

Contribution from the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction on the theme of the 2019 High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development

“Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality”

1. Introduction: A risk-informed approach to inclusive and sustainable development

This document provides a response to the letter of the President of the Economic and Social Council requesting input to the thematic review of the 2019 United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). It explains how disasters effect inclusiveness and equality and ways in which disaster risk reduction supports inclusiveness, equality, and empowerment, as well as how the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) makes a significant contribution to ensuring no one is left behind through a risk-informed approach to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Each section highlights progress, areas requiring urgent attention and risks that undermine the achievement of the SDGs, as well as areas where the HLPF can provide guidance and recommendations to accelerate progress.

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) jointly organises with host countries Global, Regional, and Sub-Regional Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction recognizes these Platforms as important international mechanisms for strategic advice, coordination and partnership development for disaster risk reduction which have been instrumental in the development of policies and strategies and the advancement of knowledge and mutual learning.

General Assembly resolution 73/231 reaffirms the importance of the Global Platform to assess and discuss progress on the Sendai Framework and advance coherence between disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate change mitigation and adaptation. The resolution recognizes the outcomes of the Global Platform and the Regional Platforms as contributions to the HLPF and stresses the importance of considering disaster risk reduction in the deliberations and outcomes of the HLPF in 2019.

Four years since its adoption, the Sendai Framework is yielding positive results, building on the success of Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015). There are also gaps and challenges in implementation that require urgent attention at global, regional, national and local levels that, left unaddressed, risk the achievement of the SDGs by 2030. Perseverance is therefore needed to reduce existing disaster risk and ensure that development policies, programmes and investments do not create new disaster risk.

This document provides a synthesis of the deliberations and outcomes of the Regional and Sub-Regional Platforms held in 2018 and the preparations for the 2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Geneva from 13 to 17 May 2019, and the inaugural Pacific Resilience Meeting¹ to be held in Suva from 30 April to 2 May 2019, in relation to the theme of the 2019 HLPF at the Economic and Social Council and the SDGs under review. It draws from the intergovernmental declarations adopted and regional strategies endorsed over the course of 2018 at the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas held in Cartagena from 20 to 22 June; the Central Asia and South Caucasus Sub-Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction held in Yerevan from 26 to 27 June; the Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) held in Ulaanbaatar from 3 to 6 July; the Africa-Arab Platforms on Disaster Risk Reduction held jointly in Tunis from 9 to 13 October; and the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction (EFDRR) held in Rome from 21 to 23 November. This is supported by data from the first read-out of the Sendai Framework Monitor, an on-line tool for governments to track progress towards the seven targets of the Sendai Framework and SDGs 1, 11 and 13.

The deliberations and outcomes of the Regional Platforms and the upcoming 2019 Global Platform provide guidance that is relevant to other key political processes in 2019 in addition to the ECOSOC HLPF, including the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway, the Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit, and the SDG Summit at the General Assembly. They highlight how disaster risk reduction and the implementation of the Sendai Framework are important contributions to the achievement of several intergovernmental processes by promoting a risk-informed and resilient approach.

If development is not risk-informed it is not sustainable. Disaster risk reduction is therefore an essential component of sustainable development. Disaster risk reduction and the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction are enablers of inclusivity, equality and empowerment. Reducing disaster risk can contribute to the empowerment of the poorest and most marginalized communities; can strengthen participatory governance approaches to risk management and reduction, particularly at the local level; and can reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that disproportionately expose the poor to disasters.

To realise the full potential of the Sendai Framework in promoting equality and inclusiveness, the 2019 HLPF at the ECOSOC is a critical opportunity for governments and stakeholders re-commit to a disaster risk-informed approach to development and to embed disaster risk reduction as an integral component of sustainable development policies and programmes.

¹ The Pacific Resilience Meeting is organized by the 15 members of the Pacific Resilience Partnership, of which UNISDR is member. Membership of the Partnership includes governments and territories, non-state actors, regional and international development partners. The Pacific Resilience Meeting considers disaster risk reduction along with climate action and sustainable development in the broader scope of resilience.

2. Promoting equality and inclusiveness through a systemic approach to risk reduction

Inequality is driven by a combination of social, economic and environmental factors. Recognizing that risks in one of these dimensions can have cascading impacts on others, thereby further entrenching inequality and marginalization, demands a systemic approach to risk reduction that can effectively empower people and guarantee their inclusion. This section provides an overview of the deliberations and guidance that emerged from the Regional Platforms for managing and reducing disaster risk in fragile and conflict-affected situations where the combination of disasters and conflict pose significant challenge to achieving the SDGs and a systemic approach to risk reduction for an effective response.

In many regions, disasters, climate change, and conflict intersect with mutually reinforcing negative consequences. People living in the poorest and conflict-affected countries, disasters amplify their risk of being left behind. They are often ill-equipped to prevent, respond to and recover from disasters; lacking adequate infrastructure, governance structures and disaster management capacities. There is an urgent need to scale-up investment in disaster risk reduction in fragile and conflict-affected contexts and to adapt disaster risk management approaches to these contexts, including an enhanced role for civil society. This is crucial in these challenging settings if the global targets of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework are to be achieved.

The Rome High-Level Communiqué, emerging from the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, emphasized the interlinked nature of society and cascading effects of hazards that demands and integrated approach. The Communiqué valued the dividends of building resilience to disasters as an effective way to tackle the underlying causes of fragility and crisis. Moreover, the security implications of climate change will be discussed at the upcoming Pacific Resilience Meeting. There is evidence that it is possible to manage complex risk by managing it in a systemic manner across sectors and agendas, i.e. development, climate, displacement and migration, sustaining peace, and financing. Systemic risk management leads to maximizing the use of resources, and even more so when action is multi-stakeholder. Joint multi-sector strategies yield results in terms of coordination, clarity and focus on shared national objectives and priorities and maximize the resources of all stakeholders.

At the jointly organized Africa-Arab Regional Platforms, countries discussed the impact of disasters being amplified by climate change, increasing inequality and conflicts, and that the increasing vulnerability of countries emerging from conflicts to disasters and climate change has a severe negative impact on their economies and development. Subsequently, in the Tunis Declaration, African countries and all stakeholders are urged to develop innovative ways to ensure disaster risk reduction is effectively implemented in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. The Arab Regional Strategy recognises that conflicts, political turmoil and migration trends, among others are drivers of disaster risk in the region. Recovery and reconstruction in these countries must be disaster-risk informed if the social, economic and physical dividends of peacebuilding and reconstruction are to withstand the impacts of disasters and climate change.

The 2019 Global Platform High-Level Dialogue on leaving no one behind will promote awareness of the need for more attention to disaster risk reduction in conflict-affected countries and regions and address the challenges in strengthening inclusive disaster risk reduction and risk-informed humanitarian and development strategies in countries affected by conflict. Focusing on achieving target (e) of the Sendai Framework, to increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020, it will also feature case studies and ideas on how to achieve disaster risk reduction outcomes for the most marginalised in all contexts, including those affected by climate change and conflict.

Climate change is expected to increase disaster displacement, particularly in developing countries, as extreme weather events become more frequent and intense. There are multiple factors that lead to displacement in disasters, such as lack of early warning systems, poverty and exclusion, and poor construction of homes. Understanding who are most vulnerable and at risk of displacement and addressing these risks and vulnerabilities before a disaster strikes can help prevent displacement. This requires integration of displacement prevention actions in national and local disaster risk reduction and development strategies as well as in humanitarian contingency planning.

To this end, the Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Asia Regional Plan aims to ensure that the development and revision of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies include provisions on displacement and human mobility. At the Africa-Arab Regional Platforms, convened jointly, countries discussed the effects of disasters on forced displacement in Africa and in the Arab States. In the Tunis Declaration for Accelerating the Sendai Framework and the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, African countries and the African Union are urged to fully integrate disaster risk reduction, climate change and the SDGs in the roadmap for durable solutions for refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons as a part of the African Union 2019 theme.

At the 2019 Global Platform a Working Session on disaster displacement and disaster risk reduction will increase understanding of disaster displacement and promote good practices through specific policies and activities that reduce disaster displacement risk and improve the resilience and protection of displaced people and others at risk of displacement. The Session will provide guidance to address disaster displacement by reducing and preventing the risk of displacement, addressing impacts when displacement is unavoidable and strengthening the resilience of displaced people and host communities. Deliberations will also encourage countries to monitor displacement, including through setting baselines and targets, and to align disaster risk reduction strategies with development, humanitarian and climate change strategies and integrate disaster displacement in other policy agendas such as migration, climate change, and sustainable development.

In its consideration of the SDGs under review in 2019, the HLPF can provide guidance and recommendations on how governments and stakeholders can adopt a systemic approach to addressing interlinked social, economic and environmental risks in order to tackle the multiple dimensions of inequality through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement to ensure no one is left behind by 2030.

3. Leveraging disaster risk reduction as a tool to reduce inequality and promote empowerment

This section provides an overview of progress in implementing the Sendai Framework and highlights how disaster risk reduction is not only essential for sustainable development but can be an effective way to empower communities, promote inclusive approaches to risk governance and management, and reduce inequality by addressing the social determinants of risk. It extracts the guidance and recommendations from the 2018 Regional Platforms on developing and implementing inclusive and participatory disaster risk reduction strategies at national and local levels; highlights areas where urgent attention is needed to implement the Sendai Framework and the disaster risk reduction related SDGs; and highlights how practical and effective solutions will be shared to address many of these issues at the Global Platform in May 2019.

- *Reducing inequality and promoting participation through disaster risk reduction*

Disaster risk is a product of socio-economic vulnerability and inequality. Disasters deplete countries' economic, social and environmental resources, further exacerbating existing inequality and poverty and creating new poor people every year. This undermines not only achievements toward the SDGs but also the fundamental tenet of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind.

SDG 1 recognises that ending poverty is contingent on reducing disaster risk and aims to build resilience of the poor and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to disasters (SDG target 1.5). The Sendai Framework Monitor² shows that more than 50 per cent of disaster deaths occur in lower income countries. Furthermore, when comparing average annual losses to disasters against gross domestic product, it is evident that disaster risk is concentrated in low-income countries³.

The Sendai Framework Monitor also indicates that weather-related hazards are the biggest cause of disaster induced economic loss. With the increasing frequency, intensity and variability of weather-related hazard due to climate change, this trend is likely to increase without urgent action to reduce disaster risk. The Monitor indicates that small-scale but frequent disasters are responsible for most damages to infrastructure, livelihoods, and economic loss and represent an erosion of development assets, such as houses, schools, health facilities, roads and local infrastructure. Such losses are usually absorbed by low-income households and communities and tend to be underestimated. To end poverty in all its forms everywhere and reduce inequality within and among countries, it is therefore essential to reduce disaster risk and build resilience in least developed countries and the poorest and most vulnerable communities.

The Sendai Framework calls for disaster risk reduction policies to be inclusive, promote an all-of-society engagement, and empower local authorities and communities. While States have the overall responsibility for reducing disaster risk, it is a shared responsibility between Governments

² Sendai Framework Monitor: <https://sendaimonitor.unisdr.org/>

³ Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction Atlas: Unveiling Global Disaster Risk (UNISDR, 2017). See <https://www.preventionweb.net/english/hyogo/gar/atlas/>

and relevant stakeholders. However, far too often certain groups and regions are excluded from disaster risk reduction and disaster management planning and processes.

At the Regional Platforms in 2018, countries and stakeholders discussed progress and challenges in developing and implementing participatory and inclusive approaches to disaster risk reduction. Countries made commitments and policy recommendations to ensure the inclusion of women and girls, children and youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, displaced and migrant populations, and the poorest and most marginalized communities, to ensure their needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities are included in disaster risk reduction strategies and that there are empowered through their implementation.

Through the Tunis Declaration for Accelerating the Sendai Framework and the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Tunis Declaration of the Fourth Arab Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction, the two regions committed to enable meaningful participation and to uphold human rights in disaster risk reduction and development planning and practice. Countries also committed to foster all-of-society engagement in the decision making, design, planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring of policies for gender-sensitive and inclusive disaster risk reduction.

This commitment will be turned into action through the implementation of the Prioritized Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, endorsed at the Africa-Arab Platform. The Plan aims to ensure national and local disaster risk reduction strategies include provisions for women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in disaster risk reduction, as well as the systematic engagement of children and youth in decision-making on disaster risk reduction. Moreover, in the Tunis Declaration for Accelerating the Sendai Framework and the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, African countries requested the Africa Union Commission to establish a Youth Advisory Board on Disaster Risk Reduction to ensure their effective engagement.

The Cartagena Declaration of the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas also recognised the disproportionate impact of disaster on women and youth and their importance as agents of change, as well as the need to apply equitable, participatory and inclusive approach to disaster risk reduction to reduce the social and economic impact of disasters. The need to consider indigenous communities and integrate their traditional knowledge through participatory approaches is also recognized.

The Ulaanbaatar Declaration of the Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction calls on countries to ensure a human rights-based, people-centred and whole-of-society approach in the development, implementation and monitoring of inclusive national and local disaster risk reduction strategies. This will be implemented through the Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, endorsed at the AMCDRR, which recognises that inequalities in the region are compounding disaster impacts which necessitates a tailored inclusive approach as disasters affect people differently due to varied types and levels of vulnerability. The Action Plan promotes the development of regional guidelines and tools on disaster risk assessments that are inclusive, comprehensive, and address the needs of all relevant stakeholders.

In the Yerevan Declaration of the Central Asia and South Caucasus Sub-Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, countries recognise the low penetration of disaster risk reduction mechanisms for the poor and most vulnerable and committed to strengthening progress in establishing national platforms for disaster risk reduction through greater inclusion of women, persons with disabilities, and youth. Under the title “Youth Futures in a Resilient Pacific”, discussions at the 2019 Pacific Resilience Meeting will highlight how poverty and inequality, among others, continue to undermine resilience and the sustainability of development gains in the region. The Meeting will showcase efforts to prioritize the needs of those most vulnerable to disasters and the impacts of climate change and will provide learning and recommendations that lead to a strengthening of resilience at the community level.

The review of the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2020 Roadmap for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework, which was discussed at the 2018 EFDRR, highlighted a common issue that many of the inclusion commitments of the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda are yet to be translated into practice. Despite policy directions shifting towards disability inclusion and gender representation in disaster risk reduction, movement to act for inclusive and accessible services and actions has been slow. The subsequent Rome High-Level Communiqué highlights the importance of a whole-of-society approach and notes countries’ resolve to work together to put people at the center of disaster risk reduction, paying special attention to those groups which are disproportionately vulnerable to the effects of disasters.

Under the title “*Resilience Dividend: Towards Sustainable and Inclusive Societies*” inclusion will be at the core of the 2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and will feature across all sessions. The Platform will share examples on how governments can turn commitments into effective inclusive and participatory approaches, particularly at local level.

A High-Level Dialogue will focus on leaving no one behind to highlight the importance of a comprehensive understanding of the reasons for marginalisation in disaster risk reduction strategies as well as the tools to understand and map who is most at risk or marginalised. The Dialogue will present ways for countries updating their national and local disaster risk reduction strategies to embed inclusion and empowerment in their strategies in order to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised. Solutions will be shared around legislation, policy and financing to address the needs of most at risk and vulnerable groups. Good practice examples of inclusive processes and strategies will be promoted to highlight what has worked well in terms of inclusion; what has resulted in real disaster risk reduction impacts for the most vulnerable and marginalized groups; and how to overcome the challenges of inclusion.

A Special Session dedicated to women’s leadership in disaster risk reduction will discuss how governments can systematically engage female leaders and women in the design, planning and implementation and monitoring of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies in support of target (e) of the Sendai Framework. Recognizing that losses are experienced disproportionately, particularly by vulnerable populations, a Working Session on building back better will focus on inclusive recovery and reconstruction that tackles the specific needs of different groups of affected people. The session aims to clearly articulate what an inclusive approach to building back better can look like.

- *Ensuring no one is left behind through national and local disaster risk reduction strategies*

Disaster risk reduction strategies are a requisite for sustainable development. Developing disaster risk reduction strategies by the 2020 deadline set by target (e) of the Sendai Framework and targets 1.5, 11.b, 13.1 of the SDGs must be an urgent national priority. Disaster risk reduction strategies not only provide a guide to ensure development is risk-informed and resilient, they also highlight the socio-economic drivers of disaster risk, including inequality and vulnerability, with dividends across the SDGs. In this regard, the development of disaster risk reduction strategies at national and local levels is a key opportunity to address issues that affect inclusiveness and equality and can accelerate progress in empowering people.

The Sendai Framework Monitor indicates that progress towards achieving target (e) by 2020 is promising but that the pace is not fast enough. To-date, around 50 per cent of countries that reported through the Monitor have disaster risk reduction strategies in place with differing degrees of alignment to the Sendai Framework. However, too many countries lack the capacity or the means to implement their disaster risk reduction strategies to a meaningful degree to have sufficient impact. Concerted efforts are needed on capacity building, finance and sharing of knowledge and transfer of technology to turn policies into action. The outcomes of the Regional Platforms held in 2018 highlight the importance of achieving target (e) of the Sendai Framework by 2020, particularly at the local level where progress is mixed.

The review of the EFDRR Roadmap 2015-2020 found that almost all countries reported coherence between national and local disaster risk reduction strategies, even though this is not always supported by legislation compelling local governments to do so. This is partially due to decision makers in local authorities and cities developing strategies on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, supported by global initiatives such as the Making Cities Resilient Campaign.

The Prioritized Action Plan 2018-2020 for the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction also finds that the Making Cities Resilient Campaign is having an impact. Some 300 cities and municipalities in the region are participating in the campaign which has supported the development of local disaster risk reduction strategies. However, the Action Plan states that developing local disaster risk reduction strategies and building disaster risk reduction systems at local, city and community levels remains a challenge in the region.

The Ulaanbaatar Declaration calls on all governments and stakeholders to promote and scale-up community-level actions that strengthen local capacities and foster local leadership to reduce disaster risk and enhance resilience. However, few countries have developed local disaster risk reduction strategies, and the establishment of local platforms for disaster risk reduction is currently limited to a few countries. Where they do exist, a high-level of stakeholder engagement is reported. The Asia Action Plan 2018-2020 therefore aims to have 60 per cent of countries establish multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder local platforms by 2020. To achieve this goal, significant efforts are needed to build capacity of local authorities, local systems and communities to understand, prevent and reduce disaster risk, and to empower local authorities and local communities through resources, incentives and decision-making responsibilities. Improving the legal, policy and regulatory environment to enable a whole-of-society approach to the development and implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020 is also identified as a priority.

The Yerevan Declaration calls on all actors to recognize the importance of engaging local governments to implement and invest in disaster risk reduction. To this end, countries committed to promote the localization and dissemination of best practices in disaster risk identification, assessment and modelling and the use of disaster risk reduction education and public awareness raising.

The push towards target (e) of the Sendai Framework will feature prominently at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in May 2019. The High-Level Dialogues will share advances in developing national and local disaster risk reduction strategies, which will be augmented by two dedicated Working Sessions promoting locally-led disaster risk reduction as well as a Working Session on climate and disaster resilience in cities. The combined outcome of these deliberations will include sharing of experience, tools, techniques and good practice in formulating and operationalizing national risk reduction strategies that are aligned to the Sendai Framework and highlight what capacities are needed for a participatory all-of-society approach to the development and implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies. A focus on the local level will offer recommendations for effective local leadership and institutional mechanisms for broad participation of key actors as well as establishing vertical coordination between national and local authorities to link local strategies with national disaster risk reduction strategies. These sessions will offer solutions on how to ensure disaster risk reduction strategies address the drivers of risk related to poverty and inequality.

For disaster risk reduction strategies to be a driver of inclusion and to address the social determinants of disaster risk, it is essential that they are grounded in understanding of disaster risk in all its dimensions of vulnerability, capacity, exposure of persons and assets, hazard characteristics and the environment, as per Priority One of the Sendai Framework. While significant progress has been made in collecting disaster risk and loss and damage data, the ability of national and local authorities to collect and disseminate disaggregated data, and to determine the differentiated impact of disasters across groups requires much greater attention at the HLPF.

The Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework recognizes that most countries face challenges in collecting data disaggregated by different parameters, such as sex, age and disability. Building the capacity of national and local governments and actors to collect and record disaster risk, displacement, damage and loss data, including from at-risk communities living in geographically remote areas is identified as a priority in the region. The Prioritized Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction calls for the establishment and updating of disaster damage and loss databases to be used in national disaster risk assessments which also include data disaggregated by geography, gender, age, and disability as a priority. In the Yerevan Declaration, countries committed to establish national disaster loss accounting mechanisms that are disaggregated by location, gender, age and income.

Many national and local governments have called for capacity building and technical support in collecting disaggregated disaster data. The Global Platform High-level Dialogue on leaving no one behind will share examples of the mapping of vulnerable groups as well as the use of disaggregated data by gender, age, disabilities and other relevant attributes, to drive decision-making that leads to more inclusive disaster risk reduction approaches. It will emphasise the importance of engaging

the poorest, most marginalised and vulnerable groups in designing and implementing disaster risk reduction strategies and plans that aim to reach every person at risk of or impacted by disasters.

- *Coherence between international agreements on disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate action*

In 2015, a coherent global policy architecture was established across disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate action. Important progress has been made translating global policy coherence into integrated regional as well as national policies and strategies for disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and sustainable development, with several promising cases that can serve as good practice examples.

The development of national climate change adaptation strategies and national disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020 is an opportunity to maximize synergies and the shared use of data sets and risk assessments. To this end, UNISDR has provided technical support to the Secretariat of the UNFCCC to developed technical guidance on integrating climate change with the SDGs and the Sendai Framework. The Least Developed Countries Expert Group under the Framework Convention is taking this work forward to ensure coherence between national climate change adaptation plans and national disaster risk reduction strategies. The Adaptation Committee is currently exploring how the Sendai Framework indicators and monitoring process can support the definition of adaptation goals and indicators under the Paris Agreement.

The Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework recognizes that countries in the region have made concrete progress in achieving coherence between development and disaster risk reduction. Most medium- and long-term national development plans integrate disaster risk as a key issue to be addressed for the achievement of sustainable development. In addition, disaster risk reduction strategies and plans have increasingly started reflecting risk-informed development and resilience-building considerations. At the Africa-Arab Regional Platforms, countries committed to the integration of climate change, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development strategies, policies, programmes and plans of action at all levels to ensure disaster risk informed, inclusive, resilient and sustainable development.

Through the adoption of the Yerevan Declaration, countries in Central Asia and the South Caucasus reaffirmed their determination to implement the Sendai Framework in coherence with the 2030 Agenda for Development, the Paris Agreement and the New Urban Agenda. Recognizing that fragmented actions continue to undermine resilience in the Pacific, the 2019 Pacific Resilience Meeting, organised by the Pacific Resilience Partnership, of which UNISDR is a member, will bring together the Pacific Climate Change Community, the Pacific Sub-Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Low-Carbon Development Community of Practice and the Pacific Humanitarian Platform. The Meeting will be an opportunity to discuss progress and make recommendations to address gaps identified in the implementation of the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, a regional strategy that integrates disaster risk reduction and climate action for sustainable development. Overall, the Meeting aims to identify common technical initiatives that will enhance the integrated delivery of the Framework and formulate Technical Working Groups to strengthen collaboration and coherence.

However, four years since their adoption, global and regional policy coherence is not necessarily translating into disaster risk-informed strategies, programmes or investments at national and local levels in most countries. The Joint National Action Plans in the Pacific are good examples of integrated disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation plans towards resilient and sustainable development which can be replicated in other countries. Deliberations at the 2019 Global Platform will share experiences and tools to translate policy coherence into integrated programmes and action. The High-Level Dialogue on achieving the SDGs through climate and disaster risk reduction will highlight how different global agreements are leading to different actions and commitments from different ministries and stakeholders at national and local level. This poses a challenge to achieving the SDGs as resources and limited human and financial resource are divided rather targeted where synergies are greatest and most effective. The Dialogue will aim to build an understanding of the key benefits for pursuing coherence between the agreements and uncover the roots of their separation to define clear and concrete actions that will support coherence in their implementation. Working Sessions will delve deeper into the capacities needed and the design of governance mechanisms that can facilitate the breakdown of silos and compile recommendations to overcome the barriers to translating global policy coherence into integrated national plans and programmes.

- *Inclusive and multi-sectoral disaster risk reduction governance and legislation*

Priority Two of the Sendai Framework recognises the importance of risk governance that enables collaboration and coordination across ministers and organisational structures at national and local levels. The establishment and strengthening of cross-sectoral disaster risk governance mechanisms as well as capacity building support for cross-sectoral governance approaches are critical so that risk management is spread across all relevant sectors, disciplines, ministries and departments. Insufficient progress on integrated disaster risk governance is compromising the implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies and the achievement of the Sendai Framework and the SDGs.

At the same time, economic growth as well as investments towards the SDGs in many developing countries is fuelling construction in places where legislation and regulatory structures and expertise cannot keep pace, resulting in the creation of new risk and subsequent economic and social losses in exposed areas. Legal and regulatory frameworks are an essential conduit for translating disaster risk reduction strategies into concrete risk management actions. Further work is needed to integrate disaster risk considerations into sectoral laws, building codes, policies and plans. It is essential that reduction of disaster risk be made a legal obligation under national laws.

The urgency of strengthen risk governance featured prominently in the Regional Platforms in 2018. The Tunis Declaration for Accelerating the Sendai Framework and the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction commends African countries that have already taken measure to strengthen policy, legal and institutional frameworks in support of disaster risk reduction and urges African countries and local authorities to include disaster risk reduction and resilience approaches in relevant national legal frameworks, legislation and regulations across all relevant sectors. The Prioritized Action Plan 2018-2020 for the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction identifies legislative and regulatory action for enabling private sector investment in disaster risk reduction and developing and enforcing regulations to ensure all new infrastructure is disaster risk-resilient as a priority

The Cartagena Declaration recognizes the importance that countries strengthen their institutional frameworks to integrate disaster risk reduction into development measures to ensure resilience. To this end, and in recognition of the multi-disciplinary and inter-institutional nature of disaster risk reduction, countries commit to strengthen institutional platforms for disaster risk reduction in order to generate coordination spaces for actions between local and national governments, the private sector, and civil society. In the Yerevan Declaration, countries committed to making disaster risk assessments a prerequisite for land use, urban planning, infrastructure and housing investments. The Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework calls for the creation of an enabling environment, including through enacting appropriate legislative and regulatory action for private sector investment in disaster risk reduction and resilience. This is supported by a target of 30 per cent of countries by 2020 with regulatory or policy frameworks to reinforce risk considerations and risk reduction measures into development initiatives, in particular in the infrastructure sector.

- *Disaster risk reduction financing for resilience*

Economic losses to disasters increasingly undermine progress towards the SDGs and financing available for sustainable development. Funding used for reconstruction and recovery could have been invested towards the achievement of the SDGs. Current approaches to disaster risk financing that focus on risk transfer and contingency funds rarely cover frequent losses from small-scale disasters, which increasingly erode the resilience of the poorest households and communities. Countries often resort to diverting funds from other areas of budget expenditure and deepening their sovereign debt. Disaster risk financing has an important role to play in protecting fiscal balances and financing recovery and reconstruction. It does not, however, cover the full scale of losses or losses from frequent, small-scale disasters. Therefore, tailored disaster risk reduction financing instruments are needed to turn national and local disaster risk reduction strategies into action and to create the fiscal space to enable countries to reduce their disaster risk and invest in resilience to curtail the economic and human toll of disasters that can significantly set-back progress towards the SDGs.

As countries develop integrated national financing frameworks and pipelines of investable projects for the achievement of the SDGs, it is vital that those frameworks and projects are risk-informed and accompanied by disaster risk reduction financing instruments. Most countries do not have a dedicated budget for disaster risk reduction. Greater engagement by ministries of finance, the economy and planning can enhance the allocation of domestic resources to disaster risk reduction, include disaster risk reduction in budgeting and financial planning across all relevant sectors and align sustainable development strategies, financing frameworks and infrastructure plans with disaster risk reduction strategies.

Financing for disaster risk reduction emerged as an urgent priority in the outcomes of the 2018 Regional Platforms. The Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework encourages countries to ensure that disaster risk reduction strategies are backed by investment frameworks; to develop new, and strengthen existing, funding mechanisms for disaster risk reduction; and to create an enabling environment for private sector investment in disaster risk reduction. This includes enforcing infrastructure construction regulations and adding disaster risk reduction as a marker for the approval of projects.

The Tunis Declaration for Accelerating the Sendai Framework and the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction stresses the need for adequate annual national budgetary allocation to finance disaster risk reduction programmes. In the Rome High-Level Communiqué, European countries resolved to work together to ensure disaster risk assessment are a prerequisite for infrastructure investments; engage the private sector in building resilience to disasters; and to pay special attention to groups disproportional vulnerable to the effects of disasters in investments.

Risk-informed public and private investments will be the focus of the second day of the 2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. A High-Level Dialogue on this issue, supported by a Working Sessions on innovative disaster risk reduction investment modalities; unlocking the resilience dividend; and the role of financing instruments for disaster risk management, will review obstacles to disaster risk-informed investments and highlight innovative financing tools and mechanisms while underscoring the urgent needed for international and domestic public and private sector financing for disaster risk reduction and adopting a disaster risk informed approach to investing across all sectors. Recommendations will focus on understanding investives for risk-informed investments; how to build a regulatory environment for integrating risk management in policies and private investment decisions; regulations for risk-informed investments in infrastructure; and promoting a coherent approach to disaster and climate risk for risk-informed decision making in the financial sector.

The deliberations and outcomes of the 2019 HLPF can: i) recognize the value of disaster risk reduction for reducing inequality; ii) share good practice on empowering vulnerable and marginalized communities and groups thorough participatory and inclusive approaches to disaster risk reduction; iii) provide political guidance on the need to establish effective risk governance mechanisms, legislation and regulations to integrate disaster risk reduction across sectors and ministries and ensure investments in the SDGs accoss all sectors are disaster risk-informed and resilient; and iv) offer guidance and share successful examples on how countries can translate the coherence established between sustainable development, disaster risk reduction and climate action policies at the international level into integrated policies, plans and programmes at national and local levels.

Reference Material

Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (16 to 18 May 2019)

<https://www.unisdr.org/conference/2019/globalplatform/home>

Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas (20 to 22 June 2018)

- Cartagena Declaration
<http://eird.org/pr18/docs/cartagena-declaration.pdf>

Central Asia and South Caucasus Sub-Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (26 to 27 June)

- Yerevan Declaration
https://www.preventionweb.net/files/57668_finalyerevandeclarationeng26.06.181.pdf

Asia Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (3 to 6 July 2018)

- Ulaanbaatar Declaration
https://www.preventionweb.net/files/56219_ulaanbaatardeclarationfinal.pdf
- Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
https://www.preventionweb.net/files/56219_actionplan20182020final.pdf

Jointly organized Africa-Arab Regional Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction (9 to 13 October 2018)

- Tunis Declaration for Accelerating the Sendai Framework and the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction
https://www.preventionweb.net/files/57759_finaladopteddrafttunisdeclaration13.pdf
- Tunis Declaration of the Fourth Arab Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction
https://www.preventionweb.net/files/57759_finaldeclarationtunisarabic.pdf
- Prioritized Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction
https://www.preventionweb.net/files/57759_draftarabplanofpriorityaction20182020.pdf

European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction (21 to 23 November 2018)

- Rome High-Level Communiqué
https://www.preventionweb.net/files/57664_hlcommuniquefinal.pdf
- Review of the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2020 Roadmap for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework
https://www.preventionweb.net/files/57664_efdrrroadmapreview.pdf