# Independent Formative Review of the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) Programme

Zenda Ofir Review Panel Chair

Scientific Committee Meeting, Sanya, China 29 November 2016



### Structure of presentation

- 1. Review approach
- 2. Fulfilling objectives, meeting expectations
- 3. Performance under IRDR's control
- 4. Critical issues and influences on success
- 5. Recommendations



# 1. Review approach



#### Key aspects of the Review

1. Shaped by:
Review questions & intended use

2. 'Rapid Expert Opinion Review':
Implications for strength of evidence

3. 'Theory-based':
Based on program logic

4. (Integrated) mixed methods:

Quant. / qual., perceptual & factual

**5. Stakeholder stratification** for interviews, survey

6. Triangulation & verification



## 2. Fulfilling objectives, meeting expectations



Initial and emerging preconditions for change

Alignment and synergy with other relevant interventions

#### Programme- related influences

- Evolving drivers for IRDR within evolving contexts
- IRDR intent. strategies & activities
- Inputs resources, infrastructure, expertise & processes

#### SPHERE OF INTEREST

#### SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

sector alliances

Effective IRDR network

Knowledge gaps in priority

areas of DRR filled

Informed early career scientists

#### SPHERE OF CONTROL

- **Implementation**
- GovernanceMilestones
- Management, ■ Communication, ■ coordination
- engagement (Relevant, quality, useful,
  - timely) research outputs
    - Relationships
      - More reliable, systematic, accessible DRR data, information & evidence
        - Lessons- & evidence-informed decision-making w.r.t. actions to reduce hazards & disaster impacts

Strategic shift from response-recovery to prevention-mitigation Transdisciplinary, multi-

- Enhanced scientific, government, civil society capacities worldwide to
- Integrated, cohesive research address hazards initiatives in DRR priority areas
  - Integrated approach to hazard (risk) reduction by scientists, governments, donors, alliances, society
  - Better policy-making mechanisms, policies, strategies & practices in
  - DRR related domains
    - Fewer lives lost

Reduction in number & intensity of hazards

- Reduction in cost of disasters
  - Wiser choices & investments by governments & civil society
  - More resilient individuals & communities
- Fewer lives adversely impacted

Programme / partners act

Actors produce, gain, change

Others respond & use: institutions, systems change

Situations, communities, societies change

framework

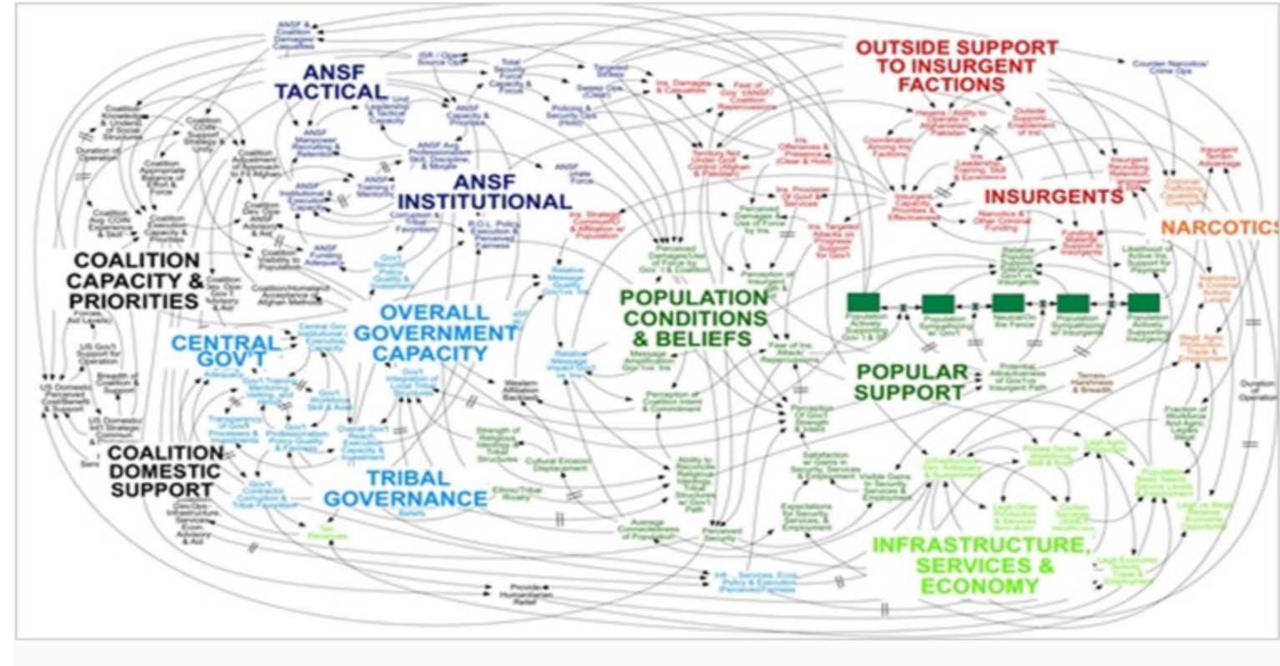
Healthier planet

Positive development

trajectories

More resilient

nations



US military stakeholder map of Afghanistan, aka a complex system

#### Initial preconditions for IRDR success

(intersecting global, regional, national levels)

Empathetic (global, regional, national) contexts

Well-defined niche
(timely, relevant &
significant in science &
application; informed by
priority challenges, aligned
with global conventions &
trends)

Benefits brought by ICSU brand & support

Well-designed IRDR intervention

Appropriate, sufficient, timely infrastructure, resources & financial flows

Appropriate, sufficient scientific expertise & goodwill

Architecture for implementation based on appropriate, productive relationships (partnerships, alliances)

Appropriate research foci (relevant, significant, timely)

#### Emergent preconditions for IRDR success

(intersecting global, regional, national levels)

Good governance & management

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Engaged, boundaryspanning science & scientific scholarship

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Catalytic action

Incentivised, capable partners in the science and policy arenas

Appropriate type of research (integrated, transdisciplinary, multisector, boundaryspanning, problemsolving, gap-filling)

Incentivised, capable policy/decision-makers, & other users of IRDR contributions

Appropriate engagement & communication with potential users

Sufficient momentum and strategy to avoid emergence of duplicate or direct competitors in niche institutions

More resilient nations SPHERE OF INTEREST SPHERE OF INFLUENCE Reduction in number & Strategic shift from intensity of hazards response-recovery to SPHERE OF CONTROL prevention-mitigation Reduction in cost of Transdisciplinary, multidisasters Implementation sector alliances Enhanced scientific, Positive development trajectories Governance
 Milestones · Effective IRDR network government, civil society capacities worldwide to ■ Wiser choices & Management, Communication, Integrated, cohesive research address hazards investments by coordination initiatives in DRR priority areas governments & civil Integrated approach to Output relevance, quality, Knowledge gaps in priority society hazard (risk) reduction by utility, timeliness areas of DRR filled scientists, governments, donors, alliances, society - Educated emerging scientists More resilient Better policy-making individuals & More reliable, systematic, accessible mechanisms, policies, DRR data, information & evidence communities strategies & practices in Healthier planet ■ Lessons- & evidence-informed DRR related domains Fewer lives decision-making w.r.t. actions to adversely impacted reduce hazards & disaster impacts ■ Fewer lives lost Programme / Situations, communities, partners act societies change Actors produce, Others respond & use: gain, change Source: Adapted from Z Ofir and T change Schwandt, IDRC, 2013 & 2016

## Success in fulfilling expectations: getting to

#### outcomes?

IRDR's sphere of control (outputs)

Knowledge gaps

Data, evidence

'Integrated, cohesive' research initiatives

Trans-disciplinary, multi-sector alliances

Network

Capacities - early career scientists

IRDR's sphere of influence (outcomes)

'Incremental'

Ratings 2.5-3.0

Influence on global policy

FORIN/DATA uptake

Knowledge publication) uptake

IRDR's sphere of interest (impact)

Not yet apparent Trace over time?



## 3. Performance in IRDR's 'sphere of control'



#### Performance in three domains

Strategy and programming ('science')

Scope of the work

Research projects

**Events** 

Network

Positioning

Visibility

Thematic

Horizontal

Vertical

Governance and management

Governance system

IPO in China

Management approach & systems



# 4. Critical issues and influences on success

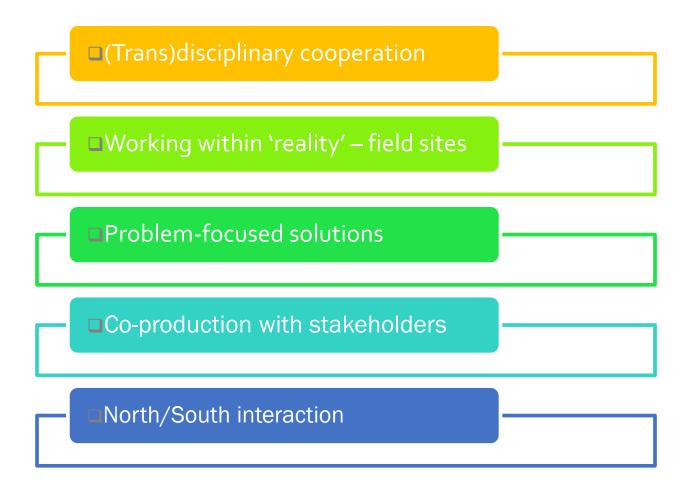


### Critical issues (challenges) for consideration

- 1. 'Business as usual' vs ambition to change the business of science (in the DRR domain)
- 2. IRDR as entity, and its boundaries
- 3. Demonstrating 'integration'
- 4. Being a 'global action network' working towards large systems change
- 5. IRDR's niche and value proposition



#### Dimensions of IRDR's 'integrated' approach





### Global Action Networks for Large Systems Change

- i. Common vision and agenda for change based on shared understanding, agreed plans of action with mutually reinforcing activities.
- ii. Diversity in thinking and expertise, and collaboration across boundaries (e.g. thematic or geographic area, or series of sites for comparison and longitudinal studies.
- iii. Common motivation and incentives for collaboration.
- iv. Activities and arenas that allow people to connect, solve problems be part of a 'community' that work together on issues of importance.
- v. Open and continuous communication to build trust
- vi. Data collection and consistent measurement of results supporting alignment, accountability and learning, with continual integration of knowledge into what is being done.



### Towards IRDR's niche and value proposition

Confluence of elements (to be further analysed):	
	Focus on integration
	Strength of IRDR's vision captured in the Science Plan
	Highly respected scientists as voice for DRR
	High profile co-sponsors, in particular ICSU's brand among scientists
	Global to local focus, and the potential to move from science to practice using comparative,
	context-sensitive studies
	IPO located where DRR is a priority, and with ample funding for science
	Potential to strengthen capacities of different types based on 'doing things differently'

### Main negative influences

- ☐ Prejudices & decisions at inception (related to set-up of ICSU Interdisciplinary Bodies)
- Business model: lack of strategic approach to resourcing ('ad hoc project' vs 'strategic program' approach)
- ☐ Shortcomings in governance, strategic leadership & management systems
- ☐ Insufficient focus on collective action for collective impact
- Hands-off approach of co-sponsors



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## 5. Recommendations



### 1. Rethink and reshape IRDR's strategy

- Return to the ambition in the **Science Plan**, while building on the foundation that has been laid.
- ☐ Keep demonstration of the value of 'integration' at the core
- □ Plan with due consideration of IRDR's value proposition, niche & comparative advantage in the 'DRR for sustained development' landscape
- Expand time horizon until 2025



# 2. Change IRDR's business model & fundraising approach

- ☐ Move from **project to program** approach
- ☐ Implement a proper **fundraising strategy**, with clear and shared responsibilities, that engage co-sponsors
- Innovative fundraising from non-conventional sources



### 3. Adjust the governance system

- Separate oversight, scientific leadership & guidance, and program
   leadership & management Governing Board
- ☐ Clearly allocate responsibilities & reporting lines
- Enable strategic and adaptive management for learning and accountability



# 4. Strengthen leadership, management & communication

- Establish **leadership** by Executive Director, in collaboration with SC Chair / executive
- □ Put in place appropriate systems (monitoring, evaluation, performance & knowledge management) for IRDR 'family'
- ☐ Nurture **relationships** among all parts of IRDR, incl. in China
- ☐ Focus on communication



# 5. Operate as 'action network' towards collective impact and large systems change

- Learn from experience of action networks working for collective impact & large systems change
- ☐ Strengthen partnerships with a strategic perspective
- Use diversity to learn from different contexts, knowledge systems



# Thank you for your attention

