Humanitarian Priorities in the Post-2015 Development Agenda
Hosted by OCHA, OXFAM and UNDP
Tuesday 24 June 2014, 18:15–19:30
Room 5, North Lawn Building

Background
The world faces a once-in-a-generation opportunity to address risks of humanitarian crises at the
global policy level. The ongoing deliberations for a post-2015 development agenda and Sustainable
Development Goals recognize the need for an agenda that contributes to building peaceful and
resilient societies, and that promotes peace and security, democratic governance, rule of law,
gender equality and human rights for all. The consultations towards a post-2015 framework on
disaster risk reduction aim to ensure coherence and complementarity with the post-2015
development agenda, to build resilience and reduce deaths and economic losses from disasters. The
discussions leading to the World Humanitarian Summit seek to better understand how humanitarian
and development actors can work together to manage the risks of crises.

Extreme poverty, conflict, disasters, fragility and displacement jeopardize prospects for sustainable
development. The MDGs are blind to the impact of humanitarian crises. Yet there is growing
evidence from Haiti, Pakistan, the Philippines and elsewhere that disasters erode development
gains, hinder progress and economic growth, and push people into poverty. Over the past twenty
years, disasters have affected 4.4 billion people, claimed 1.3 million lives and caused $2 trillion in
economic losses. Without radical action, the impact of disasters will worsen between now and 2030
and derail development.

Fragile low-income countries are lagging significantly on their progress towards the MDGs. People
living in countries affected by protracted and recurrent humanitarian crises have benefitted
unequally from the current agenda. The proportion of global poor living in conflict-affected and
fragile states is expected to increase from 20% in 2005 to 50% in 2014 and 82% in 2025. Conflicts are
expected to continue to cause the majority of humanitarian needs in the future – already in 2012,
conflict and persecution forced an average of 23,000 people per day to leave their homes and seek
assistance and protection elsewhere. Globally, 51.2 million people were either refugees or internally
displaced persons at the end of 2013. Concerted joint efforts between humanitarian and
development actors are needed to address conflict, fragility and displacement in the post-2015 era.

The post-2015 agenda must therefore address the needs of people who are vulnerable to crisis in a
more targeted way. Addressing fragility, poverty, food and nutrition insecurity, and vulnerability to
conflict and disaster, including by enhancing the resilience of communities and livelihoods, are
central to both development and humanitarian goals.

This side event will discuss the importance of raising the profile of the humanitarian
concerns/priorities within the SDG processes and discussions, and help align humanitarian and
development agendas. If conflicts, disasters and other crises are not tackled in the post-2015
development framework, it will be extremely difficult to achieve the SDGs. Development assistance must therefore focus on reducing the risk of humanitarian crisis, while humanitarian action can be a contribution to sustainable development, especially if done with medium and long term goals in mind.

Objectives

- Discuss and build support for humanitarian priorities in the deliberations for the post-2015 development agenda and SDGs. DRR/resilience are included in the current zero draft for proposed goals and targets, but must still be refined and foregrounded. It is crucial to ensure that conflict/fragility, internally displaced persons and refugees remain as integral part of the SDGs.

- Identify opportunities to strengthen the humanitarian voice and better promote humanitarian priorities. The Open Working Group on SDGs will have concluded its penultimate session only days before the side event. How do the deliberations currently reflect humanitarian concerns? How can Member States and humanitarian and development organizations enhance advocacy for the final session of the OWG in July and the intergovernmental negotiations starting in September?

- Reinforce the notion that managing risk and building resilience requires a concerted and collaborative approach across major platforms and agendas in order to be effective. Recommendations for SDGs, HFA2 and the World Humanitarian Summit will have direct implications on joint efforts of humanitarian and development actors to build resilience and manage the risk of crises.

- Discuss linkages between the post-2015 processes/agendas with a view to finding synergies and complementarities that can be translated into practical, country-level action and outcomes. Development, disasters, conflict and climate change are interconnected and the current consultations on these frameworks provide a unique opportunity to find synergies and complementarity in their design. However, while the need to align these agendas has been reiterated and pursued at the global level, few suggestions have been made as to how such alignment and harmonization could be practically put in place, in particular at the field level.

Panel speakers

- Chair/moderator: Sally Chin, Head of Office in New York, Oxfam International;
- Opening remarks by Katsuhiko Takahashi, Minister, the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations;
- Gwi-Yeop Son, Director of Corporate Programmes, OCHA;
- Marta Ruedas, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director of the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, UNDP; and
- Garfield Barnwell, Director of Sustainable Development, CARICOM