

**Eighth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction
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**Concept Note for Thematic Session 4-2: A world in crisis: Building resilience in
complex settings**

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Overview of global progress made

Today, communities are grappling with multiple concurring crises, with countries classified as highly fragile particularly vulnerable to disasters, including those linked with climate change. Since 2015, this trend has intensified. Meanwhile, it is recognized that fragility and violence undermine social cohesion and complicate comprehensive risk management. Socio-economic disparities and rising violence further impede DRR efforts.

While the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 does not explicitly include fragile, conflict or violence-related terminology, it acknowledges factors that increase the risk of both disaster and conflict, such as environmental, socio-economic, and politico-institutional factors. The Hazard definition and classification review recognizes societal hazards, including violence, environmental degradation from conflict, international armed conflict and explosive remnants of war as hazards.

Additionally, the Political Declaration of the High-Level Midterm Review on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework (A/RES/77/289) adopted in May 2023, calls on States to “*build back better in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, including by recognizing concerns that countries affected by protracted humanitarian crises and emergencies are among those most vulnerable to the impacts of disasters and are furthest behind in implementing the Sendai Framework, recognizing also that implementation of the Sendai Framework can address drivers of vulnerability and exposure to build resilience and reduce humanitarian impacts and needs*” (paragraph 39(g)). The Bali Agenda for Resilience included a recommendation to “integrate disaster risk reduction into the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to overcome the protracted and recurrent nature of crises.”

The UN Secretary-General’s recent reforms of the UN Development System further promote coherence among UN agencies and partners, creating new opportunities for collective action on DRR. Most recently, the Pact of the Future, endorsed in September 2024, recognizes that “countries in conflict and post-conflict situations, require assistance to implement the [2030] Agenda”, as well as the need for “more coherent, cooperative, coordinated and multidimensional international response to complex global shocks.”

There is thus clear strategic direction on the need to link DRR and efforts to address fragility, conflict and violence in normative and policy frameworks. The convergence of crises and multiple factors of vulnerability means that DRR must not be considered on its own but rather as part of a comprehensive approach to reducing risks and strengthening resilience to various shocks. Displacement, for instance, whether resulting from conflict or disasters, has been found to leave internally displaced persons (IDPs) at higher risk of suffering from the impacts of disasters and climate change - including repeated displacement. However, operational challenges associated with working in fragile contexts impede the systematic scale-up of these approaches and the advancement of DRR objectives.

Despite these challenges, progress and recognition of the relevance of DRR across humanitarian, development and peace domains are evident. The Grand Bargain calls for the strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus and for providing more support to national and local responders. Similarly, the 2019 DAC Recommendation on the HDP nexus calls for better coordination through joint risk-informed, gender-sensitive analysis, collective outcomes, and joined-up programming to address root causes and structural drivers of conflict, enhance social cohesion and inclusive dialogue while ensuring humanitarian action remains needs-based and principled.

Over the past decade, joint action across humanitarian, development, and peace fields, has started to be systematically implemented, supported by a wealth of guidance and good practices.

Humanitarian actors are, though facing severe funding constraints, are making efforts to risk-inform programming through strengthened risk analysis and an increased focus on preparedness, anticipatory action, localization and risk mitigation in operational response. A commitment to more robustly respond to the climate and environmental crises has emerged, as illustrated by the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations. At COP28 in 2023, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) launched a dedicated Climate Action Account.

While progress is being made on the humanitarian side, a huge need for greater investments in prevention and risk reduction through risk-informed development programming remains, linking up to the work of humanitarian actors. Development and peace actors need to be fully engaged on the ground in complex contexts where humanitarian assistance is provided.

Part of the remaining challenges relate to compartmentalization of approaches. The current fragmentation of global risk management frameworks and climate change adaptation and DRR financing approaches challenges the implementation of coherent national DRR and adaptation plans, with administrative and programmatic challenges interfering with coordination across sectors. These barriers prevent cohesive planning and limit the impact of DRR initiatives in protracted crisis settings, where coordination between multiple actors is crucial. DRR should ideally be targeted to different levels depending on country context and governance setting, and DRR mainstreamed within existing programmes, including social protection, while simultaneously implementing specific risk reduction interventions.

The 2019 Global Assessment Report on DRR (GAR) included a chapter dedicated to DRR strategies in fragile and complex risk settings, underscoring the importance of integrating conflict dynamics in DRR and climate change adaptation (CCA) assessments and strategies, with a better understanding of systemic risks and tailored approaches¹. Additionally, there is a wider appreciation of the need to integrate conflict sensitivity into damage and needs assessments, with some local-level examples of synergies between DRR and peacebuilding efforts emerging.

Lack of financing of DRR poses additional challenges. While there is growing investment in innovative approaches such as anticipatory financing within the humanitarian sector, limited finance tends to prioritize emergency response over risk reduction, perpetuating resilience deficits. Also financing of DRR approaches in fragile contexts presents an additional challenge, partly due to governance challenges, insecurity, and risk aversion of traditional funders.

There are now broad calls to prioritise targeted financial and technical support to countries affected by protracted crisis, fragility and conflict, with tailored funding

¹ UNDRR, Regional Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction in the Arab Region (2021), chap. 6.

solutions for fragile and conflict-affected settings². The COP28 Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery, and Peace calls for bolder collective action to build climate resilience at the scale and speed required in highly vulnerable countries and communities. At COP29, the Peace, Relief, and Recovery day covered several topics relevant for fragile, conflict and violence -affected contexts, including the funding of displacement programmes and the leveraging of humanitarian stakeholders for programme delivery in complex settings. The Getting Ahead of Disasters Charter, endorsed at COP28 in 2023, outlines principles for using finance to mitigate risks and protect most at-risk populations from climate-related disasters. Additionally, innovative financing mechanisms like the Global Shield Financing Facility and the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage are emerging with growing use and acceptance of Anticipatory Action (AA) in humanitarian responses, particularly integrating early warning and disaster preparedness. Data shows that the amount of pre-arranged financing for disasters supported by international development finance has fallen (although coverage has increased), and it remains concentrated in middle-income countries, with very small amounts reaching low-income countries³.

The implementation of the Pact for the Future and ambitious outcomes at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in 2025, coupled with global financial architecture reforms, risk-informed development programming at country level and strong coordination of SDG financing, are key to achieving DRR outcomes in these settings.

Course correction towards 2027 and 2030

The consultative processes leading up to the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework highlighted the lack of integration and alignment of DRR across the humanitarian, development and peace pillars and reflected on the challenges and opportunities for enhancing resilience in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. The following actions should be taken to ensure course correction towards 2030.

Re-affirm DRR's key role in advancing sustainable development in fragile and conflict-affected contexts and make risk-informed, gender-sensitive programming the norm: Alongside climate change adaptation, DRR must be mainstreamed in humanitarian assistance, development initiatives and peacebuilding. Multidimensional risk analysis and comprehensive risk management within, and across, humanitarian, development and peacebuilding action are required, not only addressing disaster impacts but focusing on the structural drivers of risk and vulnerabilities, with a view to collectively reducing vulnerability. Fragility and conflict present unique implementation challenges that demand strong partnerships across actors, leveraging the existing experience and good practices of working jointly across humanitarian, development and peace fields. Furthermore, effective DRR necessitates

² Franck Bousquet, "A course toward prosperity depends on international community support for peace as a global public good", International Monetary Fund, 27 June 2023.

³ Michèle Plichta and Lydia Poole, The State of Pre-Arranged Financing for Disasters 2024 (Centre for Disaster Protection, 2024).

a balanced approach that combines scientific and traditional knowledge, ensuring better accessibility and understanding. This will empower stakeholders to make informed decisions that reflect both individual and collective priorities⁴.

Support the implementation of accessible resilience-building measures, on a proactive basis, with a focus on localized, whole-of-society action: The impacts of climate change are already evident, necessitating urgent investments into core DRR activities: risk analysis, risk reduction, preparedness, early warning and early action. We cannot afford to wait; all actors must mobilize for prevention. Good governance is a key enabler of resilience, especially given the wide range of actors and the required whole-of-society approach to building resilience. Localized solutions are essential, as well as opportunities for immediate disaster and climate resilience gains. Recognizing the vital roles and voices of women, youth and persons with disabilities in these initiatives is crucial, and support to these actors must be strengthened. Successful examples of localized DRR action in fragile and conflict-affected countries exist, and it is imperative to gather and share this evidence for scaling up effective practices, building on the work of humanitarian actors on localization. For instance, in Eastern Ukraine, mapping support and training have bolstered preparedness and response to manage the rising risk of wildfires in a region affected by climate change-induced drought and conflict⁵ (Impact Initiatives, 2023). Other examples include Moldova, Libya, the Horn of Africa, Yemen, Haiti, Myanmar, South Sudan, Chad, Mozambique or Nigeria (see the [Climate Watch data on climate-related risks in vulnerable contexts](#)).

Scale up coordinated and complementary technical and financial support to countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence to effectively implement the Sendai Framework: Prioritizing the unique needs of conflict- and fragile contexts is essential for advancing the Sendai Framework priorities globally⁶. Building on the call for increased financial and technical support to fragile countries, and taking into account recent progress at COP29 in establishing financing mechanisms for loss and damage, investments in accessible prevention and disaster risk management activities such as early warning systems, risk data governance, preparedness and early and anticipatory action, must be prioritized. National disaster management entities are central to these efforts, and they require enhanced support, including through investments in improved risk knowledge, coordinated preparedness, and early and anticipatory action. However, we also acknowledge the obstacles of working with and through traditional state actors at the national level, when governance and legitimacy are challenged and therefore call for context-specific openness towards effective partnerships. Associated financing must be made available at a larger scale and tracked, at national level linking to the development of comprehensive DRR financing strategies and building on efforts to close the SDG financing gap.

⁴ UNDRR, *Words into Action: Traditional and Indigenous Knowledges for Disaster Risk Reduction* (2022).

⁵ Impact Initiatives, [Climate Watch Database](#) (2023).

⁶ UNDRR, *Evidence of positive progress on Disaster Risk Reduction in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: Thematic report to inform the Mid-Term Review of the Sendai Framework* (2023)

Recognize that we are risk blind if conflict is not properly integrated into risk analysis: When supporting DRR in fragile and conflict-affected countries, DRR practitioners should increasingly consider societal hazards as a key element of risk, building on good practices already emerging in this area. It is essential to better understand the complex interplay of fragility and various hazards, including societal ones. Conflict-sensitive risk analysis, including related displacement and other impacts, is vital for identifying fragility drivers that can put stability and the achievement of the SDGs at risk and require prevention and preparedness across actors. In recent years, an increasing amount of thinking and analysis has taken place in how to advance the 'integration' of the work undertaken by humanitarian, development and peace actors, including by identifying behavioural barriers and innovating to address those. Continued work is needed to make joint risk analysis the norm, rather than agency-specific or sector-specific approaches, and to link different types of assessments systematically, reflecting the multidimensional and interlinked nature of risk and making increased use of strategic foresight and associated tools – and DRR actors can and should play an active role. While applying a do-no-harm approach, there are opportunities to scale-up successful practices on operationalizing the HDP nexus, e.g. by aligning assessments, planning, coordination and implementation across sectors through sequencing and layering activities across humanitarian, development and peace domains⁷. The evidence and practice gap on simultaneously pursuing disaster resilience and peace should be addressed.

Expected outcomes

This session will bring together the different humanitarian, development and peace actors to foster a more integrated and effective approach to risk management in conflict-affected settings, ultimately contributing to resilience and sustainable development. It will:

1. Reaffirm and showcase DRR's key role in advancing resilience and sustainable development in fragile, conflict and violence -affected contexts and call for making risk-informed programming the norm – building on successful work by humanitarian actors and scaling this up in development and peace programming.
2. Call for scaled-up support and financing by international development actors to the implementation of resilience-building measures across humanitarian, development and peace pillars in fragile settings, on a proactive basis, with focus on localized, and inclusive action. Links to ongoing work on scaling up DRR financing should be leveraged with DRR visibly integrated in action on financing for development.

⁷ See for example the [Somalia Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024](#) with the action to address Gu rains highlighted across pillars and timelines on page 24.

3. Share examples of overcoming programmatic, institutional and funding barriers to integrating DRR into humanitarian and development programming in fragile and conflict-affected countries. This includes experience of how DRR has brought actors from different sectors together, and of how different activities can be layered and sequenced across actors and disaster timelines.
4. Identify through success cases means to scale up coordinated and complementary technical and financial support to countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence to effectively implement the Sendai Framework, based on existing experience and leveraging complementary financing.
5. Share recommendations for incorporating peace-related considerations into the Sendai Framework.

Guiding questions

1. What are some of the concrete examples and recommendations from field-level actors, also considering data requirements, that we can learn from in order to accelerate Sendai Framework implementation in contexts affected by fragility, conflict and violence?
2. How can inclusive and accessible risk reduction, climate adaptation and conflict risk management approaches be scaled up and replicated? How can national Sendai Focal points be supported in implementing these approaches in preparedness, response and recovery?
3. How can we more systematically integrate DRR in humanitarian response, development initiatives and peacebuilding efforts in a challenging funding environment?
4. What can financing partners and donors do to support Sendai Framework implementation in fragile contexts and overcome barriers to investing in resilience-building in such contexts?
5. Can we address the peace-DRR gap? If so, how? What are the entry points to start?

Additional background

The world is presently facing an unprecedented convergence of crises. The 2025 Global Humanitarian Overview states that over 300 million people around the world need humanitarian assistance and protection mainly due to escalating conflicts, the climate emergency and economic instability. Populations in fragile, conflict, and violence-affected contexts are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of disasters and crises, and are often exposed to the effects of multiple and overlapping shocks. When disasters and crises strike, the groups at highest risk are often those who are already disadvantaged in society, including women and children, persons with disabilities, older persons, etc., with disasters increasingly fueling displacement among these

vulnerable groups. In 2024 alone, disasters triggered some 26.4 million internal displacements⁸.

Despite progress since 2015 in linking up humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts, the potential of disaster risk reduction (DRR) in serving as a bridge between these traditionally distinct areas of work and ensuring a system-wide focus on reducing vulnerability, remains largely untapped. In this context, there is a recognition that short-term interventions are insufficient to address the underlying causes of vulnerability and that DRR needs to be scaled up to an unprecedented level if future risks are to be mitigated.

As we enter the second half of the implementation of the Sendai Framework, the Sustainable Development Goals and other 2030 Agenda frameworks, making DRR a fundamental piece of broader development efforts will be critical to achieving resilience. The UN Secretary-General has called for renewed political solutions, stronger DRR and decisive climate action to address the root causes of crises and prevent future humanitarian emergencies. Nowhere is this more relevant than in settings affected by fragility, conflict and violence, with countries facing protracted crises and complex emergencies usually the furthest behind in achieving the Sendai Framework goal as well as the SDGs. In addition, these countries often receive, on average, less funding for DRR and climate change adaptation than other countries.

This session will show through concrete cases how DRR is being applied in fragile and conflict settings across the globe in 2025 to support the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including for those communities most affected by climate change, disasters and crisis. It will explore the role of DRR across the entire fragility spectrum, recognizing that, while fragility is diverse and complex, risk reduction and risk-informed development has a role to play across different dimensions and timescales. While the case for the change-potential of DRR in fragile and conflict settings is well known, the session will add to the existing discourse on this topic by presenting concrete success cases while also highlighting the specific challenges these contexts present for delivery and where possible, innovations that have helped overcome these specific challenges. It will expand on options on how to best scale up DRR where it is needed the most going forward.

Reference documents

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⁸ OCHA, *Global Humanitarian Overview 2025* (2024).

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