UNISDR Science and Technology Conference
on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

Launching UNISDR Science and Technology Partnership and the Science and Technology Road Map to 2030

To promote and support the availability and application of science and technology to decision-making in Disaster Risk Reduction

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Geneva International Conference Centre

Concept note: The Role of Youth in the application of Science for Disaster Risk Reduction

1) Overview

Young scientists from various disciplines within the crosscutting field of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) have the potential to enable an effective, sustainable and evidence based implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (referred as Sendai Framework). Young scientists are pushing the boundaries of research and its context specific application for improved decision-making across spatial and temporal scales. The innovative capacity of the younger generation should be utilised to ensure that good practices and scientific evidence are used to support decision makers now and in the future. The potential contribution of young scientists in tailoring the decision making in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Sendai Framework needs recognition, as their contribution is crucial to ensure the resilient society we want.

This side event will cover the following discussion points;

- The values of showcasing knowledge on good practices from the young scientist community on their current and potential research contributions to the effective implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework;

- Discuss challenges and solutions for engaging more young people in the evidence based implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework;

- Launch the Young Scientists in DRR Platform which is being coordinated by UN Major Group for Children and Youth (UN MGCY):

- Discuss the networks, platforms and partnerships that the Young Scientists in DRR Platform will interface with, including the UNISDR Science and Technology Advisory Group (STAG), International Council for Science and Social Science (ICSU), Universities and others;

- Discuss the UNISDR Science and Technology Roadmap via the Young Scientists in DRR Platform and in particular address the need for capacity development and sharing research approaches to support the implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework.

2) Stock taking

The Sendai Framework places importance on the role of young people as 'agents of change' for DRR and heavily emphasises the importance of science and technology as enablers for implementing and monitoring resilient programs. Thus, the importance of engaging young scientists and promoting their continuous interaction with youth engaged in policy design and implementation, while facilitating inter-generational dialogue, is vital. The younger generation and early career students, researchers, besides scientific and technological professionals are capable of integrating scientific knowledge and driving evidence based policy at all levels.

The UN MGCY coordinates the youth participation in inter-governmental and allied processes, including the Sendai Framework development, implementation, monitoring, and review. UN MGCY are currently in the process of developing the Young Scientists in DRR Platform with the support of amongst others from the UNISDR Science and Technology Advisory Group (STAG). However, there still remains a challenge to meaningfully engage young scientists in the application of science for policy design and implementation. This side event will first discuss the broader challenges and solutions for young scientist's engagement and then go on to discuss the Young Scientists in DRR Platform.

Challenges and possible solutions:

- Review existing mechanisms and opportunities for young scientists to engage in the application of science for DRR, e.g., UN MGCY, ICSU, Universities, research institutions, professional and learned societies, civil society, youth and community-led organisations.

- Identify various ways in which youth can contribute more effectively to science and technology in DRR, e.g., open source data collection, young scientist specific research dissemination forum/publication.

- Discuss the challenges and barriers for young scientists in DRR participation and active involvement in the Sendai Framework.

Young Scientists in DRR Platform:

- Enable young scientists' contributions to the implementation of the Science and Technology Roadmap, enriching evidence based implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework;

- Facilitate interdisciplinary and inter-generational knowledge exchange, collaboration, and engagement for young scientists to participate in applying science for DRR.

- Build the partnership of the youth-led Young Scientists in DRR Platform with UNISDR STAG and others, for capacity building, mentoring activities, and for sharing research/professional opportunities for young DRR scientists.

- Promote the collection and collation of existing knowledge from young scientists (research thesis and publications, datasets and databases etc.) that can be used to build further scientific knowledge on DRR, and encourage future research initiatives filling the science gaps identified by the actors of the Roadmap.

3) The way forward

Over the next 15 years, it is important to ensure that young scientists are continuously engaged and able to apply scientific knowledge for DRR in the implementation of the Sendai Framework. This side event will launch a youth-led Young Scientists in DRR Platform. The Platform will, alongside other initiatives, engage young scientists in STAG activities, which has been emphasized in the UNISDR Science and Technology Roadmap. The three priority areas of the Young Scientists in DRR Platform that require investment are outlined in the table below with reference to the connection with the UNISDR Science and Technology Roadmap.

Sendai Framework Priority Area	**Priority for action in S&T Roadmap**	**Key actions in S&T Roadmap**
Priority Activity 1: *Enable a stronger youth involvement in the intergovernmental processes on indicators, monitoring and review at global level and national indicators at country level.*		
1. Understanding Disaster Risk	1.3 Ensure that scientific data and information can support and be used in monitoring and reviewing progress towards disaster risk reduction and resilience building.	Develop and monitor a set of core indices and indicators to measure progress.

3. Investing in Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience	3.1 Provide scientific evidence to enable decision-making of policy options for investment and development planning	Promote cooperation between academic, scientific and research entities and networks and the private sector to develop new products and services to help reduce disaster risk
Priority Activity 2: *Outreach activities at all levels to mobilise youth and universities in science and policy e.g. debates, twitter chats, webinars and competitions.*		
2. Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk	2.1 Ensure a stronger involvement of science in policy- and decision-making at all levels	Promote and improve dialogue to facilitate a science-policy interface for effective decision-making. Raise awareness and improve understanding of disaster risks and their impact on societies and their trans-boundary and global impact.
Priority Activity 3: *Develop thematic teams of young scientists from varied disciplines to share knowledge (e.g. through joint publications) and promote DRR at regional and national levels.*		
1. Understanding Disaster Risk	1.1 Assess the current state of data, scientific knowledge and technical availability on disaster risks reduction and fill the gaps with new knowledge.	Enhance access to environmentally sound technology, local knowledge and inclusive innovation.
	1.2 Synthesize, produce and disseminate scientific evidence in a timely and accessible manner that responds to the knowledge needs from policy-makers and practitioners;	Promote partnership between scientists, policy makers, private sectors and community leaders to establish, disseminate and share good practices, learn lessons, and create knowledge .

4. Enhancing Disaster Preparedness For Effective Response, and to "Build Back Better" In Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction	4.2 Build capacity to ensure that all sectors and countries understand, have access to, and can use scientific information for better informed decision-making	Build local knowledge and the use of existing training and education mechanisms and peer learning. Incorporate disaster risk knowledge in formal and non-formal education. Promote trans-disciplinary work in disaster risk reduction research. Strengthen public education and awareness in DRR. Develop the workforce capacity in all sectors in understanding disaster risk and implementing DRR approaches. Enhance knowledge and technology transfer and promote the use of global technology pools to share know-how, innovation and research

The Young Scientists in DRR Platform will be further developed in line with the three priority areas as outlined in the table above, in the time up to the side event.

4) Acknowledgment

This concept note has been developed by the UN MGCY whom is working on the set up of the Young Scientists in DRR Platform. The main contributions are provided by the following members of UN MGCY: Lydia Cumiskey (Water Youth Network and Deltares), Donovan Guttieres (Boston University), Annisa Triyanti (University of Amsterdam and Universitas Gadjah Mada), Aashish Khullar (Organising Partner, UN MGCY), Aakriti Grover, Ajay Kumar, Joel Gill (Director, Geology for Global Development) and Moa Herrgard (Medical Student Sweden, Deputy Organising Partner UN MGCY).

5) References

[1] Third Central European Workshop for Promotion of the role of Young People in the Development of Science and the Popularisation of Scientific Knowledge held at Villa Lanna, Prague (Czech Republic), 25-26 March 1999

[2] Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction 2015–2030. In: UN world conference on disaster risk reduction, 2015 March 14–18, Sendai, Japan. Geneva: United Nations Office

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[4] Cumiskey, L., Hoang, T., Suzuki, S., Pettigrew, C., & Herrgård, M. M. (2015). Youth Participation at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. International Journal of Disaster Risk Science, 6(2), 150163.

Annex:

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

Preamble

7. There has to be a broader and a more people-centred preventive approach to disaster risk. Disaster risk reduction practices need to be multi-hazard and multi-sectorial, inclusive and accessible in order to be efficient and effective. While recognizing their leading, regulatory and coordination role, Governments should engage with relevant stakeholders, including women, children and youth, persons with disabilities, poor people, migrants, indigenous peoples, volunteers, the community of practitioners and older persons in the design and implementation of policies, plans and standards. There is a need for the public and private sectors and civil society organizations, as well as academia and scientific and research institutions, to work more closely together and to create opportunities for collaboration, and for businesses to integrate disaster risk into their management practices.

Guiding Principles

19 (d) Disaster risk reduction requires an all-of-society engagement and partnership. It also requires empowerment and inclusive, accessible and non-discriminatory participation, paying special attention to people disproportionately affected by disasters, especially the poorest. A gender, age, disability and cultural perspective should be integrated in all policies and practices, and women and youth leadership should be promoted. In this context, special attention should be paid to the improvement of organized voluntary work of citizens;

Role of Stakeholders

36 (a) (ii) Children and youth are agents of change and should be given the space and modalities to contribute to disaster risk reduction, in accordance with legislation, national practice and educational curricula;