

JOINT STATEMENT

on behalf of the UN Disaster Risk Reduction Focal Points' Group

Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2019

Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen, Colleagues & Friends,

Disasters are taking an enormous toll on sustainable development. It is largely the vulnerable and poorest who pay with their lives, and their livelihoods. With only 11 years left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, we need to make a drastic change of course.

We do not have time to lose. As the UN Secretary-General has pointed out, 'Climate change is moving faster than we are'. Urbanization and industrialization, water scarcity, land degradation and desertification, and biodiversity loss are some of the many inter-linked drivers of increasing disaster and climate change impacts. The most vulnerable countries and peoples are already facing the devastating impacts. As we have witnessed in Mozambique, India, East Africa and many other countries and regions around the world in the past years, climate and disaster risk is pushing millions of people back into poverty each year. Millions are displaced. Many are being left behind.

We need to step up efforts to manage existing risks that have built up over time, while preventing as much as possible future risks from being created.

The UN Secretary-General has recognized that 'only global solutions can solve global problems'. Multilateralism is needed more than ever. Humanity is at a turning point in tackling global crises with wide-reaching impacts for all societies.

At this point in time, the United Nations stands ready to support countries to meet their 2020 commitments under the Sendai Framework and Paris Agreement to achieve the SDGs by 2030. The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, the UN Secretary-General's Climate Summit, the SDG moment in the General Assembly, the High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development, the High-Level Review of the SAMOA Pathway in 2019 and the High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage are all opportunities to help us shift gears.

We need to accelerate action to reach those who are at the greatest risk of being left behind. The UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience provides a solid foundation for strengthening joint UN support at country and local level. The UN works with the most vulnerable countries and people to strengthen access to services that are risk-informed. Health, water and sanitation, education, social protection and food security must be protected from disaster risk. We seek to leverage progress in science and technology, and translate it into practical action for early warning and prevention, within and across sectors. This helps to strengthen resilience, cope with disasters when they occur, and recover and rebuild better lives.

Engaging all of society and ensuring wide participation in the implementation of the Sendai Framework is critical to protect people and their livelihoods from disaster risk.

Women play a central role in building resilience and are a key part of the solution. Young people are putting pressure on leaders to ensure that mistakes of the past are not repeated and that the rights of children are fulfilled. Their efforts are making the world a safer and more resilient place for future generations. It is crucial that national and local disaster risk reduction strategies address the specific needs, vulnerabilities, capacities and responsibilities of women and girls, men and boys, the elderly, persons with disabilities, the poor and other at risk groups, while promoting their participation and leadership.

Country, community and stakeholder action at the Global Platform gives reason for hope. Building on what already works, we need to shift gears and do more, faster, at a much larger scale, with enhanced outreach and impact at local level.

As part of the United Nations System, we are committed to supporting Member States in their efforts to build and maintain resilient, inclusive and sustainable societies, leaving no one behind.

I thank you.