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CARIBBEAN
VIII PLATFORM FOR
DISASTER RISK
REDUCTION

URUGUAY
28 FEB,
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2023



REGIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030 IN THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN

(UPDATED IN NOVEMBER 2021 AND ADJUSTED IN MARCH 2023)

Introduction

This Regional Action Plan (RAP) is meant to serve as a foundational document, of a non-legally binding nature, that identifies practices and processes to advance implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) 2015-2030 throughout the Americas and the Caribbean. It marks an evolutionary step towards a concerted regional approach to supporting countries in their efforts to build whole-of-society resilience, reduce disaster risk and impacts, and contribute to the well-being of our societies.

The RAP helps further the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas and the Caribbean through the identification of local, national and regional initiatives that contribute to one or more of the Sendai targets. This approach helps Member States to collectively build upon the Guiding Principles established in the Sendai Framework, in particular those aimed at fostering a whole-of-society approach, in line with the groups and stakeholders identified in the Sendai Framework and coherence across the DRR, climate change new urban agenda and sustainable development frameworks, as well as the Regional Actions listed in the “Guidelines Towards a Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015-2030”. The latter were agreed at the First Meeting of Ministers and High-level Authorities on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas hosted by the Government of Paraguay on 9 June 2016.

The Regional Action Plan (RAP) for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean was first adopted by Member States in the Fifth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas (March 7-9, 2017, Montreal, Canada). The RAP was then re-confirmed as valid by Member States at the Sixth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas (June 20-22, 2018, Cartagena, Colombia).



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Ahead of the Seventh Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean (1-4 November 2021, hosted virtually by the Government of Jamaica), an e-consultation was designed by UNDRR in collaboration with the Government of Jamaica in order to collect relevant information to be used as a basis for reflection and discussion on the challenges and opportunities present in the region to advance in the implementation of the Sendai Framework. Further consultations were held with Intergovernmental Organizations, with youth and with civil society organizations.

The intergovernmental organizations that took part in this consultation were CAPRADE, CDEMA, CEPREDENAC and RMAGIR. The youth consultation was undertaken in the framework of the organization of the Regional Youth Forum on Disaster Risk Reduction (26 October 2021), and the civil society consultation was led by GNDR. As a result, the updated version of the Regional Action Plan was adopted during the Seventh Regional Platform.

In the resolution A/RES/75/216¹, approved by the United Nations General Assembly on 29 December 2020, Member States decided to hold a Midterm Review of the implementation of Sendai Framework (MTR SF). In response to this call, together with a notable number of National Volunteer Reviews (NVRs), thematic studies and a subregional report on Sendai implementation in the English-speaking Small Island Developing States (SIDS), a regional report on Midterm Review for Latin America and the Caribbean (MTR SF-LAC) was also produced in 2022 that led to some telling findings in terms of progress and challenges. While cognizant that the RAP and MTR SF-LAC have different objectives and scopes, the Midterm Review process nonetheless provides valuable inputs that allow for an initial assessment of advances to the RAP.

Prior to the Eighth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean (Punta del Este, Uruguay, 28 February through 2 March 2023), UNDRR and the Government of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay carried out a preliminary crosscutting analysis of the results of the MTR SF-LAC and RAP. Based on their findings, a survey was carried out with Member States from which additional inputs were received that provide the basis for the discussions in the framework of the VIII Regional Platform.

During the exercise of cross-checking the results of the MTR SF-LAC with the regional initiatives of the RAP, it became evident that the current structure and formulation of the RAP warrants some adjustments that would facilitate a better assessment of its implementation. Through the survey, Member States were also consulted on the proposed adjustments to the regional initiatives as incorporated within this version of the Regional Action Plan.

¹ <https://undocs.org/es/A/RES/75/216>



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The initiatives included in this RAP are initiatives that Members States, civil society organizations, volunteers, youth and other relevant actors and organizations may advance collectively. The RAP:

1. Encourages interested actors to become lead partners or supporting partners in its implementation, as described herein, and in line with national priorities.
2. Respects the whole-of-society approach that features prominently within the Sendai Framework. Relevant actors, in accordance with respective mandates and priorities, will continue to be engaged throughout all stages of the process, taking into account their needs, capacities and contexts. We recognize the leading role of Member States in DRR while acknowledging the contribution of stakeholders, including the youth, civil society, women, grass-roots organizations, indigenous communities, Afro-descendants, minorities, people with disabilities, older persons, the private sector, academia, and the scientific and technical community, among others.

To promote the implementation of this action plan, interested Member States and stakeholders, in accordance with respective mandates and priorities, should develop activities based on initiatives listed below. In addition, countries of the Americas and the Caribbean should:

1. Review the implementation of this RAP ahead of each Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, through consultations with the different countries of the region.
2. Support the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and the subsequent Regional Platform host in the review of the status of implementation.
3. Utilize this RAP to support the implementation of DRR actions included in existing regional and subregional agreements.
4. Disseminate the RAP among decision-makers and technical staff, from central to local levels.
5. Facilitate Member States and relevant regional organizations in the process to inform UNDRR of these DRR actions, which could contribute to the implementation of this RAP, in order to rally support and avoid duplication of efforts.

The COVID-19 pandemic, as an expression of the systemic nature of risk generated by the complex interconnectivity in our region and the world today, has underlined the urgency to address disaster risk and build resilience. The pandemic has demonstrated how a local crisis can quickly cascade across sectors and countries, having devastating impacts on economies



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and on the health and well-being of millions of people worldwide. The adjustments made to the RAP integrate lessons learned from the pandemic and past disasters, reflect the concerns for climate change and the recognition of the need to increase ambitions and the multi-sectoral, multi-level and multi-stakeholder engagements to fully implement the Sendai Framework for a safer and more resilient Americas and the Caribbean.

Priority One: Understanding disaster risks

Policies and practices for disaster risk management should be based on an understanding of disaster risk in all its dimensions of vulnerability, capacity, exposure of persons and assets, hazard characteristics and the environment. Such knowledge can be leveraged for the purpose of pre- disaster risk assessment, for prevention and mitigation, and for the development and implementation of appropriate preparedness and effective response to disasters. In addition, understanding the interdependence of economic, political, human and natural systems and how risk in any of these systems can have cascading and ripple effects in the others becomes critical for development planning and climate change adaptation.

Regional initiative

1. Recognizing the complex interconnectedness of social, economic, human and environmental systems, strengthen disaster risk information and knowledge systems by:
 - a. supporting to national and local multi-hazard systems and the monitoring of factors of vulnerability that can intensify existing risk;
 - b. strengthening early warning systems; and
 - c. strengthening disaster risk mapping initiatives, scenario development, traditional knowledge, research and methodologies related to risk assessment and for understanding economic, cultural and social risks and losses from extensive and intensive disasters.
2. Strengthen monitoring and evaluation, as well as the recording of disaster risks and losses, with specific focus on historical data to inform future actions and to facilitate the development of risk scenarios.
3. Strengthen systems and mechanisms for sharing disaster risk assessments, best practices and methodologies across regions and sectors, promoting open access to data where applicable and as appropriate, and enhancing overall hazard and vulnerability data utilization and access, as a priority for the next two years.
4. Promote comprehensive studies and comprehensive evaluations on multi-hazard disaster risk, linking climate change projections with hazards, socio-economic vulnerabilities and



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data on levels of exposure. This includes strengthening systemic and comprehensive approaches to territorial analyses, such as metropolitan approaches and the analysis of watersheds.

Prioritize for the next two years comprehensive studies and comprehensive evaluations that link DRR and climate change.

5. Promote the incorporation of knowledge on hazards and the use of disaster risk information by:
 - a. recognizing the differentiated needs of women, youth, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, older persons and other vulnerable groups;
 - b. incorporation into school curriculum, especially in primary and basic education; and
 - c. working with media outlets.
6. Strengthen collaboration and interoperability of data across all key sectors (including critical infrastructure and basic services) and territories, as a priority for the next two years.
7. Identify and promote, in collaboration with the scientific and technical community, a regional scientific research agenda that takes into account major hazards as well as existing vulnerabilities, and strengthen multi-actor, multi-level and multi-sectoral dialogue, cooperation and sharing of knowledge on disaster risk and risk reduction strategies, as a priority for the next two years.

Priority Two: Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk

Disaster risk governance at the national, regional and global levels is of great importance for the effective and efficient management of disaster risk. Disaster risk governance mechanisms must comprehend the systemic nature of risk. Clear vision, plans, competence, guidance and coordination within and across sectors, as well as the participation of relevant stakeholders, are needed. Strengthening disaster risk governance for prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and building back better and greener is therefore necessary and should foster collaboration and partnership across mechanisms and institutions for the implementation of instruments relevant to disaster risk reduction and sustainable development.

Regional initiative

8. Strengthen coherence in the approaches to reduce disaster risk and address climate change, promoting participatory and inclusive planning that guarantees that disaster risk reduction strategies are integrated into sustainable development processes at regional, national and local levels, as a priority for the next two years.



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9. Ensure the inclusion of biological and health risks in disaster risk reduction plans and strategies, in collaboration with the health sector, and promote comprehensive approaches that incorporate dimensions of human, environmental and animal health.
10. Enhance and increase capacity building programs, both in-person and remote, targeting different sectors, organizations (public and private) and vulnerable groups.
11. Promote multi-sectoral and multi-level disaster risk governance mechanisms and achieve the commitment of sectors to effectively integrate risk management into policy and institutional management, as a priority for the next two years.
12. Foster multi-stakeholder and multi-national exchanges through sharing of experiences and best practices for integrating DRR actions in all areas, including climate change adaptation and sustainable development spheres.
Prioritize for the next two years the collection of evidence on the incorporation of DRR in different thematic areas and sectors.
13. Promote the integration of the joint efforts of international cooperation stakeholders, including the agencies, funds and programs of the United Nations system for greater coherence and comprehensive management of disaster risk reduction initiatives, as a priority for the next two years.
14. Promote inclusivity across disaster risk governance frameworks, integrating voices and enabling participation and an understanding of the differentiated needs of women, youth, indigenous people, Afro-descendants and other minorities, persons with disabilities, older persons and other vulnerable groups, as a priority for the next two years.
15. Promote public-private partnerships and facilitate the commitment and engagement of the private sector in the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015- 2030, including in the design of plans and strategies and in recognition of the critical role that this sector can play in the development of tools, approaches and technologies to understand risk, the sector's responsibility to ensure that investments are risk-informed, and considering its capacities to support disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, as a priority for the next two years.

Priority Three: Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that governments are critically under-prepared to tackle the systemic nature of risk and are underinvesting in and under-prioritizing prevention and resilience. Public and private investment in disaster risk prevention and reduction through structural and non- structural measures are essential to enhance the economic, social, health and cultural resilience of persons, communities, countries and their assets, as well as the



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environment. These can be drivers of innovation, growth and job creation. Such measures are cost-effective and instrumental to save lives, prevent and reduce losses and ensure effective recovery and rehabilitation. Investing in disaster risk reduction is essential for developing sustainably in a rapidly changing climate.

Regional initiative

16. Improve practices in risk financing and risk transfer by:
 - a. encouraging regional studies on good practices in risk financing and risk transfer at different territorial levels; and
 - b. strengthening the cooperation with insurance companies to promote greater coverage, create incentives, strengthen evidence on the impact of disasters and promote resilient investments.
17. Enhance and mobilize investment in DRR at national and local levels, prioritizing for the next two years:
 - a. strengthening linkages with financial provisions for climate change adaptation and mitigation in disaster risk reduction; and
 - b. encouraging budgetary and multi-lateral support for disaster risk reduction in all sectors at all levels.
18. Mainstream disaster risk into public and private investment, promoting the necessary regulatory changes, as a priority for the next two years.
19. Strengthen tracking of financing and investment in all components of DRR and conduct risk-sensitive budget reviews, as a priority for the next two years.
20. Collaborate with international financial institutions and regional banks to ensure they align their strategies, operations and activities with the Sendai Framework and national risk reduction priorities and strengthen the capacities of national systems to promote these partnerships, as a priority for the next two years.
21. Promote the sharing of best practices on business continuity, including the continuity of government and other vital services, taking into consideration all hazards, as appropriate and applicable.
22. Enhance a systems and resilience-focused approach to post-disaster stimulus and recovery plans, particularly for the COVID-19 pandemic but also other disasters that have impacted the region, giving due attention to prevention and mitigation of future shocks, prioritizing the most vulnerable in society.



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Priority Four: Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction

The steady growth of disaster risk, including the increased exposure of people and assets, combined with the lessons learned from past disasters, indicates the need to further strengthen disaster preparedness for response, take action in anticipation of events, integrate disaster risk reduction in response preparedness and ensure that capacities are in place for effective response and recovery at all levels. Empowering women, youth, indigenous populations, Afro-descendants, minorities, older persons and persons with disabilities to publicly lead and promote gender equitable and universally accessible response, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction approaches is critical to building resilience. Disasters have demonstrated that the recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction phases, which need to be prepared ahead of a disaster, are a critical opportunity to “Build Back Better and Greener”, including through integrating disaster risk reduction into development measures, making nations and communities resilient to disasters.

Regional initiative

23. Strengthen the coordination, collaboration and participation of Member States, communities, regional and international organizations, civil society organizations, volunteers, the private sector and other stakeholders, in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, within the scope of respective mandates and priorities, seeking to harmonize the use of language.
24. Strengthen cross-sectoral, coordinated action to address the diverse and region-specific challenges of human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change.
25. Promote the exchange of post-disaster recovery knowledge and best practices that incorporate the perspective of building back better and greener to protect communities, their access to housing, to critical infrastructure and basic services (health, drinking water, electricity, internet, etc.), their livelihoods, and the environment, with established priorities at national, subnational and local levels.
26. Strengthen knowledge sharing and exchange of experiences/expertise on tools for the improvement of development planning processes applied to urban, rural as well as to other organizational models that take into consideration disaster risk such as building norms, local sustainable development strategies and master plans, among others.



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27. Develop and share best practices and strategies to:
 - a. improve integrated multi-hazard early warning systems;
 - b. improve disaster risk information systems; and
 - c. strengthen linkages among scientific and technical agencies, communities, and decision makers.
28. Strengthen social protection systems to be more shock-responsive and reach the most vulnerable in a timely manner.
29. Promote recovery planning to facilitate more effective and efficient recovery after a disaster.
30. Strengthen international cooperation, including south-south cooperation, to facilitate the flow of tools, technologies and skills to better prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters, building back better and greener.

Only together can the countries and people of the region be truly resilient.

Adopted in Punta del Este, Uruguay on 2 March 2023.