

Validation of the DRR policy marker in the context of COVID-related actions

Guidance Note for evaluators

In 2018 the OECD DAC included a new policy marker for disaster risk reduction (DRR), which was integrated into its Creditor Reporting System (CRS). The DRR marker is related to the advancement of the goal and global targets of the Sendai Framework to achieve a substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries. The definition of the DRR marker, its eligibility criteria and examples of typical activities are indicated in document [DCD/DAC/STAT\(2018\)/52](#).

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission is rolling out a very substantial response, including new actions and a reorientation of programmes in the pipeline to include COVID-related measures. These actions are being approved through a simplified procedure to cope with the urgency of the situation. Comments are to be kept to the essentials and deadlines are very short.

This document provides guidance to reviewers on how to interpret the DAC guidance in the context of COVID-related actions.

We would like to highlight the following points of interpretation:

1st – Biological hazards and epidemics fall under the scope of the Sendai Framework and, by extension, of the DRR policy marker

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) defines '[disaster impact](#)' as *"the total effect, including negative effects...and positive effects..., of a hazardous event or a disaster. The term includes economic, human and environmental impacts, and may include death, injuries, disease and other negative effects on human physical, mental and social well-being"*. Furthermore, UNDRR clarifies the concept of *slow-onset disaster*, relevant in the context of the Sendai Framework, as *one that emerges gradually over time. Slow-onset disasters could be associated with, e.g., drought, desertification, sea-level rise, epidemic and disease*. Furthermore, point 15 of the Sendai Framework indicates that it applies *"to the risk of small-scale and large-scale, frequent and infrequent, sudden and slow-onset disasters caused by natural or man-made hazards, as well as related to environmental, technological and biological hazards and risks."*

2nd – COVID emergency response actions qualify for DRR to be marked as a "significant" objective

To qualify for the DRR marker, *an activity must contribute to:*

- a) *The prevention of new disaster risk, and/or*
- b) *The reduction of existing disaster risk, and/or*
- c) *The strengthening of resilience*

Through the implementation of integrated and inclusive economic, structural, legal, social, health, cultural, educational, environmental, technological, political and institutional

measures that prevent and reduce hazard exposure and vulnerability to disaster, and increase preparedness for response and recovery with the explicit purpose of increasing human security, well-being, quality of life, resilience, and sustainable development.

In the context of slow-onset disasters it is not possible to establish a strict distinction between “existing disaster risk” (i.e. before a disaster hits) and emergency response, where risk reduction measures are constantly needed to reduce impact even when the effects of the disaster are already being felt.

COVID response actions are often not only about reducing the impacts of disaster (e.g. funds to minimise impacts on small businesses) but also about building resilience for ongoing impacts (e.g. strengthening health systems and promoting WASH facilities). Emergency response actions that are clearly contributing to build resilience can qualify for a DRR marker (significant objective).

3rd – For DRR to be considered a “principal objective”, the COVID-response action needs to go beyond emergency response and contribute explicitly and directly to the building of resilience

The activity will score “principal objective” if it directly and explicitly contributes to at least one of the four Priorities for Action of the Sendai Framework:

- *Priority 1: Understanding disaster risk.*
- *Priority 2: Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk.*
- *Priority 3: Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience.*
- *Priority 4: Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.*

In accordance to the OECD DAC Converged Statistical Reporting Directives for the Creditor Reporting System (CRS)¹, principal policy objectives are those which can be identified as being fundamental in the design and impact of the activity and which are an explicit objective of the activity. The OECD also proposes the following guiding question to verify this condition: *Would the activity have been undertaken without this objective”*

For COVID response actions to be classified as a “principal objective” for COVID response actions, building of resilience must therefore constitute the main motivation for the action. COVID response actions that focus on addressing existing disaster impacts and build resilience only as a side-effect of the action would not qualify for DRR as a “principal objective”.

In other words, an action whose objective is to build resilience and addresses COVID can consider DRR as a “principal objective”, whilst an action whose objective is to respond to the impacts of COVID and also helps build resilience can consider DRR as a “significant objective”.

¹ Annex 18 of Module E in document [DCD/DAC/STAT\(2018\)9/ADD2/FINAL](#) of 28 May 2018.



Annex 1. Examples of COVID-response activities that can qualify for the DRR marker

Examples of activities that may consider DRR as a “principal” objective

- ✓ Building COVID resilience by strengthening national systems for disaster risk management, with accompanying national and sub-national risk assessment
- ✓ Strengthening national health forecasting and warning services and disaster risk analysis for building national capacity for disaster risk management
- ✓ Permanent improvements in infrastructure and equipment in health facilities, as well as capacities of health systems staff, to deal with epidemic outbreaks, including better water and energy access
- ✓ Supporting national and local governments with actions to respond to the COVID outbreak and its subsequent phases with technical assistance and support in the formulation of resilience-building policies
- ✓ Development/revision of social protection policies to mitigate economic impacts of COVID on vulnerable populations (not ad hoc temporary measures)

Examples of activities that may consider DRR as a “significant” objective

- ✓ Support to maintain essential health services during the COVID outbreak
- ✓ Safe WASH services in health care facilities to deliver quality health services, protect patients, health workers and staff
- ✓ Rapid and low-cost water service and sanitation provision for communities, health care facilities and schools including water treatment facilities
- ✓ Support to guarantee learning continuity, accelerated learning, and distance learning
- ✓ COVID and WASH awareness and training (including testing)
- ✓ Temporary social protection measures to address economic impacts of COVID on vulnerable populations, such as cash transfers, seed and fodder packages