



**UNDRR**  
UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction



## **FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE AFRICA WORKING GROUP ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION [EXTENDED]**

• ABUJA (NIGERIA) • 8-9 OCTOBER 2019 •

THEME: TRANSLATING COMMITMENTS INTO ACTION: THE RIGHT PATHWAY  
TOWARDS DELIVERING ON THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK IN AFRICA

### **Concept Note**

#### **BACKGROUND**

According to the IMF, Africa continues to have some of the world's fastest growing economies. Despite this positive narrative, Africa remains the most vulnerable continent. Nearly all nations in Sub-Saharan Africa are among the most vulnerable, especially to climate related disasters (2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction). In early 2019, the continent witnessed the most devastating disasters on record due to tropical cyclones Idai and Kenneth. These cyclones affected Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Comoros in early 2019 and left more than 1,000 people dead and many more displaced. The Ebola virus disease outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo, which was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern in July 2019, is another challenge the continent continues to face. All these are testimony to the continent's continued vulnerability to disasters most of which are climate related. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and intensity of natural hazards on the continent, leading to increased disaster risk and threats to sustainable development.

Guided by the Africa Regional Strategy for DRR and the Extended Programme of Action (aligned to the Hyogo Framework for Action-HFA) adopted by the African Union Heads of State and Government in

2004 and 2011 respectively, African countries have taken important measures to strengthen Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) as an important step to building resilience.

Efforts are underway to build on and sustain the momentum generated through the Extended Programme of Action and the HFA by translating the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa (adopted by the African Union Heads of State and Government in January 2017) into action at all levels.

Increased political commitments illustrated by the development of regional, sub-regional and national DRR strategies and plans in line with the Sendai Framework and the Programme of Action are beginning to take hold. African states have improved their understanding of disaster risk and are strengthening their capacity for implementation, monitoring and reporting on progress made in the Sendai Framework and the Programme of Action. Efforts are also increasing to enhance early warning systems, including through improved climate information services and their application in DRR. The establishment of the DRR Africa Science and Technology Advisory Group and the Youth Advisory Board recently will help facilitate the full engagement of stakeholders such as the

science and technology community and the Youth in the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the Programme of Action. These are important tangible results that have been generated, which also illustrated the multi-stakeholder commitment to DRR on the Africa continent. In addition, there has been a growing recognition of the nexus between climate change, disasters, mobility, migration, displacement, conflict, human security and food security. This is paving the way for ensuring policy coherence and integration of climate change, DRR and sustainable development actions at all levels. Work is underway in collaboration with partners, including the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) to keep the momentum going and thereby ensuring an integrated and coherent implementation of these and other relevant agendas across the continent.

The roll out and implementation of the Sendai Framework Monitor System is another milestone achievement recorded in 2019. This will significantly contribute to achieving policy coherence between the Sendai Framework and the Paris agreement towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. UNDRR and AUC have been working together to integrate the 13 indicators of the additional 5 targets of the Programme of Action into the Sendai Framework Monitor. This will also contribute to the realization of the coherence agenda, taking into account specific circumstances in African and will also reduce reporting burden on countries.

In addition, the ongoing efforts to develop DRR strategies by 2020, as well as the development of National Adaptation Plans and the revision of Nationally Determined Contributions present opportunities for countries to promote and support an integrated and coherent implementation of climate change and DRR actions.

These and other milestone achievements recorded since the adoption of the Programme of Action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework

in Africa are highlighted in the *Tunis Declaration on Accelerating the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa*

(<https://www.unisdr.org/conference/2018/afrp-acdrr>) that was adopted by Ministers and Heads of delegation responsible for DRR in Africa during the Africa Arab Platform on DRR (October 2018). The Tunis Declaration also contains prioritized actions and decisions to advance the implementation of the Programme of Action, thus the Sendai Framework in Africa.

Subsequent assessments of the progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action in general, and the Tunis Declaration in particular, have resulted in concrete and prioritized activities, which are reflected in the Africa Common Position presented at the 2019 Global Platform for DRR (May 2019). The ten commitments contained in the Africa Common Position summarize those concrete and prioritized actions that African countries and other stakeholders need to implement going forward to deliver on the Programme of Action and the Sendai Framework.

The Africa Working Group on DRR (AWGDRR) has been playing a pivotal role, including through its regular sessions, in identifying and supporting the implementation, monitoring and review of progress of those concrete and prioritized actions incorporated into the above-mentioned political declarations and commitments. The AWGDRR will continue to focus its coordination and technical support on supporting Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), AUC and other partners in their efforts to translate political declarations and commitments into action going forward.

## **THE AFRICA WORKING GROUP ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**

Reconstituted following the request of the Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (Nairobi, April 2010), the AWG has been playing an important role in providing technical support to the African Union Commission, Regional Economic

Communities, Member States and partners for the coordination and implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and its Programme of Action.

The Group meets biannually wherein the Core Group and Extended Group meet alternatively. Fourteen sessions of the AWGDRR have been convened so far.

The Fifteenth session of the AWGDRR will be held under the theme 'Translating commitments into action: the right pathway towards delivering on the Sendai Framework in Africa'. It will review regional progress in the implementation of prioritized activities in the Tunis Declaration and the ten commitments in the Africa Common Position to the 2019 Global Platform for DRR. It will also identify concrete and prioritized actions to accelerate the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa. The session will also review progress in the implementation of action points from the 14th session (3-4 April 2019, Hawassa, Ethiopia). These action points include: (i) provision of support to countries affected by cyclone Idai and Kenneth, with focus on disaster loss accounting and on facilitating a training on Post Disaster Needs Assessments and Disaster Recovery Framework; (ii) Establishment and operationalization of a continental early warning information sharing mechanism to link the early warning information to early action and improve outreach to communities; (iii) Strengthening the capacity of Regional Climate Services to improve the quality and reliability of forecasts; (iv) Advocating for and supporting an integrated and coherent implementation of DRR, CCA, humanitarian and development plans and interventions; (v) Strengthening linkages between continental, regional and national platforms; (vi) Accelerating the development and implementation of national, local and sub-regional DRR strategies and plans aligned with the Sendai Framework and the PoA; (viii) Increasing the number of countries reporting on progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework using the SFM; (ix) Conducting regional consultations for the development of the Biennial report on DRR by AUC; (x)

Mobilizing high-level representation of Africa at the 2019 Global Platform for DRR and finalizing the Africa Common Position to be presented at the Platform; and facilitating the operationalization of the Africa Science and Technology Advisory Group and the Africa Youth Advisory Board.

Moreover, the session will receive updates on the outcomes of other continental and international events, including the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (April 2019), Climate Change and Development in Africa Conference (August 2019), Peer-learning exchange on policy coherence (July 2019) and the Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 7- August 2019), with focus on DRR.

#### **OBJECTIVE AND OUTCOME OF THE 15<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE AWGDRR**

Specific objectives and expected outcomes of the Fifteenth session of the AWGDRR are summarised below:

##### **OBJECTIVES:**

- To evaluate regional progress (with focus on the implementation of prioritized actions in the Tunis Declaration and commitments in the Africa Common Position to the 2019 Global Platform for DRR) and identify follow up actions to advance the implementation of the Programme of Action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework in Africa; and
- Review progress in the implementation of agreed action points from the 14<sup>th</sup> session of AWGDRR, 3-4 April 2019, Hawassa, Ethiopia;

##### **OUTCOME**

- Recommendations/ Action points to accelerate the implementation of the Tunis Declaration and the ten commitments of the Africa Common Position to the 2019 Global Platform for DRR.

## **FORMAT OF THE SESSION**

The Fifteenth session will include panel discussions on prioritized topics related to the theme of the session, as well as presentations and discussions at the plenary. For further details, please see the agenda.

## **VENUE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

The Fifteenth session of the AWGDRR will be hosted by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, with support from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission in Abuja, Nigeria from 8-9 October 2019.

Information Note for participants will be sent out to all confirmed participants.

For any additional information, please contact AUC (Mr. Gatkuoth Kai, Technical Coordinator for DRR at [KaiG@africa-union.org](mailto:KaiG@africa-union.org) ) and the UN Office for DRR (Mr. Mathewos Hunde Tulu at [mathewos.tulu@un.org](mailto:mathewos.tulu@un.org)).