



**Strategic Approach to Capacity  
Development for Implementation of  
the Sendai Framework for  
Disaster Risk Reduction**

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# **Executive Summary & Introduction**

  
**SENDAI FRAMEWORK**  
FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030

 **UNDRR**  
UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

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# Executive Summary

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework) recognizes the State's primary role in facilitating the achievement of its disaster risk reduction (DRR) goal and priorities and highlights the criticality of sharing these responsibilities with other stakeholders and realizing an all-of-society approach.

United Nations Member States have identified a need for implementation support and enhancement of the capacity of institutions and individuals dealing with DRR, and in implementation of the technical support requirements of the Sendai Framework itself. Without adequate capacity and mechanisms for its implementation, it will be impossible to achieve the Sendai Framework targets. The pursuit of more collaborative and coordinated efforts to deal with increasingly limited resources<sup>01</sup> is required as global progress towards meeting DRR targets advances.

As the UN entity mandated by the Sendai Framework and the UN General Assembly to support implementation, monitoring and review of the Sendai Framework, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction has taken the lead on an investigation of prevailing DRR-specific capacity development (CD) needs in collaboration with other UN entities, partners, and DRR stakeholders<sup>02</sup> for the purpose of developing a more effective strategic approach.

Between July 2017 and March 2018, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction's Global Education and Training Institute (GETI) convened global, regional, online, and one-on-one consultations in collaboration with regional offices<sup>03</sup> that fostered the participation and input of over 300 stakeholder representatives. Through these consultations and concurrent literature review, during which a broad range of needs, ideas, and approaches were identified and assessed, a baseline notion of success emerged. The resulting Strategic Approach was further presented and discussed during 2018 Regional Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Strategic Approach herein seeks to establish among all stakeholders a common understanding of CD within the DRR context. By characterizing outstanding CD needs in light of common obstacles and constraints, presenting key principles, elements, and actions that together help guide planning discussions, providing targets and ideals, and normalizing practice across sectors, improvement of practical standards will occur.

The Strategic Approach therefore does not offer a unique framework to be modelled or plan to be copied. Rather it is a resource of empowerment for all relevant CD partners and stakeholders, and

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01 UNISDR, 2014. pp. 6-17.

02 The Sendai Framework encourages the participation of each of the following stakeholders: national governments, sub-national governments, local governments, civil society organizations (including volunteers, organized voluntary work organizations, and community-based organizations), academia, scientific and research entities and networks, businesses, professional associations, private sector financial institutions, philanthropic foundations, and the media.

03 Information on UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Regional Offices may be found at <http://bit.ly/2F08bsQ>.

its goal a vision of risk-informed sustainable development by 2030. It provides generalized advice on the CD roles and responsibilities of various DRR stakeholders, and high-level guidance in six critical areas of need which include:

1. Developing and Strengthening DRR Fundamentals
2. Institutionalizing DRR Capacity
3. Sharing and Using Risk Information Before and After Disasters
4. Establishing Collaborative Action for DRR at the National and Local Levels
5. Strengthening External Support Mechanisms
6. Advancing and Expanding DRR Capabilities

The Strategic Approach also identifies high-value 'anchors' that key decisionmakers and CD champions at all levels may pursue at the community, country, regional, and global levels may establish to improve the coordination and quality of CD efforts. These include:

1. Promoting awareness of the need for CD at all levels and by all stakeholders, and supporting the development of national and local strategic plans
2. Establishing nationally-based and Sendai Framework-relevant evaluation indicators that enable measurement of CD outputs, outcomes, and impacts
3. Expanding South-South, Triangular, and other partnership and cooperation opportunities through the creation of a global CD provider marketplace
4. Demystifying Capacity Needs by Providing Nationally- and Locally-Relevant, Sendai Framework-Focused Target Capability Standards
5. Strengthening advancement and professionalization of DRR capacities and capabilities by leveraging on existing and/or establishing regional and national CD institutes

Recognizing that a more complementary global approach to the development of DRR capacity requires appropriate coordination mechanisms that are acceptable to all partners, several options are provided as dictated by the nature of the various partnerships that exist. These include:

1. United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and other UN strategic partnership frameworks
2. United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: Towards a Risk-Informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development (UNPoA)
3. CD for DRR Platform (Marketplace)
4. The Sendai Framework Monitor (CD plan)

The Strategic Approach is designed to be a living document. As CD needs and trends change over time, updated versions of this document will be released to reflect those changes. A companion website offering expanded detail, lessons learned, best practices, and examples is currently under development. The present version is available at:

<https://www.preventionweb.net/sendai-framework/capacitydevelopment>

# Introduction

## A Vision of Risk-Informed Sustainable Development by 2030

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030<sup>04</sup> (Sendai Framework)<sup>05</sup> recognizes the State's primary role in facilitating the achievement of its disaster risk reduction (DRR) goal and priorities but highlights the criticality of sharing these responsibilities with other stakeholders through an "all-of-society" approach.<sup>06</sup>

Global efforts to address persistent gaps in DRR capacity continue to fall short in the face of persistent, shifting, and increasing risk drivers. Whether directed towards the enhancement of individuals' knowledge and skills, the strengthening of organizational and institutional structures, or the fostering of a more conducive risk reduction environment, there remains much room for improvement in both mindsets and modalities of disaster risk reduction capacity development (CD for DRR) efforts. UN Member States<sup>07</sup> have identified a need for continued support with Sendai Framework implementation, namely development of the capacity of institutions and individuals at the national and local levels.<sup>08</sup>

The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction has taken the lead to develop the Strategic Approach to Capacity Development for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (the Strategic Approach) in collaboration with partners and affiliated organizations in order to provide all DRR stakeholders with a common and comprehensive methodology for developing the capabilities and competencies required to address DRR goals and increase resilience.

The Strategic Approach addresses a longstanding lack of common guidance for CD for DRR.<sup>09</sup> <sup>10</sup> It is not focused solely on how the United Nations or any development partner supports countries' CD for DRR efforts, but rather encourages all stakeholders to understand the greater CD needs that exist within countries and communities, and to consider their role within that context.

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04 The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 outlines seven clear targets and four priorities for action to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks: (i) Understanding disaster risk; (ii) Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk; (iii) Investing in disaster reduction for resilience and; (iv) Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction. <http://bit.ly/2Bl4Da3>.

05 The Sendai Framework was adopted by 187 countries in March of 2015 to effectively promote and guide progress towards a substantial reduction in 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. In doing so, ambitious targets were established for both 2020 and 2030. The Sendai Framework was subsequently endorsed by the UN General Assembly through resolution A/RES/69/283 on 23 June 2015.

06 UNISDR, 2015b. Paragraphs 19a-f.

07 Particularly the least developed nations, small Island developing states, landlocked countries, and middle-income countries facing conditions that exacerbate vulnerability.

08 Hagelsteen and Burke, 2016. P. 43.

09 Becker and Abrahamsson, 2012. P1.

10 Hagelsteen, 2014. P1.

The Strategic Approach is designed to inform the actions of any CD partner, regardless of whether public, private, or non-profit, and whether based locally, nationally, or at the international level. The information and advice provided are contextualized for and directed at the national government level but apply to all stakeholders that contribute to and/or are influenced by CD efforts. It is developed to be valid for the duration of the Sendai Framework for DRR. The approach places emphasis to ensure women, children and youth, persons with disabilities, poor people, migrants, indigenous peoples, volunteers and communities at risk can access CD for DRR.

Between July 2017 and March 2018, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Global Education and Training Institute (GETI) convened global, regional, online, and one-on-one consultations in collaboration with the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction regional offices<sup>11</sup> that have fostered the participation and input of over 300 stakeholder representatives.<sup>12</sup> Through these consultations and concurrent literature review, during which a broad range of needs, ideas, and approaches were identified and assessed, a baseline notion of success emerged. From this baseline, the approach that follows was developed.

The Strategic Approach was developed in complementarity with the existing library of DRR and CD products, programmes, and resources, and both refers to and draws upon them where applicable. Direct and significant linkages also exist between national and global DRR requirements, prevailing CD knowledge and practice, and ongoing efforts to address sustainable development (SD) and climate change adaptation (CCA). This includes efforts to fulfil the Sendai Framework goal and priorities, as well as efforts made in keeping with the Sendai Framework “Words into Action” (WIA) guides and the monitoring, assessment, and evaluation promoted through the Sendai Framework Monitor.<sup>13</sup>

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11 Information on UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Regional Offices may be found at <http://bit.ly/2F08bsQ>.

12 A full description of the consultative process and a list of consultations is provided in Appendix 2.

13 See Appendix 1 for descriptions of each relationship.