



Fifth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas

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Towards Risk Informed Sustainable Development

CONCEPT NOTE

1. Introduction

Member States of the United Nations have reaffirmed their continued commitment to reduce disaster risk and losses by adopting the “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) 2015 – 2030 at the Third United Nations (UN) World Conference on DRR held in March 2015, Sendai, Japan. The Sendai Framework is a 15-year non-binding agreement, which recognizes that the State has the primary role to reduce disaster risk but that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders including local government, the private sector and others. It aims for the following outcome:

“The 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 Sendai Framework was the first of the post-2015 development instruments to be adopted and was followed by three other major intergovernmental agreements: the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, adopted in July 2015; Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, agreed in September 2015; and Paris Agreement adopted at the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in December 2015, and which is the successor to the Kyoto Protocol.

The Sendai Framework is a development framework that catalysis the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The SDG outcome document – ‘Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’ – highlights the need for DRR across a number of sectors. It is explicit in the outcome document of the SDGs that most of the goals are unattainable without addressing exposure and vulnerabilities of people living in poverty. For example, SDG-1 calls for an end to poverty in all its forms everywhere and recognizes that reducing exposure and vulnerability to disasters is essential for sustainable poverty eradication.

Therefore, in order to achieve sustainable development through integration of DRR in several development sectors, it is fundamental that Member States seek to implement the Sendai Framework at all levels by adequately engaging multiple stakeholders through their risk informed development planning, implementation and monitoring processes including on development and climate issues, as appropriate; and promote the integration of disaster risk management in other relevant sectors.

The Sendai Framework recognizes that Global and Regional Platforms for DRR have been instrumental in the development of policies and strategies and the advancement of knowledge and mutual learning, stressing also the pivotal role that they played in supporting the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA).



The Sendai Framework calls on national governments to actively engage in the Global Platform for DRR, the regional and sub-regional platforms for DRR and the thematic platforms in order to forge partnerships, periodically assess progress on implementation and share practice and knowledge on disaster risk-informed policies, programmes and investments, including on development and climate issues, as appropriate, as well as promote the integration of disaster risk management in other relevant sectors, underscoring the need for them to function as a coherent system of mechanisms in order to fully leverage the potential of collaboration across all stakeholders and sectors to provide guidance and support in implementation, and also to contribute to the integrated and coordinated follow-up processes to UN conferences and summits.

To support the assessment of global progress in achieving the outcome and goal of this framework, four priorities and seven global targets have been agreed to.

Priorities

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

The Sendai Framework’s Four Priorities are also the basis of the recently approved “Guidelines Towards a Regional Plan of Action” adopted during the First Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR held in Paraguay in June 2016.

Global Targets

- Increase: disasters strategies, early warning system and risk information, international cooperation;
- Reduce: disaster mortality, impacted people, economic loss, infrastructure damage.

The Regional Platforms (RP) for DRR are multi-stakeholder forums that were developed incrementally after the World Conference held in Japan, in 2005. While they have varying characteristics, they all share the same traits as dynamic forums for policy-makers, partners, experts and practitioners to announce initiatives, launch products, share information, promote campaigns, monitor progress and provide evidence about DRR.

The RP for DRR in the Americas is the main venue that brings together key stakeholders and actors involved in DRR from throughout North, South and Central America and the Caribbean. It is a multi-sector participatory forum which reflects the commitments and views of governments (national, subnational and local), intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), international organizations (IOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community organizations, scientific and academic institutions, the private sector, donors and the media. Four sessions of the RP in the Americas have been convened.



2. Results of the Previous RP Sessions

RP09

The first RP for DRR in the Americas, organized by UNISDR Americas and the Organization of American States (OAS), was held in Panama City, Panama, from 17 to 19 March 2009. This first session sought to bridge the gap between National Platforms and the Global Platform by establishing a mechanism for broad participation at the hemispheric level. It focused on defining responsibilities and priorities in order to move forward with a hemispheric agenda in the coming years, based on the trends, challenges, areas of progress and opportunities in the region. The results of this first session included the consolidation and institutionalization of the RP for the Americas, strengthening partnerships and alliances, increasing knowledge surrounding the mechanism to monitor progress in the implementation of the HFA, the promotion of opportunities for cooperation and on the dissemination of information on DRR throughout the region.

RP11

The second RP was carried out in Nayarit, Mexico, from 15 to 17 March, 2011 and, for the first time, was supported by the Advisory Council as a formal support mechanism. The main results of this 2011 session were captured in the Communiqué of Nayarit regarding the need to prioritize DRR at the highest level of action and the development of a hemispheric agenda to promote DRR. The main focus areas of the RP11 were: Acceptance and application of DRR within adaptation to climate change (CCA); measurable increases in investments for DRR; disaster resilient cities, schools and hospitals; HFA Mid-Term Review; and the message that was to be taken from the region to the Global Platform. This session permitted a reaffirmation of the commitment to the guiding principles of DRR and CCA, with a set of recommendations that were brought to the Global Platform.

RP12

The third RP was organized by UNISDR in Santiago, Chile, from 26 to 28 November, 2012. Throughout the three days of the Platform, 400 representatives from 43 countries and overseas territories participated in six thematic sessions, a high-level panel and four parallel sessions aimed at identifying experiences and progress as well as defining the priorities for strengthening the DRR agenda throughout the region. The Regional Platform was recognized by participants as the ideal venue to discuss how we can further promote the integration of DRR into policies and planning processes. It has also served to reveal significant progress in the region in terms of strengthening governance for DRR through new legal frameworks and the integration of risk reduction in investment policies and development planning in the countries of the Americas.

The growing interest generated by the RP can also be measured by the number of organizations, a total of 43, which presented their experiences in the "Ignite Stage" during the three days of the RP. As a result of this, participants agreed on the following priorities to advance in the development of an agenda for DRR in the Americas:

- a) Strengthen the political commitment and encourage collaboration of all sectors to further integrate policies for DRR and adaptation to climate change in the context of development planning.
- b) Recognize and strengthen the role and capacity of the various members of civil society and ensure that communities and organizations participate in decision-making processes with regards to DRR and resilience in the Americas.



- c) Recognize and reinforce the link between the public and private sectors as a key factor in developing disaster resilient societies and support the integration of private sector efforts in a DRR program in the region.
- d) Continue to strengthen the procedures and instruments, including those of a financial nature, to monitor progress and ensure the integration of risk management and adaptation to climate change in planning processes, knowledge management, development practices and public investment.

RP14

The fourth RP took place in Guayaquil, Ecuador, from 27 to 29 May 2014. The RP particular importance was to consolidate substantive and political contributions from the Americas coming from the previous RPs as key inputs towards the World Conference on DRR held from 14 to 18 March, 2015, in Sendai, Japan and the approval of the Sendai Framework. The outcomes of the RP served to:

- Involve high-level political and executive authorities along with various actors to advance the DRR and the CCA agenda in the region;
- Generated an increase in the number and diversity of participants in this RP;
- Allowed to undertake a joint assessment of the progress in DRR and CCA for the period 2005-2015 serving to identify gaps and inputs for the new international Framework for DRR (Sendai Framework)
- Identify and celebrate the achievements made through the HFA 2005-2015 thus facilitating an update on the status of implementation of regional agreements/recommendations of the HFA with a view towards presenting them at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction 2015;
- Carry out a substantive consultation with participants from various sectors to provide an opportunity for consultation so that participants may contribute to the development of the new Framework for DRR finally approved in Sendai in 2015.
- Agree on a common regional agenda (Guayaquil Communiqué) to prioritize areas and identify regional strengths leading to the adoption of a new framework for DRR.

3. *Fifth Regional Platform on DRR in the Americas (RP17)*

Canada will host the Fifth RP for DRR in the Americas (RP17) through its Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness with the support of the UNISDR's Regional Office for the Americas (UNISDR Americas). The offer to host this RP reflects Canada's continued support to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and its commitment to the priorities and targets of the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030.

This Fifth Session will be held in Montreal, Quebec, Canada from 7 to 9 March 2017. Approximately 1000 delegates are expected, including ministers, policy makers, practitioners, experts and disaster risk managers. A Ministers and High-Level Authorities meeting will also take place during this Fifth Session.

Both meetings, the RP and the High-Level segment, will mark the first opportunity for governments and stakeholders in the Americas to discuss and agree on a Regional Action Plan to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas.



The main focus will therefore be on identifying how governments, ministers, civil society leaders, technical and scientific institutions, private sector, media could drive the implementation of activities and actions to meet the expected targets of the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030 in the Americas while building capacity in the region.

The agenda of the Fifth Session will encompass a number of activities including: an intergovernmental segment, technical sessions, parallel and special events where participants will be able to interact and discuss the implementation of the Sendai Framework, and exchange best practices and lessons learned. A key feature will be a High-Level segment where Ministers and other high-level authorities will agree on the priorities of the DRR agenda for the next two years for the Americas region. A key outcome of this discussion will be the agreement of a Regional Action Plan for the Americas.

Key outcomes of the Fifth Session:

1. Chair Summary
2. High-Level Communiqué of the High-Level Segment
3. Regional Action Plan to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas
4. Proceedings of the Fifth RP for DRR in the Americas
5. Recommendations of the Americas Region for the 2017 Global Platform

Objectives of the Fifth Session:

1. Identifying approaches and viable mechanisms for the implementation of the Regional Action Plan;
2. Further integrating DRR and CCA in the context of development planning aiming towards “a risk informed sustainable development”;
3. Strengthening the role and capacity of the various members of stakeholder, including the private sector in the implementation of the Sendai Framework;
4. Integrating actively the civil society networks and community networks;
5. Taking stock of the progress made in the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas Region, including stakeholders’ commitments;
6. Sharing knowledge and new tools to strengthen national and local resilience to disasters, including lessons learned in resilience building from the recovery phase;
7. Reviewing the proposed monitoring system for the Sendai Framework, specifically regarding the seven targets to be reached by all Member States;
8. Aligning linkages with other UN bodies and World organizations ensure coherence with other global processes (SDGs, CCA) and identifying specific areas for follow-up action to be reflected as contributions to the Global Platform and the SDG’s process at the national level;
9. Recognizing and strengthening gender specific leadership in DRR throughout the Americas; and
10. Recognizing and strengthening the role of Indigenous knowledge and practice in DRR throughout the Americas.

The deliberations of the Fifth Regional Platform are expected to contribute to the definition of the recommendations that the Americas region will put forward to the Global Platform that will take place in Cancun, Mexico from 24 to 26 May 2017, as well as provide inputs to the next session of the High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development.



The Fifth Session will provide an opportunity for Member States to:

- Share experiences in implementing the Sendai Framework through its four priorities at the regional level, with a focus on Priority 1 and 3: Understanding Disaster Risk;
- Improve understanding of the national and regional baseline status of the Sendai Framework and the actions needed to achieve its seven global targets;
- Increase commitment for actions to implement the Sendai Framework at national and local levels;
- Build regional capacity in the four priorities of the Sendai Framework;
- Ensure policy coherence between DRR, humanitarian action, Sustainable Development and Climate Change in accordance with Sendai Framework, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change;
- Provide opportunities to showcase the early successes and highlight the good practices by Governments and stakeholders in the implementation and the monitoring of the Sendai Framework.
- Ensure knowledge transfer and capacity building on DRR as it pertains to Indigenous populations.
- Integrate the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit.

Specifically regarding the contribution of stakeholders it is expected that the Fifth Session will:

- Increase engagement and commitment of stakeholders to implementing the Sendai Framework through its four priorities, with a focus on Priority 1: Understanding Disaster Risk;
- Improve ownership and accountability to actions supporting governments in the implementation of the Sendai Framework;
- Improve understanding of the baseline status of the Sendai Framework and the actions needed by stakeholders to achieve its seven global targets;
- Align and integrate the objectives of the Sendai Framework with ongoing work taking place globally through other UN bodies and other organizations such as the World Health, and the World Meteorological Organizations.

The meeting will also feature an exhibition space, a photographic exhibit and an Ignite Stage, a place where DRR practitioners present innovative DRR tools and initiatives. The RP will also offer an opportunity for sub-regional intergovernmental groups and DRR stakeholders to interact and strengthen partnerships and share experiences on the road to meeting the Sendai Framework's seven global targets. Interested parties from across the Americas can also be part of this conversation by using the hashtag #SendaiAmericas.

4. Advisory Council

Due to the intergovernmental nature of the Sendai Framework targets, the structure and contents of this Fifth Session are being defined by an established Regional Platform's Advisory Council which is comprised of representatives from countries representing the various inter-governmental organizations of the Americas - CAPRADE, CDEMA, CEPREDENAC, REMAGIR, UNASUR, ACS and OAS; key ISDR system partners in the region - World Bank, IADB, IFRC, OCHA, WHO/PAHO, UNDP, ECLAC, as well as the Government of Ecuador (as host country of the previous Fourth Regional Platform held in 2014), the Government of Mexico (as host



of the next Global Platform to be held in 2017), Paraguay (as host of the First Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR), Canada (as host of the Fifth Regional Platform), a representative of Civil Society through the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations, a representative of the private sector, a representative of the technical-scientific community represented by the International Council for Science (ICSU) and by UNISDR¹.

¹ Explanation of acronyms - CAPRADE - Comité Andino para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres (Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Relief) - CDEMA - Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency - CEPREDENAC - Centro de Coordinación para la Prevención de los Desastres Naturales en América Central (Coordination of Natural Disaster Prevention in Central America), REMAGIR - Reunión de Ministros y Altas Autoridades de Gestión Integral del Riesgo de Desastres en Mercosur (Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities of Integrated Risk Disaster Management of Mercosur), UNASUR - Union of South American Nations, ACS - Association of Caribbean States, OAS – Organization of American States, IADB – Inter-American Development Bank, IFRC - International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, OCHA – United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, WHO/PAHO – Pan American Health Organization, UNDP – United Nations Development Programme, ECLAC - Economic Commission for Latin America & the Caribbean.