

Brussels, 13 October 2016

Action Plan 2016-2020 between the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)

Introduction

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) is the focal point in the United Nations system for the coordination of disaster risk reduction and for ensuring synergies with regional organisations and activities in the socio-economic and humanitarian fields. It is an organisational unit of the UN Secretariat and is led by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction (SRSG). UNISDR has five regional offices, including the Regional Office for Europe (UNISDR-ROE) located in Brussels, Belgium. Within the context of this Action Plan 2016-2020, UNISDR-ROE will carry out the joint activities as described below.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 is the successor instrument to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters. It was adopted on 18 March 2015 at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, Japan. The Sendai Framework is the outcome of stakeholder consultations initiated in March 2012 and inter-governmental negotiations held from July 2014 to March 2015, which were supported by the UNISDR upon the request of the UN General Assembly. UNISDR has been tasked to support the implementation, follow-up and review of the Sendai Framework.

The Sendai Framework acknowledges the role of local governments in risk reduction, and the importance of tackling disaster risks in urban areas to reduce the impact of both large and small-scale disasters that are increasing in intensity as urban areas grow and urban populations expand. Of the seven (7) global targets agreed, the first and primary task is to "increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020".

As part of the implementation, follow-up and review of the Sendai Framework, the UNISDR Making Cities Resilient (MCR) Campaign works toward building resilience to disaster on the local level. The Campaign was launched in 2010 and currently counts over 3 000 participating cities worldwide and more than 650 European local governments.

The MCR Campaign employs many tools and activities for building resilience and capacity at local level. The "Ten Essentials" are the guiding framework of the MCR Campaign, and the corresponding indicators support local governments in developing local/urban resilience strategies that take into account current and future risk scenarios. Some of the tools and activities include self-assessments,

capacity building, city-to-city exchanges and twinnings, and local level peer reviews. UNISDR defines itself through its multi-stakeholder coordination approach based on the relationships it has developed with national and local governments, intergovernmental organisations and civil society, including the private sector, and by its mode of operating through a network of global partners, such as the Committee of the Regions.

The Committee of the Regions (CoR) is the voice of regions and cities in the European Union consisting of regional and locally elected representatives from the 28 EU countries. Six commissions, including the Commission for Natural Resources (NAT), cover competences in policy areas based on the EU Treaties, including on civil protection. Closer cooperation will also enhance the visibility of the Committee of the Regions' Commission for Natural Resources (NAT Commission) at international level.

Since 2012, the CoR and the UNISDR-ROE have collaborated to promote disaster risk reduction (DRR) at local level in European countries. Following the demand for further cooperation from European countries, the CoR and the UNISDR-ROE have further explored areas in which a strategic and long-term partnership can bring benefits to European countries.

Objective and activities

The overall objective of the Action Plan is to strengthen the implementation and coordination of DRR actions at local level in Europe. This is in line with the goals and targets set out by the Sendai Framework and broader EU policy on disaster risk management.

To achieve this objective, the NAT Commission and UNISDR-ROE agree upon the following joint activities for the time period 2016-2020:

Policy

- The CoR promotes the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and its goal to significantly increase the number of cities with local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020.
- On behalf of the CoR, the NAT commission endorses the Ten Essentials, the UNISDR guiding framework for disaster risk reduction at local level.
- UNISDR-ROE provides relevant policy guidance and ensures knowledge sharing, i.e. key documents, guidance and reviews.
- The CoR explores the possibility of drafting an opinion on the implementation of the Sendai Framework as relevant to local governments, depending on the interinstitutional agenda and pending the interest of CoR members.

Planning and implementation

- UNISDR-ROE and the CoR organise regular high-level exchanges between the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction (SRSG) and the CoR President as well as meetings between both organisations at administrative level.
- The CoR participates in the UNISDR Making Cities Resilient Campaign Steering Group.

- The CoR participates in relevant working groups, meetings, consultations and discussions, organised by the UNISDR.
- UNISDR-ROE participates in the activities organised by the CoR in the field of civil protection, climate change adaptation and sustainable development.

Advocacy/outreach

- The CoR contributes to raising awareness on the MCR Campaign and local level disaster risk reduction activities and to information sharing through various channels such as the CoR website.
- The CoR and the UNISDR-ROE organise an annual joint event within the context of the European week of Regions and Cities and the International Day for Disaster Reduction (13 October).
- UNISDR conveys CoR activities relevant to disaster risk reduction through its networks and events at regional and global levels.

A review of the Action Plan 2016-2020 will be conducted after its expiration. In addition to the above identified areas for cooperation, more specific plans of action may be developed to implement the indicated joint activities.

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of the UN Secretary-General for
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