Policy Brief to the HLPF 2023

By the UNDRR Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism (SEM)

During the past years the world has witnessed ongoing exacerbation of climate change, the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, and the persistence of both old and new conflicts, all of which illuminate the ever-evolving and intricately connected nature of diverse but related risks. These events have significant implications for how individuals, societies, and government’s approach risk. This unique situation presents an opportunity for learning which is crucial for assessing progress towards achieving 2030 Agenda. In order to promote sustainable development, it is imperative that we address risks and potential opportunities associated with slow- and sudden-onset hazards and, importantly, to do so without generating new risks.

The recommendations presented herewith have been developed by the UNDRR Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism (SEM) and represent the collective contributions of our seventeen stakeholder constituencies. By taking into account the perspectives of diverse stakeholders, these recommendations have been designed to reflect a broad and inclusive approach to risk reduction.

**Learn from the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework**

Policymakers need to consider the long-term impacts and trade-offs of development choices, embedding DRR principles across the SDGs. However in most countries, sustainable development, climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and humanitarian action agendas have evolved in parallel with little linkages between their planning, coordination and/or financing mechanisms. Coherent risk governance must be at the centre. This was key among the findings of the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (MTR SF). The concurrent stocktaking of the Sendai Framework, 2030 Agenda, and the Paris Agreement offers an opportunity to enhance policy integration across all levels, and ultimately reduce vulnerabilities at the local level. To utilise the full potential of the ongoing SDG Midterm Review and Global Stocktake of the Paris Agreement (GST), there is a need for a meaningful engagement with the lessons learned from the MTR SF.

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1 Policy brief: Towards risk-informed implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction [LINK](#)
Connected and collaborative localization

Despite efforts to promote resilient and sustainable development, progress at the local level remains inadequate. In order to address this pressing concern, there is a need to prioritise investment in local actions, which should be grounded in the voices of local communities and their traditional knowledge and, importantly, acted upon in an inclusive manner. Moreover, these actions should not take place in silos, but it is crucial to connect, collaborate and share experiences across stakeholders. Such an approach will inspire collective ownership and foster meaningful collaboration, ultimately enhancing progress at all levels.

Minimise climate change induced losses and damages

Disaster risk reduction and climate change-induced losses and damages are inextricably intertwined. The urgency to mitigate risks and minimise losses is paramount. By recognizing their interconnectedness, we can pave the way for comprehensive strategies that address both the immediate impacts of disasters and the long-term consequences of a changing climate.

Increase leadership of persons most at risk

Despite increased attention to leaving no one behind, efforts to reduce the vulnerabilities of communities and individuals most at risk remain inadequate. To avoid leaving anyone behind, it is essential to prioritise enhanced investments to increase the leadership of persons who are most at risk. This includes but is not limited to providing flexible and accessible financing and resource allocation mechanisms that include these populations in preventing, planning for, and responding to emerging risks, and contributing to prioritising shifting needs.

Learn from the COVID-19 pandemic

The pandemic provides an opportunity to learn from the risk governance failures and successes. The response has highlighted the need for a holistic approach to public health, recognizing that it cannot be considered in isolation from social, financial, and environmental factors. Public health must be integrated with other risk reduction strategies. The pandemic has also shown that collaboration and resource mobilisation for a common goal can be successful. Whether public-private partnerships, transboundary cooperation, or scientific collaboration, all sectors need to prioritise the wellbeing of people and the planet over financial gains.