

Call to Action for the 7th Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

We are the largest international network of civil society organisations working together to strengthen the resilience of communities most at risk of disasters. This call to action has been co-developed with GNDR members from across the globe.

The 7th session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction will take place in Indonesia, in May 2022. GNDR recognises the importance of this event - it marks the first session of the global platform since the Covid-19 pandemic. It is also an important first milestone in the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Sendai Declaration and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework) was adopted and endorsed by Member States in the United Nations General Assembly, providing the framework for all-of-society and all-of-State institutions engagement in preventing and reducing disaster risks posed by both natural and man-made hazards and related environmental, technological, and biological hazards and risks.

The year 2023 is marked as the mid- point in implementing the Sendai Framework as well as other related agreements, conventions, and agendas/agreements such as the Paris Agreement and the Urban Agenda. The UN General Assembly decided to 'hold a midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework in 2023 to assess progress on integrating disaster risk reduction into policies, programmes and investments at all levels, identify good practice gaps and challenges and accelerate the path to achieving the goal of the Sendai Framework and its seven global targets by 2030, "emphasising" that the Sendai Framework provides guidance to a sustainable recovery from Covid-19 and helps identify and address underlying drivers of disaster risk in a systematic manner'.

In view of the above, we undertook an independent review of the Sendai Framework, capturing GNDR members' perspectives in the global south.^[1] The findings from this survey have been used, alongside ongoing consultation with members to develop a call to action, directly from the perspective of civil society organisations. These were then framed around the foundation of our 2020-25 member-led strategy.^[2]

This call to action will directly input into the NGO major group formal declaration that will be submitted to UNDRR ahead of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. It will also feed into the wider Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism formal declaration. **Here, we aim to continue to highlight the crucial role that civil society has in meaningfully implementing an all of society approach necessary for effective risk management policy and practice.**

Risk is increasing

2022: Covid-19, conflict, climate change, displacement, and food insecurity

People on the frontline of risk continue to highlight the urgency of strengthened risk reduction measures. In 2022, an estimated 274 million people will face hunger, conflict, and displacement because of disasters, climate change and the Covid-19 pandemic.^[3] Climate change is being described as a super-risk driver by communities on the front line of risk.

GNDR recognises the conflict in the Ukraine as an example of the systemic nature and global connectedness of risk. For example, the conflict is having a direct impact on rising food insecurity across the MENA and Africa regions.^[4] GNDR also recognises the importance of not overlooking the ongoing conflict and protracted crises being felt by those on the front line of risk in fragile states such as Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria, Somalia, DRC and Ethiopia.

Civil society organisations recognise this increasing risk and highlight that it is combined with a lack of resources for disaster risk reduction reaching the local level.^[5] GNDR calls on decision makers at all levels to recognise this level of urgency, and clearly demonstrate how the second half of the Sendai Framework implementation will address the increasing, systemic and dynamic nature of risk, and support all of the Agenda 2030 frameworks to adopt risk-informed interventions across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus.

GNDR recognises that progress has been made in achieving the Sendai Framework targets. Most notably, our members have highlighted that (1) investment has been made in understanding disaster risk reduction across multi-stakeholders and all levels, and (2) civil society has significantly invested in communities' understanding of disaster risk reduction. The most successful interventions are reportedly ones that were community-led, included collaborative governance, and took an all of society approach. However, if we are to successfully achieve the targets set out in the Sendai Framework, significant actions need to be taken ahead of 2030.

Ahead of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2022, GNDR has captured the eight priority action areas identified by our members and outlined what global decision makers, member states and fellow civil society organisations need to work together on.

GNDR urges all stakeholders to champion (1) localisation, (2) risk informed development, and (3) civil society led collaboration for the meaningful implementation of an all of society approach to disaster risk reduction.

Specifically, GNDR calls for global decision makers to support and champion the following messages with members states:

1. Listen to communities

- Our primary call is to listen to the community, to those on the front line of risk, the first responders. Those living in communities on the front line of risk have the local knowledge, expertise, and capacity to significantly strengthen risk governance in policy and practice
- Meaningfully include local leaders in the implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework
- Institutionalise including community voice, knowledge and recommendations in decision making. Avoid tokenistic inclusion and empower local voice to lead decision making
- Promote the analysis of the systemic nature of risk and risk-informed development from the perspective of the communities most at risk. Within this, promote local knowledge, nature-based solutions and ecosystem protection

2. Invest at the local level

- Prioritise making sure risk reduction finance (both public and private) reaches the local level
- Hold both national governments and donor states accountable for making sure finance reaches the local level
- Empower and finance locally-led, grassroots action for risk reduction
- Include local leaders in decision making spaces at local, national, and global levels
- Meaningfully include local leaders in deciding how risk reduction budgets are spent at the local level
- Listen to local voices on how climate change is a super driver of risk and integrate climate-related hazards and their impacts in local DRR planning; integrate both mitigation and adaptation in risk reduction planning
- Prioritise prevention and empower local-level leaders to adopt nature-based solutions

3. Improve coordination and coherence. Enable civil society to lead the coordination and coherence required for risk-informed development

- Recognise the systemic nature of risk and adopt a coherent approach across all global frameworks for effective risk-informed development, risk reduction and resilience building for communities most at risk
- Recognise the role that civil society organisations have to lead collaboration. Accept and strengthen the role of local CSOs in convening an all of society approach to effectively achieve the Sendai Framework commitments
- Specifically utilise the capacity civil society organisations and networks have to collect and disseminate two-way knowledge exchanges

- Support civil society organisations to work with government delegations on integrating DRR road maps and national adaptation plans
- Link DRR decision making to climate change negotiations, specifically to loss and damage and the need for the global north to increase financial support to the global south
- Incorporate the understanding of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 6th Report into the strategy for implementing the second half of the Sendai Framework for Action
- Strengthen the harmonisation of all 2030 agendas and in particular work to meaningfully integrate risk-informed development across the Sendai Framework, the Paris Agreement, and the Sustainable Development Goals

4. Empower women leaders. Recognise and tackle gender inequality as a driver of risk

- Recognise gender inequality as a barrier to achieving the Sendai Framework targets and invest in action to meaningfully tackling gender inequality for strengthened disaster risk reduction
- Empower women leaders to meaningfully engage in disaster risk reduction at all levels
- Recognise paragraph 36^[6] in the Sendai Framework that focuses on inclusion and the barriers that persist to meaningful inclusion of women at all levels of risk reduction decision making in both policy and practice

5. Strengthen DRR governance in conflict affected states

- Those on the front line of disaster risk in fragile states specifically call on the global community to implement risk governance
- Support conflict-affected and fragile states to implement disaster risk reduction governance, policy, and plans
- Invest in understanding which conflict-affected states do not meaningfully include DRR governance; understand the barriers and identify solutions
- Specifically understand how risk reduction finance can reach the local level in fragile states and what the international community needs to do to ensure this happens

6. Involve children and youth in disaster risk reduction

- Recognise the importance of multigenerational action for risk reduction
- Reflect on paragraph 36 of the Sendai Framework and understand why young people feel that they are not yet meaningfully included in decision making and work to address this
- Meaningfully include children and youth leaders in all levels of disaster risk reduction decision making and continue to prioritise education on risk reduction and resilience

7. Learn from Covid-19

- Understand and address the weakness in governance that Covid-19 demonstrated
- Recognise the specific failures of risk governance and increase the number of UN Member States equipped with quality multi-stakeholder DRR governance body/arrangements that include civil society representation and adequately reflects all parts of society
- Learn from the social, economic and political elements of risk reduction highlighted by the pandemic
- Include biological disasters, such as pandemics in the Sendai Framework going forward

- Work to ensure everyone has access to the Covid-19 vaccine

8. Integrate inclusion across all levels. Transition from seeing inclusion as a standalone topic

- Recognise the intersectional dynamics of marginalisation in relation to risk
- Recognise paragraph 36 in the Sendai Framework that focuses on inclusion and understand why inclusion is not felt to have been successfully mainstreamed across all areas of the Sendai Framework
- Meaningfully integrate inclusion across all areas of the Sendai Framework

Furthermore, GNDR commits to prioritising the following key actions and calls on fellow civil society organisations to collaborate to do the same.

- 1. Listen to communities:** we will amplify local perceptions of risk and integrate them with scientific analyses of risks at the local level to realise risk-informed development
- 2. Invest at the local level:** we will act as a catalyst for local leadership in anticipating and tackling increasing disaster risks
- 3. Improve coordination and coherence for risk-informed development:** we will coordinate civil society voices and perceptions on DRR at local, national, regional and global levels
- 4. Empower women leaders. Recognise and tackle gender inequality as a driver of risk:** we will capture and communicate evidence of how such inequality leads to increasing disaster risks and promote the importance of women leadership at all levels we work in
- 5. Strengthen DRR governance in conflict affected states:** we will unpack the relationship between conflict and increases in vulnerability towards multiple hazards and deteriorating social capital
- 6. Involve children and youth in disaster risk reduction:** we will intentionally invest in youth leadership and their aspiration for a resilient society
- 7. Learn from Covid 19:** we will capture evidence of the cascading nature of risks and promote good practices on strengthening risk governance at the local level
- 8. Integrate inclusion across all levels.** Transition from seeing inclusion as a standalone topic: we will mainstream inclusion in all DRR programmes as a collective CSO effort globally

For more information on this call to action please contact Becky Murphy (GNDR Policy Lead) at: Rebecca.murphy@gndr.org

[1] <https://www.gndr.org/resource/advocacy/civil-society-consultation-of-the-mid-term-review-of-the-sendai-framework-implementation/>

[2] <https://www.gndr.org/about/strategy-2020-25/>

[3] UN OCHA (2021) The Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) for 2022

[4] WFP March 2022 <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/food-security-implications-ukraine-conflict-march-2022>

[5] GNDR Global Analysis Sendai Framework Mid Term Review from the perspective of Civil Society Organisations in the Global South

[6] https://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf