



# **UNISDR** **Strategic Framework** **2016-2021**

In support of the Sendai Framework  
for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 - 2030



**UNISDR**  
United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

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**Strategic Framework**  
**2016-2021**

## THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION: A THEORY OF CHANGE

### Introduction

The UNISDR Strategic Framework is underpinned by a theory of change in which the reduction of disaster risk is essential to sustainable development, and where a risk-informed development path is key to the successful management of disaster risks.

Disasters are exacting a huge toll with hundreds of thousands of lives and US\$1.5 trillion lost in the last decade alone. Economic losses from disasters are now averaging US\$250 billion to 300 billion each year<sup>1</sup>. This trend is set to continue as exposure in hazard-prone countries grows more rapidly than vulnerability is reduced. Economic development, the rapid pace of urbanisation and population growth concentrate people and economic activity in hazard-prone areas. With climate change, environmental degradation and rising inequality, successfully managing disaster risk in these areas will be a determining factor of prosperity and sustainability.

Disaster risk is part of the DNA of social and economic development, rooted in poverty and inequality, evolving over time. Consequently, managing disaster risks cannot be separated from the broader governance of social and economic development. Successful disaster risk governance relies on accountable institutions, appropriately resourced local governments, functional judicial systems, and low levels of poverty and social inequality.

The international humanitarian system is also under increasing strain with unprecedented humanitarian needs in many regions of the world. It has become clear that current and expected future levels of assistance required

cannot be sustained and that the risks of humanitarian crises and disasters have to be reduced significantly. UNISDR recognises that behavioural change of society as a whole is required to substantially reduce disaster losses. It therefore directly supports governments and acts as a convener and catalyst for action by a wide range of stakeholders, including the United Nations system and regional organisations, major groups, civil society and the private sector, parliamentarians and key decision-makers, and the science and technology community.

International agreements on disaster risk reduction, sustainable development, financing for development, and climate change mitigation and adaptation present a unique opportunity for increased coherence and global impact. For the first time, this set of interconnected agreements has the potential to catalyse international development that is sensitive to trade-offs between economic, social and environmental priorities, recognises the critical role of gender equality and mainstreaming, and reflects an understanding of climate and disaster risk. Today, the international community, including the public and private sector, has a unique opportunity to change the way that development is understood, implemented and measured.

### The path ahead: UNISDR in 2016 – 2021

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030 marks a crucial shift from managing disasters to managing and reducing risk and establishes resilience-building as a common denominator of the 2030 Agenda. To paraphrase the UN Secretary-General, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development started in Sendai.

Countries have committed to give sharper focus to their efforts to reduce disaster risk by setting priorities for action and specific targets that are codified in the Sendai Framework. Understanding disaster risk, strengthening disaster risk governance, investing in resilience, and enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to build back better are the four priorities for action for countries in pursuance of the Sendai Framework's outcome and goal. The progress that countries make in these areas will be measured against the **seven global targets**:

substantially reducing: (a) the loss of lives, (b) numbers of affected people, (c) economic loss, and (d) damage to critical infrastructure; and

increasing and improving: (e) national and local strategies with specific targets and indicators, (f) international cooperation, and (g) access to early warning and risk assessment.

Furthermore, major changes in attitudes and behaviours towards disaster risk reduction, which began in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004, are now reflected and further elaborated in all the recent international agreements (SAMOA Pathway, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, the Transforming our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on climate change and the New Urban Agenda). In the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in particular, disaster risk reduction and resilience are reflected in 25 targets and in 10 of the 17 goals.

The United Nations system, through the *UN Plan of Action for Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development*, is committed to strengthening coherence in its approaches and efforts in disaster risk reduction. UNISDR supports its UN partners as well as regional organisations, development banks and relevant multilateral institutions in making all programming disaster risk-informed. The Sendai Framework provides UNISDR with a pivotal role in aligning national implementation and monitoring, and regional and global review of progress across relevant international frameworks. This is the first time that the international community will be able to review global progress in disaster risk reduction in a systematic way, one that is linked to progress in sustainable development, and UNISDR is the central facilitator and clearing house for this process.

The next five years are critical. The Sendai Framework outlines a set of essential outputs by 2021. These determine the strategic direction for UNISDR in the coming years. They include:

- Support to the intergovernmental work of countries, including on finalising the terminology for disaster risk reduction and the indicators for the global targets.
- Support to countries in implementing the Sendai Framework, including development of national and local strategies and plans with concrete targets and indicators, aligned with plans on sustainable development and climate change.
- Development of baselines for the global targets of the Sendai Framework, requiring global coverage of the development and improvement of national disaster loss databases with as much disaggregation as feasible of data by sex, age and ability.
- Analysis of disaster risks and good practice in the context of sustainable development and climate change through Global Assessment Reports on Disaster Risk Reduction (GAR),

1. UNISDR. 2015. *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction Making Development Sustainable: the future of disaster risk management*. Geneva, Switzerland: UNISDR.

Global and Regional Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction, and partnerships and advocacy in strategic areas.

- Review of progress against the Sendai Framework, including guidance for future course corrections, reviews of the UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience and international development assistance flows.
- Major stock-taking exercise of implementation of the Sendai Framework, including assessing the achievement of Target E on national and local disaster risk reduction strategies.

### UNISDR's mandate and vision

UNISDR is the focal point in the United Nations system, coordinating disaster risk reduction and ensuring synergies among the relevant activities of United Nations agencies and regional organisations, and related activities in socio-economic and humanitarian fields. UNISDR's role<sup>2</sup> is to support the implementation, follow-up and review of the Sendai Framework, including by fostering coherence with other international instruments, such as the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs as well as Paris Agreement on climate change. As such, UNISDR champions and supports the integration of disaster risk management across different areas of work of the United Nations and of its Members States as well as among a broad range of key stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society.

To carry out its mandate, UNISDR's **vision** is articulated in line with the Sendai Framework, as the *substantial reduction of disaster losses and risk for a sustainable future*. The vision builds on UNISDR's significant track record of expertise and accomplishments under the Hyogo Framework

for Action, from 2005 to 2015. These include the successful establishment and leadership of regional and global coordinating and review mechanisms for disaster risk reduction; ongoing support to countries, intergovernmental processes, and key stakeholders, by providing relevant risk information, decision-making support tools and policy guidance; catalysing multi-stakeholder engagement in disaster risk reduction, including the private sector, parliamentarians and civil society; fostering gender-sensitive disaster risk reduction; and effective global advocacy.

**The desired impact and long-term objective** of UNISDR's work *is the prevention of new and reduction of existing disaster risk and strengthening resilience*, corresponding with the goal of the Sendai Framework.

A number of conditions will need to be created and sustained in order to achieve this, including

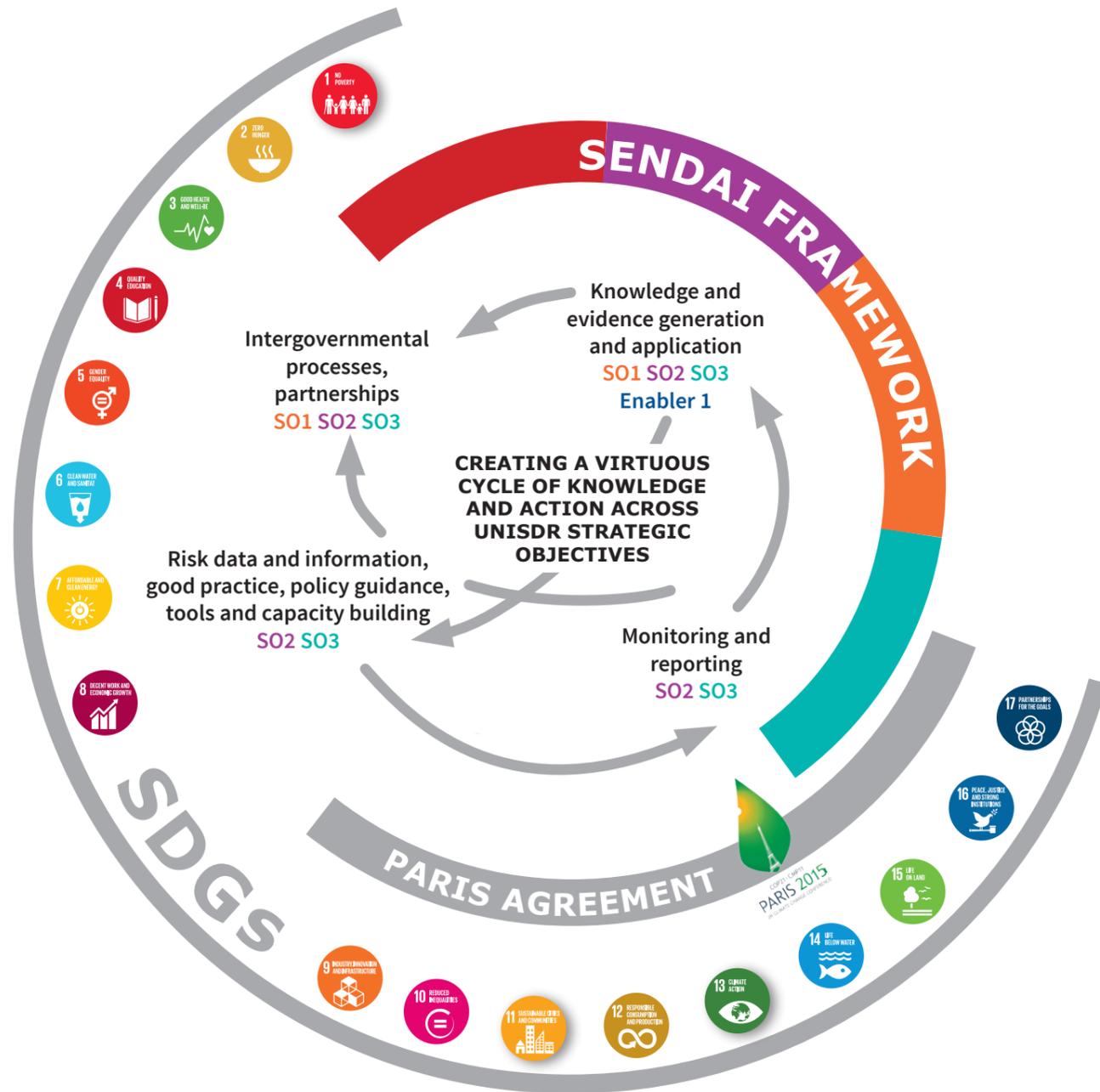
- an engaged and active international community – including governments and key policy makers, the UN system and international and regional organisations, international and regional development banks, parliamentarians, the private sector, civil society, and the science and technology community – that understands and is committed to disaster risk reduction as a strategic approach to achieve sustainable development;
- the ability and practice of countries to align their national priorities, strategies and plans – as well as the related monitoring and review mechanisms – to relevant international frameworks, in particular for disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- a change in decision-making processes, policies and practices of governments, private sector and other key actors to make them truly risk-informed, which implies access to risk information and knowledge that is context-specific, appropriate and accurate;

- an all-of-society engagement and partnership, guided by the principle that governments, parliamentarians, civil society and community groups, international organisations, the private sector, members of the science and technology community, and other key stakeholders jointly engage in disaster risk reduction and act as important contributors to understanding risk and as advocates for risk-informed development.
- a continued commitment to making disaster risk reduction gender- and age- sensitive and inclusive of all stakeholders, including persons with disabilities.

UNISDR commits to enabling and fostering these conditions through three **Strategic Objectives**, which guide its work from 2016 through to 2021. At the heart of this is its mandate to review progress against the Sendai Framework. Monitoring and reporting progress in disaster risk reduction creates **a virtuous cycle of**

**knowledge and evidence generation and application for improved policy and practice, which forms the backbone and underlying rationale of UNISDR's engagement across its Strategic Objectives:** supporting countries in generating risk data and information, and regular monitoring and reporting on disaster loss, risk and risk reduction practice, create the basis for analysis and evidence. Through a positive feedback loop, this evidence informs global and regional processes in disaster risk reduction, such as the Global and Regional Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPs and RPs), which in turn inform national practice. It also is the basis for coherence with international processes on sustainable development and climate change, in particular the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change. Importantly, the analysis and evidence feeds directly back into improved national implementation in the form of accessible risk knowledge, tools and capacity building.

2. **Mandate** from the Sendai Framework, as endorsed by the General Assembly, GA/RES/69/283



**VISION** The substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses for a sustainable future

**MANDATE** Focal point of the United Nations system for disaster risk reduction and the custodian of the Sendai Framework, supporting countries and societies in its implementation, monitoring and review of progress

**OVERARCHING OBJECTIVE** The prevention of new and reduction of existing disaster risk and strengthening resilience through successful multi-hazard disaster risk management.

Strategic Objectives

**1**  
Strengthen global monitoring, analysis and coordination of Sendai Framework implementation

**2**  
Support to regional and national Sendai Framework implementation

**3**  
Catalyse action through Member States and Partners

Results

**1.1**  
Global Progress of the Sendai Framework & related SDG targets assessed

**2.1**  
Regional & national coordination mechanisms leveraged to monitor & accelerate Sendai Framework

**3.1**  
Fostered policy coherence by engaging with member States & contributing to relevant intergovernmental processes

**1.2**  
Global risk data, analysis and policy advice generated

**2.2**  
National disaster risk reduction strategies & plans developed in line with Sendai Framework prescribed guidance

**3.2**  
Coordination & advice provided to UN System partners at global level towards effective & efficient Sendai Framework implementation

**1.3**  
Global coordination and accountability mechanisms convened

**2.3**  
Build capacity of counterparts, UNCTs and partners for DRR leadership

**3.3**  
All of society engagement and action promoted through strengthening partnerships with key stakeholders

Enablers

**Enabler 1:**  
Effective knowledge management, communication and global advocacy

**Enabler 2:**  
Strengthened organizational performance

**3.4**  
Partnerships leveraged for increased financing for disaster risk reduction and risk-sensitive investment

# 1 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

## STRENGTHEN GLOBAL MONITORING, ANALYSIS AND COORDINATION OF SENDAI FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION

Progress hinges on having an engaged and active international disaster risk reduction community, including governments and key policy makers, the UN system and international and regional organisations, the private sector and civil society, and science and technology actors. UNISDR uses its convening power for regional and global coordination to bring this community together on a regular basis to review progress against the Sendai Framework, examine challenges and opportunities in practice and policy, and strengthen coherence and cooperation with other international frameworks, in particular with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement on climate change. UNISDR is

establishing the global monitoring system and leads the global review of progress in disaster risk reduction against the global targets of the Sendai Framework, and ensures alignment with progress reviews on relevant parts of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, most notably the SDGs.

The main results expected under this strategic objective are that global coordination and accountability mechanisms are successfully delivered and leveraged, on-going inter-governmental support is provided, and risk knowledge and data to measure progress are systematically collected and analysed.

# 2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

## SUPPORT TO REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SENDAI FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION

Accurate, appropriate and applicable risk knowledge, including analysis of regional and global risk patterns and trends, and progress in disaster risk reduction are prerequisites for effective disaster risk management. UNISDR supports countries in assessing what they are currently losing, what they could lose in the future, what drives risk, which disaster risk management options have proven effective and which innovations hold potential for building resilience.

UNISDR will continue to make available relevant risk knowledge and provide policy guidance in support of countries' planning and implementation. Specifically, UNISDR will support countries in reviewing data requirements for the development of national targets, indicators and baselines, and provide leadership and coordination in the United Nations system (through UN Country Teams and other regional coordination

mechanisms) to support the development of national and local strategies. UNISDR will also coordinate and strengthen overall approaches to capacity building.

The main results expected under this strategic objective are that relevant national disaster loss and appropriate disaggregated risk data are generated, and disaster risk knowledge and policy guidance are made available for risk-informed decision-making; regional coordination and accountability mechanisms are successfully delivered and leveraged; and that United Nations Country Teams and regional organisations actively support countries through risk-sensitive United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs)<sup>3</sup> and the United Nations Plan of Action.

3. UNDAFs may be replaced with UN Sustainable Development Frameworks in the coming years.

# 3 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

## CATALYSE ACTION THROUGH MEMBER STATES AND PARTNERS

The Sendai Framework calls for all-of-society engagement and partnership as one of its guiding principles. This means that governments, civil society, international and regional organisations, the private sector and other key stakeholders must jointly engage in disaster risk reduction. UNISDR is recognised for its strong partnership experience and network, its promotion of gender equality, parity and women's empowerment in disaster risk reduction. It will build on this, to engage and strengthen commitments by members of the science and technology community, civil society and community leaders, including representatives of minority groups, the private sector, parliamentarians and local authorities as catalysts for action and accountability. Partners contribute to understanding and managing risk and advocate for risk-informed and accountable development in important ways.

The main results expected for this strategic objective are coherence of international and regional advocacy for disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate change action; strong partnerships for the generation and application of risk knowledge and evidence; the on-going provision of inter-governmental support; and active and accountable contribution to disaster risk reduction from all stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society and community groups, science and technology partners, parliamentarians and key decision-makers.

In addition, two **Enablers** support UNISDR's work across the three Strategic Objectives, the geographical regions and at all levels:

# 1 ENABLER

## EFFECTIVE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, COMMUNICATION AND GLOBAL ADVOCACY

Effective knowledge brokering lies at the heart of successful communication and advocacy for disaster risk reduction. UNISDR supports countries and a wide range of stakeholders by meeting both the demand and supply side of risk knowledge. High-impact communication and advocacy for disaster risk reduction will be underpinned by investments in effective knowledge management within the organisation, for the UN system and with countries, key stakeholders and networks. Consequently, UNISDR communicates clearly on disaster risk trends, disaster losses and impacts, highlighting gaps in implementation and show-casing best practice by governments and stakeholders in reducing disaster risk and disaster losses.

The main results expected for this enabling pillar of work are that UNISDR achieves major impact in knowledge generation and uptake, based on data collection and risk analysis, disaggregated by gender, age and disability, and is recognised and respected for its role as knowledge leader, broker and convener in disaster risk reduction. In addition, effective communication and global advocacy campaigns ensure stakeholder engagement and consolidate UNISDR's track-record of excellence across the three Strategic Objectives.

# 2 ENABLER

## STRENGTHENED ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Impact of UNISDR's work will be increased through more effective, efficient and quality organisational performance and programme delivery. A sustainable and predictable resource base will have to go hand in hand with enhanced effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of operational performance. UNISDR will also strengthen its results-based management with concurrent planning, monitoring and evaluation; enhance its human resource management and staff development in line with its commitment to the UN system wide policy on gender equality and women empowerment and significantly improve its resource mobilisation.

The main results expected for this enabling pillar of work are an appropriate, sustainable and predictable financial resource base, and enhanced operational performance based on appropriate gender-sensitive structure and staffing. Both areas will support enhanced performance across the three Strategic Objectives.

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Note: The designations employed and the presentation of maps in this report do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

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