

Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction 2024
Eyes on 2030: Enhancing ambition in Asia-Pacific to accelerate disaster risk reduction

As the first regional platform since the adoption of the Political Declaration of the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework), the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) 2024 will be organized under the theme: *Eyes on 2030: Enhancing ambition in Asia-Pacific to accelerate disaster risk reduction*. The overarching theme of the APMCDRR 2024 will focus on raising ambition through the sharing of lessons learned, identifying innovative ideas and practices to reduce systemic risk and cascading impacts, identifying practical financing opportunities for developing countries to reduce risk and build resilience, and advancing climate and disaster resilience, risk-informed development and humanitarian response preparedness, including anticipatory action and early warning systems, across the Asia-Pacific region. As Asia-Pacific is the most disaster-prone region in the world, with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals under serious threat, the conference provides an important opportunity to share experiences and best practices to accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework. Built on the findings and recommendations from the Sendai Framework Midterm Review, the deliberations of the respective United Nations General Assembly High-level Meeting held on 18-19 May 2023 and its Political Declaration and policy directives, the APMCDRR 2024 sessions will be organised around three main pillars and four cross-cutting themes, which will inform the content of the conference programme.

| Thematic Pillar 1: PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS TO ENHANCE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION FINANCING | Thematic Pillar 2: LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND: GENDER RESPONSIVE AND INCLUSIVE DISASTER RISK GOVERNANCE | Thematic Pillar 3: LOCALIZATION AND URBAN AND RURAL RESILIENCE |
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| <p>There is a need for sustainable and predictable investments in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and scaling up DRR financing tools and strategies to better address disaster risk. Supporting investments in early warning systems under the United National Secretary-General's Early Warnings for All Executive Action Plan, national level DRR frameworks, anticipatory action, and ensuring access to sustainable and predictable data and financing is essential to build disaster resilience. The engagement of the private and informal sectors (including micro-enterprises) is also crucial for mixed finance and innovative solutions that meet the needs of communities, facilitating the collection of disaggregated data and disclosure of information on climate and disaster risks to achieve the goal and targets of the Sendai Framework by 2030.</p> <p>Overall, DRR-related official development assistance has barely increased since 2015. It is urgent to recognize the detrimental impact of disasters on the debt sustainability, national GDP and graduation of many least developed countries (LDCs), identify gaps in public spending on DRR against identified risk and necessary measures, allocate increased domestic and private resources, provide for anticipatory financing, support countries rated at high risk of debt distress and ensure that DRR is mainstreamed into public budgeting and development planning. It is also critical to develop comprehensive and inclusive national, regional and local DRR financing strategies and ensure that infrastructure plans and investments are aligned to DRR strategies and leverage blue and green infrastructure that works with grey infrastructures.</p> <p>Likewise, it is important to pursue the reform of international financial institutions to ensure their policies and measures support the most vulnerable countries in their plans, needs and efforts to reduce disaster risk, as well as foster peer-to-peer exchanges and capacity building for small island developing states (SIDS), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and LDCs to enhance their access to and management of disaster risk financing.</p> | <p>Hazards and resulting disasters affect people differently and exacerbate already existing inequalities. Inequality, poverty and exclusion are drivers of disaster risk. Women and girls, LGBTQIA+, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, older persons and marginalised communities are disproportionately affected by disasters and have different and uneven levels of resilience and capacity to recover. Only inclusive DRR, based on human rights, effectively preserves, protects and saves lives, alleviates suffering and enhances physical security and human dignity.</p> <p>An intersectoral approach to DRR and climate change adaptation (CCA) is needed to deepen understanding of inequalities and capacity factors affecting people and communities due to discrimination, poverty and exclusion. Risk information needs to reflect the needs and capacities of different groups and individuals for inclusive and gender responsive policy and strategy design and implementation and financing mechanisms. Disaggregated data on the impact of disasters on different groups needs to be made available for informed decision-making on social protection needs.</p> <p>DRR and CCA actions need to ensure that all voices are heard, that all are involved and that all constituencies, including forcibly displaced and stateless persons, have the opportunity, capacity and funding to contribute to decision-making processes, implementation and full and equal leadership, ensuring that the people are at the centre of disaster risk governance. An inclusive, whole-of-government and whole-of-society risk governance approach is critical to foster integration, build trust and ensure systems-based and risk-informed strategies and actions.</p> | <p>Resourcing, financing and incorporating the subnational and local level, as well as civil society, is critical for effective DRR. There is a need for increased support for the empowerment and leadership of local authorities, as well as for greater engagement with youth, organisations from and for persons with disabilities, women's networks, local communities, businesses and civil society organizations. Important aspects include addressing the urban and rural continuum, reducing the risk and improving the management of disaster- and climate change-induced displacement and migration, promoting nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches responsive to local conditions, and the use of local, traditional and Indigenous knowledge (led by Indigenous Peoples and Communities). It is also necessary to demystify the intersectionality of risks for local communities.</p> <p>It is essential to strengthen local institutions through financing and connecting them with national and regional governance structure to increase the resilience of infrastructures and communities, reduce disaster risk and subsequent ecosystem degradation, and strengthen capacities at local levels. Overall, the main challenge of supporting local innovation in DRR is securing the necessary funding to develop solutions and scale them for application to existing and foreseeable level of risk.</p> |
| Cross-cutting enablers | | |
| <p>SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND KNOWLEDGE</p> <p>Technology has advanced significantly over the last few decades and is offering sophisticated tools for data management and analysis, risk modelling and risk evaluation, digital communications and many other areas. It is important that access to technology for developing countries is ensured and that capacities are built and maintained for its use, including by disadvantaged groups and at local levels. Academia and scientific institutions are key stakeholders to complement work by governments, regional and international organizations, civil society and other, to advance the DRR and CCA agendas and need to be further involved in policy design and implementation and connected to research and development within government authorities, to enhance the science-policy nexus. The social (psychology, sociology, anthropology) and economic sciences are still largely disconnected from and undervalued in DRR, although they are just as important to understand how people deal with risk and how different groups are affected differently by disasters, as well as to integrate DRR in development policy and strategy and to finance these.</p> <p>Technological advances should provide a platform for innovation and should increase the interlinkages between different kinds of knowledge, including local, Indigenous and traditional knowledge (LITK), lay persons' knowledge and overall practical experiences from the communities. The rapid rise of artificial intelligence and machine learning and their role in DRR, specifically on early warning systems and interface with LITK, needs to be better understood for complementary application to learn and design collaborative approaches. All kinds of knowledge, including LITK, must inform decisions and actions on the ground. This is also essential to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of early warning systems and impact-based forecasting and early action by local communities, including regular testing. A holistic and synergetic approach that draws on LITK and experience combined with science, technology and innovation, empowering local civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations is therefore key.</p> | <p>CONVERGENCE AND COHERENCE</p> <p>DRR, climate and development challenges are increasingly intertwined. The integration of DRR, CCA, water, climate, agriculture, food systems, social protection, security, energy and biodiversity conservation, among other issues, requires the breaking out of institutional and policy silos. It is important to foster synergies between them and address transboundary and long-term impacts of policies and actions. The Sendai Framework works hand in hand with the other 2030 Agenda agreements, including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the New Urban Agenda, and ultimately the Sustainable Development Goals. More closely aligning these frameworks and thematic agendas is crucial to building resilience and achieving sustainable development. While these linkages are conceptually obvious, they are less evident in practice, as these frameworks are usually overseen and implemented by different structures at the national level and progressed through separate tracks globally and regionally. It is therefore important to advance dialogue and exchange, but also more integrated action, follow-up and review to promote policy coherence across sectors and enhance resilience and reduce risk.</p> | |
| <p>MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION</p> <p>When inequality is caused by multiple factors, a whole-of-society approach to DRR and CCA is needed at all levels to achieve scale and diversity of challenges. Horizontal and vertical coordination and collaboration should ensure meaningful participation of different stakeholders, including at local, national, regional and international levels. Working collaboratively leads to the identification of needs, inequalities, gaps, capacities and risk and thereby addressing them in a joint and coherent manner.</p> <p>Strengthening multi-hazard and multi-stakeholder risk governance is important, including the application of legal and regulatory frameworks and ensuring the participation of people in all their diversities, as well as local communities, volunteers, academia, scientific and research entities and networks, business, professional associations, the private sector, financing institutions and the media. Coordination between different stakeholders is also crucial to prepare to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction in order to better harness the opportunities to strengthen resilience, reduce disaster risk and make progress towards sustainable development through risk-informed recovery and reconstruction.</p> | <p>FULL PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT</p> <p>The full engagement of the private sector in DRR is vital. It plays a critical role in multi-hazard and multi-stakeholder risk governance. The environment, social and governance (ESG) investments and business practices by the private sector can make the difference between continued increase of disaster risk or inverting the trends toward safer communities. Both independently and in partnership with government, the private sector not only creates important pathways for financial investment in resilience but also contributes to the localization of resilience through investment in employment, innovation and product development.</p> <p>Disaster-related disruptions to business continuity are felt most acutely by micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) whose financial reserves are limited. But MSMEs also have great potential to contribute to DRR, which should be encouraged. MSMEs comprise more than 80 per cent of businesses in the Asia-Pacific region and are critical in creating and sustaining livelihoods, supporting well-being, building social cohesion and value chains, and enhancing local resilience through micro-credit initiatives, among others.</p> <p>Strengthened public-private partnerships are increasingly needed to reduce disaster risk. Private sector investments in risk prevention and reduction not only protect business infrastructure and assets, but also contribute to community resilience. Private and public sector cooperation includes developing standards, joint research and development, information sharing and innovative financing, among others.</p> | |