



# **United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience**

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Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated  
Approach to Sustainable Development



United Nations



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# Acronyms

<b>CCA</b>	Common Country Analysis
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
<b>PSG</b>	Peer Support Group
<b>QCPR</b>	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
<b>QSA</b>	Quality Support and Advice
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SRSG</b>	Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDAF</b>	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
<b>UNDG</b>	United Nations Development Group
<b>UNDS</b>	UN Development System
<b>UNRC</b>	United Nations Resident Coordinator

# UN Funds, Programmes, Specialized Agencies and Others

<b>CTBTO</b>	Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
<b>DESA</b>	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
<b>ECA</b>	Economic Commission for Africa
<b>ECE</b>	Economic Commission for Europe
<b>ECLAC</b>	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>ESCAP</b>	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
<b>ESCWA</b>	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>IAEA</b>	International Atomic Energy Agency
<b>ICAO</b>	International Civil Aviation Organization
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>IMO</b>	International Maritime Organization
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>ITU</b>	International Telecommunication Union
<b>OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>OHCHR</b>	United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner
<b>OHRLLS</b>	United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<b>UNCCD</b>	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
<b>UNCTAD</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNDOCO</b>	United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

<b>UNHABITAT</b>	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children Fund
<b>UNISDR</b>	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
<b>UNSSC</b>	United Nations System Staff College
<b>UNITAR</b>	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UNOPS</b>	United Nations Office for Project Services
<b>UNOOSA</b>	United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs
<b>UNU</b>	United Nations University
<b>UNV</b>	United Nations Volunteers
<b>UNRWA</b>	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
<b>UN-WOMEN</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
<b>UNWTO</b>	United Nations World Tourism Organization
<b>UPU</b>	Universal Postal Union
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WIPO</b>	World Intellectual Property Organization
<b>WMO</b>	World Meteorological Organization
<b>World Bank</b>	World Bank Group
<b>WTO</b>	World Trade Organization

# Introduction

The United Nations Secretary-General proclaimed that “All investments in sustainable development should be risk-informed”<sup>1</sup>. The Secretary-General’s statement reflects the enormous toll disasters are taking on development prospects (conservatively estimated at US\$314 billion per year in the built environment alone<sup>2</sup> ). Since 2005 more than 1.5 billion people have been affected by disasters in various ways, with women, children, youth and other vulnerable populations disproportionately affected<sup>3</sup> . If additional losses were accounted for due to climate change, the estimates would be higher.

Without a radical change of course to ensure that the costs - both economic and in terms of human lives - are addressed through preventative measures, disasters will significantly set back development gains in the affected countries and hamper the prospect of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 builds on achievements and elements established under its predecessor agreement, the *Hyogo Framework for Action: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities 2005-2015*, and introduces a number of important innovations, including a stronger emphasis on disaster risk management, as opposed to disaster management. The Sendai Framework underscores that disaster risk reduction is essential to achieve

sustainable development. This is echoed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Indeed, ten of the seventeen SDGs have targets related to disaster risk, firmly establishing the role of disaster risk reduction in realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Furthermore, in the Paris Agreement, adopted at the 21st Conference of Parties to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2015, Member States committed to holding the global average temperature increase to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C, with the aim to “significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change”.

Disaster risk reduction as an integrating element within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, represents such a change of course. Integrating disaster risk reduction across UN system efforts in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a practical and tangible bridge between the development and humanitarian communities, as well as an important rallying point for key stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, who are highly motivated and essential participants in reducing disaster and climate risk at the global, regional, national and local level.

The Sendai Framework specifically calls upon the UN system to support its implementation in a coordinated manner, bringing together coherently the efforts of UN entities pursued within their respective mandates. This reflects the broader expectation of Member States for coherent and

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1. UN Secretary-General’s Report One Humanity, Shared Responsibility (UN, 2016)

2. Global Assessment Report (UNISDR, 2015). These expected annual losses account for earthquakes, tsunamis, tropical cyclones (wind and storm surge) and riverine floods. It does not include other natural hazards that also can generate important losses.

3. Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

coordinated support that maximizes synergies, harnesses the potential of partnerships, and optimizes the efficient use of financial and other resources across the UN system.

## **Strengthening UN System Coherence and Effectiveness in Disaster Risk Reduction**

Since 2013, UN system support in disaster risk reduction has been guided by the first UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience and has been largely based on the cumulative efforts of the United Nations to support the Hyogo Framework for Action. The UN system's commitments and actions focused on: quality assistance to countries; ensuring that disaster risk reduction is a priority for the UN system; and also ensuring that disaster risk reduction is central in the post-2015 development agreements and targets. The reviews of progress<sup>4</sup>, show significant advancement by the UN in the implementation of some of these commitments and actions for example in the prioritization of disaster risk reduction by UN organizations. However, the reviews also identified slower progress in advancing disaster risk reduction in a consistent and integrated manner in UN country programmes.

The *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, the *Paris Agreement on Climate Change*, the *New Urban Agenda*, the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* of the third International Conference on Financing for Development and the *SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway*, together with relevant international agreements - such as the *International Health Regulations (2005)* - each address disaster risk and taken together, they represent an opportunity to provide a more coherent and integrated international frame for managing risk within sustainable development.

This revised plan, entitled: "UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction: *Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development*", has been prepared in light of the new international agreements and changing operational context, in particular, to ensure coherence with respect to climate change risk and the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as to address the challenges identified in the reviews of progress<sup>5</sup>. The revision is necessary to align with the principles driving the broader UN response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the need to effectively support its universal, integrated, transformative and people-centered approach and its promise to reduce inequalities and "leaving no one behind" in the UN's development work. The revised Plan provides for a stronger alignment of the UN's work in disaster risk reduction with other UN system-wide approaches on related issues. In

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4. Past reports and reviews on UN system work on disaster risk reduction include:

- Three Disaster Risk Reduction in the UN publications (UNISDR 2009, 2011, 2013)
- In-depth study on the role of the United Nations contribution to the implementation of the HFA (von Oelreich, Mid-term Review of the HFA, 2011)
- Initial review of the status of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in the UN (HLCF, 2012)
- Review of the Status of Integration of DRR into CCA/UNDAFs since the issuance of the UNDG Guidance in 2009 (UNDOCO, UNISDR, UNDP 2013)

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5. The Sendai Framework (paragraph 48c) made a specific request to initiate this revision.



particular, it provides actions to align with the forthcoming UN system-wide strategic approach to climate change such as:

- System-wide and joined approaches for integrating disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in UN development efforts;
- Coherent approaches in the support by the UN for measuring the loss and damage of disasters and climate change;
- Joint monitoring of progress in integrating risk reduction and climate change adaptation in UN development work.

The revised UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: *Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development* is the contribution by the UN to ensure the implementation of the Sendai Framework contributes to a risk-informed and integrated approach to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It addresses the need for coherence and mutual re-enforcement of the UN's resilience building efforts and seeks to more effectively integrate UN operational preparedness and response capacities into national operational and capacity development arrangements. The revised UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: *Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development* has added emphasis on country and local level engagement, ensuring the UN system is

responsive to the different country needs and contexts in regards to disaster risk reduction.

By aligning to the scope of hazards as reflected in the Sendai Framework, the revised Plan recognizes that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will rely on measures to manage a broad spectrum of risk with a wide range of stakeholders and on accountability across all sectors. The work of the UN system in the context of the implementation of the revised Plan will continue to cover the risk to disasters caused by natural hazards (geophysical, meteorological, hydrological and climatological) including extreme climate events, both slow and sudden onset, as well as strengthen activities related to other hazards, including technological and biological threats. The ability to assess and manage risk due to the interaction between hazards, their cascading effects, and links to the risk of conflict will be required.

## **The UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development**

In order to achieve the above, the revised UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience outlines three Commitments and nine Results. The Commitments are: 1) strengthen system-wide coherence in support of the Sendai Framework and other agreements, through a risk-informed and integrated approach; 2) build UN system

capacity to deliver coordinated, high-quality support to countries on disaster risk reduction; and, 3) to ensure disaster risk reduction remains a strategic priority for UN organizations.

While the revised Plan has a time horizon of 2030 to align with the Sendai Framework and the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it also recognizes the need to accelerate support to countries on key priorities before 2020. These more immediate results have been identified as the initial requirements necessary to achieve a risk-informed approach to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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### **Commitment 1: Strengthen system-wide coherence in support of the Sendai Framework and other agreements, through a risk-informed and integrated approach**

Several actions and results are proposed to ensure synergies, coherence and mutual reinforcement in the implementation of the Sendai Framework to advance disaster risk reduction. Given the strong relevance and integration of disaster risk reduction across the SDGs, this will also contribute significantly to UN system efforts in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These include developing risk-informed policies and guidelines, and the promotion of coherent and integrated monitoring and reporting by countries on the progress in reducing the risk of disasters and climate extreme events in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Result 1.1:** UN system policies, guidelines and inter-agency initiatives supporting the implementation of the Sendai Framework, and more broadly the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, are risk-informed and contribute to reducing existing, and prevent future disaster and climate risk, and strengthen resilience.

**Result 1.2:** UN system and related organizations have supported countries in monitoring the implementation of the Sendai Framework ensuring coherence with the monitoring frameworks of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement, the New Urban Agenda and other international frameworks.

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### **Commitment 2: Build UN system capacity to deliver coordinated, high-quality support to countries on disaster risk reduction**

This commitment responds to the considerably higher expectations on the UN support by countries. The results under this commitment provide direction for the changes required in the UN's modus operandi, to assist countries in avoiding the creation of risk through risk-informed development planning and/or Sendai compliant national and local disaster risk reduction policy instruments in order to reduce the existing burden of risk in countries built up over many years.

The results further support the authority of UN Resident Coordinators (UNRCs) to mobilize and draw on all relevant resources of the system. It seeks to strengthen the ability of the UN Country

Teams to effectively support national and local communities in early warning, preparedness, response and recovery.

The results are proposed to ensure UN country programmes address disaster and climate risk ,and that UN Resident Coordinators and UNCTs are effectively supported and resourced to support risk-informed UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs)and other UN Development Partnership Frameworks.

**Result 2.1:** UN system and related organizations have intensified their capacity to support countries integrate disaster and climate resilience into national, sectoral and local development strategies and plans and / or to develop / update national and local strategies / plans for DRR as aligned with the Sendai Framework

**Result 2.2:** UN system, related organizations and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) have strengthened their ability to effectively support national and local communities in early warning, preparedness, response and recovery.

**Result 2.3:** Disaster risk and climate information that is compliant with disaggregation requirements of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework, informs all complete or partial UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) and other UN Development Partnership Frameworks.

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### **Commitment 3: Disaster risk reduction remains a strategic priority for UN organizations.**

A number of UN organizations have disaster risk reduction programmes and identify disaster risk reduction and resilience policies as corporate priorities. However, more can be done to integrate disaster risk reduction into strategic planning frameworks of UN system organizations, particularly in key development sectors. UN organizations should elevate disaster risk reduction as a strategic priority for the organizations. Some UN organizations have employed an integrated approach to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in their strategies, programmes and projects and this integration is also recognized and enhanced.

**Result 3.1:** UN organizations incorporate disaster risk reduction as part of their corporate policy and programming.

**Result 3.2:** UN organizations allocate resources to increase the level of commitment to disaster risk reduction for resilience to support implementation of the Sendai Framework.

**Result 3.3:** UN system and related organizations have an advocacy and communications strategy on risk-informed Sustainable Development towards a larger engagement of the stakeholders in their sectoral programmes.

**Result 3.4:** UN system and related organizations prioritize technical assistance to countries in disaster risk reduction

## **Implementing the Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience**

The UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: *Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development* has three components for implementation.

### **1. Coordination and Strategy**

While the responsibility for implementing the UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience rests with different parts of the UN system, it is important to ensure coherent and coordinated system-wide actions on disaster risk reduction including at the global, regional, and country levels. The Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction (SRSG) will play a lead role in facilitating and promoting such coordination. Accordingly, the SRSG will convene, at least once a year, a Senior-level Leadership Group on Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience. The group will: 1) oversee strategic and policy aspects on the operationalization of the UN Plan of Action; 2) review progress, agree on annual priorities and address gaps and issues related to the implementation of the UN Plan of Action; and, 3) ensure linkages and coherence with process related to the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and UN Development System (UNDS).

At the technical level, the UN Disaster Risk Reduction Focal Point Group will support the work of the Senior-level Leadership Group on Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience and

continue promoting the exchange of experience and coherence across the UN system. At the country level, coordination capacity on disaster risk reduction will be assessed and strengthened through support to UNRCs and UNCTs in the implementation and monitoring of the Plan of Action. Regional coordination will build on existing mechanisms such as UN Development System (UNDS) processes led by the Regional UNDG Teams and regional coordination mechanism led by the Regional Economic Commissions.

### **2. Monitoring and reporting progress**

A Results Based Analytical Framework for the UN Plan of Action has been developed to determine and agree on actions required under the three Commitments of the Plan. The framework identifies results, indicators, baselines, sources of information and responsible UN entities for monitoring, reporting progress and accountability. The results framework is an integral part of the UN Plan of Action.

Reporting on progress will follow a two-tiered approach with a selected set of indicators for annual reporting that feed into the UN Secretary-General's Report on Disaster Risk Reduction, the UN Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) Report and relevant reporting requirements of the UNDG. On the other hand, biennial reports on the Results Based Analytical Framework will be produced for the sessions of the biennial Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development reporting.

The progress reports of the Plan will build on existing monitoring mechanisms carried out by the UNDG, the QCPR on country programming, existing intergovernmental monitoring mechanisms of Regional Economic Commissions, UN agencies' own results based management systems and other existing inter-agency reporting mechanisms. The reporting will be aligned with the monitoring by countries on progress on the sustainable development, disaster risk reduction and any future goals and targets on climate change adaptation. The reporting will also build on existing monitoring and evaluation by UN organizations and other relevant inter-agency mechanisms.

### **3. Communication, advocacy and partnerships**

Following endorsement of the UN Plan of Action, Executive Heads of UN organizations, UNRCs and UNCTs will be engaged to raise its visibility with countries and partners. Through appropriate channels, such as the UNDG, greater efforts will be made to communicate to UNRCs and UNCTs, on support available and efforts made by the broader UN system with regard to the implementation of the UN Plan of Action.

Future events, such as global and regional platforms for disaster risk reduction, can be optimised to promote the UN Plan of Action as a key UN engagement. Indeed, the UN Plan of Action and its commitments, results and actions are a main UN contribution to disaster risk reduction and support to resilience building as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Through the implementation of the UN Plan of Action, examples of bringing about greater coherence and mutual reinforcement across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as best practices of assistance to countries, will be collected and shared. Progress reports will be regularly communicated to countries and made readily accessible, for instance through open, on-line sources. This will strengthen UN accountability to countries, partners and the public at large.

Partnership and joint funding approaches will support the implementation of the UN Plan of Action. Joint programmes, joint financing and investment strategies will draw on the capacity of the UN system to put into practice multi-stakeholder partnerships in support of the implementation of the Sendai Framework and a risk-informed 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



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In support of the Sendai Framework  
for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 - 2030

