in order to assess exactly who was influenced by the network’s activities, in what way, when and where; and that in the end both data and sources would be on public record which would add to their credibility. Possibly, a contributing factor to these difficulties may have been that the network is currently at a turning point from a more central to a decentralized form: in the last two years it has experienced a major re-structuring of its management and governance structures, with the Secretariat tripling its staff and a completely new Global Board with members from 11 regions. The new system has not yet taken full effect, instead it seems to cause some confusion and tension (see Section 6.1.2) which, we felt, might also have affected somewhat the mindset of those reporting outcomes of the network’s achievements.

A further factor affecting the evaluation process was a change in the internal lead of the evaluation. This had costs and benefits: no doubt it came at a considerable cost in time of both staff and evaluators. Evaluations are most efficient and effective when one or at most two internal evaluation managers are responsible for the data provided to the evaluators, serve as a single point of contact for these and, as they gain confidence in the evaluation approach, mentor any other staff providing data to the evaluation. However, the investment was justifiable here because of the objective of using the evaluation process to build staff capacity in M&E, and in the end resulted in a more participatory and democratic process that may have increased the learning curve further.

What counts is that the efficient and capable GNDR team managed to compile information and views from 9 regions in a very participatory way, and while this may not have resulted in a pure OH data set, taking into account the team concerns and needs and adapting the evaluation design accordingly in the end delivered an impressive volume of useful data for the evaluation. All in all, we appreciated GNDR’s agile, adaptive and democratic management style of the evaluation and believe that ultimately there are potentially several important organisational learning benefits from this joint OH learning experiment that we would characterize as follows:

**An external view summarising the status quo of GNDR’s structures and functions may stimulate discussions on network development.** “*Networks move through stages of development, from launching and growing to performing and achieving, and then on to sustaining, transitioning, or disbanding*” (Taylor et al. 2015). Evaluation results of a network thus depend on the stage the network is in. In this study, a substantial number of perceived outcomes dealt with network

development demonstrating that this was still a key area of work during the evaluation period. The findings through a light on the current influence of this on the team and may be useful for taking decisions on what is needed to best support network effectiveness.

**The mixed methods approach delivered a wealth of complementary data and resulted from a broad engagement.** While the outcomes database (DB2) contained only a very limited number of SMART outcomes describing specific achievements of GNDR (Section 5.2), the individual views of over 70 network actors obtained through the surveys conveyed a very broad picture of where members see GNDR's achievements (Section 5.1). The survey data helped both to focus our selection of particular outcome themes and complemented the more specific outcomes described in DB2.

**Greater awareness of network achievements within the network.** As confirmed by the focal points, even the Secretariat staff was not aware of all the outcomes gathered and how they had been achieved. This is probably a reflection of the sheer size of GNDR and scope of the results already achieved; but it may also be evidence that there is room for a more systematic reporting, monitoring and evaluation system, particularly in the regions. This evaluation, together with the data bases compiled as evidence, may be useful for communicating results and experiences within the network.

**OH helped identifying GNDR's influence on sustainable behaviour changes of social actors.** The formulation of outcomes allowed us, together with the network focal points, to identify types of behaviour changes evident in social actors influenced by the network. Behaviour changes are more likely to signify lasting effects of the network than an assessment of outputs and activities.

**A clearer understanding of the role of GNDR in achieving results.** Each of the final SMART outcomes included a description of the GNDR contribution specifying in what way the outcome had been achieved. The involvement of network focal points in writing and verifying the outcome statements demanded a significant level of engagement with the evaluation and mentoring from the evaluators before the outcomes were formulated satisfactorily. The result may be that network actors now have a clearer idea how the network has contributed to outcomes and therefore be better informed when developing future strategies and plans.

**Greater awareness of network achievements beyond the network.** Some of the substantiators who reviewed the Outcome Stories were external to the network. Their involvement in reviewing particular results may have increased their appreciation of the network's role in the DRR landscape.

## 5. Data summaries and overall findings

### 5.1. Harvesting for 'basic perceived outcomes' (primary survey data, DB1)

**The harvest:** The review of the 8 documents resulted in only 27 cases for DB1 which could potentially be developed further into SMART outcomes. The surveys among the regional network members and the members of the Secretariat, Board, Trustees and former Steering Group (SG) provided another 153 cases; 78 cases of these were contributed from 61 informants from 9 geographic regions, 61 from the 9 Secretariat staff, and 14 were contributed by 3 Board/SG members. (Annex 9.6.2 & 3).

**Quality of DB1 cases.** As expected, almost all cases lacked specific information and were not yet SMART outcomes, some were rather general statements conveying personal views of the informants on network achievements (e.g. Bd02<sup>3</sup>), some had no or limited GNDR connection (e.g. Reg77), some were duplications, others contained more than one potential outcome (e.g. Bd01, Reg75), and often it was unclear whether the potential change occurred within the evaluation period.

Still, DB1 provided a rich source of examples in which areas GNDR informants perceived the network's achievements. Although many of these statements would need extensive follow-up to be

<sup>3</sup> DB1 has not been made public because verification and investigation of all cases was beyond the scope of this evaluation; we refer to DB1 supposing the primary users of the evaluation may choose to follow up selected cases at a later stage.

turned into SMART outcomes, as personal views held by GNDR members from the various regions they still could be used to support findings from the more specific outcomes described in DB2.

**Typing of DB1 cases.** Typing was attempted for 122 of the 180 cases; for 58 cases the outcome descriptions were either too unclear to be typed or there was evidently no change, they occurred not within the evaluation period, were duplications of other cases, or there was clearly no contribution by GNDR. The typing was based on incomplete information and thus has to be considered as a crude approximation of what the potential outcome might be about. Also, some cases described more than one outcome with two or more social actors changing. Hence, all numbers presented below can only be indicative; misclassifications are very likely considering the limitations of DB1 data, and our summaries cannot be precise. But we feel that the analysis still provided a rough idea who GNDR may have worked with, where, and in which way, during the evaluation period. Also, the typing informed the selection of representative cases which were developed into SMART outcomes for DB2.

**Geographic spread.** 43 of the 122 cases were relevant on the global level (including those that concerned network development and governance), and 79 cases were reported from the regional or national level, especially from Asia-Pacific (30), the focal region of this evaluation, and from Latin America (20). 60 nationally relevant cases came from 30 countries across the 9 regions (Annex 9.8.1).

**GNDR's social actors (who changed).** We attempted to classify the 122 cases roughly with respect to the type of organisation or function of the social actor whose claimed change was described and to which GNDR's work supposedly had contributed to some extent.

The largest number of cases (82 cases) concerned CSOs as social actors, of which only 47 could be classified further. These included cases describing claimed changes in the former regional and national coordinating organisations (20), in other CSO members (17), as well as in non-GNDR CSOs (10). The non-GNDR CSOs included mainly international NGOs, some from the wider development world who are not, or not exclusively involved in DRR work such as World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT), the Swiss NGO Platform, the Disability Caucus, the Huairou Commission, the Japanese Civil Society Coalition (JCC), Bond UK group of NGOs, the Arab Network for Environment & Development (RAED), etc..

Non-CSO social actors comprised communities, national authorities, global or regional policy bodies (such as the UN system), for each of which were about 10 cases reported; as well an academic institution, a media person and a donor (1 each).

Notably, the network supporting entities – the Secretariat staff in the UK and in the regions (RDCs), as well as the former Steering Group or the new Global Board – were also perceived as changing social actors, adapting their practices e.g. in response to member concerns (9 cases).

**Types of potential changes (“umbrella themes”).** Although the data in DB1 did not represent verified changes and were often very general statements, we still attempted to classify the 122 cases roughly according to the general theme of the claimed behavior change they described in the social actor(s) and grouped these into 5 broad ‘umbrella themes’ (Annex 9.8.3).

Most cases (39) concerned potential policy and practice changes in the social actors which were reported for CSOs (17), communities (6), national authorities (8), global or regional government bodies (7), and 1 donor. This very diverse category comprised cases where

- CSOs changed their programming to integrate DRR (e.g. Reg57).
- CSOs adapted or increased their DRR work with communities (e.g. Reg10)
- CSOs adapted or increased their DRR work with national authorities (e.g. Doc02).
- International NGOs adapted their position and communications to (increasingly) include aspects of DRR in their policy and advocacy work (e.g. Bd05, Bd06)
- Communities took actions to build their resilience, e.g. establishing committees (Reg18).
- National governments adapted frameworks to place more focus on DRR (e.g. Reg04, Reg06)
- Global policy bodies (UNISDR) adapted their official position and placed a greater emphasis on local level implementation of DRR policy (Bd03)

In 25 cases we suspected changes in collaboration, where

- CSOs started or increased collaboration and networking among each other (e.g. Reg12, 38, 01).
- Non-GNDR and/or non-DRR stakeholder stakeholders (e.g. Disability Caucus, Swiss NGO Platform, US group of NGOs, academic institutions, etc) established a (closer) collaborative relationship with GNDR or signed formal agreements to collaborate (e.g. Sec40, Doc20, Sec10, Sec36).
- Stakeholders (GNDR members or not) produced and/or endorsed joint positions (e.g. Doc14, Sec49, Sec33).

33 cases dealt with knowledge transfer & sharing, awareness, learning, capacity changes, where

- CSOs and other stakeholders claimed to have gained more awareness or a deeper understanding of DRR related themes or developed DRR relevant skills through GNDR activities or outputs (Reg13, Reg20, Reg51, Reg60, Reg63)
- GNDR members and non-members engaged in viewing posts disseminated e.g. via facebook, twitter or joining a listserv (Doc15, Doc23, Sec20, Sec21)

14 cases concerned GNDR membership and member engagement, e.g.

- Changes in GNDR membership overall or regionally (Asia-Pacific) (Sec23, Sec51).
- Member engagement with the Secretariat, particularly the RDCs (Sec47, Sec04).
- Member participation in GNDR strategy / planning workshops or surveys (Doc07, Doc17, Sec50).

Notably, 5 of the cases in the last category described **potentially unintended, negative outcomes**, such as members reducing their level of engagement due to communication issues. These cases will be considered in more detail in Section 6.1.2 when discussing GNDR's structures and processes for effective and sustainable learning and action.

Finally, another 11 cases dealt with potential changes in network structures and functions, e.g.

- The Secretariat increasing their regional capacity by employing regional development coordinators (e.g. Bd08)
- The Secretariat responding to member concerns and building a more regionally representative governance structure with new Global Board (e.g. Doc09)
- GNDR members being prepared to serve on the Global Board (e.g. Sec58)

Again, 4 of these cases pointed to **potentially negative outcomes**, mainly expressing concerns about the effectiveness of the new governance and management structure (discussed in Section 6.1.2).

**Contributor and contribution.** In very few of the DB1 cases it was possible to discern unambiguously the GNDR network actor(s) who might have contributed in what way(s) to the potential change. However, for 113 of the 122 cases we were able to discern very broad types of strategies that GNDR seemed to have employed (further simplifying the modified Network Function Approach of Hearn and Mendizabal (2011). These putative strategies comprised both network purpose functions, promoting GNDR's goals and objectives (such as community building, convening and bridging; policy work and advocacy; knowledge management), as well as network form functions, building and fostering the network as such (outreach and communication; network strategy planning, management, governance) (Section 6.1).

**Relevance to evaluation questions.** The DB1 cases were relevant across all 3 evaluation questions at global or regional levels, with the majority (at least 67) being informative for answering EQ1 (progress towards building an effective and sustainable network); c. 21 were informative for EQ2 (changes in the behaviour of network actors in terms of DRR policy/practice); and at least 34 concerned EQ3 (influence on DRR policy/practice of non CSO stakeholders and the wider development world).

## 5.2. Analysis of SMART outcomes (DB2) and extended Outcome Stories

**DB2 outcomes:** Time and budget allowed only a portion of the DB1 cases to be followed up upon and developed into SMART outcomes. For this, 30 representative cases were selected following the criteria described in Section 3.1, covering the 3 evaluation questions, global, regional and local levels, as

well as the various types of assumed changes in social actors. Both evaluators and internal staff tried to retrieve additional information through email or skype calls with the original contributors of the cases. Based on these interviews, 5 outcomes had to be discarded because they did not occur within the evaluation period; others did not generate sufficient information on the presumed behavioural change or GNDR's contribution, or they showed that there was in fact no change. But the interviews highlighted also an additional outcome: the adaptive response of the Secretariat changing their VFL/AFL/Frontline programming in line with member needs (DB2-VFL). In the end, DB2 comprised a total of 21 cases, where behavioural changes took place during the evaluation period, which were sufficiently well described to be credible and verifiable, and where the relationship between GNDR's contribution and the outcome was plausible (Annex 9.7).

Of course, these 21 outcomes did not provide a comprehensive picture of the achievements of GNDR during the evaluation period. However, they represented well researched exemplary case studies of significant key results GNDR achieved during this period on the global, regional and national level in various areas of its work with different social actors.

**Geographic relevance.** 11 of these outcomes were relevant on the global level, 5 concerned Asia-Pacific, 3 Latin America, and one each Southern/East Africa and West Africa.

**GNDR's social actors.** About half of the outcomes in DB2 (12) concerned changes in CSOs; the other half described changes in national authorities (3), in a global governance body (UNISDR, 2 outcomes), and in a donor (1 outcome). The GNDR Secretariat appeared as social actor in 3 outcomes. None of the 10 cases in DB1, where changes in communities were proposed, found its way into DB2.

**Types of changes ("umbrella themes").** Most of the outcomes described in DB2 (10) concerned changes in policy and practice either in CSOs (5), in national authorities (2), in the parties of the UNISDR (2), or in the donor 'Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation', SDC (1). Changes in collaboration were found in 3 cases, 2 referred to the work with CSOs at the World Conference of DRR at Sendai, and one to the work of the NCO 'Centro al Servicio de la Acción Popular' (CESAP) with the Venezuelan government. Only one outcome described a change in the category "Knowledge transfer & sharing, awareness, learning, capacity", namely the sharing of information via listservs, mailings and meeting in the run up to and during Sendai with IDC – several other outcomes in this category had occurred after the evaluation period (mostly influenced by GNDR's Frontline programme). In the category "Membership and member engagement" there were 3 outcomes: 2 describing changes in the number of members globally and regionally in Asia-Pacific, and 1 reporting increased engagement of members in the Asia-Pacific region after the establishment of the regional hub. Four outcomes reported on changes in "Network structures and functions", namely the Secretariat adapting its VFL/AFL/Frontline programme in response to member needs, the Secretariat strengthening regional representation through regional Board members and employing regional development coordinators, and CSOs being prepared to serve as Board members. None of the "**negative cases**" in DB1 (Section 5.1) could be developed further into SMART outcomes for DB2; in this evaluation they are used as personal views on specific challenges the network may currently face (Section 6.1.2).

**Contributors and contributions to changes in social actors.** With more information at hand, DB2 allowed also the typing of contributors. In 6 outcomes these were CSOs; in 2 of these cases these were NCOs on their own, in 2 with support of the Secretariat, and in 2 other members. In the remaining 15 outcomes, the contributor was the GNDR Secretariat (UK and/or RDCs), as well as in one instance the former Steering Group. All 5 types of strategies were represented: "Community building and bridging" through VFL/AFL/Frontline (5) or other means (3), "Network strategy planning, management, governance" (4), "Outreach and communication" (3), and "Policy work and advocacy" (6).

**Relevance to evaluation questions.** Several of the outcomes were significant for more than one evaluation question. Roughly there were 9 outcomes mainly relevant to EQ1, 5 to EQ2, and 7 to EQ3.

In sum, although DB2 comprised only 21 outcomes, there was a fairly good spread across evaluation questions, outcome categories and social actor categories.

**Extended Outcome Stories of GNDR achievements** Thus, it was possible to select 10 outcomes (some concerning related themes) that formed the basis for 6 extended GNDR Outcome Stories for the subsequent substantiation. The stories covered together all 3 evaluation questions and various types of changes in a range of different social actors of GNDR (Annex 9.9), namely:

- OS 1:** Creation of more regionally representative governance and management structures.
- OS 2:** Evolution of the VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes in response to CSO member concerns.
- OS 3:** Increased collaboration among DRR networks from the Global North.
- OS 4:** Engagement of GNDR members and capacity building in local monitoring of community risk and resilience through GNDR's Views of the Frontline (VFL) programme.
- OS 5:** UNISDR and national governments recognised the role of CSOs (Sendai Framework for DRR).
- OS 6:** Collaboration with networks outside the DRR community – GNDR and the Disability Caucus.

### 5.3. Validity of the outcomes data – verification and substantiation

**Verification.** From the evaluation design described in Section 3 it is evident that the sources for most of the data informing this evaluation were internal to the network, as is commonly the case with OH. However, the ‘basic perceived outcomes’ gathered in the regional surveys from various sources (DB1) were all reviewed by various Secretariat focal points. For the SMART outcomes, the extensive reciprocal reviewing of the data by the evaluators and several focal points, as well as the information gained through the interviews, helped to ensure the data is sufficiently valid and credible for the primary intended users of this evaluation. During this process, the outcome statements were scrutinized for a plausible rationale between what was reported as achieved and the reported contribution of GNDR; each outcome was examined to ensure that:

- a) it described an observable change in the behavior, relationships, and actions of social actors;
- b) the description of GNDR’s influence was sufficiently concrete and specific to be verifiable;
- c) there was a plausible rationale between the substance and coherence of what was reported as achieved as an outcome and the reported contribution of the network actors.

**Substantiation of Outcome Stories.** The 6 Outcome Stories were developed from 10 of the outcomes in DB2 which thus gained further credibility through the substantiation process. For this, the Outcome Stories were sent to 3 informants each. For Outcome Stories 1 to 4 and 6, we received feedback from two substantiators each, for outcome 5 one substantiator responded (Annex 9.10). One substantiator considered himself not qualified to respond. None of the remaining respondents disagreed completely with any of the outcomes. 4 substantiators agreed partially with one component of the narrative (outcome, significance, or contribution statement); however, in each case the respective comments explained that specific details were missing, but while this added to our understanding of the observed change, in our view this did not change the credibility of the outcomes.

**Conclusion.** While we cannot exclude that there remain a few ambiguities in the outcomes data, based on the verification and substantiation results we consider the SMART outcomes in DB2 to be sufficiently valid and credible to serve as evidence for changes in this evaluation – particularly considering that all authors of outcomes / Outcome Stories as well as the substantiators were informed that they would go on public record as the evaluation report would be publicly available.

## 6. Findings and conclusions in relation to the evaluation questions

Over the last decade, there has been a growing interest of network developers and grant makers in finding frameworks for the evaluation of social change networks. Here, we adapt three approaches:

i) that described by Taylor et al. 2015, which identified three pillars of network evaluation as ‘Connectivity’, ‘Health’, and ‘Results’; ii) the approach of Bonbright and Khagram in the ‘Innovations for Scaling Impact’ and ‘Keystone Accountability’ paper “Next generation network evaluation” (2010); and iii) aspects of effectiveness discussed in the International Institute for Sustainable Development working paper “Knowledge Networks: Guidelines for Assessment” (Creech and Ramji 2004).

An assessment of GNDR’s ‘Results’ will be addressed in Sections 6.2 and 6.3. Section 6.1 looks at some of Taylor et al.’s ‘Connectivity’ and ‘Health’ aspects, namely in how far changes in the nature of GNDR’s memberships and their connections ('Connectivity'), and the network's infrastructure, management, governance, and learning ('Health') affect GNDR's effectiveness. 6.4 discusses GNDR's objectives 2012-15, its purpose, strategies, and niche in context with the findings of this evaluation.

## 6.1. GNDR's structures and processes for effective and sustainable learning and action (EQ1)

*To what extent do the outcomes indicate any progress towards building an effective and sustainable network for facilitating learning and joint action?*

Here we examine several aspects of network effectiveness and sustainability, looking first at **network membership, connections and participation**; and second at **network coordination, management and governance**. In our analysis we draw both from the observed verified changes (outcomes) described in DB2 and the ‘personal perceptions’ of network actors from the primary survey data (DB1), as well as from the interviews with internal and independent sources.

### 6.1.1. GNDR's membership, connections and participation

**GNDR member recruitment and growth.** GNDR's member recruitment process has not changed over the last years: membership remains open to any individual affiliated to a CSO; individuals from other entities (e.g. local/national governments, UN bodies, academia, private sector, etc.) can join as associated members. The membership process is free, members can apply via an online application form or email to the Secretariat, and there are no membership fees. Still, GNDR has seen an impressive growth in membership during the evaluation period, particularly after the establishment of the RDCs: it has expanded globally around a 100% (doubled) in terms of individuals and a 50% in terms of organisations since Feb. 2014 (DB2/Sec23). The Mailchimp mailinglist grew from 786 individuals in June 2014 to 1255 in July 2015. A similar pattern is evident in Asia-Pacific, the focal region of this evaluation, where membership increased by 92% since the regional hub was established to 311 individuals in March 2015 (DB2/Sec51). GNDR's new members comprised CSOs that had not been associated with GNDR before, as well as organisations and networks that were already in contact but formalised their relationship as the network grew, developed its structures and became more visible.

 The network has clearly been successful in attracting members, although according to the Secretariat staff there is no formal member recruitment process in place. GNDR has been growing “*organically through activities*” (Jesus Cordero) rather than through outreach and advocacy activities of the Secretariat or members. GNDR's strategies to engage members and foster collaboration will be discussed in more detail below, but from the outcomes described in DB2 and the interviews it is evident that several factors play a role, among these GNDR's regional programmes, its increased regional presence through the RDCs, as well as the high visibility of the network through its global level activities during the evaluation period. As Nicole Stolz, Caritas Switzerland, Member of Swiss NGO DRR Platform and GNDR Global Board member phrased this:

*“There is simply no alternative to GNDR. [...] GNDR's name and presence brings civil society actors together, through GNDR actors get a voice. This has not so much to do with GNDR's products (VFL/AFL/Frontline), but with the existence of the network as such, the strong visual presence of the network.”*

**Member composition.** GNDR's membership comprises individuals from a broad range of CSOs, which is also reflected in our data, including local or community-based groups and grass roots organisations, national and regional NGOs, a few international NGOs, academic and research institutions, and faith based organisations. Many organisations belong themselves to other national and regional networks, alliances and associations. This diverse membership provides a great resource to GNDR but also a challenge to manage and serve well. As Glenn Dolcemascolo, Climate Change Officer at UNISDR observes:

*"GNDR has quite a few different types of organisations: many national and regional CSOs and a couple of international ones, as well as some grassroots organisations on the community level. Their views are very different and some organisations may not necessarily want to be represented through the network. GNDR needs to be cognitive of these differences; yet, this points also to an opportunity to bring more clarity to the ways different CSOs function, the different needs to express themselves and the mechanisms to do this."*

According to the Secretariat staff, information on their membership is still fragmented, with e.g. individual member's affiliation currently available for 60% of the members. Although probably laborious to build and maintain, a well-developed member-relationship-management system would help to gain clarity on the structure and needs of GNDR's membership and thereby be useful for informing the Secretariat how to enhance network services.

**Nature of network's relationships.** GNDR was founded 2007 according to Marcus Oxley "*with the premise that civil society can achieve more and have more impact by working together, i.e. by developing common policy positions that they could bring to international negotiation at Geneva, Washington, Japan....*" This "working together" in fact denotes a variety of relationships, purposes and means of engagement that build the ties and connections of the network. Examples were reported in both databases, of which the most important were:

The Secretariat and national and local CSOs were engaged through GNDR'S VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes to collect data on local DRR needs and develop common positions for advocacy and policy work at the global level. This actually constituted the largest sample (34) in the primary survey data and was supported by verified outcomes in DB2 (Reg76, Doc02, Reg53, Bd11) and Outcome Story 4 that described the nature of cooperation between the GNDR Secretariat and CESAP.

Member CSOs connected with other CSOs at the local, national or regional level, as described in 2 outcomes: i) DB2/Doc02 reports on GNDR member 'Yakkum Emergency Unit' (YEU), a local NGO, using GNDR's Frontline programme to further build relationships between the national and local platforms; and DB2/Reg53, too, describes that VFL / Frontline has led CESAP, Venezuela, to increase partnerships with CSOs. Abelina Caro Ilarrraza from CESAP confirms as response to question 4 in the substantiation:

*"Yes, [GNDR] has strengthened the local networks of Risk Management and link up with other NGOs working on the issue of development, to encourage them to incorporate disaster risk reduction into their projects."*

National member CSOs worked with communities or local authorities and national agencies to adapt or implement local or national risk strategies and/or increase local resilience. 21 cases in DB1 dealt with this type of interaction; 3 of which found their way as outcomes into DB2, namely concerning the authorities of the Philippines, Kiribati and Honduras (Reg54, Reg29, Reg06), and Outcome Story 4 also throws a light on the work of CESAP with the Venezuelan government.

The global advocacy and communication work assessed here was mainly channeled through the GNDR Secretariat maintaining strong relationships with UNISDR preparing for the World Conference on DRR (WCDRR) in Sendai, Japan, March 2015. Outcome Story 5 reports this and the good partnership with UNISDR, as Glenn Dolcemascolo confirms:

*"GNDR has become our first port of call on many issues related to understanding issues that CSOs face. They are highly committed and reliable in their follow through - this is a need as well."*

There was also evidence for strategic partnerships and collaborations with international NGOs, networks and associations facilitated by the GNDR Secretariat, both within and beyond the DRR sector: Outcome DB2/Reg44 and Outcome Story 6 described the engagement of the International Disability Caucus (IDC) with GNDR in the lead up to and during WCDRR, and Outcome Story 3 the collaborative work with several networks for the WCDRR, among these InterAction, Voluntary Organisations in

Cooperation in Emergencies (VOICE), Japan CSO Coalition (JCC), Bond, Swiss NGO Platform, Australian Council For International Development (ACFID), French NGO DRR Working Group, Act Alliance, and The Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC). Valerie Scherrer, Director Emergency Response Unit, CBM International, Belgium, believes that

*"GNDR is a key element to gather and influence a wide scope of stakeholders involved in the DRR sectors. It is of particular interest of the disability caucus and movement to use such network as vehicle to better and broader inclusion."*

 In sum, we find that GNDR has successfully established relationships with a diverse range of members and stakeholders on several levels: CSOs on the local and national level, UNISDR on the global policy level, and more recently also an increasing number of international NGOs. There is also evidence that GNDR members actively implement the knowledge gained through training and joint action working with social actors at the periphery of the GNDR network, i.e. communities and national authorities. There is some evidence in the outcomes data that GNDR's work helped CSOs to better connect with other CSOs, and from interviews and some cases in DB1, we suspect that there might be more results after March 2015 (the end of the evaluation period) for peer-to-peer collaboration cases, e.g. through Frontline, but they are not relevant for this evaluation. A further theme in GNDR's Strategy 2012-15 was the establishment of strategic coalitions with actors outside the DRR community in order to be more effective through better integration of DRR into sustainable development strategies of actors for whom DRR is not a principal concern. To achieve this, GNDR could seek to influence actors engaged in climate or environmental, human rights, poverty alleviation or social justice movements. There is no sign for formal agreements with key actors in this field in the evaluation data, but GNDR may have done ground work or, as Marcus Oxley puts it:

*"GNDR has had exploratory discussions, we met climate networks and environmental groups; but so far our potential partners did not take up the offer - there is no fruit yet."*

We note that GNDR is already interacting in a substantial way with significant NGO actors for whom DRR is only one of many concerns. Notably, it has sound and stable relationships with Bond (where GNDR's Advocacy Coordinator is now co-chair on the DRR group) and the Swiss NGO Platform (co-founded by Nicole Stoltz who is on GNDR's Global Board). Such relationships and roles put GNDR in a good position to further deepen engagement with the wider development world.

**Member engagement and communication.** A network is the people and the relationships and interactions between them, it cannot be created, but it can be developed or fostered (Hearn and Mendiabal 2011). What strategies does GNDR, the Secretariat, Board, and members, use to foster collaboration; and how engaged are members in developing the network and in GNDR's activities?

An important purpose function of networks is community building, convening and bridging, i.e. bringing together network actors and also other stakeholders for stimulating discourse, collective learning and action. A majority of cases in DB1 concerned cases where the VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes led by the Secretariat served to involve members or other stakeholders in GNDR's work (45 cases). This built on the VFL achievements of phase 1, where, in 2011, GNDR was presented with a Letter of Commendation from the UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction, recognizing their successful mobilisation of CSOs. While we feel the Secretariat led programmes were successful in terms of member engagement in phase 2 and also have led to increased local capacity and effectiveness in DRR work (see Section 6.2), it is not clear how much peer-to-peer collaboration they fostered among network members during 2012-15 (see above). However, 'bridging', i.e. working with other (non-GNDR, or non-CSO, or non-DRR) stakeholders, has clearly been important in phase 2, not only with respect to the partners at the periphery of the network (i.e. communities and national governments), but also creating bonds with other international NGOs and/or networks not exclusively involved with DRR such as CBM International / the Disability Caucus. This is supported by the view of Valerie Scherrer, Director Emergency Response Unit, CBM International, Brussels Area, Belgium:

*"The network is a key element to gather and influence a wide scope of stakeholders involved in the DRR sectors. [...] It clearly plays a role of bridging different agendas and supporting coherence between different frameworks (DRR is interrelated with issues such as development, humanitarian action and climate changes), hence ensuring voices of all partners are heard but also making sure that grassroots organizations are represented and considered in broader discussion. It ensures a "people" centered approach across sectors."*

The results from the VFL/AFL/Frontline work were also the basis of GNDR's policy and advocacy work 2012-15. Common key positions developed through GNDR members work with their ministries were agreed in intergovernmental preparatory meetings in which GNDR was engaged and then presented at the global level, notably the WCDRR in Sendai. Through this work, too, the Secretariat succeeded to strengthen the CSO position by engaging them in the global level work, e.g. most visibly by increasing CSO participation at these events (Sec32, outcome story 5). This is confirmed by Glenn Dolcemascolo, Climate Change Officer, UNISDR, Genève, Switzerland:

*"Through engagement with GNDR we have also been able to jointly explore ways that UNISDR can better support CSO engagement, this includes helping us to design and maximize CSO engagement in key events and hopefully, beyond advocacy,, will extend to influencing the ways that we build partnerships for implementation."*

Another network purpose function engaging members is knowledge management, i.e. the aggregation, filtering, sharing, and amplification of information, experiences, learnings. Only 4 cases in the primary survey data (DB1) and one outcome in DB2 concerned this area of work, facilitating for example the exchange of information among members e.g. via social media groups or disseminating relevant documents and brochures via the GNDR website. On GNDR's website we find under the header 'Learning' three themes (Disability, Older persons, Animal protection), and as resources about 10 documents (as summaries or full papers)<sup>4</sup>. Yet, evidence from DB1 (Sec20 and Sec21) suggests that GNDR members have become more engaged and active in Facebook and Twitter since the Secretariat reactivated these channels in mid 2014. In fact, DB1/Doc15 states that GNDR tweets, facebook posts, and blogs about the Reality Check campaign, political negotiations and the WCDRR in general were viewed by over 65,000 people. Also, the Asia-Pacific RDC reported in an interview that members recently started sharing their own work through facebook pages administered from the region, although there is no evidence yet that members used the knowledge disseminated and there were no requests for input. Interviews with the UK Secretariat conveyed that so far there were no other formal knowledge sharing mechanisms, bringing local members together to share their experiences (incl. e.g. partner brokerage), although members would be linked when informal requests were being made via email. Further, it was stated that electronic mailings were sent using Mailchimp since June 2014 allowing statistical analysis which showed that 'only' 40% of GNDR members opened mailings and response rates were below 10%. While this sounds low it is not, in our experience, unusual for a heterogeneous network comprising a membership with very diverse interests and possibly varied motivations for membership.

 Summing up the evidence in this section, we find a strong and successful focus in phase 2 on two lines of work: i) engaging and enabling members through the Secretariat led VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes (i.e. the organizing, coordinating and convening function of the network, promoting collective learning and action among actors); and ii) developing common positions from the local level information and engaging members as well as other stakeholders such as INGOs in global level advocacy and policy work (i.e. building consensus and coherence, amplifying and advocating the network's goals and results). The coordination of these activities was, as in GNDR's first phase, still largely driven by the GNDR Secretariat and the NCOs, with limited evidence for independent member-member interaction in the data (though we cannot exclude that a more systematic M&E system / active attempts to be aware of changes the network is influencing may have revealed more such cases, see Section 6.1.2). The knowledge management function of the network was, reasonably enough, also mainly in the hands of the Secretariat through which most information was processed and shared, with increasing regional efforts since the establishment of the RDCs, e.g. via the Asia facebook site. While this function may not have been systematically pursued and certainly could be expanded, it will depend on the overall priorities and how GNDR will position itself in the next phase, how much of a 'knowledge network' it would like to become.

<sup>4</sup> [www.gndr.org/learning.html](http://www.gndr.org/learning.html)

## 6.1.2. Network coordination, management and governance

### Network formal structure, management and governance

The decision to adapt GNDR's management and governance structures resulted from the growing membership covering 125 countries around the world. This was another of GNDR's key areas of work during 2012-15: 15 cases in DB1 and 4 outcomes in DB2 (Doc09, Bd08, Sec58) suggest activities aimed at influencing network governance and management, or planning and strategy development (a network form function). Outcome Story 1 describes in detail how the GNDR Secretariat expanded its management capacity with 5 new positions in the UK hub, as well as 5 regional development co-ordinators (3 with 100%, 2 with 75% positions) between 2013 to 2014 in order to steer the election process of the regional board representatives and facilitate the subsequent increased management, communication and knowledge sharing needs with and among the regions. Calls from members at the GNDR Global Conference, The Hague, 20-21 March 2013, had motivated the Secretariat to create the space for a more regionally representative GNDR Global Board, which after a participatory process became finally formally functional in March 2015.

While the process itself is now successfully completed and we find that the formal structures in place are likely to serve the network well in its next phase, they don't seem to have reached their expected effectiveness, yet, at least not in all regions. The RDC Asia-Pacific states in outcome DB2/Reg09 that members in Asia engaged more strongly with GNDR since the establishment of the regional hub in Bangkok in Feb. 2014 and in DB1/Bd02, South East East Asia Board member Lorna P. Victoria from the Centre for Disaster Preparedness Foundation, Philippines, says that members now regarded GNDR as less 'London centred'. However, Abelina Caro Ilarrazza, CESAP, Venezuela, believes that

*"GNDR is still seen as something that is far and it is necessary to create a national network of GNDR in Venezuela, closer to the GNDR people in the country."*

Also, the RDC Latin America reported in an interview on tensions between RDCs and board members and confusion in the respective roles of RDCs and Global Board members, and our interviews with Secretariat staff confirmed that this is not a unique situation but may to some extent also occur in other regions. While responsibilities and roles of Board and Secretariat are described clearly<sup>5</sup>, they do not seem to be taken up and implemented accordingly yet. Notably, in the interview with a Board Member we heard the RDCs referred to as a third entity, next to the UK Secretariat and the Board, rather than seeing the UK hub and the RDCs as part of one globally distributed coordination unit.

Nicole Stoltz, GNDR Global Board member, feels

*"GNDR has not yet settled into their new structure. After The Hague there was a "movement", people were very engaged and wanted to change the structure, but now that it is formalized, they are not there yet. It is sometimes not clear, what is expected of people, including me."*

The perception of some of the Secretariat staff, too, is that the regions don't feel better represented yet, there is no increased member engagement and responsiveness, and activities are still largely driven through the UK, the Board has not yet started to take up the more strategic, governance role. Marcus Oxley feels that

*"The decision to shift to regional coordinating positions had limited success yet. Partly because resources for RDCs are very limited; partly because the vision of what they have to do is not clear; partly our management/leadership from the Secretariat UK is not clear. There is still lot to be done".*

Partly, the reasons for this may be historical since before 2014, regional activities were mainly coordinated through regional and national coordinating organisations managing GNDR's VFL/AFL/ Front-line work. Changing to the new governance and management structure involved shifting of responsibilities and relationships to different network coordinating nodes or, in some cases, former coordinators taking on new or additional roles (now wearing two hats, e.g. as national coordinator and board member), which – as every change process – does not happen without tensions and power struggles.

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<sup>5</sup> E.g. here: [www.gndr.org/about/governance.html](http://www.gndr.org/about/governance.html)

 All in all, we found that GNDR has made important progress and showed very adaptive management responses to the growing network during the last 4 years in changing from a rather informal, mostly UK steered management and governance to building more regionally representative formal operational and government structures. There are apparent conflicts stemming from the change from informal to formal structures, and it may need a better clarification of roles and responsibilities of Board and regional Secretariat staff, as well as sufficient and carefully designed support through the UK Secretariat to help the individual regions to find a balanced distribution of power in a participatory way. But generally the network has succeeded to put its formal structures in place and now has to allow the different network entities to adapt – it takes time and patience to organize a network effectively, particularly those at the scale of GNDR.

### Internal communication, culture and leadership

Along with its formal structure, GNDR has also changed its communication structure and culture. The globally distributed Secretariat now faces challenges such as the need for new and expanded information channels for knowledge and innovation exchange; an agile and participatory system of solution finding and decision making; new line management responsibilities accommodating the larger staff number; and all of this in a very diverse cultural and environmental setting and a broad spread of time zones.

Interviews with the UK and regional Secretariat staff revealed that the mechanisms for information exchange both among the 5 RDCs for South-South learning and between RDCs and the UK hub may not always operate smoothly, yet. The regional staff does not always feel updated on “*the things going on in London*” (Asia-Pacific RDC) and the RDC Latin America notes that

*“The GNDR Sec has an ear for regional issues, the implemented processes are useful and the UK Secretariat is conceived as very respectful. [...] However, there is a time problem and some issues don't get as much attention as they need, so the RDCs often have to cope on their own. Also, GNDR does not yet have a formal policy or code of conduct which would be an important asset for such a diverse network”.*

Communication issues may also affect the work with members: some perceptions gathered in the primary survey data (DB1) report on instances where Secretariat communication with organisations has led to adverse effects on member engagement, i.e. DB1/Sec15. This is mainly – as the follow up interviews showed - where members may have had issues with the consultative process but none of these could be followed up sufficiently in this evaluation to be verified.

 Generally, when speaking to the Secretariat staff we had the impression that despite their strong engagement in and passion for GNDR's endeavours, there was a somewhat negative spirit concerning communication within network supporting entities and effectiveness of their work. This may be the result of the substantial changes the network has experienced over the recent years and a sign that it still is in the ‘groan zone’ of this change, where strong personal ties and trust will be needed to keep everybody engaged in the task.

### Learning, monitoring and evaluation.

As described in outcome DB2-VFL and in more detail in Outcome Story 1, the GNDR management has continuously learned from their programming experience, implementing changes and adaptations to their VFL/AFL/ Frontline programming since the inception in 2008 to better meet the needs of local CSOs. The sequential redesign of the programme at the end of each action phase (2009, 2011, 2013) took place in iterative cycles of shared action followed by learning reviews involving the participants. Thus there was a tight interaction and collaboration on programming between the Secretariat and the GNDR membership (referred to as ‘interpretative leadership’ by the Secretariat).

However, as Terry Gibson, the Operational Director, confides: as an action network GNDR hasn't invested much time in documenting activities and therefore hasn't developed an evidence base to draw on for management and governance decisions. All documentation has been produced at the UK hub and little information is available on results on the national and regional levels. Work on the global level too does not seem to be well documented with the bulk of information relating to

GNDR's achievements and how they were brought about being held in the heads of people rather than openly in accessible documents that can be shared for collective learning and decision taking.

We conclude that with the growth in size, momentum and management/governance capacity in the recent years, GNDR has not invested sufficiently in M&E to provide an evidence-based learning framework for the organization, one that supports not only Secretariat decision making but crucially also the members and Board. A stronger M&E system will not only be useful to demonstrate what it has achieved, but also to obtain a better understanding of where the regions are at, what works where and what doesn't, and to inform and take the appropriate decisions in order to adapt their regional strategies accordingly. In addition to establishing an appropriate system that allows global staff and regions to record and share their experiences and results, GNDR needs to make the space to step down from the treadmill at times and switch from 'action' mode to 'reflection' and 'learning' on which then participatory management decision can be based. One important pre-requisite for this – on which we greatly commend the network - is the engagement and openness of GNDR's staff, who we found to be generally frank in expressing concerns and issues, and their willingness to improve individual and programme performance in order to overcome any barriers that in their eyes may still keep GNDR's work from being "*awesome*", as one staff member put it.

## 6.2. GNDR's influence on network actor's DRR practice and policy (EQ2)

*To what extent do the outcomes indicate that the knowledge and collaborative approach fostered and shared among the network has influence on the behaviour of network actors in terms of DRR policy and practice, individually or across organisations?*

In this and the next section we look at GNDR's "*results achieved as the network works toward its goal or intended impact*" (Taylor et al. 2015). Section 6.2 addresses the question in how far the data indicate that GNDR actors have been influenced in their DRR policy or practice by being part of or acting as GNDR, and if so, what exactly has fostered such changes. Thus, in the first instance, we examine only those cases that were classified as "Policy and practice" changes, not those typed "Collaboration" or "Knowledge transfer & sharing, awareness, learning, capacity changes" although arguably the latter could be conceived as steps towards a more sustainable behaviour change.<sup>6</sup>

As reported in Section 5.1., claimed policy and practice changes in CSOs are described in 17 cases of the primary survey data spreading over 4 of GNDR's regions. Three of these, namely those concerning the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT, DB1/Bd05); the Swiss NGO Platform (DB1/Bd06) and Tearfund (DB1/Bd06) will be considered in Section 6.3 as these organisations work mainly outside the DRR field.

### Changes in GNDR's national coordinating organisations

Half of the remaining 14 cases concerned claimed changes in NCOs including the 'Center for Disaster Preparedness' (CDP) in the Philippines, YEU in Indonesia, 'Pattan Development Organisation' in Pakistan, 'Sustainable Rural Growth and Development Initiative' (SRGDI) in Malawi, and CESAP in Venezuela. This is to be expected because:

- a) NCOs are likely to have interacted more intensively with the Secretariat than other members and to have benefitted from direct financial and technical support through the network, and
- b) they are often the principal multipliers in a network, serving as champions of network goals, and facilitators of knowledge exchange and learning.

However, possibly this is also biased through the particular selection of informants at the regional workshops, which was attended by many representatives from NCOs.

<sup>6</sup> Specific cases that would fall into these categories are not discussed here to keep the report more concise and useful.

For example,

- GNDR member CDP were mobilised in 2013-2015 through GNDR advocacy materials, such as the Reality Check campaign to share this with the Philippine Government at the Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR (AMCDRR); as a result CDP were able to sit with the official delegation at the WCDRR in Sendai to influence the Philippine position (DB1/BD01).

Two cases were researched in more detail and included in the outcomes data (Annex 9.7), namely:

- With Secretariat support, the local NGO YEU, Indonesia, developed their capacity such that they are now a national DRR resource on local monitoring, filling a gap by providing local insights to the national platform. The knowhow gained by the NGO means it is now more confident in national advocacy and international knowledge sharing, having been invited to the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) consultation (DB2/Doc02); and
- With Secretariat support, CESAP, Venezuela, has developed a new understanding of how to research, monitor and process DRR information with the significant consequence that it has introduced and integrated DRR into its work by a) adapting programmes to include a much stronger DRR focus, recognising the links between vulnerability and risks; b) becoming an advocate for other CSOs to do the same by leading the creation of regional NGO DRR networks; c) encouraging other NGOs to integrate DRR into their work; d) engage with government on DRR (DB2/Reg53).

Representatives from both organisations were selected as substantiators of Outcome Stories (2 and 4) and confirmed the influence their engagement with GNDR has had, i.e.:

*Hepi Rahmawati, YEU: "Yes, having engaged with GNDR since 2009 has given YEU a better understanding on global infrastructures and framework on DRR and how it can be linked with the work at local level and advocacy at national level. YEU's active role as National Coordinating organization for VFL, AFL and Frontline in Indonesia is well acknowledged by national and local government as well as National and Local DRR Platform to be strategic partner in DRR policies and program discourse. YEU is also the member of AADMER CSOs partnership network due to the work on VFL."*

*Abelina Caro Ilarraza, CESAP: "Yes, it has enabled learning in the area of research, monitoring, analysis and processing of information, not previously had. [It] has enabled contact with the Government and other organizations, it has strengthened the local networks of Risk Management and link up with other NGOs working on the issue of development, to encourage them to incorporate disaster risk reduction into their projects."*

### Changes in other GNDR member CSOs

The other seven cases in the primary survey data report on 'umbrella type' cases, such as

- The highly impressive participation of 450 civil society organisations to carry out the VFL 2013 survey in 57 countries, drawing together 21,455 citizen views on DRR (DB1/Doc06) – assuming that participation in the programme itself indicates a change in practice (DB1/Doc06);

Or on specific changes of organisations such as

- The local NGO 'Réseau des femmes pour les droits environnementaux' (REFEDE), Mali, enhanced their risk reduction capacity by making use of meteorological information and gaining a better understanding of climate adaptation measures and DRR (DB1/Reg76);
- 'Orissa State Volunteers and Social Workers Association' (OSVSWA) in India, through implementing the AFL program of GNDR was able to create stronger community groups and establish community infrastructure (DB1/Reg11);
- 'Development Education and Advocacy Resources for Africa' (DEAR Africa), Nigeria, through AFL and VFL, learned how to engage communities in DRR activities (DB1/Reg75).

### Strategies influencing policy and practice changes in network actors

As key contribution to the above changes we discerned mostly the Secretariat led VFL/AFL programme, either through

- Guidance on the VFL/AFL methodology and use of data;
- Ongoing support to better understand local monitoring;
- Financial support for dissemination of monitoring results;
- Opportunities for exchange and learning for NCO staff through regional workshops, teleconferences and 1:1 calls.

Within the scope of this evaluation we could only draw on exemplary cases, but in sum we note that there is evidence of institutionalisation of DRR and new ways of working on DRR that are signs that GNDR has most likely had a lasting effect on the actors concerned. Being part of GNDR and/or participating in GNDR programmes has led organisations a) to change their programming and/or integrate DRR into their programmes; and b) work more effectively with communities and local or national governments on DRR. Although the data is too limited to make conclusions about how typical such changes are and their sustainability, these are strong examples of good practice to build on.

### 6.3. GNDR's influence on other stakeholders and the wider development world (EQ3)

*To what extent do the outcomes indicate that GNDR's work has influenced other stakeholders in their DRR policy and practice; (and how do these view GNDR and its role in the DRR or broader development landscape)?*

This section looks at a key element of GNDR's 2012-15 Strategy: its interest in extending its influence beyond its members and beyond the traditional 'DRR silo' of organisations. We define the 'other stakeholders' and the 'wider development world' to include:

- Local and national government authorities
- Communities
- INGOs and networks with a secondary focus on DRR
- Other international organisations including the UN system.
- Donors

In section 6.2, we found examples of the GNDR Secretariat being highly successful at mobilising local and national CSO members to participate voluntarily in community-level data collection using its tools through the VLF/AFL/Frontline programmes. Importantly, we also found evidence of CSO members developing or strengthening relationships with communities and (national or local) government authorities through their use of network tools and activities, both while participating voluntarily in GNDR programmes and subsequently. In this section, we first look at the next level of GNDR influence: whether CSO members successfully used their new or strengthened engagement with communities and government to influence these wider stakeholders. Next, we examine whether GNDR has been able to influence international NGOs for whom DRR is not the principal concern and, where possible, what that influence has led to. Lastly, we look at the strong evidence from multiple sources that GNDR has been successful at influencing the UN system.

#### **Policy and practice changes of national authorities influenced by GNDR members**

In perhaps the most significant GNDR influences on governments in the outcomes data, authorities in Honduras (DB2/Reg29) and Kiribati (DB2/Reg06) have allocated new human and financial resources to local DR activities benefitting communities.

- In Honduras, the budget allocation in 2013-14 followed from the work of GNDR member 'La Mesa Nacional de Incidencia para la Gestión del Riesgo' (MNIGR), which influenced national and regional authorities to work more closely with local communities.
- Also in 2013-14, Kiribati's government decided to establish a national committee on climate change and DRR in part because of the experience it gained from a multi-stakeholder taskforce set up by GNDR member 'Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific' (FSPK) to guide its community consultations under the VLF/ALF programmes. As a consequence, the government provided more support to DRM implementation by including DRR in the curriculum of primary

schools: story books related to climate change and disaster risks reduction were developed for year 1, 2 and 3 by the curriculum department within the Ministry of Education.

As in the Honduran and Kiribati examples, authorities in Venezuela have also recognized the role of CSOs in DRR, e.g. by inviting the NCO CESAP to join the national DRR platform as the only NGO. Here again the decision to embed a CSO in national DRR planning followed the recognition that local perspectives, initially gained through VFL, are valuable for helping the ministry with planning and anticipation for hazards (DB2/Reg54, Outcome Story 4). A local substantiator affirms GNDR's influence:

*Adelfo Solarte, Asociación Civil Uniandes, Mérida, Venezuela: "Government agencies [...] have been attracted by the communication on the supporting activities the GNDR provided to some initiatives. At least as far as Mérida is concerned, the local government (Municipality of Libertador) has increased its support to disaster reduction initiatives. It would be too simple to say that this interest has arisen only through their work with GNDR, but there are not many local activities in the area, so certainly the presence of GNDR has had something to do with this".*

Several further claimed changes in the policies or practices of government authorities in Asia, Africa and Central America are evident in the primary survey responses. In each case, the local perspectives brought to authorities by members using VFL or AFL data have been pivotal influences:

- National authorities in Vietnam are said to be motivated to invest at the local level having been made aware of local issues through the VFL national report in 2013 by GNDR member DWF Vietnam (DB1/Reg03).
- Government agencies in El Salvador are said to have been motivated to improve their implementation of DRR at community level due to advocacy by GNDR member organisations in El Salvador during 2014 using findings from VFL (DB1/Reg41).
- The government in the Philippines are said to have changed their approach by adapting programme frameworks after local realities were communicated to it by GNDR member CDP through use of VFL to monitor the progress of HFA (DB1/Reg04).
- In Malawi, the government is reported to have established DRR clubs in schools after the relationship between community and local government on DRR was strengthened when a GNDR member shared ALF data (DB1/Reg48).
- In one case, the policy influence is said to have been on the negotiating position of the government of the Philippines ahead of Sendai (DB1/Bd01).

 There will certainly have been multiple actors and factors influencing the government decisions to strengthen DR support and resources. However, we found the SMART outcome and contribution descriptions sufficiently specific, credible, and significant to imply that GNDR members had influenced policy or practices of national authorities directly, with indirect support of the GNDR Secretariat (UK or regional) through the tools and approaches created and promoted by the network. Further, a substantial number of cases in the primary survey data seemed to suggest that these outcomes did not describe isolated cases but that in other regions, too, GNDR members had successfully contributed to changing national authority policies and practices.

What is not clear from the evaluation data is whether the Secretariat-led advocacy has influenced national governments directly, other than at the Sendai negotiations (see below). The only suggestion of such direct influence is a case from Bangladesh in which a GNDR paper is said to have influenced the national position ahead of Sendai (DB1/Reg17). It is possible there are more such examples that have materialised, particularly since the Secretariat's ability to engage directly with governments at regional forums or otherwise was extended significantly with the expansion of the Secretariat regionally.

### Community ownership of the DRR issue

A strong theme in the survey data was communities taking ownership of DRR issue / being proactive. These potential examples of changes were not developed further into verifiable, SMART outcomes, mainly because obtaining further details and confirmation would have involved engaging with community representatives and this was not feasible given other agreed priorities for the evaluators' support. Claimed changes were found for several nations in Latin America, Africa, and Asia-Pacific:

- Communities in Honduras were motivated to take actions to build their resilience (DB1/Reg42)
- Community members are now able to develop DRR action plans in Burkina Faso (DB1/Reg78)
- Communities in Malawi became aware of how to hold duty bearers to account. (DB1/Reg46)
- Communities in Cameroon engaged further in DRR activities (DB1/Reg71)
- A community in Zambia was motivated to be responsible for their local area. (DB1/Reg47)
- Communities in Kiribati formed committees on DRR/CC (DB1/Reg18)
- A school in Bangladesh redesigned its policy and plans in line with community DRR needs (DB1/Reg16)

 While the primary survey data was not sufficiently specific to verify these cases, and while there may have been other actors and factors, too, influencing the communities in being more proactive in DRR, the number of changes reported from various nations and continents suggests that inspiration by GNDR's work has likely played a role. However, both the exact nature of the change (attitude or behaviour) and what exactly GNDR did to influence the suggested changes above was not always clear. In many cases, either participation in VFL/AFL or use of data from the exercises was the key GNDR contribution.

### Donor agency attitudes and practices towards CSOs in DRR projects

We found evidence of a single but significant change in the outcomes data (DB2/Bd04): in 2015, after three years of engagement of Secretariat members, the 'Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation' (SDC) started to give more importance to local level, highly recurrent disasters, e.g. in the Swiss position for the Sendai framework. This helped efforts to strengthen civil society monitoring of the expert group that established indicators for the Sendai framework and has been reflected in SDC guidance to the 'Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery' (GFDRR, World Bank), which encourages more support for community-based approaches to DRR.

### Changes in INGOs and networks with a secondary focus on DRR

For GNDR to be more effective, the 2012-15 GNDR Strategy identified the need to strengthen its engagement with NGOs operating internationally for whom DRR was a secondary issue. Through such relationships, advocacy for DRR would be stronger and the views of local CSOs would be heard more clearly at the international level. The data suggests progress against this objective, improving awareness and engagement and hence leading to new practices in INGOs and networks:

Two outcomes (DB2/Bd06 and Sec33) and Outcome Story 5 describe how the direct engagement of the UK Secretariat influenced the Swiss NGO Platform:

- As a result of GNDR reports (VFL and Reality Check), presentations by the Secretariat and meetings with Swiss NGO Platform members, the Platform changed in two respects during 2012-15:
  - a) it became more active in international advocacy for DRR and b) it promoted the role of civil society (DB2/Bd06). Specifically, the Platform engaged in influencing the World Health Summit agenda in favour of civil society positions and also actively was involved in influencing Swiss Government positions on the Sendai Framework. The strongest engagement came when the Platform actively participated in the development of positions to influence Sendai DRR Framework, the Financing for Development and the SDGs processes.

Further evidence on the various ways how GNDR influences NGOs came from one further outcome and several of the responses of NGO representatives, who were asked during substantiation in how far they or their organisations had been affected by GNDR's work:

- For Tearfund, Joel Hafvelstein, at that time its Resilience Adviser, found the action and learning methodology that formed the core of the GNDR Action at the Frontline programme inspirational and influenced the Tearfund Ethiopia country officer Keith Etherington to adopt this approach in 2012-13 as a basis for embedding DRR in the activity of the Self Help Groups which have been developed successfully by Tearfund in several rural areas of Ethiopia (DB2/Bd11).
- More broadly but still with Tearfund (UK), Oenone Chadburn, Head of Humanitarian Support, cited GNDR as a source that can inform practices as it seeks, as a donor, to more equal relations with its local partners (substantiation).
- Anders Hylander, Network Communications Advisor, Bond (UK), the national umbrella body for NGOs engaged in international development assistance, notes that GNDR have been '*instrumental*' in raising awareness on DRR issues through the Bond blog and other online communication. It also showed leadership by co-chairing the Bond DRR group since March 2015 (substantiation).
- Megan Williams, Humanitarian and Human Rights Advisor, Australian Council for International Development, cites the greater depth GNDR has helped bring to DRR work in Australia among both civil society and government. In addition, she has valued the access GNDR provides to a community of experts and being connected through the network to global debates.
- For Valerie Scherrer, Director Emergency Response Unit, CBM International (Disability Caucus), working with GNDR has improved knowledge on DRR practice through the collaboration. The organisations have developed common understandings that inform both constituencies.
- For two other organisations, representatives highlighted that engagement with GNDR helped build their capacity and interest in DRR advocacy (Julie Mayans, Référent Technique Sécurité Alimentaire et Moyens d'existence, Solidarites International, French DRR NGO Group) and seeking global-level influence (Carlos Kaiser, ONG Inclusiva, Chile).

 Together, these testimonies provide examples of GNDR inspiring change beyond the DRR 'silo' through its action learning approach, being a highly regarded source of knowledge and expertise, providing access to a community of experts and having an ability to work collaboratively to realise mutual benefits.

### DRR and international policy bodies

As with the Swiss NGO Platform example mentioned above, at least some in the UNISDR Secretariat see GNDR as a critical source of expertise. Substantiating Outcome Story 5, Glenn Dolcemascolo, Climate Change Officer, UNISDR, commented that GNDR has become their "*first port of call on many issues related to understanding issues that CSOs face*".

The value UNISDR finds in GNDR is built on the strong civil society participation that GNDR brought to the Sendai conference: in an impressive achievement, GNDR's Secretariat succeeded in registering 305 civil society participants during January - March 2015 to attend the Sendai conference, and actively facilitated their participation through sharing critical information on listservs. In addition, the GNDR Secretariat was invited to act as one of four organising partners for the NGO Major Groups. This opened up political space for civil society organisations to participate in the WCDRR held in Sendai in March 2015 and engage in the preparations for it (DB2/Sec32 and Outcome Story 5).

 Glenn Dolcemascolo confirmed that it is not only the issues of CSOs but of communities themselves that GNDR helps to communicate. In other words, GNDR has helped local knowledge and voices to be heard at the UN-level. And with this, GNDR has clearly had influence at the UN policy level, helping UNISDR to:

- better understand the issues that are important to civil society
- better understand the role they play in delivering the Sendai Framework
- explore ways that UNISDR can better support CSO engagement
- design and maximize CSO engagement in key events and
- potentially influence the ways that UNISDR builds partnerships for implementation.

## 6.4. GNDR's purpose, objectives and niche (EQ1, EQ3)

We were not asked to examine in detail GNDR's purpose and objectives 2012-15 and in how far the network had achieved these. However, as part of assessing GNDR's structures and functions for effective and sustainable learning and action in its second phase, we needed to briefly look at how clearly the networks' goals and objectives were formulated, in how far they were shared among network actors and how GNDR strove to achieve these, i.e. which, if any, pre-defined strategies (or Theory of Change) the network followed to accomplish these. GNDR's role and niche is then discussed in the second part of this section as part of addressing evaluation question 3, in context with stakeholders' views on the network's contribution to the DRR or broader development landscape.

### **GNDR's objectives 2012-15**

GNDR's Strategy 2012-15 reflects the logical framework for its planned activities and describes to some extent the changes that were expected in the network actors. In the following we map the results of this evaluation findings onto the objectives of the Strategy Plan, although the limitations of our data have to be kept in mind and they may not reflect achievements in all areas (Section 9.1).

**Objective 1 'Strengthen the way GNDR members work together':** As we showed in Section 6.1, the evaluation data support that GNDR has been very active in '*building its community*', with impressive membership growth, restructuring of governance and management capacity, and workshops such as The Hague for shared strategy development; even if some results may need more time to become fully effective. We note that there is much evidence for '*strengthening member capability*' through VFL/AFL/Frontline, while we did not find cases describing the influence of other capacity building programmes. Also, while there were some cases describing how GNDR has been '*enhancing our sharing of knowledge*', i.e. supporting the knowledge management function of GNDR (e.g. through the website and social media), there seems to be no formal programme in this area, yet.

**Objective 2) 'Enhance engagement between civil society and other key stakeholders':** As in many global, voluntary networks it is often difficult to clearly define internal and external stakeholders. However, the distinction is particularly fuzzy for GNDR. The general purpose of some of the organisations – on the national, regional or international level - with which GNDR was '*building relationships and dialogue*' or establishing '*partnerships and collaboration*' may be outside DRR, yet they may have a DRR working group or some overlapping interest in DRR – so when exactly is a partnership formed 'beyond the DRR and development silo'? While we used our own definition (see Section 6.3), it was difficult for us to assess in how far our observed results mapped with those described under Objective 2. Nevertheless, while there were clearly no cases in our data supporting e.g. engagement with private enterprises and only one with a media partner, Section 6.3 showed that GNDR members successfully influenced policy or practices of national authorities and possibly also communities in taking ownership of the DRR theme. With better monitoring data and a clearer definition of who exactly GNDR is aiming to influence through which strategies, it will be easier in the future to demonstrate GNDR's contribution to this objective and to adapt its respective strategies accordingly.

**Objective 3) 'Communicate the day-to-day reality of life for people most at risk':** This objective, including research and communication activities, has been the core of GNDR's Strategy since its inception in 2007. Many cases in the primary survey data and outcomes in DB2 describe how GNDR used '*advocacy and campaigning*' as a strategy to contribute to e.g. influencing national authorities or the UN system. Again, it may be helpful to define more clearly the various type(s) of audience(s) GNDR is aiming to target, how, and why. A tool worth considering for the next phase would be a communication strategy/plan describing the different advocacy and outreach strategies and the changes anticipated in, judging from this study, external audiences ranging from national, regional, global policy bodies, donors, communities, non-DRR INGOs, and non-GNDR CSOs, to the network's own CSO members.

 From this mapping of evaluation findings onto GNDR's objectives 2012-15 we take that the network can be applauded on achieving results in many areas of what we feel is a highly ambitious Strategic Plan. It might be helpful for GNDR's next phase to define further their project logic in order to more clearly formulate their objectives. Further, we note that particularly for higher level objectives involving multiple actors not under the direct management control of GNDR (e.g. Objective 2 and 3) it is problematic to monitor or evaluate progress through conventional logframe based approaches using predominantly quantitative indicators, such as those described in the GNDR Strategy 2012-15. For this, too, a well thought-out project logic with strategies describing who exactly GNDR is trying to influence, how it anticipates to achieve such changes, and who in GNDR is involved in this work, will provide a useful framework.

### **Stakeholder views on GNDR and its contribution to DRR and the wider development world**

Personal views on GNDR from actors from the DRR and the wider development community were obtained through the surveys, the interview with a GNDR Board member and particularly from the substantiators of the Outcome Stories who we asked, "*Do you believe that GNDR fills a need in the DRR or wider development world; and if so, which?*" This is, of course, by no means a comprehensive approach – which would be a task beyond the agreed scope of this evaluation. However, the responses throw a spotlight on how both representatives within and more external to the DRR world value the work of the network and where they see its added value and niche.

It is notable that all 10 substantiators who answered the above question confirmed that they felt GNDR filled a need and/or described a critical role that, in their view, GNDR does or could play. Below we give examples from the substantiation, the survey data, and the interviews on where various sources would see GNDR's added value or mission. Acknowledging that GNDR did not have pre-formulated strategies (or mission statements) and that OH was chosen specifically because it would capture results regardless of what had been pre-defined, we have provisionally identified 5 headings under which we feel we could group these statements (below we give examples of these):

1. Provide a platform for collaboration, exchange and learning amongst CSOs.

*Ruiti Uriano Aretaake, FSPK, Kiribati (Regional Survey): It builds good relationship with other CSOs dealing with DRM and partnership with Government bodies"*

*Megan Williams, ACFID, Australia (Substantiation): I believe that, in relation to GNDR's relationship to this network, they play a critical role in bringing the various networks together to share information, provide updates and plan joint actions".*

*Essam Nada, GNDR RDC NAWA, Egypt (Regional Survey): Working closely with GNDR Members Networks in the regions such as WV, ACTed, RAED, and Oxfam in different levels of commitments ..."*

2. Strengthen the capacity and local/national visibility of CSOs to enhance their work with local communities and national authorities

*Sarwar Bari, Pattan Development Organisation, Pakistan (Regional Survey): Because of our association with GNDR, our resolve and conviction for DRR deepened. Moreover, our understanding about DRR and underlying factors of risks and disasters has also been enriched. Due to our association with GNDR, we feel strong to make officials accountable on their failures as we know that we would have some support at the global level.*

*Kenechukwu Chudi Onukwube, DEAR Africa, Nigeria: (Regional Survey): Our knowledge base about the VFL and AFL has increased and so we are able [to] facilitate community-driven DR activities. [For example,] communities in Nigeria have formed local coalitions on climate change adaptation through Communities for Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience (C4CCAR). Two Communities coalitions (in the Northeast - 1 and Southeast - 1) are better aware of the need for community-based contingency planning to improve their resilience.*

3. Develop and promote common positions towards good DRR practice and provide a global presence and voice of GNDR's various constituencies.

*Nicole Stoltz, Caritas Switzerland, Swiss NGO DRR Platform, GNDR Global Board (Interview): [...]GNDR is a "catalyzing point" for the civil society. GNDR's name and presence brings civil society actors together, through GNDR actors get a voice. This has [has to do] with the existence of the network as such, the strong visual presence of the network at conferences, the fact that GNDR succeeded to make its voice heard and therefore has strengthened civil society.*

*Julie Mayans, Solidarites International, French DRR NGO Group, France (Substantiation): "We think that yes, it is a great opportunity to gather efforts done separately by the different networks on advocating for DRR in policies and also on sharing good practices among DRR actors. It makes our messages more coherent and gives them more weight."*

4. Connect and advocate CSOs and their needs to regional and global policy and the wider development world.

*Carlos Kaiser, ONG Inclusiva, Chile (Substantiation): "Yes, GNDR helps us went global."*

*Adessou Kossivi, GNDR RDC Western Africa, Togo (Regional Survey): There is a significant change in the behavior of the UNISDR technical secretariat in Togo towards Civil Society Organization in Togo due to the proof we brought in terms of role of civil society."*

5. Serve as a center of expertise and leadership (a one-stop shop) for DRR good practice and experts and as a vehicle for external actors.

*Glenn Dolcemascolo, Climate Change Officer, UNISDR, Genève, Switzerland (Substantiation): "I would add that GNDR has provided a very useful vehicle for UNISDR and others to reach out to a particular group of important civil society actors and has thus helped to establish a means of communication to seek views on significant policy issues and approaches."*

*Valerie Scherrer, CBM International, Belgium (Substantiation): It is of particular interest of the disability caucus and movement to use such network as vehicle to better and broader inclusion."*

However, there were also notions that, while GNDR fills important roles in the DRR or wider development world, its exact niche and roles will need refining, the network had to be cognitive of the diversity of their members and needed to develop more clarity on who it serves and in what way it could best do so:

*Glenn Dolcemascolo, Climate Change Officer, UNISDR, Genève, Switzerland: "Absolutely, [...] particularly as a space for civil society to build common approaches and positions. Though it should be said that GNDR is not universal, meaning that there are some segments of civil society that need also to be engaged through other instruments - particularly large multinational NGOs and smaller community-led organizations. This understanding of how different civil society groups organize, represent themselves and need to be engaged (including diversity across those that have policy focus, action-research focus, capacity training focus etc) can help GNDR further define its niche and meet the need."*

*Oenone Chadburn, GNDR trustee and Head of Humanitarian Support, Tearfund, UK: "I think there is a long term journey for GNDR to fill some of the gap of representing local to global, and local to regional levels. [...] there is definitely a significant movement of raising the voice of the "south" and the international community need to take this into account as they grow and evolve post WCDRR, COP15, SDGs and WHS."*

 We conclude that within the DRR community GNDR is perceived as having a strong global presence or, in Nicole Stolz words: "*There is simply no other global actor comparable to GNDR in the DRR area.*" There is also evidence in the data that GNDR is seen as playing an important role for local CSOs in supporting their work, e.g. according to Adelfo Solarte: "*GNDR is the organization that best meets the need to support the action of citizens in the field of disaster reduction.*" And, in line with GNDR's vision, the network is viewed as a means to develop and promote common positions from local level information and build a bridge speaking with a collective voice to connect local to regional and global levels. As pointed out by some informants, this latter role – being a champion for the views of its members – may need more attention during the strategy development for the next phase, exploring in more detail how GNDR can represent and address the varying needs of its different regions and member groups.

## 8. Recommended points for discussion

We hope that the evidence and conclusions in this report will be useful to the primary intended users of the evaluation and lead to substantial discussion, facilitating their strategy development. There will be many additional factors informing respective decision-making which we as evaluators will and should not have access to. Therefore, we feel it would be presumptuous on our side to give recommendations, rather we provide the following points for discussion and consideration by GNDR's decision makers:

### 1. GNDR's vision, purpose, mission, niche

The network's purpose justifies its existence and explains why its members are collaborating and building relationships (Hearn and Mendizabal 2011). GNDR's purpose is currently to "*enable civil society to connect local to global and speak with a collective voice that drives action which reduces risk and increases the resilience of the most vulnerable*". While the outcomes identified by this evaluation show progress towards this purpose, we wonder whether it may perhaps not comprise all aspects of GNDR's work. GNDR has experienced an immense and rapid growth and it is important to allow its purpose to evolve in line with the diversification of its participants. Yes, for some the network is a means to develop and promote common positions from local level information and build a bridge speaking with a collective voice to connect local to regional and global levels (Section 6.4.). Yes, strengthening local capacity and working with local humanitarian actors is increasingly seen as the key to humanitarian effectiveness<sup>7</sup>. Yes, there is also great value in connecting national and international NGO networks and providing a global framework for knowledge exchange, collaboration and joint position development – within the DRR community as well as with actors outside the DRR field. And, yes, the network is also perceived by some as a vehicle for external stakeholders (Section 6.4). Yet, what will be the respective functions and benefits of the various actors of the network, how can they best interact to achieve highest mutual benefit? How can GNDR accomplish the task to be at the same time a network of regional CSO networks and international NGOs and speak for small, local, grass roots NGOs? And how can GNDR keep the balance between local and international member organisations and accommodate for the increasing and understandable wish of the South to be represented by a voice from the South?<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps a review of GNDR's high level objectives, based on an analysis of their membership and member needs, may help the network during their current strategy development for the next phase to more clearly define their various areas of work and subsequently better communicate their purpose and niche. The following questions can guide this exercise:

- a) Is GNDR's vision and purpose adequately described to the satisfaction of all its constituencies? What exactly does GNDR want to change, what is or will be different because it exists?
- b) Would it be helpful to define (a) mission statement(s) in order to better reflect the potential contributions of the network and its actors to achieve its purpose?
- c) How can GNDR ensure that its vision, purpose (and mission statements) are shared and known among all its constituencies and regions and receive clear 'buy-in'?
- d) What is GNDR's niche in the DRR and wider development world? How can it be communicated?

### 2. GNDR's membership and strategic partners

As described in Section 6.1.1, the network has clearly been successful in attracting members and building strong relationships with other stakeholders. Various factors may have contributed to this,

<sup>7</sup> World Disasters Report 2015: [www.redcross.ca/blog/2015/9/world-disasters-report-2015--focus-on-local-aid](http://www.redcross.ca/blog/2015/9/world-disasters-report-2015--focus-on-local-aid)

<sup>8</sup> [www.irinnews.org//report/102141/gloves-off-between-local-and-international-ngos#.VisLPV9XenM](http://www.irinnews.org//report/102141/gloves-off-between-local-and-international-ngos#.VisLPV9XenM)

including engagement of members through the VFL/AFL/Frontline programming; the networks high reputation and visibility, and the increased regional presence of GNDR through the RDCs and Global Board (see below). This diversification offers great opportunities, giving weight to the network's goals and for increased learning and reaching beyond its own sphere; but there are also challenges. One is, to adequately represent these various member groups, find a shared vision and purpose, and foster and maintain the cohesiveness of the network (see above). Another is that in a diverse network with loose membership and a centralized coordinating hub there is a risk that network members take less ownership of their network role – seeing the Secretariat/Board as the network – yet, the network is in fact its members! Also, members may not always be clear in which role or capacity they are contributing to the network's achievements - their own institutional or GNDR's, which will affect reporting of network results. Guiding questions addressing these themes would be

- a) Who are GNDR's different member or stakeholder constituencies, whose mandate(s) does the network currently have? Is sufficient information on individuals and their organisations available, are these data sufficiently well managed and monitored? Are GNDR's definitions of members and partners clear and shared among the network?
- b) How formal should GNDR's membership system be, is the current open system with two member categories (CSOs as full members and non-CSOs as associated members) still appropriate?
- c) What are the needs of GNDR's various constituencies; how do they benefit from participating in the network? Does the network have resources and capacity to serve all members?
- d) What does the network expect of its various member / stakeholder categories?
- e) If membership composition is to be considered, what would be the 'right' types of members? What would be optimal strategic partners? In how far does the network include these currently?
- f) How can (the 'right') members and strategic partners be motivated to join the network? Is there a need for more formal member recruitment / outreach strategies, are there 'good practice' guidelines for RDCs or members for recruiting members?
- g) How can GNDR enhance cohesiveness of the network despite its heterogeneity?
- h) How can GNDR motivate its various categories of members and partners to act in their GNDR role and contribute skills, capacities, connections and resources to the network's purpose?

### **3. GNDR network functions**

Strongly connected with a network's purpose and the mandate(s) of its constituencies are the functions a network uses to add value to their members work. Hearn and Mendizabal (2011) discussed five of these: knowledge management, amplification and advocacy, community building, convening heterogeneous groups and resource mobilisation. The 'basic perceived outcomes' reported achievements for the first 4 of these functions, but not the last, somewhat confirming the Secretariat views (in interviews) that GNDR should not be seen as a funding network (although one might argue that it was very successful in securing funding for its VFL research between 2012-15, c. £3 million according to the Strategy). As an '*action and learning network*' (Terry Gibson), GNDR has made much progress in coordinating joint action through its VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes, thus building its community and convening (or bridging) members with other stakeholders. There was also substantial evidence for successful advocacy of the network's goals to e.g. the UN system. However, while the Secretariat and more recently also the regions embarked on various knowledge management activities, this function may not have been pursued in a systematic, coordinated and measurable way, yet. Still, there is clearly a body of evidence for good practice examples on which the network can build when sharing know how between members (Section 6.2). Relevant points for discussion in this respect are:

- a) How does GNDR position itself, what type of network does it want to be, what should be its main strategies to foster learning? Considering its financial and human resources, how much capacity does it want to allocate to learning through action (e.g. VFL/AFL/ Frontline programmes)

- vs. learning through knowledge management systems (filtering knowledge and disseminating it e.g. through publications; sharing information via mailings and website; fostering exchange via social media / thematic facebook groups; partner brokerage; meetings, etc.)?
- b) To what extent is GNDR also an ‘advocacy network’, targeting its various audiences (governments, the public, members, INGOs, etc.) to pursue its purpose and itself (*‘a network is a means and an end’*)? Would a more strategic approach to advocacy, a definition of communication objectives, target audiences, key messages, strategies, i.e. a communication plan be of use?

#### **4. GNDR formal structure, management and governance**

The form a network takes follows the functions it plays. We found that GNDR showed very adaptive management responses to the growing network changing from an informal, centralized management and governance form to a more regionally representative, decentralized structure. Still, there seem to have been some unintended consequences including, i.e., the process has created some confusion and tension. We would like to encourage the management team to take time to organize the network effectively - one has to be realistic about the rate of change to be expected. The Secretariat has almost tripled its staff and the governance body has changed from a 5-strong Steering Group to an 11-strong Global Board – all since 2014. These changes need to be accommodated for and it will take a great level of awareness, sensitivity and openness of the supporting staff of the network to respond to the different needs of the regions and provide clear guidance in order to clarify roles and responsibilities. Time and budget resources will have to be allocated to help adapt to the new structures and allow sufficient space for consultation and exchange, particularly in face-to-face meetings to maintain strong relationships. It may also help to address the following questions:

- a) In how far are network responsibilities, policies and procedures (e.g. with respect to decision making processes, operational responsibilities, conflict of interest, code of conduct, communication and meeting rules, budgeting / financial controls, etc.) documented, accessible, promoted and lived by the network supporting entities?
- b) Who should be involved in decision-making and how should these parties arrive at consensus about collective goals and strategies? Should all network actors be motivated to actively contribute to strategy development? How and to what extent can they be engaged in this process?
- c) How can the network’s infrastructure and systems for information sharing be improved further to meet expectations and facilitate not only communication among the UK Secretariat and regions but also across regions, e.g. exchange among RDCs or among Board members?
- d) How can the management foster mutual trust and respect, based on credibility and a commitment to openness and transparency?
- e) How can the motivation and effectiveness of the network supporting staff be maintained at high levels, e.g. drawing on a) the good results the network is achieving, b) a clear sense of direction and priorities c) shared values or principles that guide the work of the network staff and its relationships with members and external stakeholders?

#### **5. GNDR’s M&E System / Theory of Change**

While GNDR’s Strategy 2012-15 was developed using a logframe for monitoring its results, there are today an increasing number of alternative M&E methods and tools for networks (Bonbright and Khaugram 2010). Outcomes based approaches, such as OM or OH with an emphasis on continuous learning and improvement may be particular suitable to network settings. They can help to make explicit a program’s Theory of Change even in complex settings and encourage evaluative thinking throughout the program cycle by all program team members. We were able to evaluate GNDR despite the absence of an outcomes-based monitoring system. Yet an M&E system that promotes reflection, learning and adaptation and triggers frequent exchange and reflection could contribute significantly to the network’s effectiveness. More so, since during this evaluation we experienced the GNDR team (and

members in the surveys) to be very open and constructive in their discussion culture, not shying away from sharing critical issues which is an essential component of high-functioning, effective teams when such varying viewpoints are appreciated and there is sufficient and frequent space for resolving these. Of course, discussions should maintain a healthy balance of constructive difference of opinion and not end in negative and destructive disputes. Building on an appreciative and inclusive culture of action, reflection and learning, an improved M&E system can help identify and learn from the network's structural (form) and purpose outcomes (i.e. the short and medium term results progressing GNDR's goals) and will thus support management and strategic decisions. A rewarding type of result to monitor going forward may be, as discussed in Section 6.3, to capture and build on changes in the periphery of the network, e.g. in communities, as it would show GNDR's influence beyond those it works with directly. However, such outcomes would need to be verifiable with community representatives or independent sources. Also, knowing if non-member organisations influenced communities using knowledge, know-how or approaches promoted by GNDR would be a fruitful type of result to follow up on in future monitoring, though one with the additional challenge of engaging non-affiliated organisations in a monitoring exercise. We thus recommend considering the following points for planning GNDR's future:

- a) Will GNDR benefit from thinking of outcomes in terms of behavior change as used in this evaluation? Will it help to understand what strategies work and which don't? Can an outcomes based M&E system help GNDR in taking management decisions and further developing its strategies?
- b) Will the future M&E system focus network actors in their efforts to influence change? Will they be clear about and supportive of the network's intended outcomes?
- c) Will the M&E system be adaptable to different network components and regions, setting up behavioral and other markers of change which clearly define the kinds of progress GNDR intends to help bring about? Will it be effective in gathering comparable and consistent data across the network and sufficiently efficient and manageable considering the GNDR's resources?
- d) Can this M&E system serve as a communication platform, motivating members to communicate progress and supporting advocacy efforts, and engaging also other stakeholders?

Should GNDR consider investing in an outcomes based M&E system, it will help to link planned inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes and draw a picture of how and why the desired changes are expected to come about, i.e., develop a Theory of Change to clarify the project logic, highlight assumptions that need to be tested, and help identify appropriate participants and partners. The following questions may help in this process:

- a) What are GNDR's high level objectives and desirable results (discussion point 1)?
- b) Who exactly are the network's social actors GNDR wants to work with and influence? Who of these belong to the GNDR's inner circle of direct influence, who are in the periphery with more indirect influence?
- c) What changes does GNDR expect to see in these social actors? How should their behaviour change to create the world GNDR wants for them (and they want for themselves)?
- d) What strategies would GNDR need to employ to influence such changes?
- e) Does GNDR need to change itself even further (structure / processes) to achieve these changes (discussion points 2-4)?
- f) How can GNDR observe and monitor these changes in a practical way (see above)?

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## 11. Annex A

### 11.1. GNDR's objectives 2012 – 2015

#### GNDR's objectives 2012-15.

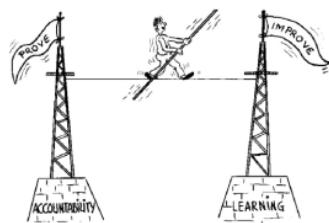
Objective / activities
<b>Objective 1: Strengthen the way GNDR members work together</b> <u>Outcome:</u> Faster progress towards effective policies that increase resilience of the most vulnerable and greater transparency and accountability at all levels for programme implementation.
Building the GNDR community Develop shared vision and commitment; Strengthening relationships; develop Global Secretariat; Develop regional and national governance structures; Regional support officers; Regional communications capability.
Strengthening member capability Assess capacity building requirements; Regional training and capacity building programme (events and resources); Regional action learning programme (VFL).
Enhancing knowledge sharing Global active learning programmes; Global knowledge management;
<b>Objective 2: Enhance engagement between civil society and other key stakeholders</b> <u>Outcome:</u> Partnerships formed beyond the DRR and development 'silos' and stronger connections established with communities at the local-level enabling greater efficiency, effectiveness and quicker impact where it is needed most.
Building relationships and dialogue Stakeholder mapping; Identifying benefits of partnerships; Building multi stakeholder relationships
Partnerships and collaboration Build forms of collaboration between environmental, climate change, DRR and development actors; Develop and support national and regional resilience champions; Cross-scale initiatives and events; Institutional relationship development; Public awareness, campaigning and advocacy; Engage with private enterprise.
<b>Objective 3: Communicate the day-to-day reality of life for people most at risk</b> <u>Outcome:</u> A stronger and more cohesive civil society network with enhanced ability and capacity to share learning, speak with a collective voice and undertake joint actions.
Action research Research and development (VFL 2013 and 2015); Mobilisation of VFL Action Research; VFL Research and Analysis of data; Other research activities.
Advocacy and campaigning Global and regional reporting and advocacy; Policy dialogue and advocacy at global regional and national levels (supply side); Public awareness and campaigning at all levels (demand side); Contributions to post-HFA

## 11.2. GNDR governance and management

<b>Region / Position</b>	<b>Board &amp; Trustees / Secretariat (Sec UK and Sec Regional Development Coordinator - RDC)</b>
Secretariat UK	
Executive Director	Marcus Oxley
Operations Director	Terry Gibson
Team Administrator	Emma Kelleher
Advocacy Coordinator	Lucy Pearson
Programme Manager	Stu Solomon
Communications Coordinator	Jesus Cordero
Learning Coordinator	Bruno Haghebaert.
Sec Latin America RDC	María Verónica Bastías González
Central America	José Ramón Ávila Quiñonez
South America	Graciela Mercedes Salaberri Vacani
Sec West Africa RDC	Adessou Kossivi
West Africa	Peter Akanimoh
Sec Southern and East Africa RDC	Michael Murphree
Southern Africa	Kheswar Beeharry Panray
East Africa	Currently none
Sec North Africa & West Asia RDC	RDC Essam Nada
North Africa & West Asia	Emad Adly
Central Asia	Ali Ardalan
Sec Asia-Pacific RDC	Rouf Mohammad Abdur
South Asia	Farah Kabir
South East and East Asia	Lorna P. Victoria
Pacific	Rex Stephen Horoi
Europe	Nicole Stoltz
North America	Rod Snider
Trustees	
	Oenone Chadburn, Head of Humanitarian Support, Tearfund UK
	Nigel Timmins, Humanitarian Director, Oxfam International
	Emma Hillyard, Group Financial Controller, The Orders of the St John Care Trust

### 11.3. GNDR evaluation design

## GNDR Outcome Evaluation Indicative Evaluation Design 29.07.2015



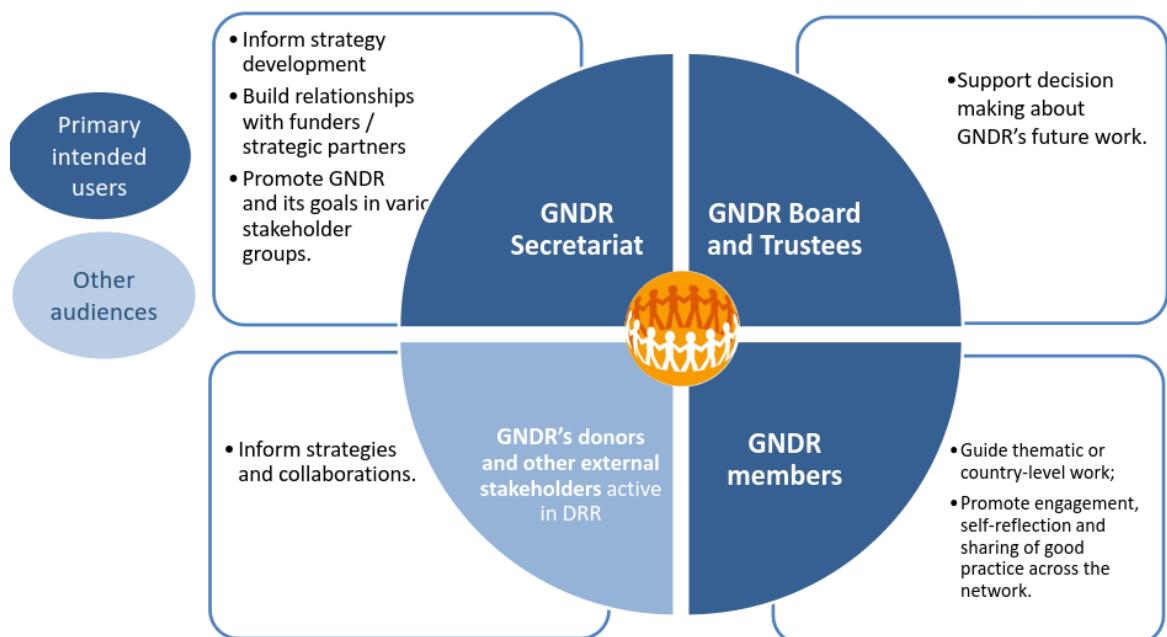
Kornelia Rassmann & Richard Smith & Terry Gibson

This document has been adapted from the Terms of Reference for the GNDR evaluation provided by Terry Gibson in June 2015 and has been prepared using information derived from conversations and correspondence between Terry Gibson, Kornelia Rassmann, and Richard Smith, as well as a meeting with the GNDR Secretariat in London, UK, on July 22, 2015.

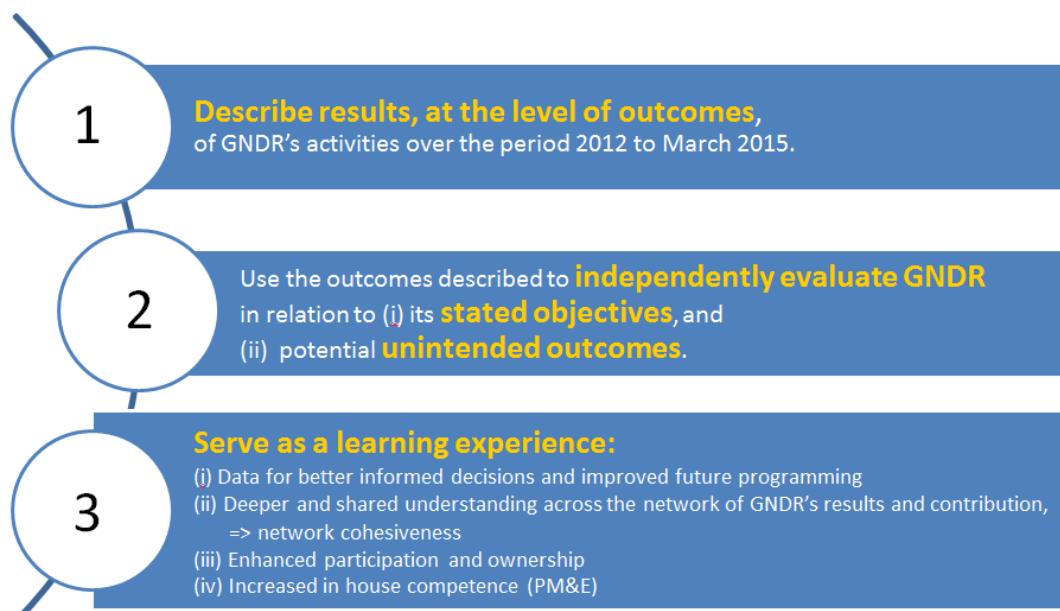
GNDR Evaluation | Indicative Evaluation Design | 29.07.2015

2

### Users, uses and audiences of the GNDR evaluation



## Evaluation purpose



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## Indicative evaluation questions



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## Scope of the evaluation

-  Outcomes (including outcome, contribution and possibly significance statements) will be harvested that emerged **between 2012 - March15** (GNDR's phase 2).
-  Harvesting on all levels: local, national, regional, and global; but efforts will focus particularly on **Asia** and possibly one other specific region.
-  Included will be **intended and unintended, positive and negative** outcomes.
-  In a first approach, the basic perceived outcome statements will be collected from a variety of network focal groups; the **most significant outcomes** will then be selected and contribution and significance statements added through further research / interviews. The resulting number of outcomes is determined by the time available.
-  Selected **outcomes MAY be extended and substantiated** by 1-3 "external" informants each ("**Substantiators**"); they may not cover all themes / change pathways/ social actors influenced.



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## Indicative (!) deliverables and time line

Steps	Jun	Jul	Aug				Sep				Oct				Nov	
	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
<b>Step 1:</b> Contracting and evaluation design (London Workshop)																
<b>Step 2:</b> Harvesting (mentored by evaluators) of basic perceived outcome statements from various key network actors (reg. workshops, secretariat, board, SC).																
<b>Step 3:</b> Engage with informants to harvest contribution and significance statements for selected outcomes; <b>possibly</b> sharing / verification among focal points.																
<b>Step 4:</b> Extend selected outcomes and substantiate through external informants (this step is <b>optional</b> and depends on resources / time line)																
<b>Step 5:</b> Data analysis, interpretation, synthesis																
<b>Step 6:</b> Support use of findings, report																

 GNDR lead

 Evaluators lead



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## Note of caution

- Time requested from the GNDR Secretariat and regional contacts will be considerable, probably several days each month from July to Nov.
- Success of the evaluation will depend on the timely collaboration the evaluators receive from the internal and external sources. Time line and/or scope may need to be amended in agreement with the GNDR Sec if there is an indication that there are larger delays.
- Even under the best circumstances, the evaluation cannot be exhaustive of the outcomes and achievements of a dynamic and diverse, multi-level initiative such as the GNDR.



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## 2

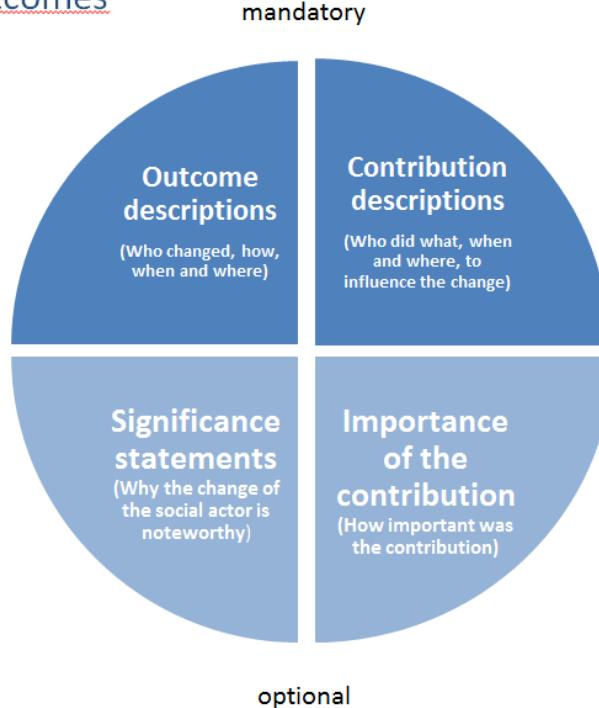
**GNDR OH Evaluation Work Plan Overview**

• Adapted from Ricardo Wilson Grau 2013:  
<http://www.outcomemapping.ca/resource/outcome-harvesting>  
 • See Excel sheet GNDR OH Evaluation Work Plan.xlsx' for details

GNDR Outcomes Evaluation Work Plan		GNDR OH Evaluation Work Plan Overview		
Evaluation design, contracting		Timeline		
Contracting of evaluation team		until end Jul	2 <sup>nd</sup> week Sep	Mid Oct
Define	• Users & uses • Eval questions • Scope • Budget • Time line • Responsibilities	Preliminary data base with short basic perceived outcomes.	Completed data base with validated and verified outcomes	Stakeholder assessment of the accuracy of exemplary outcomes (& external views?).
<b>Objectives</b>	Common understanding of evaluation objectives	Knowledge on outcomes shared across network focal points.	Knowledge on outcomes data Knowledge on network outcomes shared with external stakeholders	Increased credibility of outcomes data Knowledge on network outcomes shared with external stakeholders
<b>Outputs</b>	Evaluation design Signed contracts	Completed data base with validated and verified outcomes	Data compilations , classifications and interpretations	Evaluation report
		Mid Nov	End Oct	3 <sup>rd</sup> week Dec

## 11.5. Formulating SMART outcomes

### Describing outcomes



### Potential elements of an „Outcome“

#### Suggested elements for the harvest

- **Outcome descriptions:** Describe observable changes in the behavior, relationships, activities, policies or practices of individuals, groups, organizations or institutions (= boundary partners / social actors) that
  - were influenced in a small or large way, directly or indirectly, intentionally or not, negatively or positively, by the network actors,
  - contribute towards the objectives of the network as defined in the evaluation questions.
- **Contribution descriptions:** Describe the contributor and its influence on the social actor (what activities and outputs led to the change?)
  - The descriptions need to be sufficiently concrete and specific to be verifiable and there has to be a plausible rationale between what is reported as achieved as an outcome and the reported contribution.

#### Optional elements (depending on balance between nos. of outcomes / detail; input of GNDR supporting staff to harvest)

- **Significance statements:** Explain why the change of the social actor is noteworthy.
  - This can be text and/or include a ranking indicating the extent to which the change signifies progress towards the objectives as defined in the eval. questions (was this a small or large, highly or less important change?)
- **Importance of the contribution:** How important was the contribution, to what extent did it influence the social actor? (This could be text and/or a ranking: high, medium low)



## Example outcome

### 1. Outcome (who has changed, in what way, when and where)

- GNDR members [who exactly?] presented the Joint Civil Society position paper at x, y, z UNISDR regional platforms [when? Where?], the first time a GNDR position paper had been presented at a UN forum by members

### 2. Contribution (who did what, when and where to influence the change, and in what function)

- GNDR helped to develop the Joint Civil Society Position paper [who exactly in GNDR? In what way - did they write it, publish it, bring people together to collaborate on it?] and disseminated it to the GNDR members [how?].

### 3. Significance of outcome (why the change of the social actor was noteworthy)

- Member participation in advocacy is important for achieving GNDR's objectives because the voice of members lends significant credibility over and above that of the secretariat alone and gives the network greater reach.

### 4. Importance of contribution (to what extent the activities and outputs contributed to the change)

- The paper offered GNDR members a unique opportunity for advocacy of GNDR's objectives at the national and regional level; it motivated them to promote it to national governments and international partners for consideration during the on-going conversations to develop the post-2015 Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA2).

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## Outcomes are SMART (adapted from Ricardo Wilson-Grau)

### Specific

- The outcome is formulated in sufficient detail so that the primary intended user without specialized subject or contextual knowledge will be able to understand and appreciate who changed, what that change was, when and where it occurred?

### Measureable

- The description of the outcome provides objective, verifiable quantitative and qualitative information, independent of who is collecting data. How much? How many? When and where did the change happen?

### Achieved

- There is a plausible relationship, a logical link between the outcome and what you did that contributed to it. Who did what that either wholly but probably partially, indirectly or indirectly, intentionally or unexpectedly contributed?

### Relevant

- The outcome represents a significant step towards the impact that you seek. The person(s) who identify and formulate the outcome and your contribution must be well placed to assess both.

### Timely

- The outcome occurred within the time period being monitored or evaluated, although your contribution may have been months or even years before.

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## 11.6. List of sources for Outcome Harvesting

### 9.6.1. List of internal GNDR evaluation focal points and sources

Name	Position / Affiliation	Role in Evaluation
GNDR Secretariat: UK hub		
Terry Gibson	Operations Director, GNDR	Internal lead (Jul/Aug), harvester
Emma Kelleher	Team Administrator, GNDR	Internal lead (Aug-Dec), harvester, interviewee
Stu Solomon	Programme Manager, GNDR	Internal lead (Aug-Dec), harvester, interviewee
Bruno Haghebaert	Learning Coordinator, GNDR	Harvester
Jesus Cordero	Communications Coordinator, GNDR	Interviewee
Lucy Pearson	Advocacy Coordinator, GNDR	Interviewee
Marcus Oxley	Executive Director, GNDR	Interviewee
GNDR Secretariat: Regional Development Coordinators		
Mohammad Abdur Rouf	Asia and Pacific RDC, GNDR	Harvester, interviewee
María Verónica Bastías	Latin America RDC, GNDR	Interviewee
Board		
Nicole Stoltz	Board Member GNDR, Caritas Switzerland, Swiss NGO Platform	Interviewee

### 9.6.2 Sources for harvest of 'basic perceived outcomes'

Name	Lead harvester	Cases / respondents
9 Regions (e.g. surveys at regional workshops*)		
1. Central America Consultation, El Salvador, July 1-3 (Meeting and Survey Gizmo)	Stu Solomon	17 / 17
2. Europe & 3. North America: Consultation, Paris, July 1-2 (Meeting and Survey Gizmo)	Terry Gibson	2 / 2
4. West Africa: Consultation, Senegal, July 14-15 (Meeting and Survey Gizmo)	Bruno Haghebaert	16 / 14
5. South America: Consultation, Uruguay, July 16-17 (Meeting and Survey Gizmo)	Stu Solomon	10 / 6
6. Southern Africa and 7. East Africa: Consultation, Zimbabwe, July 21-22 (Meeting and Survey Gizmo)	Emma Kelleher / Terry Gibson	8 / 8
8. Asia and 9. the Pacific: Regional stakeholder survey, August; Consultation, Bangkok, July 21-22 (Meeting and Survey Gizmo)	Rouf Mohammad Abdur	25 / 14
GNDR Secretariat (UK and Regions)		
Survey (email questionnaire) and focal group session, August	Terry Gibson	61 / 9
Board, Trustees, former Steering Committee		
Survey (email questionnaire), August	Terry Gibson	14 / 3

\* No survey took place at the N. Africa & W. and C. Asia Consultation, Egypt, July 27-28.

### 9.6.3 Documents reviewed

Name	Lead harvester	No. outcomes
Frontline Workshop, London, July 8-9 (meeting report in production)	Terry Gibson	2
VFL 2011 Learning Review	Bruno Haghebaert	2
GNDR Conference 2013, Summary Report	Bruno Haghebaert	5
Reflection on Action: Engagement with the Sendai process and internal team working, meeting report	Bruno Haghebaert	2
GNDR Report to NMFA 2013	Emma Kelleher	1
GNDR Report to NMFA 2014	Emma Kelleher	2
GNDR Report to NMFA 2015	Konny Rassmann	10
GNDR Global Board Meeting Notes Sendai 2015-3-19	Emma Kelleher	3

## 11.7. GNDR's SMART outcomes (DB2)

We present here shortened versions of the outcome and contribution statements of DB2, their full text is given in the Excel data base in Annex B. The data are sorted by type of outcome. Outcomes where numbering is shaded in grey were used in Outcome Stories.

Outcome	Contribution	Social actor (type of change) Contributor (type of contribution)
<b>Changes in network structures and functions</b>		
<b>BD08 (OS1):</b> The GNDR Secretariat expanded its management capacity by 5 new positions in the UK hub as well as 5 regional development coordinators between 2013 to 2014, in order to steer the election process of regional board representatives and facilitate the subsequent increased management, communication and knowledge sharing needs with and among the regions.	To meet the needs of an increased global membership and support the regional development, GNDR's 2012-2015 strategy and action plan produced in 2012 by the <u>GNDR Steering Group</u> with the support of the secretariat called for expansion of the capacity of the secretariat UK and the establishment of regional positions.	GNDR Sec-UK (global) GNDR Gov (Network strategy planning, management, governance)
<b>Doc09 (OS1):</b> The GNDR Secretariat listened to calls from members at the GNDR Global Conference, The Hague, 20-21 March 2013, to create the space for a more regionally representative GNDR Global Board, which finally became formally functional in March 2015.	At the GNDR Global Conference, The Hague, in 2013, discussions and contributions of <u>GNDR members</u> highlighted the importance of prioritising governance as a key topic to be resolved and of including perspectives on regional representation and accurately reflecting countries in specific regions.	GNDR Sec-UK (global) CSO (GNDR) (Network strategy planning, management, governance)
<b>Sec58:</b> From Oct to Dec 2014, <u>13 DRR experts from across Asia</u> , 11 from organisations in South Asia and 2 from South East East Asia, were prepared to serve on the new GNDR Global Board.	<u>GNDR Team Administrator Emma Kelleher</u> disseminated the opportunity among the associated and formal Asian members and request for expression of interest. <u>The Asia RDC Mohammad Rouf Abdur</u> encouraged potential candidates in the region to apply.	CSO (GNDR) (regional) GNDR Sec-UK&RDC (Network strategy planning, management, governance)
<b>DB2-VFL (OS2):</b> Since the inception of its 'Views from the Frontline' (VFL) programme in 2008, the GNDR management has continuously called for and implemented changes and adaptations to the programme to better meet the needs of local CSOs.	The VFL, AFL and Frontline programme have been progressively devised and developed over the period 2008-2015 in an iterative process through cycles of shared action followed by learning reviews where <u>GNDR members</u> participating in the programme provided feedback on the lessons learned.	GNDR Sec-UK&RDC (global) CSO (GNDR) (Network strategy planning, management, governance)
<b>Changes in membership and member engagement with GNDR supporting entities</b>		
<b>Sec23:</b> The <u>GNDR membership</u> has grown globally since February 2014 around a 100% (doubled) in terms of individuals and a 50% in terms of organisations. This included CSOs and networks that were already associated with GNDR and now formalised their relationship with GNDR, as well as completely new members.	GNDR Secretariat staff, most notably the RDCs, have engaged directly with partner organisations and interested individuals to promote the benefits of GNDR membership. Through this important personal relationship, and additionally, understanding the regional dynamic, GNDR secretariat staff were able to motivate and persuade both individuals and organisations to join the network.	CSO (non-GNDR) (global) GNDR Sec-RDC&UK (Outreach and communication)
<b>Sec51:</b> <u>Asian GNDR membership</u> was already large compared to other GNDR regions before the establishment of the GNDR Asia hub in Feb. 2014, but since then increased further by 92% (from 163 to 311 individual members) until March 2015.	<u>The Asia RDC, Mohammed Rouf Abdur</u> , attended different forums and workshops like the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Bangkok (AMCDRR), engaged existing members for inviting new CSOs, used personal calls and disseminated printed PR materials or online resources on GNDR. <u>The GNDR Secretariat</u> helped with logistics and other administrative requirements	CSO (non-GNDR) (regional) GNDR Sec-RDC&UK (Outreach and communication)
<b>Reg09:</b> <u>GNDR members in Asia</u> engage more strongly with the Asia RDC since the establishment of the regional hub in Bangkok in Feb. 2014.. <u>For example, Dilip Pattanaik, Executive Director of the Orissa State Volunteers and Social Workers Association (OSVSWA) in India</u> , a member of GNDR since February 2010, confirmed in the GNDR outcomes survey 2015 that they now had a strong relationship with the regional GNDR hub, facilitating regular communication.	<u>The GNDR regional hub Asia</u> offers a variety of mechanism for its members to get engaged: skype or phone calls and conferences, workshops, physical visit etc..	CSO (GNDR, non-DRR) (regional) GNDR Sec-RDC (Outreach and communication)

<b>Changes in knowledge transfer &amp; sharing, awareness, learning, capacity</b>		
<b>Reg44 (OS6):</b> Members of the International Disability Caucus (IDC), an international informal group of CSO's involved in inclusive DRR, through their engagement with GNDR and other actors in the lead up to and during the WCDRR Conference in Sendai (Japan) in the period 2014- 2015 gained greater understanding of the benefits of closer collaboration across different constituencies (disability connections to youth, older persons, gender etc..) and among the different CSO networks engaged in DRR'.	The GNDR Secretariat, through its engagement with the IDC in the lead up to and during the WCDRR Conference in Sendai (Japan) in the period 2014- 2015, contributed to this outcome: inviting them to regional GNDR meetings, inviting them to the GNDR listserv, and sharing GNDR group positions with the Disability Caucus.	CSO (non-GNDR, non-DRR) (global)  GNDR Sec-UK (Community building and bridging)
<b>Changes in collaboration or in policy and practice (CSOs, outcomes relevant on the national level)</b>		
<b>Doc02:</b> The local NGO 'Yakkum Emergency Unit' (YEU), a member of GNDR and the national coordinating organisation managing the national AFL and VFL programme, have enhanced their programme capacity on risk reduction and have increased their political spaces through their participation in the AFL and VFL projects from 2013-2015.	The GNDR Secretariat supported YEU by providing the VFL methodology and guidance on how to use the data; they supported the continued capacity development of YEU staff and provided financial resources to YEU for report production and dissemination.	CSO (GNDR, DRR) (Policy and practice, national)  GNDR Sec-UK&RDC (VFL/AFL/Frontline)
<b>Reg53 (OS3):</b> Centro al Servicio de la Acción Popular (CESAP), Venezuela, a GNDR member and National Coordinating Organisation, has traditionally focused on development issues such as health, water, and human rights and did not engage with DRR or climate. They have changed their internal policies and practices as a result of gaining a better understanding of DRR issues through their participation in VFL 2011-2015.	The GNDR Secretariat led 'Views from the Front-line' programme has helped CESAP better understand the relationship between DRR & social development. The VFL programme built up CESAP's capacity around DRR and resilience and supported them to be a national leader on DRR issues in Venezuela.	CSO (GNDR, non-DRR) (Policy and practice, national)  GNDR Sec-UK (VFL/AFL/Frontline)
<b>Reg76:</b> The local NGO 'Réseau des femmes pour les droits environnementaux' (REFEDE), Mali, have enhanced their risk reduction capacity through their participation in the VFL and AFL projects from 2013-2015. The participatory activities included in AFL allowed REFEDE MALI to better engage with communities and strengthened their relationship and trust.	GNDR's National Coordinating Organisation (NCO) AFAD in Mali appointed REFEDE due to their geographical position as PO for the VFL programme in Mali.	CSO (GNDR, non-DRR) (Policy and practice, national)  GNDR NCO (VFL/AFL/Frontline)
<b>Bd11:</b> The Tearfund Resilience officer and the Tearfund Ethiopia country officer Keith Etherington adopted the GNDR action and learning methodology of the AFL programme as a basis for embedding DRR in the activity of the Self Help Groups which have been developed successfully by Tearfund in several rural areas of Ethiopia. This work was conducted in 2012-2013.	The Tearfund technical specialists were motivated through the influence of the <u>GNDR AFL programme, developed and supported by the GNDR Secretariat</u> .	CSO (GNDR, non-DRR) (Policy and practice, national)  GNDR Sec-UK (VFL/AFL/Frontline)
<b>Changes in collaboration or in policy and practice (CSOs, outcomes relevant on the global level)</b>		
<b>Sec33 (OS3):</b> The DRR networks InterAction, VOICE, JCC, Bond, Swiss NGO Platform, ACFID, French NGO DRR Working Group, Act Alliance, and CCIC collaborated with GNDR and created a joint statement for the World Conference for DRR and continue working closely together since then e.g. via a listserv administered by GNDR Secretariat. This is the first example of these donor country networks coming together and agreeing on a set of statements.	GNDR Secretariat coordinated and supported the drafting of a joint position paper to send to governments before the World Conference for DRR in Sendai, Japan, March 2015.	CSO (incl. non-GNDR, non-DRR) (Collaboration, global)  GNDR Sec-UK (Community building and bridging)
<b>Sec10 (OS6):</b> The International Disability Caucus (IDC) expressed interest in working more closely with GNDR at the Third UN WCDRR in Sendai (Japan) in March 2015.	The GNDR Secretariat, in the lead up to the Third UN WCDRR in Sendai (Japan) in March 2015, established contact and worked with members of the Disability Caucus.	CSO (non-GNDR, non-DRR) (Collaboration, global)  GNDR Sec-UK (Community building and bridging)
<b>Bd06:</b> The Swiss NGO platform changed their behaviour to become more active in international advocacy for DRR. This shift in behaviour took place from 2012 onwards, but became more prominent when the Swiss NGO Platform actively participated in the development of positions to influence Sendai DRR Framework	GNDR reports (such as Views from the Frontline, Reality Check), presentations by the <u>GNDR Secretariat</u> and meetings of Platform members with the GNDR Secretariat during 2013-2015, managed to influence the Swiss NGO platform's behaviour	CSO (global, non-GNDR, non-DRR) (Policy and practice, global)  GNDR Sec-UK (Policy work and advocacy)

<b>Changes in collaboration or in policy and practice (other stakeholders)</b>		
<b>Reg54 (OS4):</b> The Venezuelan government recognized the important role GNDR member and national coordinating organisation 'Centro al Servicio de la Acción Popular' (CESAP), Venezuela, played in providing local information that helps the ministry with planning and anticipation for hazards. They allowed CESAP to join the national DRR platform as the only NGO.	<u>Centro al Servicio de la Acción Popular (CESAP), Venezuela, a GNDR member and NCO, has used the HFA local monitoring component of VFL 2013-2015 to strengthen their role working with the Venezuelan government.</u>	National authority (Collaboration, national)  GNDR NCO (VFL/AFL/Frontline)
<b>Reg29:</b> COPECO, a governmental agency in Honduras, worked more closely with local communities during 2013-2014 and created a space at regional and national levels for community risk reduction activities.	Hector Antonio Lopez, National Platform of CSOs in Honduras (MNIGR) and GNDR National VFL Coordinator, approached COPECO, introduced them to the VFL and motivated them to collaborate in the programme. MNIGR also assisted COPECO with their work with the communities.	National authority (Policy and practice, national)  GNDR NCO (VFL/AFL/Frontline)
<b>Reg06:</b> During 2013-2014, Kiribati's government decided to provide more support to DRM implementation. The Kiribati National Experts on Climate Change and Disaster Committee (KNEC) was established	FSPK, GNDR's national coordinating organisation, established a task force committee set up for CC/DRR including also the Ministry of Education. The experience in this task group contributed to the governance decision to establish a national committee on CC and DRR.	National authority (Policy and practice, national)  GNDR NCO (Policy work and advocacy)
<b>Bd04:</b> The Swiss Agency for Development and Corporation (SDC) gave more importance to local level, highly recurrent disasters, e.g. in the Swiss position for the Sendai framework.	GNDR Secretariat and particularly chief executive director established a strategic partnership with SDC and advocated GNDR's goals.	Donor (Policy and practice, global)  GNDR Sec-UK (Policy work and advocacy)
<b>Sec32 (OS5):</b> UNISDR invited the GNDR Secretariat to act as one of four organising partners for the NGO Major Group, and opened up political space for civil society organisations to participate in the World Conference on DRR (WCDRR) held in Sendai in March 2015 and engage the preparations for it.	The GNDR Secretariat, along with 3 other organisations were appointed by UNISDR as an organising partner of the NGO Major Group at the beginning of 2014. One of the key roles as an organising partners of the Major Group was to facilitate the registration and participation of stakeholders in the group during the political process leading up to the WCDRR	Global policy body (Policy and practice, global)  GNDR Sec-UK (Policy work and advocacy)
<b>Doc11 (OS5):</b> The parties of the Third UN World Conference on DRR (WCDRR) adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) on March 18, 2015, with a clear emphasis on civil society as a key stakeholder.	Over the last years, GNDR's VFL work highlighted the importance of local level governance in DRR. In 2015, GNDR's advocacy campaign "Reality Check" further promoted the importance of civil society in the implementation of the SFDRR. In the lead up to the WCDRR, the GNDR Secretariat were then closely involved in discussions regarding SFDRR and GNDR members and the Secretariat had a strong presence at the WCDRR promoting the Reality Check messages.	Global policy body (Policy and practice, global)  GNDR Sec-UK&RDC, members (Policy work and advocacy)

## 11.8. Classification of DB1 cases and DB2 outcomes

### 9.8.1 Geographic relevance of 122 typed 'basic perceived outcomes' in DB1

Global / Regional / National	No. DB1	No. DB2
<b>Global</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Regional/National</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Asia-Pacific</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>5</b>
Regional	8	2
Countries (9)	22	3
<b>Latin America</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>
Regional	6	
Countries (6)	14	3
<b>NAWA</b>	<b>4</b>	
Regional	4	
<b>Southern and East Africa</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
Countries (5)	6	1
<b>West Africa</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>
Countries (8)	16	1
<b>North America</b>	<b>1</b>	
USA	1	
<b>Europe</b>	<b>2</b>	
Regional	1	
Countries (1)	1	

### 9.8.2 Types of social actors described in DB1 to have changed

Global / Regional / National	No. DB1	No. DB2
<b>GNDR supporting entities</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>
Sec UK and/or RDC	6	3
Board/Steering Group	3	
<b>CSO</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>12</b>
Former national and regional coordinating organisations	20	3
Other CSOs (DB1: c. 17 member and c. 10 non-members)	27	9
CSOs (various or can't be defined)	35	
<b>Communities</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>National authorities</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Global and regional governance bodies (e.g. UN bodies)</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Donor</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Academia</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>Media</b>	<b>1</b>	

### 9.8.3 Types of changes (“umbrella themes”) in DB1 and DB2

Umbrella results summarizing behavior change themes	No. DB1 (122 typed)	No. DB2 (21)
<b>Changes in policy and practice</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>10</b>
CSOs	17	5
National authorities	8	2
Communities	6	
Global policy bodies	7	2
Donor	1	1
<b>Changes in collaboration</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>3</b>
CSOs	22	2
National authorities	1	1
Global policy bodies	1	
Academia	1	
<b>Changes in knowledge transfer, sharing &amp; learning</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>1</b>
CSO	27	
Communities	4	
Global policy bodies	1	
Media	1	
<b>Changes in membership and member engagement with GNDR supporting entities</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>
CSO	13	3
Secretariat	1	
<b>Changes in network structures and functions</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>
CSO	3	1
Secretariat & Board/SG	8	3

## 11.9. GNDR Outcome Stories

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### 9.9.1 **GNDR Outcome 1: The GNDR Steering Group and Secretariat responded to member requests to create a more enabling network environment through enhanced regional governance and management structures.**

#### **Outcome**

Between end 2013 and March 2015, the GNDR Secretariat and Steering Group took steps to strengthen GNDR regionally through reform of GNDR's governance and expanding the Secretariat to meet member needs.

Before 2014, the network was managed through a much smaller Secretariat (with 3 instead of now 13 members, namely the Executive Director, Operations Director and Finance Manager) located solely in the UK, and governed by the GNDR Steering Group consisting of 6 members from Asia, Pacific, South America and USA. GNDR's regional and national activities were managed through the support of national coordinating organisations (NCOs) that were paid through project funding.

At the GNDR Global Conference, The Hague, 20-21 March 2013, attended by over 130 delegates and network stakeholders, the GNDR Secretariat listened to calls from members and to the suggestion of the GNDR Steering Group to create the space for a more **regionally representative Global Board**. To drive the regional governance restructure process in a participatory, democratic way, a call was put out on the GNDR website and distributed through listservs asking interested members to self-nominate for their respective regional position by completing a form. Completed application forms were screened against criteria formulated by the GNDR Secretariat and signed off by the Steering Committee and a points system developed. Member engagement in the process varied and for 6 regions where only one suitable member was nominated they were recommended for the position. In the 5 regions where more than one member was nominated (West Africa, South America, Europe, South Asia, South East Asia), full GNDR members of the region were permitted to vote (only once) for their preferred candidate.

The list of elected and selected candidates were sent to the Steering Group and approved. The new board was thus complete beginning of 2015 and now encompasses representatives of 11 geographic regions, 3 trustees and the 2 GNDR directors. The members of the new Global Board have participated in a 3 day online induction meeting on 19-21 January 2015 and met for the first time at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held from 14 to 18 March 2015 in Sendai, Miyagi, Japan, where the previous GNDR Steering Group stepped down from office and the new Global Board became formally functional.

In parallel, the GNDR Secretariat enhanced its regional network management by employing **5 locally based staff, regional development coordinators (RDCs)**, in 2014 (three 100% GNDR positions for Asia & Pacific; Latin America and the Caribbean; West Africa; and two 75% positions for Southern Africa; North Africa and West Asia). In addition it has allocated resources to expand their team in order to provide more dedicated capacity to lead on and follow through with the planned governance changes and regional representation of the network, creating **5 new staff positions in London, UK, at the Global hub** to facilitate management, communication and knowledge sharing with and among regions (namely managers for Programmes, Team Coordination, Communication, Advocacy, and Learning).

#### **Significance for evaluation question 1**

An effective network needs to be responsive to member interests if it is to retain and enjoy the commitment of members. The GNDR Steering Group and Secretariat were responsive to the needs of an increasing international membership of national and local CSOs by enhancing regional representation in both governance and management structures while at the same time aiming to maintain a global focus.

The new Global Board's strategic and governance functions will complement the operational work of the GNDR Secretariat (UK staff and RDCs). It is hoped that by having regional board representatives engaged in driving GNDR's governance and strategy development processes through respective subcommittees and quarterly wider board conferences, there will be a better understanding as well as representation of regional needs.

At the same time, expanding the GNDR Secretariat by the 5 RDCs is expected to lead to more regional executive and operational strength in implementing the GNDR Strategic Plan planned as defined by the Global Board and thus a more supportive environment for GNDR's members.

#### **GNDR's contribution**

GNDR's membership clearly asked for a more regional representation of GNDR governance structures at the GNDR Global Conference, The Hague, 2013, which was organised by the GNDR Secretariat and brought together more than 130 delegates from a diverse range of people from grass-roots leaders and practitioners active at the local level, national and international NGOS, academics, UN and other international agencies and donor governments.

The increase in membership and the greater stability offered by government funding led the GNDR Steering Group and Trustees in 2012/13 to task a governance sub-group with initiating a process for establishing a stronger, more representative governance structure for the network. The preliminary results were presented by Marcus Oxley, GNDR Executive

Director, and Vishaka Hidellage, GNDR Steering Group member, in a plenary presentation at the GNDR Global Conference. The session was followed by an opportunity for comments, challenges, clarification and questions which highlighted strongly, amongst others, the importance of prioritising governance as a key topic to be resolved and of including perspectives on regional representation and accurately reflecting countries in specific regions. The GNDR Steering Group met for an immediate post-conference session on 22 March and the importance of speeding up progress on establishing a clear governance structure including regional representation that is suitable for this growing network was emphasised.

The expansion of management capacity of the GNDR took place before this. The 2012-2015 strategy and action plan produced in 2012 by the GNDR Steering Group with the support of the Secretariat called for expansion of the capacity of the GNDR Secretariat in the UK and the establishment of regional positions to meet the needs of an increased global membership and support the regional development required by the strategy.

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### **9.9.2: GNDR Outcome 2: Evolution of the VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes in response to CSO member concerns**

#### **Outcome**

GNDR's 'Views from the Frontline' (VFL) is a participatory monitoring programme designed to strengthen public accountability for disaster risk reduction (DRR) policy execution by providing the first independent global review of progress towards the implementation of DRR at the local level. Since the inception of the programme in 2008, the GNDR management has continuously called for and implemented changes and adaptations to the programme to better meet the needs of local CSOs.

#### **Views from the Frontline**

After the establishment of GNDR in 2007, its first Steering Group meeting in March 2008 proposed a shared action to conduct complementary monitoring of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA): VFL. The programme was designed and then mobilised in December 2008. The take-up from members was enthusiastic and the programme grew from an initial intended 5 countries to 33 in 2009. The report of the findings was presented at the UNISDR global platform June 2009 and according to the head of UNISDR had a significant impact on the implementation of HFA at local level. The report '[Clouds but Little Rain](#)' has been widely referenced in the DRR community.

In 2010, a learning review was conducted by the GNDR Secretariat gathering feedback from the participants of the programme. It found that members valued not only the 'outputs' of global and national reports, but the impacts of the process itself, where they referred to capacity building in action research, and the opportunities created by the action to build dialogue and partnerships with other local level actors.

Over the two successive phases of VFL in 2011 and 2013 and their respective learning reviews members raised concerns about the outputs and process effects of the programme. There was little change or progress found in the studies which raised the question of whether there was a value in repeated surveys. The detailed data seemed to have limited value which suggested that the indicator based survey method was not effective. Members expressed concern over the 'extractive' nature of the surveying, calling for an action that had direct local relevance. There was also recognition in the 2013 study that the focus should shift from a specific DRR thematic to a wider resilience perspective, reflecting the reality of local level experience.

#### **Action at the Frontline**

The Action at the Frontline (AFL) programme was designed and piloted in 2013-2014 to meet member concerns, focused on local level action research directed at supporting local level sustainable development. The programme was welcomed by members. It has resulted in documented case studies of actions which are shared between members. For example, an unanticipated outcome was that at member request an AFL facebook group was established and has been used by members with very limited facilitation for peer to peer communication and learning. Members highlight the unique opportunity the programme offers to collaborate with communities based on local learning and priorities rather than on a projectised basis.

At national and global level, attention has turned to the emerging post-2015 developmental frameworks, and as VFL learning showed that local priorities weren't constrained by policy siloes such as DRR or Climate Change, consideration should be given to creating a complementary local assessment of progress spanning all framework priorities. Learning from VFL also led to recognition that the consultation process should be one that is relevant and meaningful to local level respondents.

#### **Frontline**

During 2014-2015 the observations above informed design and piloting of Frontline, which builds on AFL with a method of aggregating local level priorities to national, regional and global level. Piloting has been in 3 phases in 30 countries and has the goal of demonstrating that aggregated local priorities can provide useful information for local and national policy and implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation – from the local level – of post-2015 developmental frameworks. Stakeholders from other thematic areas are being engaged in this enterprise, intending to converge at a January 2016 workshop with the goal of agreeing on collaboration around Frontline.

## Significance for evaluation question 1

Particularly in the period 2008-2011, VFL was the main activity of the network and was the basis for attracting members. It created a management infrastructure at regional and national level which became the de facto coordination structure of the network. Consideration is now being given to refining that structure to be fit for purpose for overall network coordination.

As noted above, members valued the capacity building resulting from participation, and the later AFL programme has also stimulated action and learning among the membership. However, concerns were voiced also and the above description shows that GNDR governance and management were able to respond to this and adapt the programme to meet member concerns. Current member feedback suggests calls for the next phase of the galvanising shared action to be mobilised.

### Additional significance to evaluation question 2

VFL, AFL and Frontline have been the key source of knowledge and collaboration across the network, however it has proven difficult to promote sharing and uptake of learning. The greatest impact in this area appears to be from the subset of the membership involved in AFL who have changed their behaviour at individual organisation level through collaborating with communities on a sustainable development basis, and have also demonstrated peer-to-peer communication and learning, particularly through the AFL facebook group.

### Additional significance to evaluation question 3

Findings from VFL and Frontline have been used as the basis of messaging and presentations at UNISDR global platforms (2009, 2011, 2013) at the UNISDR World conference (2015) and at regional events. Governments such as those funding the network (Dutch, Swiss) assert that they have been influenced by the findings. A representative of the Australian Government agency DFAT asserted that VFL was their reference document for understanding DRR at community level.

## GNDR's contribution

The VFL, AFL and Frontline programme have been progressively devised and developed over the period 2008-2015 in an iterative process through cycles of shared action followed by learning reviews where GNDR members participating in the programme provided feedback on the lessons learned. The learning reviews have formed the basis of sequential redesign of the programme at the end of each action phase (2009, 2011, 2013) as exemplified in the narrative 'outcome' above. Redesign of the AFL / VFL / Frontline programmes, creation of structures and allocation of resources was led by the GNDR Secretariat (with consultancy support) in response to and in tight interaction and collaboration with the GNDR membership. We refer to this leadership style as 'interpretative leadership' as the initiative has been taken by the secretariat as leaders, based on cyclical consultation and learning with members.

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### 9.9.3: GNDR Outcome 3: Increased collaboration among DRR networks from the Global North

#### Outcome

A range of disaster risk reduction (DRR) networks from donor countries started working more closely together in early 2015 following an initiative of Mohamed Hilmi, head of the DRR Working Group of InterAction, a US based alliance organisation of over 180 NGOs from around the world, and the GNDR Secretariat. Apart from GNDR and the InterAction DRR Working Group, these DRR networks include:

- VOICE DRR Working Group (Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies), an advocacy and information exchange network representing 84 European NGOs active in humanitarian aid worldwide;
- JCC (Japan Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) Coalition), a network of Japanese CSOs working together to participate actively in the establishment of the Post-2015 Framework on DRR and to share Japanese CSOs' experiences with the international community;
- Bond DRR Working Group, the UK membership body of over 260 organisations working in international development or supporting those that do through funding, research, training and other services. Bond has a working group on DRR;
- Swiss NGO Platform, a network of NGO professionals from 14 organisations dedicated to increasing the resilience of women and men, communities and governments to all aspects of DRR and adaptation to climate change.
- ACFID (Australian Council for International Development), with over 130 member organisations involved in international development and humanitarian action united to strengthen their collective impact against poverty;
- French NGO DRR Working Group, with the 5 members Action contre la faim, CARE France, Croix-Rouge Française, Handicap International and Solidarités International, aiming to promote their respective actions and common advocacy messages.
- Act Alliance, a coalition of more than 140 churches and affiliated organisations – 75% from the Global South – working together in over 140 countries to create positive and sustainable change in the lives of poor and marginalized people.
- The Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC), a coalition of 75 voluntary sector organisations working globally to achieve sustainable human development.

Through coordination of Mohamed Hilmi from InterAction and with support from the GNDR Secretariat, a joint position paper was developed and signed by the focal points of these networks for the World Conference for DRR in Sendai, Japan, March 2015. The paper was titled “Achieving impact where it matters” and put forward specific recommendations for what governments and civil society could commit to doing to ensure the Sendai Framework had an impact at the local level. It also included GNDR’s checklist of 10 essentials for impact at the local level.

In March at the WCDRR in Sendai, the GNDR Secretariat organised a meeting where the participating networks met to further discuss their respective roles in implementing the SFDRR and how they could work better together going forward.

Immediately following the conference, the networks agreed to continue to stay in touch through a listserv set up by the GNDR Secretariat for all the focal points of these networks. The GNDR Secretariat managed listserv is being used to communicate events, share ideas and initiate and coordinate other joint projects.

### **Significance for Evaluation Question 1**

An important function in social networks is community building, i.e. developing relationships of trust to promote collective learning, collaboration and building consensus and coherence. The collaboration of the above mentioned 10 organisations is the first example of a substantial number of relevant DRR networks of the Global North coming together to develop a joint position paper and agreeing on a set of DRR statements. Moreover, this was not a one-off event but the networks agreed to collaborate and coordinate their work in the future, e.g. through the listserv set up by the GNDR Secretariat. They have subsequently worked together on a joint statement for the Finance for Development Agreement, have aligned their input into the Sustainable Development Goal indicators, have contributed to each other’s’ campaigns and have developed shared master messaging for the World Humanitarian Summit.

### **Significance for Evaluation Question 2 and 3**

The agreed set of DRR statements supported by a substantial number of donor country DRR networks provides guidance to CSOs and other stakeholders (GNDR members and non-members) in the DRR sector potentially influencing their policy and practice.

### **GNDR’s contribution**

In early 2015, before the World Conference for DRR in Sendai, Japan, Mohamed Hilmi approached the GNDR Secretariat to prepare a joint position paper to send to governments. The GNDR Secretariat agreed to help and suggested to open up this joint work to additional relevant DRR networks. Mohamed Hilmi prepared the first draft of the paper, which the GNDR Secretariat edited and sent around to some of the other focal points of relevant DRR networks from donor countries, who all contributed to the draft paper. The paper was then signed by the networks (except JCC for logistical reasons) and submitted to various governances, including UK, EU, US, and Australia.

At the WCDRR in Sendai, the GNDR Secretariat organised regional meetings between networks, including one meeting for donor countries. JCC provided the space, members of the GNDR Secretariat, ran the meeting, with assistance from GNDR’s board members Nicole Stoltz (Swiss NGO Platform) and Rod Snider (American Red Cross, and a member of Interaction DRR Working Group).

Immediately following Sendai the GNDR Secretariat organised a call between the DRR networks from donor countries to discuss what modality we could use to continue collaboration. The GNDR Secretariat suggested a listserv, which was agreed upon by those on the call in part due to the success of a GNDR listserv used by a broader group of actors whilst at WCDRR in Sendai. The GNDR Secretariat set up the listserv and subscribed other networks’ focal points.

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#### **9.9.4: GNDR Outcome 4: Engagement of GNDR members and capacity building in local monitoring of community risk and resilience through GNDR’s Views of the Frontline (VFL) programme.**

##### **Outcome**

Based on the notion that civil society can achieve more and have more impact by working together and that local level realities need to be communicated better to the global level, GNDR’s ‘Views from the Frontline’ (VFL) programme was designed and then launched in December 2008 in order to conduct complementary local level monitoring of the Hyogo Framework from Action (HFA).

The participatory monitoring programme was designed to strengthen public accountability for disaster risk reduction (DRR) policy execution. It provides a review of progress towards the implementation of DRR at the local level; these national level reports are then condensed into regional and global level reports (e.g. [‘Clouds but little rain’, ‘If we do not join hands...’](#), [‘Views from the frontline: Beyond 2015’](#)) and submitted to the relevant UN bodies. Since its inception in 2008, the VFL programme has been implemented three times (2009, 2011 and 2013) and has provided critical monitoring of community risk and resilience in over 57 countries until 2013, drawing together information from over 650 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in what is one of the largest monitoring processes to measure an international agreement.

Through this coordinated and joint local level monitoring involving local CSOs, the VFL programme has not only succeeded to involve the primary bearers of the risks, the communities, it has also influenced the policy and practice of these organisations.

For example, Centro al Servicio de la Acción Popular (CESAP), a GNDR member in Venezuela, has traditionally focused on development issues such as health, water, and human rights and did not engage with DRR or climate. The organisation learned about DRR risks and how social development and DRR are interlinked when participating in VFL in 2009, 2011, 2013. Consequently, they adapted their own agenda to include a much stronger DRR focus.

In 2013-2015, CESAP continued implementing the HFA local monitoring component of VFL and used it to strengthen their role working with the Venezuelan government. They published a report representing the realities from the local monitoring in Venezuela and through the profile and reputation of the report they were given the opportunity to present the VFL findings to the Venezuelan Minister in charge of DRR. The Venezuelan ministry for disaster response found the local monitoring critical for future planning and felt that VFL filled the gap of representing the local level. Based on the insight and information from the local monitoring, CESAP was invited to participate in Venezuela's national DRR platform and has now taken on the role as advisor providing local level information and views. Moreover, CESAP has influenced other organisations in Venezuela to engage more strongly with the DRR theme and lead the creation of 6 regional NGO DRR networks.

### **Significance for Evaluation Question 2**

Through participation in GNDR's collective action and learning programmes, GNDR's members get introduced to new or emerging ideas relevant to their work, which may influence their priorities and shape their own agendas. The VFL programme offered an opportunity for CESAP to learn from the DRR knowledge and experience shared within the network and build capacity in local DRR monitoring, which helped them gain influence with their partners. Based on this experience the organisation integrated DRR strongly into their own plans.

### **Significance for Evaluation Question 3**

Through GNDR's national partners, the VFL programme has provided critical local monitoring insight to the Venezuelan government and informed national policy and practice. Findings have also been used as the basis of messaging and presentations at UNISDR global platforms (2009, 2011, 2013) at the UNISDR World conference (2015) and at regional events.

### **GNDR's contribution**

In 2008, the GNDR Secretariat engaged CESAP to become the national coordinating organisation implementing VFL in Venezuela. The Secretariat facilitated mentoring and training, supporting CESAP by providing the VFL methodology and guidance on how to use the data. The financial support to CESAP allowed them to develop the national report that they presented to the government in 2015. The understanding of CESAP staff members was developed through their engagement with VFL, as well as through general engagement with the GNDR Secretariat at annual regional workshops, in quarterly online teleconferences, and regularly in 1:1 Skype calls. The GNDR Secretariat was supported by the Regional Coordinating Organisation in South America who provided local guidance and contextual relevance.

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### **9.9.5: GNDR Outcome 5: UNISDR and national governments recognised the role of civil society in the development and implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR**

#### **Outcome**

UNISDR and national governments recognised the importance of the role of civil society in the development and implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR (SFDRR) in the run up to and during the World Conference for DRR (WCDRR) which took place in Sendai, Japan in March 2015.

This manifested itself in three ways:

- UNISDR invited the GNDR Secretariat to be one of four organising partners for the NGO Major Group along with The Huairou Commission, Japanese Civil Society Coalition (JCC) and Climate Action Network (CAN) International, and thus opened political space for civil society organisations to engage in the preparations for the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) held in Sendai in March 2015. The GNDR Secretariat was able to register 305 civil society participants during January - March 2015 to attend the Sendai conference, and actively facilitated their participation through sharing critical information on listservs.
- UNISDR agreed to send additional invitations for civil society panelists at the WCDRR, including High Level sessions, at the insistence of the GNDR Secretariat lobbying for more civil society representation. For example GNDR member Carlos Kaiser, Executive Director of ONG Inclusiva, Chile, was selected by UNISDR as a key panelist for the session 'Partnership Dialogue for Inclusive Disaster Risk Management (DRM)'.
- UNISDR and member states agreed to consider including local level issues and the important role of civil society in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The relevance of small scale disasters, the need to strengthen local capacities, and the critical role different members of civil society can play in disaster risk reduction (DRR) appear strongly in the Sendai Framework for DRR, representing some of the key points resulting from GNDR's Reality Check Campaign.

### Significance for Evaluation Question 3

The finalised Framework will guide nations' DRR planning and programming for the next 15 years. Global and national governments recognising the role of civil society for achieving the Framework's goals presents an important step forward in terms of the inclusion of vulnerable groups, identifying actions at different scales, and international transfer of technology over this period. For a non-legally binding Framework it may not have gone as far as it could in terms of providing measurable targets, building on local level capacities, recognising conflict and climate change as underlying drivers of vulnerability, and making linkages with other critical frameworks being developed this year, including the SDGs and the UNFCCC's Climate Change Agreement. However, GNDR has substantially contributed to the result that now CSOs are in a position to enhance local level impact and accountability of the Sendai Framework for DRR, helping to ensure that the gaps in the Framework do not lead to shortcomings in impact for the most vulnerable.

From this position, GNDR can now use this precedent for further global meetings, especially when advocating with newly found government contacts for other post-2015 frameworks. Additionally, GNDR's success in communicating the reality of those at the Frontline from utilising the View from the Frontline material forced the recognition of civil society as a key actor. GNDR can now use this strong paragraph on role of civil society in holding governments to account in the implementation of these post-2015 frameworks.

### GNDR's contribution

Over the last 10 years since the adoption of the Hyogo Framework for Action, civil society has demonstrated to national governments their critical role in DRR. A key part of this has been the findings from and process of GNDR's Views from the Frontline work, which highlighted the importance of local level governance in DRR. The 2009, 2011 and 2013 VFL reports were shared at the UNISDR Global Platforms those years and have since been referred to in UNISDR reports since.

In 2014, the GNDR Secretariat developed its advocacy campaign "Reality Check", promoting the importance of civil society in the implementation of the SFDRR. It specifically called for local level realities such as small scale disasters, and the role of CSOs to be taken into account in the SFDRR. These messages, and in particular the campaign's Reality Checklist, were shared with DRR networks and were subsequently included in a joint civil society statement by DRR networks. This statement was shared with governments globally. The GNDR Secretariat had meetings with governments about these core messages ahead of the finalisation of the SFDRR. The GNDR Secretariat negotiated to co-lead various high level sessions at the WCDRR and included these core messages in session concept notes shared with governments.

Also, the GNDR Secretariat was able to advocate strongly the importance of civil society organisations participation in the high level UN discussions. After hearing that civil society panelist for the session 'Partnership Dialogue for Inclusive DRM' would be limited to just one, the GNDR Secretariat , drafted an email to UNISDR highlighting the need for this session to be inclusive and have panelists representing different constituencies, such as those women's groups and persons with disabilities. The GNDR Secretariat asked other civil society representatives to raise their concerns about this limitation on a joint call to UNISDR. The issue was supported by all 10-15 civil society representatives on the call. After following up with UNISDR they agreed to add an additional space for a civil society representative and GNDR member Carlos Kaiser from ONG Inclusiva was selected as a key panelist for this session by UNISDR.

The GNDR Secretariat also provided information to civil society on how to attend the WCDRR and registered CSO participants for the conference. To communicate the results of this high level policy work back to its CSO members, the Secretariat provided regular updates on the preparatory meetings of the WCDRR to members of civil society through global listservs and mailings in the run up to the World Conference for DRR, between April 2014 and March 2015.

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### 9.9.6: GNDR Outcome 6: Collaboration with networks outside the DRR community – GNDR and the Disability Caucus.

#### Outcome

The Disability Caucus (DC) is an informal group composed of the Assistive Technology Development organisation, the Disability inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) network, the International Disability Alliance, the International Disability and Development Consortium, The Nippon Foundation and Rehabilitation International. Through their engagement with the GNDR Secretariat and other actors in the lead up to and during the Third UN World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) in Sendai, Japan (period 2014-2015), the members of the DC gained a greater understanding of the benefits of closer collaboration across different constituencies (disability connections to youth, older, persons, gender etc..) and with the different Civil Society Organisations (CSO) networks engaged in DRR. This became evident when, at the WCDRR in Sendai in March 2015, the DC expressed interest in working more closely with the GNDR Secretariat aiming to promote a more inclusive DRR approach among GNDR members. As a result, a disability section was set up on the GNDR website July 2015 (see: <http://gndr.org/learning/themes/disability.html>) to which the DC provided input to the content. Discussions are currently taking place with regards to a more intense and formalised collaboration between the DC and GNDR.

### **Significance for evaluation question 3**

The collaboration between the DC and GNDR is significant because it opened the opportunity for the DC to be exposed to approaches and practices applied by other CSOs engaged in DRR work with other constituencies, such as older persons, women, children. Also, it enables the inclusive DRR community to engage with a variety of DRR civil society actors on DRR in order to influence their policy and practice in favour of a more inclusive DRR approach. Vice versa, it allowed the GNDR Secretariat to widen its focus on the traditional DRR 'silo' and work closely with a new constituency that it had not worked with in the past.

This reciprocal influence among different stakeholder groups is an important network function, potentially influencing policy and practice of its members and other stakeholders, promoting learning and action, and building consensus and coherence.

### **GNDR's contribution**

The collaboration was a mutual understanding of the benefits of working together, not a one-sided initiative. The GNDR Secretariat, in the lead up to the Third UN WCDRR in Sendai (Japan) in March 2015, was able to register members of the DC to attend the First and Second Preparatory Conferences in Geneva, as GNDR held organising partner status with UNISDR. In this period, the GNDR Secretariat established contact with members of the DC. Matthew Rodieck, an independent consultant engaged in the Disability Caucus, and the GNDR Secretariat met at an informal session in Geneva in October 2014 and from then on had regular calls to coordinate messaging and decided to come together to volunteer to lead the Sendai session on Inclusive DRR. They worked together on that for the months running up to Sendai and the GNDR Secretariat often put him in touch with other members and other networks to help advance his work. As GNDR was one of the organising partners of the NGO major group, and UNISDR denied the Disability Caucus major group status, the GNDR Secretariat assisted the DC to get their messages heard.

At the Sendai Conference in March 2015, a meeting was set up between members of the Caucus and some other persons actively involved in inclusive DRR, such as Carlos Kaiser, ONG Inclusiva, Chile, and members of the GNDR Secretariat. Possible opportunities for closer collaboration between GNDR and the Caucus were discussed such as enhanced knowledge sharing on inclusive DRR and advice on network building.

Also, the GNDR Secretariat invited the DC in Sendai to have their name on the GNDR listserv set up at the World Conference to connect them to the GNDR membership. Through GNDR Secretariat members' commitment to the listserv group and open discussions, this relationship between the GNDR Secretariat and the DC became much stronger. Additionally, the GNDR Secretariat shared different civil society position papers with the DC, which allowed them to gain knowledge on what other civil society actors thought about the Sendai process.

## 11.10. Table of substantiators and their agreement with the Outcome Stories

GNDR Outcome Stories		Substantiation		
Outcome story	Substantiator	Description of outcome	Significance to Eval Question 1	Description of contribution
<b>Outcome story 1: The GNDR Steering Group and Secretariat responded to member requests to create a more enabling network environment through enhanced regional governance and management structures.</b>				
<b>Suranjana Gupta</b> , Senior Specialist and Adviser for Community Resilience, Land and Housing, Huairou Commission and member network Groots International, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India	Fully	Fully	Fully	
<b>Oenone Chadburn</b> , Head of Humanitarian Support, Tearfund, London, UK	Partially <sup>1</sup>	Fully	Fully	
<b>Outcome story 2: Evolution of GNDR's VFL/AFL/Frontline programmes in response to CSO member concerns.</b>				
<b>Hepi Rahmawati</b> , YAKKUM Emergency Unit (YEU), Indonesia	Fully	Partially <sup>2</sup>	Fully	
<b>Buh Gaston</b> , Geotechnology Environmental Assessment and Disaster Risk Reduction (GEADIRR), Limbe, Cameroon	Fully	Fully	Fully	
<b>Outcome story 3: Increased collaboration among DRR networks from the Global North.</b>				
<b>Megan Williams</b> , Humanitarian and Human Rights Advisor, Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), Canberra Area, Australia	Fully	Fully	Fully	
<b>Anders Hylander</b> , Network Communications Adviser, Bond, London, UK	Not qualified	Not qualified	Not qualified	
<b>Julie Mayans</b> , Référent Technique Sécurité Alimentaire et Moyens d'existence chez Solidarites International, French DRR NGO Group, Paris Area, France	Fully	Partially <sup>3</sup>	Fully <sup>4</sup>	
<b>Outcome story 4: Engagement of GNDR members and capacity building in local monitoring of community risk and resilience through GNDR's Views of the Frontline (VFL) programme.</b>				
<b>Adelfo Solarte</b> , Asociación Civil Uniandes (APL-La Mucuy Baja), Mérida, Venezuela	Fully	Fully	Fully	
<b>Abelina Caro Ilarrazo</b> , CESAP, Venezuela	Fully	Fully	Fully	
<b>Outcome story 5: UNISDR and national governments recognizing the role of civil society in the development and implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR.</b>				
<b>Glenn Dolcemascolo</b> , Climate Change Officer, UNISDR, Genève, Switzerland	Fully	Fully <sup>5</sup>	Fully <sup>6</sup>	
<b>Outcome story 6: Collaboration with networks outside the DRR community – GNDR and the Disability Causus.</b>				
<b>Valerie Scherrer</b> , Director Emergency Response Unit, CBM International, Brussels Area, Belgium	Fully	Fully	Fully	
<b>Carlos Kaiser</b> , ONG Inclusiva, Chile,	Partially <sup>7</sup>	Fully	Fully	

### Comments on partial agreements with descriptions:

1. *Partial agreement on outcome description: "Partly, is that there doesn't seem to be captured anywhere the difficulty of the cross cultural dynamic of international governance. So from my experience, the expectations of different members involved in developing the updated governance structures and then subsequent new board reflected not only separate personalities, but also their regional cultures and experience base. For example our South American counterparts have a great understanding of rights and collective representation, especially of minority groups, whereas other regions did not prioritise this aspect and were happier with more centralised representation"*
2. *Partial agreement on significance statement: "VFL, AFL and Frontline is not only means of capacity building and networking between the network, but it also be the entry point and rapport building for government-CSOs partnership."*
3. *Partial agreement on significance statement: "We partially agree as for our network, we were involved in the joint statement and the meetings during the WCDRR in Sendai but we decided not to be involved in the other statements for Finance for Development Agreement, and for the Sustainable Development Goal indicators. There are several reasons for that: 1)we have few human resources to dedicate to follow the work on those different joint statements, and 2) our organizations are also included in other networks (for ex VOICE) and give preferences for a more "global" (and not DRR focused) positioning on the different conferences such as the WHS, etc. But it doesn't mean that we do not agree with the messages of those joint statements.*
4. *Comment on contribution description: In the sentence "The paper was then signed by the networks (except JCC for logistical reasons) and submitted to various governances, including UK, EU, US, and Australia", I would specify that we also submit it to the French government.*
5. *Comment on outcome description: I would say FULLY except that the language in point two is misleading. Participation of civil society did not come at the "insistence" of GNDR but rather it was through the trusted partnership between our organizations that we were able to identify ways to ensure maximum civil society representation in high level panels and that through partnership we were able to find solutions when faced with the constraints of space and UN procedure. Also in point one, I would add that it was not only that GNDR was able to register participants, they were able to facilitate a substantial and visible presence for civil society that enabled advocacy and partnership building directly with governments at the event. The GNDRR contribution also helped to ensure that civil society presence was well organized and meaningful in its participation/interventions through onsite and preparatory coordination. Their contribution is very much appreciated by me and the organization and has been communicated in a personal letter from the SRSG.*
6. *Comment on contribution description: I would add that GNDR has provided a very useful vehicle for UNISDR and others to reach out to a particular group of important civil society actors and has thus helped to establish a means of communication to seek views on significant policy issues and approaches.*
7. *Partial agreement on outcome description: No comment.*