

Briefing Note on the 21st Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP21) in Paris

Climate change poses risk to sustainable development with increasing disaster losses associated with climate related extreme events and slow-onset hazards. Climate change is altering the face of disaster risk and adding complexity to disaster risk management. The world cannot afford to perpetuate disconnect between disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate change. Disaster risk and climate change are felt differently by different countries and communities.

All regions and almost all countries on the planet will be impacted by climate change one way or another. These impacts will in turn affect poverty, health, social development, economic growth, demographics and migration, and environmental protection. Hence, addressing climate change and reducing disaster risk will be critical for sustainable development now and in the future. IPCC report «Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability», as contribution of Working Group II to the 5th Assessment Report states that effects of climate change are already occurring on all continents and across the oceans.

In March 2015, the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, which was later endorsed by the UN General Assembly in its 69th session. The Sendai Framework is the first of the post-2015 international agreements to be adopted and provides the basis for a risk-informed and resilient future. The **Sendai Framework specifically addresses climate change and climate action, providing measures, guiding principles and means of implementation**. Sendai outcomes are a significant milestone in international cooperation for building resilience to climate-related disaster. Sendai Framework establishes the significance of ensuring credible links on the post-2015 agenda including sustainable development goals, financing for development, climate change and disaster risk reduction and the calls for enhanced coherence across policies, institutions, indicators, reporting and measurement systems for implementation.

In the context of COP21 and expected outcome of a new climate agreement to succeed the Kyoto Protocol, **UNISDR aims** at promoting coherence and mutual reinforcement of disaster risk reduction in the climate change agenda including global, national, and local commitments to build climate resilience, foster collaboration for effective action and efficient implementation towards achievement of global targets on risk reduction and on climate mitigation and adaptation.

Specific messages for COP21 on disaster risk reduction to build climate resilience:

- COP21 outcomes to stress the need for accelerated action to build resilience through risk-sensitive planning and implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.
 - The policy foundations for coherence and mutual reinforcement between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation are well established in various decisions of the UNFCCC which are explicit in regards to the importance of disaster risk reduction. The Cancun Adaptation Framework specifically called for: *“enhancing climate change related disaster risk reduction strategies, taking into consideration the Hyogo Framework for Action, where appropriate, early warning systems, risk assessment and management, and sharing and transfer mechanisms such as insurance, at the local, national, sub-regional and regional levels, as appropriate;”*.

- COP21 is an opportunity to reinforce the importance of coherent and coordinated actions on reducing disaster risk and building climate resilience through recognizing Sendai Framework as an existing international framework that provides means for implementing and accelerating national and local actions on climate risk management and resilience. Engagement of non-state actors is critical to accelerate action at all levels.
- Adaptation is a challenge faced by all countries. It is critical for a post-2015 climate regime to stress the importance of building resilience by enabling communities to adapt and build back better from devastating impacts of disasters and climate change. Building on references made in the Cancun Adaptation Framework (adopted in COP16) and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the post-2015 climate regime to promote a more integrated approach to adaptation, sustainable development, environmental management and disaster risk reduction.
 - Adaptation planning is further strengthened through consideration of exposure and vulnerability to extreme and slow onset events; coordination with national and local disaster risk reduction plans;
 - Reducing disaster risk through effective adaptation plans at all levels, improving people-centred early warning systems, improving ecosystem management and enhancing disaster preparedness and disaster management capacities are crucial to sustainable and resilient development.
 - Support to national and local adaptation efforts through enhanced international cooperation, enhanced institutional arrangements and linkages to existing knowledge and information on climate risk and projected impacts enable and advance adaptation.
- Loss and Damage associated with climate change is on the increase leaving its marks on developing and developed countries all over the world. The Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage already establishes close linkages between knowledge and understanding of comprehensive risk management approaches and actions to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including slow onset impacts. Enhanced international cooperation and complementarity of efforts to support countries increase understanding of comprehensive risk management approaches and improve data on disaster losses by building on, expanding, and strengthening existing national disaster loss databases and risk analysis will be important.
 - The approved two-year work plan of WIM calls for enhancing the understanding of the capacity and coordination needs with regards to preparing for, responding to and building resilience against loss and damage associated with extreme and slow onset events, including through recovery and rehabilitation.
 - Strengthening cooperation with institutions outside the convention will facilitate coordination and information sharing between the climate change and disaster risk reduction communities allowing for effective implementation of the WIM work plan as well as national adaptation and mitigation efforts.
 - Knowledge and information generated through risk management approaches and disaster risk reduction activities contribute to climate risk management and to understanding and managing losses and damages linked to climate change impacts.

Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 specifically addresses climate change and climate action, providing measures, guiding principles and means of implementation. It focuses attention on action needed to tackle underlying disaster risk drivers, such as the consequences of **climate change** and variability, among others. It calls on UNISDR to support the development of coherent global and regional follow-up and indicators and in coordination, as appropriate, with other relevant mechanisms for sustainable development and **climate change**.

- a. The Sendai Framework establishes the significance of ensuring credible links between intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, financing for development, **climate change** and disaster risk reduction and the calls for enhanced coherence across policies, institutions, goals, indicators, and measurement systems for implementation. It sets out guiding principles which include the development, strengthening and implementation of policies, plans, practices and mechanisms that promote coherence among **climate change and variability**, environmental management and disaster risk reduction agendas (among others).
- b. Understanding disaster risk requires specific actions that support conduct of comprehensive surveys on multi-hazard disaster risks, including **climate change scenarios**. It also identifies actions to maintain and strengthen in situ and remotely-sensed earth and **climate observations** and investment in effective, nationally-compatible, regional multi-hazard early warning mechanisms, where relevant, in line with the **Global Framework for Climate Services**.
- c. Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster calls for collaboration across global and regional mechanisms and institutions for the implementation and coherence of instruments and tools relevant to disaster risk reduction, such as for **climate change**, among others.
- d. Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction calls for efforts to prepare, review and periodically update disaster preparedness and contingency policies, plans and programmes considering **climate change scenarios and their impact on disaster risk**.
- e. Sendai specifically calls for the incorporation of disaster risk reduction measures into multilateral and bilateral development assistance programmes including those related to **adaptation to climate change**. It also calls upon the other international organizations and treaty bodies, including the **Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**, to support in the implementation of the framework.
- f. The Sendai Framework also reinforces the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, the regional and sub-regional platforms for disaster risk reduction and the thematic platforms as instruments to forge partnerships periodically assess progress and share practice and knowledge including on development and **climate issues**.

In addition to these specific provisions, full implementation of Sendai Framework will support and accelerate national and local efforts to adapt to climate change. With no other international operational goal on adaptation in place, the Sendai Framework is the most focused and robust instrument currently available to address resilience.