

Official Statement

Government of India at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2019

Chairperson,

Distinguished delegates,

Four years after the adoption of the Sendai Framework, I have the honour to present a brief overview of steps taken by India towards meeting the Sendai targets, some early achievements, and some of the key challenges.

With regards to Target A, we are not only focusing on reducing mortality from major disasters but also from small or medium, and locally-specific disasters such as heat wave, thunderstorm and lightning. This has yielded early results. Heat wave related deaths have decreased from over 2000 in 2015 to 25 in 2018. This has been possible through issuance of appropriate national guidelines on heat wave action planning, localization of heat wave early warning, extensive public awareness campaign, and effective implementation at the local level through a multi-sectoral approach.

Earlier this year, we have also issued national guidelines for managing the risk of losses from Thunderstorm, Lightning, Squall, Dust Storm, Hailstorm and Strong winds. Taken together these natural hazards are among the biggest killers in India. As in the case of heat wave, the national guidelines will help improve the capacity of our States, assist with local level Action Planning, and ultimately help reduce preventable losses from such frequently occurring disasters.

Towards the achievement of Target E, based on the National Disaster Management Plan of 2016, all the States and more than 95% of Districts in India have prepared their Disaster Management Plans. Moreover, in light of the experience of its implementation over the last two years, the National Plan is being revised. The revised plan will explicitly address issues related to social inclusion and outline specific

measures for bringing coherence in the implementation of SFDRR, SDGs and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

For Sendai target F, in order to enhance regional and international cooperation, we hosted the First 'BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise' in the National Capital Region in October 2017. This Exercise provided a platform for sharing Best Practices on all aspects of DRR, and for strengthening regional response and coordination among BIMSTEC member countries. Likewise, in February 2019, India hosted a meeting on Disaster Risk Management of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), an intergovernmental organization of 22 members and nine dialogue partners. During the meeting, a work plan was prepared for regional cooperation on DRM among IORA members.

Chairperson,

I am happy to inform that for the accomplishment of Sendai Targets C and D, India has been actively pursuing the theme of Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and has initiated a dialogue with more than 40 countries to build a Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure. Such a Coalition would benefit both developed and developing countries and serve as a knowledge and capacity development platform for promoting disaster resilient infrastructure. In order to further develop the notion of a Coalition, India in collaboration with UNISDR, has hosted international Workshops on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure in January 2018 and March 2019. The March workshop brought together more than 33 nations, 12 international organizations, 25 academic institutions and private sector organizations to deliberate on multiple facets of disaster and climate resilient infrastructure, and to chart directions for future cooperation.

Local level capacity – for implementation of the Sendai Framework as well as for monitoring progress – remains a challenge.

In order to augment the capacity of state level disaster risk management organizations to steer the implementation, we have launched a national programme or scheme to provide appropriate technical and financial support to state governments.

In order to encourage innovation and recognise the exceptional contributions of organisations and individuals to disaster risk management in the country, Government of India has instituted an annual national award in the name of our great freedom fighter Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. The first award was announced on his birth anniversary on 23 January this year.

Chairperson,

In the end, I would like to conclude that India is focusing on strategies and approaches that can help in fulfilling SFDRR commitments and is dedicated to reduce the vulnerabilities and impact of disasters through national efforts as well as regional and international Co-operation.

Thank You.

(672 words)
