

## Terms of Reference of the Scientific and Technical Partnership for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

UNISDR, 13 July 2015

### 1. Background

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai Japan on March 2015, recognises the importance of science and technology, calling to "*Enhance the scientific and technical work on disaster risk reduction and its mobilization through the coordination of existing networks and scientific research institutions at all levels and all regions with the support of the UNISDR Scientific and Technical Advisory Group...*"<sup>1</sup>

To meet this request by the Sendai Framework and to serve the needs of countries and stakeholders more directly, the current UNISDR Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) needs to be enhanced in terms of its scope, resources and expand its work to different partners working on science and technology who may be interested to join efforts to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

### 2. Goal and Functions

The principal **goal** of the Scientific and Technical Partnership and its Advisory Group (STAG) is to provide the scientific and technical expertise for the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

**The scope and functions** of this work is defined in the Sendai Framework under its paragraph 25g as *to strengthen the evidence-base in support of the implementation of this framework; by*

- *Promote scientific research of disaster risk patterns, causes and effects;*
- *Disseminate risk information with the best use of geospatial information technology;*
- *Provide guidance on methodologies and standards for risk assessments, disaster risk modelling and the use of data;*
- *Identify research and technology gaps and set recommendations for research priority areas in disaster risk reduction;*
- *Promote and support the availability and application of science and technology to decision-making;*
- *Contribute to the update of the 2009 UNISDR Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction;*
- *Use post-disaster reviews as opportunities to enhance learning and public policy; and disseminate studies.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 25g of the Sendai Framework

### 3. The Guiding Principles

- The work of the Scientific and Technical Partnership for the implementation of the Sendai Framework (also named S&T Partnership in this document) will be guided by its core group STAG to build collaboration with existing and future institutions, research centres, academia, networks and platforms with recognised expertise and experience in developing and/or applying science and technology to reduce disaster risk.
- The S&T Partnership will work to ensure the Sendai Framework is implemented to a high scientific and technical standards.
- The S&T Partnership will operate within the terms of reference, which enshrine the principles of transparency, impartiality, equity, accessibility and evidence-informed processes.
- The S&T Partnership's work will focus on deliverables, capitalise on and make available existing scientific and technical knowledge, practices and tools to reduce disaster risk.
- The S&T Partnership will contribute to further develop international cooperation and capacity building to local, national, regional and global science communities to meet the objectives of the Sendai Framework.
- The S&T Partnership will continuously use and apply learning from similar international systems, including relevant bodies at international and other levels for support where needed.

### 4. Structure and roles of the Scientific and Technical Partnership

#### ***The Scientific and Technical Partnership for the implementation of the Sendai Framework***

A Scientific and Technical Partnership will be established of major scientific and technical institutes or organisations, research centres, networks and platforms, and UN science-based organizations working on the different disciplines of advancing science and technology for disaster risk reduction.

All interested relevant organizations are welcome to participate in the Partnership. They will respond to a call for interest. Selection will be made by UNISDR supported by STAG, based on expertise and capacity to develop and provide science, technology or tools for disaster risk reduction, as well as the commitment to the Partnership's activities to contribute to the implementation of the Sendai Framework. The number of Members of the Partnership will expand gradually. See annex 1 for more details.

Membership of the Partnership will be for four years term, renewable on demonstration of achievements of institutionally agreed outputs. A plenary session of all members of the Partnership is convened every two years coinciding with the Global Platform.

### ***The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for DRR***

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of the UNISDR will oversee the activities of the Scientific and Technical Partnership, its core group STAG, and its Secretariat to ensure compliance with this Terms of Reference and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

### ***The Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG)***

The STAG will constitute up to 20 members representing institutions in the Partnership, in addition to selected few individual experts. UN agencies will have two rotating representatives.

The composition of the Group will reflect the makeup of the technical institutes and disciplines needed for disaster risk reduction as well as the geographical balance, gender and age. See annex 2 for further details.

The STAG will provide direction and guide the work of the S&T Partnership by: i) preparing, presenting and participating in the implementation of the Partnership's work plan to the Partnership for approbation; ii) monitoring the implementation of the Partnership's work plan, once approved by the Partnership; iii) approving the terms of reference and monitoring the activities of Technical Working Groups; and iv) providing technical expertise and support to the Secretariat;

The STAG will also support the work of the Partnership in the following functions:

- i) Work in coordination and linkage to national and regional DRR platforms, partners or networks;
- ii) Advise national, regional and global DRR platforms to integrate S&T actors in their bodies and events;
- iii) Contribute to and implement DRR policies in collaboration with various stakeholders in the different areas;
- iv) Identify key scientific information, knowledge and case studies needed for policymakers and practitioners;
- v) Catalyze new efforts and Partnership to generate new knowledge and contribute to capacity building for scientists particularly in developing countries.

The STAG will have a Chair and a Vice-Chair elected by members of the group to serve for one term of two years.

The STAG will report to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for DRR and to the Scientific and Technical Partnership in its plenary sessions.

The STAG will meet face to face at least once a year and will hold regular telephone or video conferences as frequent as the work program needs.

### ***The Scientific and Technical Working Groups for DRR***

It is foreseen that a number of Technical Working Groups will be established to complete concrete activities or products in the Partnership's work plan. For instance to update DRR terminology, identify and review case studies, organize scientific conference. And a number of areas to be determined by the Partnership.

Working Groups will be composed by members of the Scientific and Technical Partnership and will be balanced geographically, and by gender and age. The Working Groups will be hosted by a relevant organisation.

The Working Groups will report to STAG supported by the Secretariat and to the Plenary Session of the Partnership.

### ***The Scientific and Technical Secretariat for DRR***

The Secretariat will be hosted within UNISDR. The Secretariat will perform day-to-day management of the Partnership, and will provide ongoing technical and logistical support to STAG and the Working Groups to undertake their respective functions.

The Secretariat will also help to ensure coordination across themes, projects, regions and committees, liaise with key stakeholders, assist with mobilisation of financial resources and assist in the facilitation of monitoring and evaluation of the STAG's work.

The Secretariat will report to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on DRR.

### ***Associated members***

Associated Members, where appropriate, will also be invited to join the meetings of STAG and the working groups to bring additional institutional or technical expertise in support of the work programme of the Partnership.

## **5. Accountability, use of information and publications**

STAG and Working Groups will provide advice and recommendation to the head of UNISDR. Members of the STAG and Working Groups shall respect the impartiality and independence required by UNISDR.

Members of the Partnership and STAG will share, as appropriate, their work and results including through the web site that will be maintained by the Secretariat. Information provided by members does not imply endorsement by UNISDR.

Any publication generated by and in the name of the Partnership activities by a member shall be subject to review and approval by the chair of STAG and the UNISDR prior to its issuance and shall contain appropriate disclaimers.

Members shall not make public statements on behalf of the UNISDR, unless authorised by UNISDR. The use of name and logo of UNISDR in any statement or materials shall be through proper consent of UNISDR.

## Annex 1:

### **Call of Interest and Selection of the S&T Partnership Members**

#### **Call for Interest Process for the S&T Partnership Membership**

- a. The call for interest for the Science and Technology Partnership members will be announced by the UNISDR Secretariat to key partners working on DRR, including information about S&T Partnership membership, level of commitment & expected workload; and selection criteria for S&T membership.
- b. The Secretariat will share the list of Partnership candidates and the details of the procedure with the selection panel.

#### **Selection Process for S&T Partnership membership**

- A selection panel will be composed of up to 10 members from the UNISDR Secretariat, including regional offices and current members of STAG.
- The Secretariat will send the list of nominations to the selection panel to shortlist them based on the demonstrated level of commitment to the Partnership through relevant scientific and technical research, involvement in capacity building activities, and technical advice, taken into account diversity of geographic representation.
- The final list of candidates will be selected by consensus by members of the selection committee. In cases of unresolvable disagreement, the matter will be referred to the SRSG and Head of the UNISDR, and every attempt should be made to resolve the matter amicably.
- All discussions about selection process and partners' information should remain internal and not be shared outside the committee.

#### **Term of Office of the Partners**

- The Partnership shall comprise of institutions, organizations and agencies with recognized experience in developing and applying science and technology to DRR.
- The terms of membership of the Partnership shall be for four years, renewable.

#### **Frequency of meetings of the S&T Partnership**

- Representatives of members of the S&T Partnership will meet face-to-face once every two years just before the Global Platforms and also at the respective Regional Platforms to review activities and outputs of the Partnership and to promote collaboration among members.
- STAG and the Secretariat will organize these meetings.
- Other meetings and conferences may be organized by members and partners on their own resources, as contribution to the work of the Partnership.

## Annex 2:

### **Call for Interest and Selection of STAG members**

#### **Call for interest to the STAG membership**

- Call for interest for STAG candidates will be announced by UNISDR Secretariat, including information on required level of commitment and expected workload and selection criteria.
- All institutions of the Scientific and Technical Partnership can designate representatives for consideration as members of STAG.
- The composition of STAG shall reflect the makeup of the key technical institutes and disciplines for DRR as well as the geographical representation, gender and age.
- The Secretariat will share the list of selected candidates and the details of the procedures with the Partnership.

#### **Selection Process for STAG membership**

- The Secretariat will forward the list of suggested candidates to UNISDR regional offices for comments, as relevant.
- A selection panel will be composed of up to 10 members from the UNISDR Secretariat, including regional offices and current members of STAG.
- The Secretariat will send the list of candidates to the selection panel to shortlist them based on demonstrated level of commitment to the Partnership through technical expertise, involvement in capacity development activities, and reflecting the regional diversity.
- The final list of candidates will be selected by consensus. In cases unresolvable disagreement, the matter will be referred to the Head of the UNISDR.

#### **Term of Office of STAG members**

- The STAG shall be comprised of up to 20 members, including designates of institutions and organizations to represent those entities, in addition to the individual expert members.
- The terms of office for members of the STAG will be two years, renewable for one term. Rotation of members will ensure continuity by allowing new selected members each year.
- After a maximum of 4 years, members should rotate off the STAG for one term before being eligible for re-selection. Institutions can nominate other candidates for consideration for the STAG.

#### **Frequency of meetings of STAG**

- STAG will meet face-to-face at least once every year to review activities and outputs of the Partnership and to promote collaboration among members.
- STAG will maintain regular tele or video conferences to exchange information, organise its work and deliver.