



World Animal Protection's Statement 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction presented a big step forward from its predecessor the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). The focus moved from disaster management to disaster *risk* management, with the priorities for action converging on reducing risk, enhancing resilience and preventing disaster-related losses. Whereas HFA largely focused on saving people's lives and protecting their physical infrastructure, the Sendai Framework recognises that effective Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) requires expanding the focus to include the protection of livelihoods and productive assets, and this includes livestock, working animals, tools and seeds.

Animals are worth more to their owners than just their commodity value and as a productive asset they require protection and care to preserve their productive quality. Therefore, to minimize disaster-related suffering; reduce economic, social and environmental losses; and safeguard the livelihoods of the poor, UN Member States must incorporate animal protection into their DRR policies, plans and activities as part of the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

1. The Sendai Framework for Action

In the Sendai Guiding Principles, UN Member States noted that the protection of livelihoods must include the protection of people's productive assets.

Managing the risk of disasters is aimed at protecting persons and their property, health, livelihoods and productive assets, as well as cultural and environmental assets, while promoting and protecting all human rights, including the right to development (Para 19.c)

In its Priorities for Action, the Framework emphasises that DRR efforts must first and foremost address the risks faced by the poorest and those most vulnerable to disasters. To do this, under the Priorities for Action, Priority 3 - *Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience*, the Sendai Framework recommends to:

Strengthen the protection of livelihoods and productive assets, including livestock, working animals, tools and seeds (Para 30.p); and

Strengthen and promote collaboration and capacity-building for the protection of productive assets, including livestock, working animals, tools and seeds; (Para 31.f)

On February 2017 the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the recommendations of the open-ended intergovernmental expert group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction (71/54). Global target B of the Sendai Framework urges to *Substantially reduce the number of affected people globally by 2030, aiming to lower the average global figure per 100,000 between 2020-2030 compared with 2005-2015*. In order to measure this target, Member States have agreed to quantify the *Number of people whose livelihoods were disrupted or destroyed, attributed to disasters (B-5)*. Considering that some of the most vulnerable communities depend on agriculture as their livelihoods, such an indicator will require Member States to acknowledge how disasters affect this sector. Furthermore, under Global target C, *Reduce direct disaster economic loss in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP) by 2030*; Member States are requested to measure *Direct agricultural loss attributed to disasters (agriculture is understood to include the crops, livestock, fisheries, apiculture, aquaculture and forest sectors as well as associated facilities and infrastructure, C-2)*.



2. The agriculture sector

The agriculture sector (including crops, livestock, fisheries and forestry) absorbs 22% of loss and damages in developing countries. The livestock subsector alone sustained nearly 34% of the total economic impact within agriculture. Just the Latin America and the Caribbean region between 2003 and 2013 suffered USD \$11 billion losses in the crop and livestock subsectors, which represented 3% of the projected value of production.

Large scale disasters hit hard on local economies, raking up losses by the billions of dollars. Major floods, droughts, storms and earthquakes between 2003 and 2013 decreased production value of the crop and livestock sector by 2% in Asia, 3% in Latin America and the Caribbean, 6% in Africa and 7% in the Near East. This signifies losses that range from USD \$7 billion to USD \$48 billion, according to data by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).ⁱ

3. Action Plans for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework

Based on the above, it is imperative that the protection of livelihoods and productive assets is reflected in global debates on how the Framework is implemented and how progress is measured. As countries begin to interpret the requirements for achieving the Sendai expected outcomes and determine what this must mean for regional and national DRR policies, it is essential that countries explicitly acknowledge the centrality of the protection of livelihoods, alongside the protection of lives and infrastructure. Furthermore, the protection of animals as key productive assets needs to be included in national and local disaster risk reduction strategies (Global Target E) as a way to improve resilience to climate change and disasters in the most vulnerable communities.

Not only is the inclusion of productive assets (livestock, working animals, tools and seeds) beneficial for community and urban resilience, it also has substantial cost benefits. Our analysis demonstrates the benefit of including animals in disaster management processes in the form of reduced economic losses. As an example, it is estimated that \$96 dollars of economic value was directly supported for every \$1 spent in our response to rapid-onset flooding in India. In Chihuahua, Mexico, World Animal Protection's drought intervention generated \$14 of benefits in the form of avoided losses for every \$1 spent over a one-year period.

We strongly urge the Governments to include the protection of animals and productive assets among its national priorities for mainstreaming DRR in public policies.

To achieve this, we recommend that the husbandry sector (ministries of agriculture, academia, veterinary professionals, as well as smallholder farmer and pastoralist associations) be included in the discussions for developing national and local strategies for DRR. The capacity of the public veterinary sector needs to be strengthened to understand the risks associated to disasters as well as the underlying causes of such risks. In addition, governments need to understand the impact of disasters on the agriculture sector, by ensuring that baseline information is available. Finally, local communities need to be empowered to improve their production methods and enhance their resilience.

ⁱ FAO (2015) 'The impacts of disasters on agriculture and food security' FAO: Rome Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5128e.pdf>