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

Review Design and Timeline

Prepared for sharing with the IRDR Science Committee

Zenda Ofir

Review Panel Chair

Envisaged use of the Review

The Review findings and recommendations are intended to inform the following:

1. IRDR Board meeting in October 2016
2. Work of the ICSU Committee on Scientific Planning and Review (CSPR)
3. Refreshing of strategic plans of ICSU and IRDR
4. Planning for implementation of the Roadmap for S&T for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR (2015-2030)
5. Planning for implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Review approach

The IRDR Review is an example of a "rapid review"

Rapid reviews are a type of evaluative activity conducted when evidence of relevance, performance and/or impact is required in a short timeframe, often with limited resources. Judgments are evidence-informed, but the evidence gathering process is simplified to capture the minimum information necessary for a credible assessment. The assessment is also highly dependent on the experience and expertise of the panel or team of specialists, who should ideally be drawn from diverse backgrounds and contexts.

The Review will have a theory-based, integrated mixed methods design. This means that

- the change logic of IRDR will be tested to the extent determined by the scope of the review
- qualitative and quantitative, perceptual and factual data and information will be used, collected either in sequence or in parallel; used for triangulation (or cross-checking) to the extent possible; and integrated for further data collection or for analysis.

The Review will be guided by:

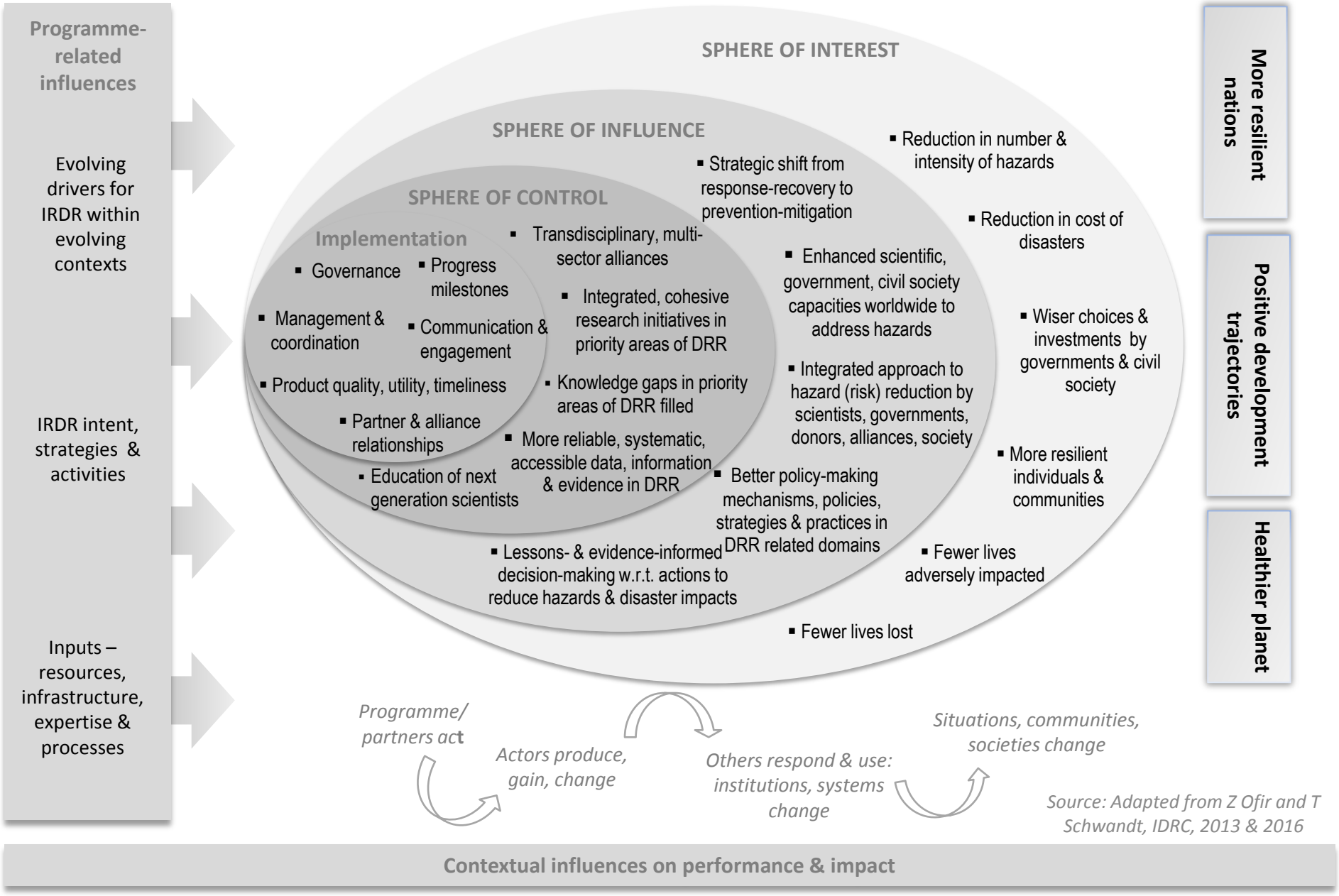
1. The purpose and use of the Review, which is in this case formative, *i.e.*, learning from past experiences and lessons for adjustments, for prospective planning and for execution of the next phase of IRDR.
2. The Review Matrix, which consists of (i) a set of Review Questions that determine the focus and scope of the Review, and their proposed (ii) Sources of Evidence.
3. Consideration of the logic of what IRDR wishes to achieve, and why, how, for whom, towards what results, under what circumstances and with what assumptions (*i.e.*, the so-called "change logic" or "theory of change" of the IRDR). Please refer to the separate document that details the change logic.

IRDR Change Logic Components

The change logic or "theory of change" spells out the logic (or hypothesis) through which change is intended to happen as a result of the programme intervention. In its comprehensive form it details the intended results (outputs, outcomes, impacts), the relationships between them, what is intended to lead to their achievement, and the underlying assumptions. The following are components of the change logic captured in various documents:

- IRDR has a strong commitment to development – of science, and of broadly-based capacity.
- Partners in this development are national and international development aid agencies and national and international science institutions and funding councils that support capacity building around the world.
- IRDR will bring an integrated approach to natural and human-induced hazards through a combination of natural, socio-economic, health and engineering sciences, including socio-economic analysis, understanding the role of communications, and public and political response to reduce risk.
- IRDR will address research gaps and enable interdisciplinary cohesion at the intersection of the sciences.
- IRDR will conduct coordinated, international, multi-disciplinary research that can guide more effective global societal responses to the risks associated with natural and human-induced environmental hazards.
- IRDR will determine how knowledge about hazards is, or can be, put to use. Understand public perception decision-making in the context of natural hazards, risks and uncertainty, and study human behaviour and cultural contexts for vulnerability analysis.
- Repository of information and data that had been acquired would be of continuing availability and value to the global community.
- IRDR will leave a legacy of enhanced capacity around the world to address hazards and make informed decisions on actions to reduce their impacts. This will include a shift in focus from response-recovery towards prevention-mitigation strategies; the building of resilience; reduction of risk; learning from experience; and avoidance of past mistakes.
- Through this enhanced capacity and shift in strategic approaches, future societies would benefit so that in 10 years there will be reduction in loss of life, fewer people adversely impacted, and wiser investments and choices made by governments, the private sector and civil society when comparable events occur.

Organising framework for IRDR contributions to development impact



Source: Adapted from Z Ofir and T Schwandt, IDRC, 2013 & 2016

IRDR Change Logic Outline

(*i.e.*, without assumptions and impact pathways descriptions)

Initial preconditions for IRDR success
(intersecting global, regional, national levels)

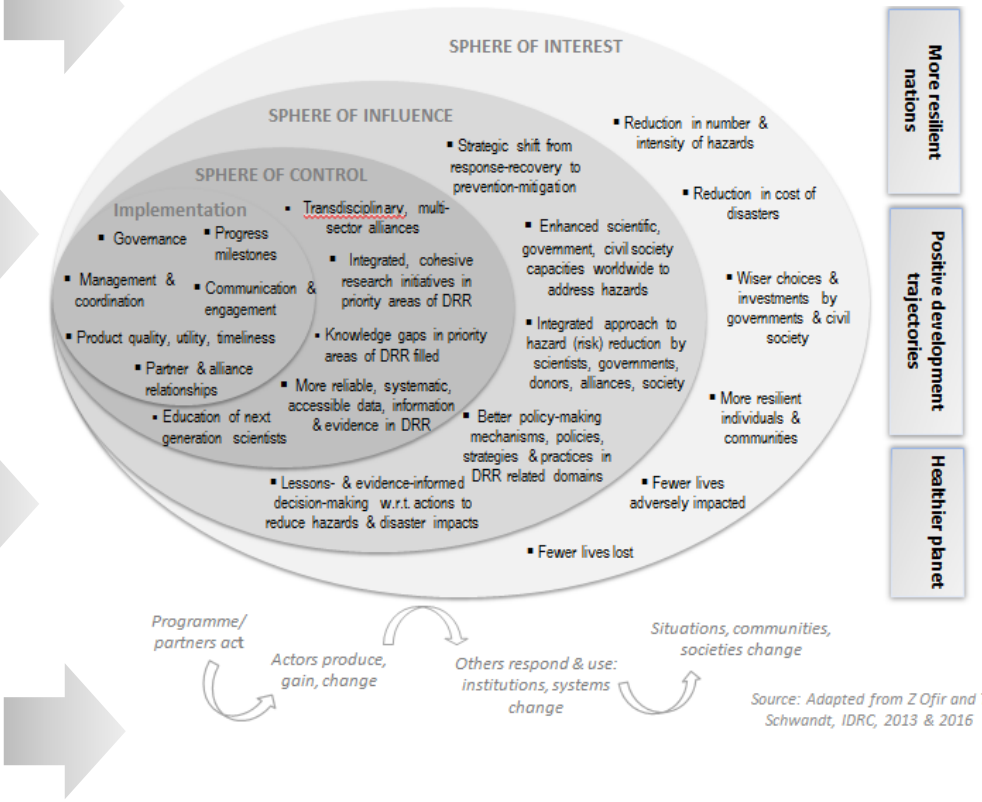
- Empathetic (global, regional, national) contexts
- Well-defined niche (timely, relevant & significant in science & application; informed by priority challenges, aligned with global conventions & trends)
- Benefits brought by ICSU brand & support
- Well-designed IRDR intervention
- Appropriate, sufficient, timely infrastructure, resources &financial flows
- Appropriate, sufficient scientific expertise & goodwill
- Architecture for implementation based on appropriate, productive relationships (partnerships, alliances)

Effective, efficient Implementation

Emergent preconditions for IRDR success
(intersecting global, regional, national levels)

- Good governance & management
- Engaged, boundary-spanning science & scientific scholarship
- Appropriate research foci (relevant, significant, timely)
- Incentivised, capable partners in the scientific & decision-making architecture
- Appropriate type of research (integrated, transdisciplinary, multi-sector, boundary-spanning, problem-solving, gap-filling)
- Incentivised, capable policy/decision-makers &other users of IRDR contributions
- Appropriate engagement & communication with potential users

Catalytic action



The Review Questions

For the Review Questions, refer to the separate PDF.

Proposed Review methods

The following lists the methods to be used during the Review. Limitations are due to the limited time and resources available for the Review.

1. *Desk study of background documents*. These include plans, progress and annual reports, meeting minutes, newsletters, relevant reviews and evaluations, as well as a list of 28 documents that can be considered official IRDR publications.

2. *Use of the change logic ("theory of change").* There is not enough scope in the Review to conduct a full-fledged theory-based (or "theory of change" based) evaluation. However, the change logic will serve as guidance and framing of aspects to be studied, and reference will be made to it wherever feasible and useful.

3. *Review and analysis of monitoring data*. IRDR has limited data on progress or emerging impacts, and very little of what is available has been consolidated for analytical use. This places significant responsibility on the Panel to collect primary data and to consolidate what is available. Research support will be required for this purpose.

4. *Stakeholder analysis.* Stakeholder maps will be produced by the Panel subgroups in order to determine and justify the sampling strategy used in each case.

5. *Field visit to the IPO.* To be conducted by the Governance and Organisation subgroup with assistance from Gensuo Jia.

6. *Bibliometric/altmetrics study*. Various possibilities to be considered, depending on boundaries of the IRDR programme, and what is feasible. Research support will be required for this purpose.

7. *Survey(s) among stratified groups.* These will be based on one or more questionnaires about performance and impact, to be self-completed, administered to selected stratified groups of stakeholders determined by the sampling strategy.

8. *Key informant interviews.* Semi-structured interviews based on a set of tailored interview guides with informed role players, as determined by the sampling strategy.

Considerations for the sampling strategy

- As this is a formative review, sampling for interviews will be mostly purposeful – i.e., an effort to identify those individuals who are (i) knowledgeable about IRDR; and/or (ii) knowledgeable about, and influential in the larger DRR landscape.
- In order to identify appropriate persons, contact lists will be mobilised from the IPO, ICSU and other components.
- More comprehensive groups of stakeholders will be reached during surveys, based on stratification.
- It is essential to reach informants from within, with links to, and independent of IRDR, as well as those who are both pro and against, or critical of the IRDR.
- An outline of groups for consideration includes the following (which is not comprehensive), also detailed in the stakeholder map in the next slide:

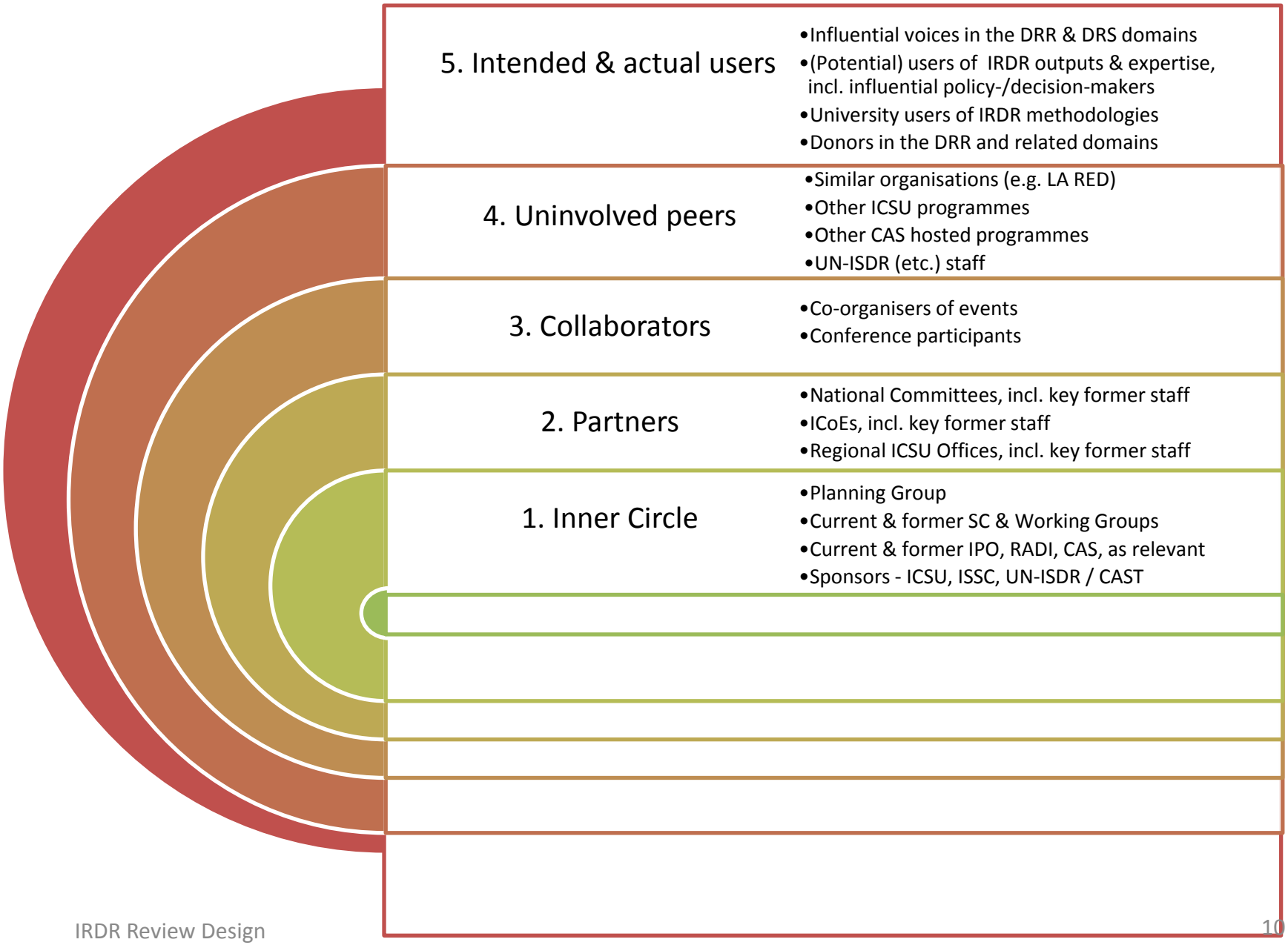
General:

- The initiatives listed in the annex of the Science Plan provides a good overview of scientific stakeholders - international and national scientific programs (ongoing and emerging), and their sponsors, especially those within the ICSU family.
- International Group of Funding Agencies for global environmental change research
- Key/influential persons from international and national organisations (UN, NGOs) involved in IRDR related work, directly or indirectly
- Key/influential persons from governments, private sector and civil society involved in IRDR related work, directly or indirectly
- People living in areas vulnerable to natural hazards (too far removed to reach through this Review).

IRDR-specific:

- Sponsors and funders of IRDR
- RADI, CAS, CAST – key past and present actors
- Science Committee members – past and present
- National and Regional Offices (IRDR and ICSU)
- Planning Group initially involved in the IRDR design
- Consultative Forum participants
- Heads of other relevant IPOs hosted by RADI or CAS – for comparison of experiences, wider perspectives
- IPO Executive Directors and team members – past and present
- International Centres of Excellence

Stakeholder map based on distance from the centre



Review Principles and Quality Assurance

Principles (proposed)

Credibility – using evaluation guidelines, cognisant of limitations

Utility - for multiple stakeholders

Transparency - about methodology, process and evidence

Inclusiveness – considering multiple perspectives and angles on evidence, within reasonable limits

Respect – conducting the work with the ultimate purpose and intended beneficiaries.

Quality assurance strategy

- Experienced Panel without conflicts of interest; majority have not worked with IRDR.
- Review designed and executed with awareness of evaluation guidelines, yet recognising the limitations of a rapid review approach.
- Triangulation of sources and methods, to the extent feasible.
- Verification of initial findings and conclusions by multiple stakeholders.

Review Panel member responsibilities

Areas of Work	Subgroups	Assigned Panel Members	Primary Responsibilities
1. Strategic planning and implementation	**Strategy & Programming**	Janos Bogardi, Germany Barbara Carby, Jamaica Roberto Rodriguez, USA	▪ Assess the achievements and impacts of IRDR against its initial objectives - including research, engagement in policy processes, capacity development, etc.
2. Governance 3. Secretariat, funding and operations	**Governance & Organisation**	Tom Beer, Australia Zenda Ofir, South Africa / Switzerland	▪ Assess appropriateness and effectiveness of IRDR's organisation, governance mechanisms, and committees – science committees, working groups, ICoEs, etc. ▪ Assess the adequacy of the IPO structure, relationship with the host organisation, level and sources of funding and prospects. ▪ Identify barriers to the effective and efficient running of the programme.
4. Stakeholders and partnerships 5. Communication, visibility and influence	**Landscape & Positioning**	Gensuo Jia, China Teguh Paripurno, Indonesia	▪ Identify IRDR linkages and relationships with the DRR science community (including with members and other programmes run by the sponsors, e.g. Future Earth) and with non-academic stakeholders. ▪ Assess IRDR's positioning in the overall DRR space - including policy for e.g. the Sendai Framework.
6. Future development		All	▪ Challenges, opportunities, and recommendations for the further evolution of IRDR.

Final timeline

When	What	Estimated Time Commitment	
		Panel Members	*Chair*
Feb 03	First teleconference: introduction, discussion of broad timeline	1h	1h
Feb - Apr	Document study	2 days	2 days
Mar 09	Draft review questions to ICSU for discussion with stakeholders	0.5 day	1 day
Mar 18	Consolidated feedback on draft review questions from Panel and stakeholders	-	
Mar 21-24	Discussions Chair with Panel subgroups, as needed for Inception Report	1.5 hour	5 hours
Mar 29	Inception Report to Panel members, and to ICSU and stakeholders for comment	0.5 day	3 days
Apr 14-15	First in-person meeting (Paris), guided by the Inception Report	2 + 1 days	2+1 days
Mid Apr-end Jul	Data collection, analysis and write-up	12-15 days	12-15 days
May 5-6	Scientific Committee meeting, Paris	2 +1 days (ZO/JB)	2+1 days
May 23-25	IPO visit and interviews, Beijing	3+1 days (ZO/TB/GJ)	3+1 days
Jul 27	All Subgroup drafts submitted to chair		
Aug (first week proposed)	Second in-person meeting – Beijing (preferred) or Paris – and finalisation of Subgroup drafts	2+1 days	2+1 days
Aug 12	Consolidated Draft Report delivered for consultation with stakeholders	1 day	3 days
Sept 16	Final Report delivered	1 day	2 days
TOTAL		**Approx. 26 days**	**Approx. 35 days**