# 2019 Global Platform Official Statement

# 17 MAY 2019

# Delivered by Thandie Mwape, Netherlands Red Cross Society

Excellencies and Distinguished delegates, Good morning!

I want to start by affirming that the Netherlands Red Cross Society supports the key messages delivered by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), to which NLRC is affiliated. It is privilege to deliver this statement through the NLRC, the lead organisation in the Partners for Resilience, an Alliance of over 50 local and national organisations world-wide who are supported by a strategic partnership that includes the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, Cordaid, CARE Netherlands and Wetlands International. **The Alliance strengthens community resilience through integrating climate change adaptation and ecosystem management and restoration into risk reduction.**

*As a partnership, we keen to see the a***cceleration of the integration of Disaster Risk Reduction in the adaptation agenda. We all need to** step up efforts to integrate a preventative DRR approach into climate change adaptation, which is increasingly being brought to the fore globally where mitigation in the Climate Agenda remains dominant. A priority is to step up investments in and maintaining natural buffers to enhance ecosystems’ protective functions, and by investing in climate-resilient livelihoods whilst keeping communities at the center.

PfR enables local authorities, private sector, communities, investors and funders to collaborate, co-invest and co-create solutions that:-

* Integrate environment, infrastructure and livelihoods
* Are hazard and context specific
* And are inclusive and people-centered

 And by doing so, these will be embedded in both community and government structures and systems: thus increasing the resilience of communities who live most at risk.

***This is exactly what Leave no-one behind means to us.*** The most vulnerable and marginalized communities and individuals, among which are often women and girls should be identified and prioritized within DRR laws and policies, investments and programming through localized decision-making and action, with support and empowerment for communities. **Our efforts to link local activities with global processes, ultimately ensures the voices of those on the ground are heard at global political dialogues.**

Only two nights ago at a Partners for Resilience Networking Event, we had the most stimulating discussions with a great mix of speakers of strong community members who sat with an Ambassador, an Under-Secretary, a CEO and a Deputy Executive Director and debated issues of inclusion and participatory approaches, ecosystem management, localisation and integrated approaches. This dialogue forms a continuous and relevant process to find new insights into the root causes of risks and find potential solutions.

**We as a partnership will continue to advance gender equality and women empowerment in disaster preparedness:** UN figures indicate that 80% of people displaced by climate change impacts are women. In a climate-fuelled disaster, poor women and children are up to 14 times more likely to be killed than men. Empowering women’s participation within a differentiated perspective of gender roles contributes to better community resilience and builds their capacity as change agents. **Thus, we as a partnership are excited to join forces with UN-Environment in a recently launched initiative called the Network of African Women Environments (NAWE).** This network may be African-based, but the ambition is to connect with the rest of the world to bring women environmental leaders to champion work on ecosystem management, which ultimately is a catalyst too to disaster risk reduction and economic empowerment.

Ecosystems in urban areas can provide a wide range of ecosystem services for climate, livability and economy if they are well-managed and incorporated into the urban fabric. Furthermore, cities should consider natural buffers in the rural hinterland of the city, beyond the city boundaries.

Natural or green Infrastructure solutions and hybrid solutions are a must, not for the future, but now. Build on and accelerate the successes and learning with designing such solutions, such as through large-scale pilots and development of standards. This will accelerate action and help overcome a lack of understanding and capacity to develop adaptive strategies more widely in the water management sector. **The Water as Leverage initiative being championed by the Netherlands Government and to which PfR is a stakeholder at the table, is one initiative we are excited about being a part of as it seeks to address water-related challenges in urban areas in Asia.**

**There must be an urgency by all of us to integrate ecosystems safeguarding in peacebuilding** **initiatives in regions vulnerable to risk.**  
We need to put a spotlight on the linkages between climate, DRR, water management, ecosystem loss and increased conflict risks and build momentum and opportunities to develop more effective and joined up responses. For instance, [the squeeze of wetlands in the Sahel](https://www.wetlands.org/publications/water-shocks-wetlands-human-migration-sahel/) region in West Africa, due to conversion, drainage and reduced freshwater flows, exacerbates human conflicts over access to water resources and productive land, driving conditions that stimulate instability and insecurity.

And lastly, on climate finance, it is exciting to read from the recent Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019, which states and I quote “the cost of disaster risk financing is likely to grow due to climate change” end of quote. In light of the historical responsibility of certain countries and companies causing most of the CO2 emissions, governments should act on introducing polluter-based international finance mechanisms, including carbon taxes/levies on international transport, fossil fuel extraction levy which **can generate new and additional resources to support local-led initiatives to prepare for and respond to climate-related disasters that impact, as usual the most vulnerable people who have least contributed to climate change.**

**I THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY!**