



Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction  
Tunisia 9-13 October 2018

## AFRICA-ARAB PLATFORM ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

□ *TOWARDS DISASTER RISK-INFORMED & INCLUSIVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT* □

9 – 13 October 2018, LAICO HOTEL, Tunis, Tunisia

### CONCEPT NOTE

#### BACKGROUND

#### REGIONAL PLATFORMS FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 recognizes the Global and Regional Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction as key mediums for its implementation, building on the pivotal role that they have played in supporting the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

Regional Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction are multi-stakeholder forums that were developed incrementally after the Kobe Conference 2005. While they have varying characteristics, they all share the same traits as dynamic forums for policymakers, partners, experts and practitioners to announce initiatives, launch products, share information, promote campaigns, monitor progress and provide evidence about disaster risk reduction.

The Sendai Framework also underscores the need for the Global Platform and Regional Platforms to function as a coherent system of mechanisms to fully leverage the potential of collaboration across all stakeholders and sectors to provide guidance

and support in the implementation of disaster risk reduction programmes.

The Global and Regional Platforms serve as instruments to:

- Forge partnerships;
- Periodically assess progress on implementation;
- Share practice and knowledge on disaster risk-informed policies, programmes and investments, including on development and climate issues;
- Promote the integration of disaster risk management in other relevant sectors;
- Contribute to the integrated and coordinated follow-up processes to United Nations conferences and summits.

#### REGIONAL PLATFORM IN AFRICA AND ARAB STATES

Regional platforms and conferences in both the Africa and Arab States regions started during the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Apart from the technical discussions, the platforms provided a unique opportunity for governments and stakeholders from both regions to reaffirm commitment to reducing disaster losses through the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). The platforms serve as a forum to

exchange experiences on successful DRR practices and innovative approaches.

### **REGIONAL PLATFORM & HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS IN AFRICA**

The Africa Regional Platform is a biennial forum that brings together African Member States, intergovernmental organizations, UN agencies, stakeholders and development partners to review progress made in the implementation of the continental and global disaster risk reduction frameworks. The Platform enables the sharing of good practices and lessons learnt, identify gaps with a view to enhancing coordination, increasing awareness, mobilizing commitments to disaster risk reduction and making recommendations to further accelerate the Sendai Framework implementation across the continent.

The forum also provides an opportunity for DRR experts to network and share knowledge and innovations on DRR and climate change adaptation, thereby enhancing the overall continental capacity to cope with disasters.

The High-Level Meeting (HLM) of African Ministers responsible for disaster risk reduction is responsible for agreeing and adopting the outcomes and recommendations of the Regional Platform) through a Declaration, which is thereafter submitted to the African Union Summit for endorsement.

Aside from adopting the outcomes of the regional platform, the HLM of Ministers also develops commitments and policy guidance on the DRR implementation process including its linkage to the overall economic development, the Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and Africa Union Agenda 2063” The Africa We Want”

The Africa regional platform and the high-level meetings have been instrumental in shaping the DRR agenda in the region from the HFA to the Sendai Framework era. The meetings have also supported the implementation of the Programme of

Action, for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015-2030 in Africa.

By bringing African DRR experts, stakeholders and policy makers together, the platforms have advocated for critical concerns on the DRM realm, such as the escalating rise in economic losses, heavy impacts of extensive disasters, the need for more investments in DRR, linking DRR and climate change adaptation and addressing humanitarian and development divide, as well as the need to enhance partnerships and political commitment for DRR. Together, these efforts have contributed to strengthen DRR, hence the continent’s progression towards achieving Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### **REGIONAL CONFERENCES IN THE ARAB STATES**

The Arab Regional Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction is a biennial conference that brings together Arab Member States, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia, women, youth, civil society, UN organizations and other stakeholders to review, develop and align regional strategies and action plans to reduce risk and build the resilience of communities and nations to natural hazards. Furthermore, they aim to enhance disaster risk reduction efforts through exchange of experiences and better communication and coordination. The event provides a unique opportunity for governments to reaffirm their political commitment to implement the Sendai Framework.

Arab regional meetings; including those held in Aqaba, Jordan, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, and Doha, Qatar focused on issues related to local level implementation of the HFA, shaping the Sendai Framework, and updating the Arab strategy and programme of work with prioritized actions for the first 2 years.

The regional conferences provided the opportunity for governments and stakeholders to reaffirm commitments on the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

## **AFRICA-ARAB PLATFORM ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**

The African region and the Arab States region often face similar risks and hazards. By coming together, the two regions will strengthen their cooperation, share lessons and experiences and agree on ways to enhance future collaboration in the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

The Africa-Arab Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction is a multi-stakeholder conference that brings together governments intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia, women, youth, civil society, UN organizations and other stakeholders to build on past progress – and limit current and future threats to development – by prioritizing disaster risk management by all sectors and at all levels.

The Africa-Arab Platform will be co-organized by the Government of Tunisia and UNISDR in collaboration with the African Union Commission and the League of Arab States.

The 7th session of Africa Regional Platform and 6th High Level Meeting, will be convened as part of the “Building Disaster Resilience to Natural Hazards in Sub-Saharan African Regions, countries and Communities Programme”, funded by the European Union (EU) and being implemented in Africa as part of a cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP).

### **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the Africa-Arab Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction is to take stock of progress made in the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the regional strategies on disaster risk reduction, and to reaffirm political commitment to achieving its implementation. This will contribute to the realization of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. The outcomes of the event will also inform the 2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction deliberations.

The Africa-Arab Platform on disaster risk reduction will also provide the regions with opportunities to share knowledge, experiences and best practices in advancing disaster risk reduction in the context of the Sendai Framework.

The platform will be inclusive, innovative, interactive and will take into account gender considerations in line with the Sendai Framework principle of an “all-of-the-society approach”.

### **OUTCOME**

The platform is expected to yield increased commitments of countries to enhance attention to risk sensitive investments, increase national and local strategies, by 2020 in line with Sendai Framework Target ‘e’. It will also seek to increase cooperation among countries on water related hazards, and enhance engagement of stakeholders with shared responsibility to implement regional strategies.

The Africa-Arab platform will consider and adopt draft declarations proposed by the respective regions to reaffirm the Africa and Arab States’ political commitment to achieving the outcomes of the Sendai Framework in the two regions. In addition, a joint communique (Chair’s Summary) on the main theme of the event will also be adopted at the platform. The outcomes of the Africa-Arab Platform on DRR will inform the 2019 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York and the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (Geneva, 13-17 May 2019).

Specific outcomes based on regional perspective will be as follows;

#### **Arab States:**

- (i) Ministerial Declaration and recommendations on implementation of the Arab Strategy on disaster risk reduction;
- (ii) Stakeholders voluntary action statements on implementation of the Arab strategy and the Sendai framework;
- (iii) Programme of work for the Arab Strategy.

The outcomes of the 4th Arab conference will be submitted to the Arab Coordination Mechanism on Disaster Risk Reduction for consideration and submission to the Heads of State Summit for adoption in early 2019.

#### **Africa Region:**

- (i) Inputs and agreement on the way forward for the development of the Africa Common Position to the 2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction;
- (ii) Ministerial declaration and recommendations on implementation of the Africa Programme of Action; and
- (iii) Stakeholder voluntary commitments on the implementation of the Africa Programme of Action.

The outcomes of the 6th High-Level Meeting will be submitted to the African Union Policy Organ for consideration and adoption during the African Union Summit in early 2019.

#### **THEME**

The theme of the Africa-Arab Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction *‘Towards Disaster Risk-Informed & Inclusive Sustainable Development’* reflects the essence of the Sendai Framework. Development that does not take risk into account, cannot be sustainable. Thus, disaster risk reduction is a key instrument to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, as highlighted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The theme of the Africa-Arab Platform is aligned with the theme of the 2019 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development that focuses on ‘Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality’.

#### **CONFERENCE STRUCTURE**

The Africa-Arab Platform is structured around plenaries and working sessions, in addition to one special session dedicated to each region. The working sessions are structured around the four Sendai priorities and specific thematic issues and

will feed into the countries statements. Such sessions have speakers relevant to the topic, including national disaster risk reduction focal points, parliamentarians, mayors, intergovernmental organizations, technical experts, and other development partners.

Interested partners are also invited to organize training workshops, side events, exhibitions and working sessions. The Platform is preceded by stakeholders’ preparatory consultations during which regional and sub-regional organizations (Regional Economic Communities) and stakeholder groups will consolidate their positions for presentation to the platform. Training on Sendai Framework Monitor and training of media personnel are additional preconference events.

The platform will comprise plenaries, working sessions, special sessions, Ministerial meetings and side events. The special sessions and working sessions will contribute to the plenaries and the latter will inform the declaration and the joint communique.

#### **PARTICIPATION**

The Africa-Arab Platform includes a ministerial level segment. It is expected to host over 800 participants from Africa and Arab countries, including ministers responsible for disaster risk reduction as well as governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, United Nations and international organizations, and stakeholder groups including National Societies of Red Cross and Red Crescent Organizations, Children and Youth, Civil Society and Community Practitioners, Women, Parliamentarians, Local Authorities, Science and Technology and Academia, Private Sector, Media, Disability, etc.

All the participants are required to register through the platform website:

<https://www.unisdr.org/conference/2018/af-rp-acdrr>).

The conference registration is now open.

Pre-conference Events: 09 October

Stakeholder consultations, training events e.g. Sendai monitoring, Disaster loss database, Arab Coordination mechanism, Africa working group



