

“Towards a Resilient Future: Science, Technology, Policy and Private Sector Nexus for Disaster Risk Reduction”

02 -03 October 2023
Conference Palace, Tunis - Tunisia

Concept Note

I. Background

Disaster risk reduction (DRR) is a critical component of sustainable development and is aimed at reducing the likelihood and impact of disasters. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is a global agreement adopted by the United Nations Member States in 2015 that outlines a comprehensive approach to DRR.

The Sendai Framework focuses on four priorities for action: understanding disaster risk, strengthening disaster risk governance, investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience, and enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

The framework emphasizes the importance of partnerships and collaboration among governments, private sector, academia, and civil society in implementing DRR initiatives. This approach recognizes that disaster risk reduction is not solely the responsibility of one sector but requires a comprehensive and coordinated effort across multiple sectors.

The role of the science and technology community is highlighted in the Sendai Framework. It is mainly focusing "on the disaster risk factors and scenarios, including emerging disaster risks, in the short, medium and long terms; increase research for regional, national and local application; support action by local communities and authorities; and support the Science-Policy interface for decision-making" (Para. 36 (b) of the Sendai Framework for disaster risk reduction).

2023 marks the midpoint in the implementation period of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, providing a significant opportunity to review and bolster the implementation of the Framework moving towards 2030, and significantly strengthen the integration with other international agreements. Member states reiterated the instrumental and cross-cutting role of science, technology and innovation in strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of disaster resilience - building and encouraging their greater application to support and accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework and its four priorities.



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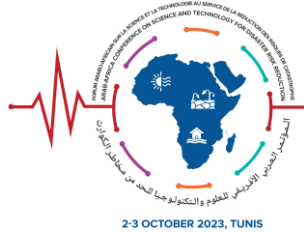
The science, technology, policy, and private sector nexus plays a significant role in implementing the mid-term review outcome of the Sendai Framework. The involvement of scientific and academic organizations is critical in understanding the underlying causes of disasters, developing effective risk reduction strategies, and ensuring that these strategies are evidence-based.

Governments play a crucial role in setting policies and regulations to support DRR initiatives and creating an enabling environment for private sector and businesses to invest in disaster risk reduction. The private sector and businesses have a crucial role in investing in disaster risk reduction initiatives that ensure the safety of their employees, customers, and assets. At the same time, innovation, new research and solutions for disaster risk management and development continue to be dominated by the private sector. The collaboration between science, technology, policy, and the private sector is essential in advancing disaster prevention and preparedness efforts and supporting governments' efforts in the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

As such, disaster risk reduction has become an essential aspect of global development strategies. While national and subnational actors may be primarily responsible for managing disaster risks, the private sector also has a vital role to play in contributing to mitigation efforts and building more resilient communities. The private sector is a significant contributor to national economies, and its support in disaster risk reduction can help minimize negative economic consequences. The private sector can contribute to disaster risk reduction efforts in many ways, such as by investing in research and development of resilient infrastructure, ensuring the business continuity of essential services during disasters, supporting the government's disaster response efforts and early warning systems. Engaging the private sector as part of multi-stakeholder partnerships is vital in global policies such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Climate Agreement, and the New Urban Agenda.

Nevertheless, in numerous countries, the private sector's contribution to disaster risk management efforts is still undervalued. Consequently, it is crucial for the private sector to transition from merely being a passive source of funding to becoming an engaged stakeholder, offering innovative solutions. Furthermore, the private sector heavily relies on a robust public service infrastructure to ensure smooth business operations.

A major hurdle confronting the intersection of science, technology, policy, and the private sector in disaster risk reduction (DRR) is the inadequate collaboration and coordination among these sectors. Frequently, scientific research fails to be integrated into policy-making processes, while businesses remain unaware of the latest advancements in DRR science. As a result, a disconnect arises between science, policy, and the private sector, impeding advancements towards resilient communities. To tackle these challenges, it is imperative to comprehend the nexus of science, policy, and the private sector in DRR. This entails harmonizing scientific



knowledge with policy decisions and business practices to formulate effective strategies for disaster prevention and preparedness.

Moreover, numerous opportunities exist for collaboration and coordination among these sectors. Public-private partnerships, for instance, offer an effective avenue to harness resources and expertise from both the public and private sectors. Furthermore, universities and research institutions can play a crucial role in bridging the divide between science, technology and policy. They can achieve this by conducting research that directly informs policymaking and by providing training and education to policymakers and business leaders, thereby facilitating a more informed and collaborative approach to address disaster risk reduction.

In conclusion, the mid-term review of the SFDRR highlights the need for greater collaboration between stakeholders in disaster risk reduction efforts. With the above-mentioned challenges and opportunities and by understanding the science, technology, policy, and the private sector nexus for disaster risk reduction, we can develop effective strategies that promote sustainable development and build resilience to disasters. The conference aims to address these challenges and come up with a commitment for enhanced partnership and action in support of the implementation of Sendai Framework for DRR and its Midterm review.

Objective:

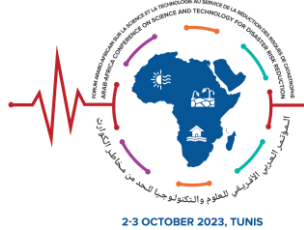
The objective of the Arab-Africa Science and Technology Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction: “Towards a Resilient Future: Science, Technology, Policy and Private Sector Nexus for Disaster Risk Reduction” is to:

- Examine the fundamental matters, obstacles, requirements, and prospects associated with integrating science into policy-making processes, while also showcasing successful approaches within the Arab and African regions.
- Explore the future direction to foster a robust science-technology-policy-private sector nexus for evidence-based policymaking in disaster risk reduction (DRR) within Africa and Arab countries.
- Establish a consensus on a set of pivotal commitments by scientific, academic, and private sector organizations to advance the application of science and technology in DRR.

Outcome:

The Arab-Africa science and technology for Disaster Risk Reduction conference is expected to achieve the following outcomes:

- Endorsement of a resolute commitment towards the application of science and technology in disaster risk reduction, aligning with the goal and targets of the Sendai Framework and the outcomes of the Midterm review.
- The Arab-African Appeal of Tunis to strengthen the interconnection between science, technology, policy and the private sector in Disaster Risk Reduction.



The outcomes of the conference will inform the 28th session of the Conference of Parties for Climate Change (COP28) in Dubai, UAE in December 2023 and the Arab and African Regional Platforms for DRR in 2024.

Conference Structure

The Arab-Africa Science and Technology for Disaster Risk Reduction Conference is structured around plenaries and thematic sessions around the four Sendai priorities. The conference will include interactive discussions to share experiences and knowledge among the countries in the African and Arab regions and showcase the latest innovations, technical know-how, tools and techniques for disaster risk reduction from the private sector and academia.

The two-day discussion will culminate in the conference's outcome document, which will be endorsed by the 'Chair' of the conference and agreed upon by all participants.

Participation

The Arab-Africa Science and Technology for Disaster Risk Reduction Conference is expected to host over 300 participants from Arab and Africa countries, including national Sendai Framework focal points, representatives of national research institutions, scientific and academic institutions (Arab STAG, Africa STAG), United Nations and international organizations, donors, intergovernmental organizations, Private Sector, Public Sector, etc.

All participants are required to register online through the following link:

<https://indico.un.org/event/1006698/>

Conference Website link:

[Towards a Resilient Future: The Arab-Africa Science, Technology, Policy & Private Sector Nexus for Disaster Risk Reduction | UNDRR](#)