

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MECHANISM



SENDAI FRAMEWORK

FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030

»» Disaster Risk Reduction

A Vital Need in a Climate Changing World

SEM Policy Paper for COP 27

INTRODUCTION

Combating climate change and averting, minimising and addressing its impacts are essential if we are going to realise the ultimate goal of lives well lived for all. The United Nations uses the language of sustainable development, including reducing the impact of disasters, as one means to secure the rights of present and future generations. To do so effectively requires a whole of society approach[1]- ensuring that all actors are given the opportunity to do their part - as well as a whole of government approach[2] - ensuring coherence between a host of reinforcing processes. For people and planet, we must commit to ensuring rapid implementation of the Paris Agreement and addressing the urgency of action on Loss and Damage in the UNFCCC climate change negotiations/processes. The Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism for Disaster Risk Reduction is an open, structured mechanism of 17 constituencies of non-state actors to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (Sendai Framework). It sees tremendous benefit to greater policy coherence and shared approaches between the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework and will be advancing such initiatives at COP27 and beyond.

A number of specific recommendations are outlined in greater detail below, but three experiences from disaster risk reduction come to the fore. Firstly, stakeholder inclusion at all levels is essential for any meaningful and sustained advance in combating the climate crisis. Second, solutions and strategies already exist within communities beyond the conventional UNFCCC mechanisms. Drawing on them would do much to strengthen integration and improve effectiveness, including on losses and damages. Finally, climate action and disaster risk reduction are two sides of the same coin - as climate change is mitigated, disasters are reduced, and as resilience is built in communities the impacts of climate change are tempered.

The IPCC reports not only clearly articulate the precipice upon which the world finds itself, but also demonstrate the negative impacts without risk-informed development. In order to counteract the impact, increase adaptation measures, and reduce vulnerability, we call for an enhanced coherence among previously siloed UN processes, especially DRR and climate action. The priorities of the Egyptian presidency, including prioritising adaptation, financing climate action, and advancing a just and equitable transition are shared by the disaster risk reduction community. Disaster risk reduction, humanitarian response, and climate change adaptation have the common objective of reducing vulnerability and enhancing capacity and resilience. A comprehensive disaster and climate risk management approach, starting with agreed-upon definitions, is key to making the shift towards integrated plans and policies, supported by shared risk understanding and inclusive institutions.

[1] Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism statement to the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, 2019

[2] Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism statement to the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, 2022

At a fundamental level, modern conceptions of development are increasingly outdated. Historical assumptions of where knowledge lies are rightfully coming into question both at the local and national levels. Local level experience and expertise is vital for development to be meaningfully owned and sustained by the populations it is meant to benefit. And the learning of so-called “developing” countries will need to be drawn upon as the “developed” world increasingly faces hazards new to them. Being hosted in Africa, this COP can serve to accelerate the pattern of knowledge exchange at all levels.

As members of the UNDRR Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism (SEM), we welcome Egypt and the African region’s prioritisation of adaptation. While mitigation is critical to ensuring the Paris Agreement’s 1.5°C target, adaptation has consistently been sidelined in the process, risking lives and livelihoods, and wreaking havoc upon those living in poverty and other populations in situations of vulnerability. The need for a permanent, clear and tangible link between the objectives and timelines of the Paris agreement and of the Sendai Framework is more urgent than ever; COP27 could play an important role in formalising these links. COP27 has the potential to renew focus on policies that reduce risk by building synergies with the effort to implement the Sendai Framework and other critical global policy agreements. With this in mind, the SEM calls upon the Parties to the UNFCCC to adopt the following measures:

1. DEDICATE ATTENTION TO LOSSES AND DAMAGE, INCLUDING FINANCE

COP26 in Glasgow was a moment where the need for a dedicated approach to losses and damages, including finance, gained significant momentum. Such initiatives are consistent with and could build upon, extant models within the disaster risk reduction space. One valuable lesson learned is that, when driven by country and local-level ownership, inclusive, and aligned with a rights-based approach, the outcomes are improved. As appropriate Financial Mechanisms are established or built upon, Member States would benefit from strengthening coherence with existing mechanisms - ensuring whole-of-society inclusion - in order to best meet the growing needs of both climate action and disaster risk reduction. Losses and damages are, first and foremost, a matter of climate justice. It ensures those who have benefited most from the current international order - those most responsible for climate change - are responsible for their fair share to those who continue to incur losses when disaster strikes and to avert hazardous climate events by deterring climate destabilising actions. We call on all Parties to embrace the approach presented by the small island developing states whose experience with both climate change and disasters is unparalleled.

2. SUPPORT COMMUNITIES IN BECOMING PARTNERS IN THE CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION PROCESS

While non-party stakeholders (NPS) are recognised as essential players in the realisation of the Paris Agreement, much more should be done to highlight the importance of local communities and those historically marginalised in supporting climate action and building resilience. Communities on the frontline of risk are the first to face the lived impacts of climate-induced disasters and those who remain when all external actors have left. Localisation, including finance, would allow their stores of knowledge and capacity to be drawn on to find solutions suited to their populations[3]. To effectively calculate losses and damages, it is essential to include, communicate with, and empower local actors, especially community-based organisations, in the development and implementation of local action plans as well as National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Flexible financing and resourcing mechanisms should be made available to enable full and meaningful participation of all stakeholders, with particular attention to those whose voices have historically been excluded or undervalued.

3. MAKE ADAPTATION PLANNING MORE EFFECTIVE

NAPs were meant to enable parties to formulate medium - and long-term plans related to adaptation. While many of the NDCs have highlighted adaptation needs, more can be done to ensure a balanced approach that recognises mitigation and adaptation with sensitivity to Loss and Damage obligations. The SEM has seen that coherence and consistency across all efforts is vital. Yet, this area is rife with contradictions. For example, an overemphasis on finance can shift the burden away from implementation yet finance is still necessary; certain initiatives understood as 'investment' actually increase climate change and can lead to displacement. It is key in this regard that broad-based measures for inclusion be employed to avoid approaches that are not risk-informed, lack coherence, and are maladaptive. Moreover, when adaptation planning is integrated with disaster risk reduction, we see co-benefits arise. Ultimately, this can ensure that integrated NAPs and disaster risk reduction plans act against future crises that impact key sectors such as education, health, housing, and social protection.

[3] For an example, please see the World Health Organization Health Emergency and Disaster Risk Management Framework: <https://www.who.int/activities/implementing-health-emergency-and-disaster-risk-management>

4. SUPPORT THE EXPANSION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE RACE TO RESILIENCE.

There has been a doubling of major disaster events over the last 20 years, a clear call for climate risk-informed development as the benefits of investing in prevention and resilience are undeniable (according to UNDRR, every dollar invested in risk reduction and prevention can save up to fifteen dollars in post-disaster recovery). The High-Level Climate Champions and the Marrakech Partnership on Global Climate Action (MPGCA) have worked to build a mechanism to engage non-Party Stakeholders (NPS) in adaptation efforts. The Race to Resilience is still dwarfed by its mitigation-focused counterpart, the Race to Zero, yet both are vital. Parties should engage national and local stakeholders in joining the Race to Resilience and building joint, sectoral approaches to enhancing resilience in all countries. Investments in disaster risk reduction must be aligned with financing the SDGs and climate change, among others. Working with the private sector is vital to ensure wise investments can be leveraged to reduce rather than increase disaster risk.

5. ADDRESS THE KNOWLEDGE GAP TO UNDERSTAND TRUE EXTENT OF CLIMATE-INDUCED LOSSES AND DAMAGES

The disaster risk reduction architecture has established numerous databases, such as the Sendai Framework Monitor and the disaster losses and damages tracking system, to better calculate the losses resulting from disasters. Unfortunately, without a coherent approach - disaggregated by gender, age, and disability - the economic, social and environmental impacts, especially their long-term, cascading and indirect effects (including, for example, population movements) will continue to fall outside the scope of existing data collection efforts. Yet, systems should be built upon to understand the true extent of losses and damages, including both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. Community-based data and narratives could feature prominently and effectively as these efforts expand. We must therefore enhance evidence-based knowledge and awareness of climate-induced loss and damage especially in developing countries and share practices to reduce the risk for climate-induced loss and damage, and thereby promote disaster resilience.

A number of other specific calls to action include the following:

- Accessible early warning systems should be extended and enhanced in all countries of the world
- The knowledge and engagement of the media should be enhanced as it is capable of informing a population as few other stakeholders can.
- When taking into consideration ecosystem and cultural contexts, nature-based solutions have potential to both reduce disasters and combat climate change.
- Land use planning, rather than seeking short-term profits, has tremendous benefits.
- Risk-informed development, including infrastructure investments, can ensure stability and durability for generations to come.
- Recommendations outlined in Our Common Agenda, including the call for a new “Emergency Platform”, can serve to strengthen the institutional mechanisms at the intersection of climate change and disaster risk reduction.

EVENTS HOSTED BY SEM IN COP27

10 Nov
11:30-13:00

Localised Solutions to Reduce Climate Induced Loss & Damage for the Most Vulnerable
Memphis, Sharm El-Sheikh International Convention Centre (SHICC)

10 Nov
11:30-13:00

Localised Financing for Climate Change Adaptation: Reducing Loss & Damage and Inequity Cycles
Amon, Sharm El-Sheikh International Convention Centre (SHICC)

12 Nov
10:05 - 10:55

Changing the Youth Narrative: From Risk to Resilience
Youth Pavillion, Sharm El-Sheikh International Convention Centre (SHICC)

17 Nov
13:15 - 14:15

Global adaptation from the grass root: what local leaders expect from the GGA and the Global Stocktake
SDG Pavilion, Sharm El-Sheikh International Convention Centre (SHICC)

17 Oct
14:00 - 15:15

Human health and Loss and Damage in Africa: science, policy and finance as enablers of action
Health Pavillion, Sharm El-Sheikh International Convention Centre (SHICC)