

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

2020 High-level Political Forum Session on “Protecting the Planet and Building Resilience”

Wednesday 8 July, 14:00-15:00 EST

Virtual

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare significant failings in disaster risk governance.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction adopted in 2015 includes pandemic hazards and risks for the first time in an agreement of this kind.

This was at the insistence of UN Member States with recent experience of responding to outbreaks of Ebola, SARS, MERS and H1N1.

UN Member States have had five years to put in place national and local disaster risk reduction strategies which should include provisions for pandemics and other biological hazards. This is the only Sendai Framework global target with a 2020 deadline as it constitutes the foundation to effectively implement the Framework by 2030.

Less than half of Member States have done so and UNDRR is working hard with national focal points and UN agencies to support efforts to reach this target and strengthen disaster risk governance.

Disaster risk governance requires clear vision, plans, competence, guidance and coordination within and across sectors, and full engagement with civil society.

An important way of measuring disaster risk governance is against key targets of the Sendai Framework including reducing loss of life, reducing the numbers of people affected and reducing economic losses.

COVID-19 has been an enormous setback for the efforts of many countries in achieving these targets with serious implications for efforts to achieve the SDGs.

UNDRR urges UN Member States to put in place national and local disaster risk reduction strategies which recognise the fact that disaster risk is systemic in nature and widespread across all sectors and development processes.