



AFRICA REGIONAL PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Ninth Session of the Africa Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (AfRP-9) and Eighth High-Level Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction

21-24 October 2024, Windhoek, Namibia
“Act Now for the Resilient Africa We Want”

Draft Concept Note

I. Introduction and background

The Africa Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction is the premier forum for charting the course of resilience building and risk reduction on the continent. The Regional Platform brings together a wide range of stakeholders from national and local governments, intergovernmental organizations and development partners, civil society organizations and the private sector, and academic as well as scientific institutions, among others. The AfRP-9 aims to review progress, discuss gaps and challenges, and identify priority actions for a more effective and impactful implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA) for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa. Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa.

The AfRP-9 is a truly inclusive and dynamic event. Strong partnerships between governments, communities, civil society, and the private sector are vital to build resilience and reduce risk. Ministers and national authorities responsible for disaster risk reduction will come together alongside diverse stakeholders from organizations representing persons with disabilities, youth, women’s groups, among others, as well as leaders from the private sector and science and technology to discuss and act on shared challenges and shared responsibility to build a more resilient future. This enables the creation of beneficial networks for sharing of good practices and lessons learnt to enhance synergies for co-production, coordination, increasing awareness, and mobilizing commitments to disaster risk reduction across the continent.

The AfRP-9 collectively identifies pathways through which we can accelerate the implementation of the political frameworks previously developed and already guiding institutions on the continent. The PoA for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa was endorsed in January 2017 by the African Union’s Heads of State and Government. This initiative translates the global objectives outlined in the Sendai Framework into actionable steps tailored to the African context. It

serves as a concrete roadmap for African nations to proactively address the multifaceted challenges posed by disasters, integrating risk reduction into development agendas and creating a more resilient future for the continent.

The AfRP-9 and the 8th High Level Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction will be held in-person organized by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) in collaboration with the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The two events will be held back-to-back and hosted by the Republic of Namibia from 21 to 24 October 2024 in Windhoek, Namibia.

The AfRP-9 will evaluate progress in implementing the Nairobi Declaration, adopted at the eighth session in 2021. The AfRP-9 also comes some 18 months after the midterm review of the Sendai Framework. Eighteen African countries submitted voluntary national reports which took stock of their progress and informed the calls to action of the General Assembly's political declaration of the high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework. The political declaration provides a roadmap to course correct and accelerate progress and this Regional Platform is the opportunity to ensure decision-makers and practitioners at all levels across Africa are hearing the calls to action.

Disaster risk reduction must no longer be the sole prerogative of national disaster management agencies or civil protection authorities. All sectors at all levels must have disaster risk reduction policies and strategies in place. This was a key message during the midterm review. As clearly stated in the Sendai Framework, disaster risk reduction requires the full engagement of all State institutions and all-of-society endeavor to be successful. The Africa Regional Platform is open to all ministries and organizations with a role to play in disaster risk reduction. This includes the ministries of finance, economy and planning, health and education authorities, the housing, infrastructure, and energy sectors, among others.

The AfRP-9 also comes on the heels of the United Nations Summit of the Future where governments will adopt a "Pact for the Future". The Summit is a high-level event, bringing world leaders together to forge a new international consensus on how we deliver a better present and safeguard the future. Strengthening cooperation to reduce the range of potentially catastrophic and existential risks that humanity faces is a main theme of the Summit. The AfRP-9 is an opportunity to discuss what this means for Africa and how it can be implemented. The AfRP-9 is also an opportunity to develop the African common position to be presented at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction scheduled for June 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland.

The urgency is undeniable. The solutions exist. This AfRP-9 offers a critical opportunity to translate knowledge into action, build a more resilient Africa, and secure a future where no one is left behind. Today, disaster risk runs through our communities, our economies and our ecosystems. Guided by the philosophy of Ubuntu, we can reduce the catastrophic risks that connect us and build the resilience that unites us.

Africa on the Frontlines: From Challenge to Opportunity

Africa is on the frontline of the climate crisis. The continent faces a multitude of interconnected threats. From relentless climate extremes to epidemics and environmental degradation, these interconnected threats cascade into devastating consequences, including loss of life, destroyed livelihoods, and displacement. This not only hinders progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want; but disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable.

The stark reality is that climate-related disasters have doubled in the past two decades, causing immense economic hardship. Africa bears the brunt, with losses reaching a staggering 12.3 per cent of its gross domestic product. Africa's disaster vulnerability is deeply rooted in systemic challenges. Rapid and unplanned urbanization, unsustainable land-use practices, and weak infrastructure all exacerbate risk. Furthermore, poverty, environmental degradation, and conflict create a vicious cycle, diminishing communities' resilience in the face of a growing climate crisis. However, the narrative goes beyond mere statistics. Loss and damage due to disasters can eliminate decades of hard work and suppress hopes for a bright future. Disaster risk reduction is, therefore, an important pillar for Africa's sustainable development.

Africa also sits on the frontline of potential. Across the continent, a vibrant private sector, a young and growing population, a flourishing academic and scientific community and committed communities are determined to build a resilient today for a prosperous and peaceful tomorrow. This commitment to disaster risk reduction has been growing for decades and has accelerated with the adoption of the Sendai Framework, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction across all levels, from national policies to community initiatives, is crucial to break the cycle of disasters. By integrating risk reduction strategies into economic and development plans and policy and investment decisions in all sectors, Africa can build resilience, safeguard livelihoods, and save lives.

Investing in disaster risk reduction is much more than responding to disasters – it's about building a more secure and prosperous future for all Africans.

Africa's future prosperity and well-being depend on building resilience across all sectors. Investing in early warning systems, strengthening governance structures, and promoting community-based disaster risk reduction are critical steps. By acting today, Africa can prevent disasters from derailing its development path and create a more secure future for all. Recognizing the urgency of building resilience across Africa.

II. Theme and Focus Areas

The theme of the AfRP-9 and 8th High Level Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction will be

“Act Now for the Resilient Africa We Want”

The AfRP-9 will focus on the following three critical issues or most important to the risk reduction and resilience building agenda today:

- **Applying Risk Information for Transformative Governance**
- **Investing to Reduce Risk: Changing the way money is spent**
- **Reducing Loss and Damage: Saving lives and protecting investments**

The importance of inclusivity in risk reduction and the implementation of the calls to action from the midterm review of the Sendai Framework will be embedded across the AfRP-9 discussions.

III. Objectives

The AfRP-9 will have the following objectives:

- Review Sendai Framework and the PoA implementation progress, identify key areas of progress and success and areas where concerted attention is needed, as well as strengthen commitments to accelerating its implementation, including in special country contexts.
- Take stock of the implementation of national and local strategies and plans for disaster risk reduction, in synergy with the Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.
- Strengthen existing, and forge new, networks and partnerships at international, national, and local levels, sharing practice and knowledge on disaster risk-informed policies, programmes and investments, including on development, climate issues, and health emergency risk management issues.
- Promote the integration and mainstreaming of disaster risk management within and across relevant sectors.

IV. Expected Outcomes

The AfRP-9 is expected to achieve the following outcomes:

- Consolidated stock-take on Sendai Framework and PoA implementation progress by Member States and stakeholders at all relevant levels in Africa, and achievement of disaster risk-related targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Adoption of a Political Declaration highlighting the core high level commitments made by countries throughout the Regional Platforms' discussions, in particular the high-level segments capturing the policy directive and commitments of all stakeholders.
- Recommendations of actions for policy makers in the areas of sustainable development, finance and economic planning, disaster risk reduction and international trade, climate and ecosystem actions, international cooperation on disaster risk reduction, including preparedness and recovery, as well as those actions tailored to the specific needs of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), with focus on ensuring that no one is left behind.

- Increased awareness on good practices in implementing the Sendai Framework for reducing risk and building resilience using innovative approaches, tools, and methodologies.
- Official commitments by stakeholders towards DRR in Africa (youth, persons with disabilities, private sector, women’s groups, civil society, etc.).
- Official statements made by respective member states ministers in charge of DRR.

V. Participants

A broad and inclusive participation is expected of representatives of member states, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, civil society, cooperation agencies, United Nations agencies, donors, development banks, scientific, technological, and academic sectors, financial and planning institutions, as well as other relevant stakeholders from across Sub-Saharan Africa. These include women’s organizations, community networks, youth organizations, volunteer groups, the elderly, people with disabilities, Indigenous populations and organizations, and groups living in conditions of high vulnerability. The AfRP-9 represents an opportunity for Member States and all these actors to share experiences and good practices for greater impact on knowledge transfer and capacity building. Furthermore, it allows them to reaffirm their ongoing commitments to disaster risk reduction at the regional, national, and local levels.

VI. Approach to the AfRP-9

The AfRP-9 will include the following different modalities for exchange throughout the event:

- Opening and Closing Ceremonies
- Plenary Sessions
- Thematic sessions
- Working sessions
- Learning Labs
- Official Statements
- Multi-stakeholder Forum for EW4ALL
- Exhibition/Marketplace
- Field visit

The three main focus areas will be reflected in three plenary sessions and three associated thematic sessions. Working sessions and learning labs will be subject to call for proposal and organized or co-organized with partners. They will both be highly interactive and will aim at answering challenges identified by the stakeholders.

The AfRP-9 will be held on 22 and 23 October and preceded by preparatory/pre-conference events, including stakeholder consultations on 21 October 2024, with the objective of conducting preliminary discussions, consultations, and agreements between different stakeholders that contribute to outcomes of the platform and the high-level meeting.

The High-level Meeting/Ministerial Segment

The High-level Meeting will be held on 24 October and will bring together Ministers and Heads of delegations responsible for disaster risk reduction in Africa to consider and adopt the outcome of the AfRP-9.

Format

The AfRP-9 and 8th High-Level Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction will be conducted in-person, with the possibility of virtual participation for speakers using Zoom.