

## Press release

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# “KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE” – UN LAUNCHES SEARCH FOR COMMUNITIES GOOD AT MANAGING THE RISK OF DISASTERS

**28 July 2015, GENEVA** – The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) today launched a search for communities that demonstrate excellence in managing disaster risk in order to draw attention to the importance of local knowledge, traditions and customs in the struggle against extreme weather events, climate change and earthquakes.

Margareta Wahlström, the head of UNISDR, said: “We want to identify and honour communities which exemplify the use of traditional, indigenous and local knowledge and practices, to complement scientific knowledge in disaster risk management. Over 19 million people from communities across the globe were newly displaced by disasters last year and we need to improve our understanding of how local practices can contribute to better management of disaster risk.

“Under the campaign slogan, KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE, we are seeking nominations from governments, local governments and civil society organizations for communities which should be declared Champions of Disaster Risk Reduction for their efforts. The first communities to be designated Champions will be announced on International Day for Disaster Reduction, Tuesday, October 13, this year.”

The newly adopted global agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, contains several references to the need for a strong focus on communities and indigenous peoples, their traditional, indigenous and local knowledge and practices, in the design and implementation of policies, plans and standards for disaster risk management. Nominations and queries should be addressed to [iddr2015@un.org](mailto:iddr2015@un.org) by COB September 14, 2015.

**About UNISDR:** UNISDR is the UN office dedicated to disaster risk reduction. It is led by the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction and supports implementation of the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* which seeks “the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries.”