DRR Bulletin

Eighth Africa Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction: 16-19 November 2021

In a world that is experiencing an ever-increasing frequency and magnitude of hazards, both man-made and natural, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and disaster preparedness have become essential. Africa is particularly vulnerable to natural hazards, which coupled with risk factors such as low adaptive capacity and prolonged conflict, make DRR particularly urgent on the continent. Most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a further blow to Africa's development efforts, with its impacts on the African economy expected to be felt for years to come.

These facts informed the theme of the Eighth Africa Regional Platform for DRR: Towards Disaster Risk-Informed Development for a Resilient Africa in a COVID-19 Transformed World. In addition to highlighting Africa's recent DRR efforts, the meeting reiterated the importance of DRR action, with Ministers and Heads of Delegations adopting the Nairobi Declaration on accelerating the path to achieving the goals and targets of the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa. Through this Declaration, Ministers in charge of disaster risk called on African Union (AU) Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to, among other things, increase the annual budgetary allocation for implementing DRR strategies, programmes and plans of action.

One of the objectives of the meeting was to review progress in implementing the Sendai Framework and its Programme of Action (PoA) in Africa. The meeting showcased recent efforts to promote DRR and disaster preparedness on the continent in accordance with the Sendai Framework, including: the Africa Framework for Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Early Action; the COVID-19 recovery framework for Africa; the Africa Road Map for Improving the Availability, Access and Use of Disaster Risk Information for Early Warning and Early Action, including in the Context of Transboundary Risk Management; and the African Union Commission (AUC) Continental Situation Room. To ensure continued work in promoting DRR, Ministers and Heads of Delegations also adopted a new Matrix of the Programme of Action for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR in Africa, covering phase II of the Programme of Action, from 2021-2025.

The meetings, which brought together over 750 delegates, were organized by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) Regional Office for Africa, the Government of Kenya, the AUC, and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

The Eighth Africa Regional Platform for DRR took place virtually from 16-18 November 2021, and the Seventh High-Level Meeting on DRR took place on 19 November in a hybrid format, meeting both online and in Nairobi, Kenya. On Tuesday, 16 November, a series of pre-conference and side events took place. This report summarizes a selection of the pre-conference and side events, as well as the events of 17-19 November.

In This Issue

A Brief History of Disaster Risk Reduction

Natural hazards, such as floods, droughts, earthquakes, and tsunamis, are becoming more regular and intense, increasing the impact on people and communities. Compounding the situation, poor planning, poverty, and a range of other underlying factors create conditions of vulnerability that result in insufficient capacity to cope with natural hazards and disasters. Action to reduce risk has grown in importance on the international agenda and is seen by many as essential to safeguard sustainable development efforts and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

DRR includes all the policies, strategies, and measures that can make people, cities, and countries more resilient to hazards, and reduce risk and vulnerability to disasters. Recognizing natural hazards can threaten anyone unexpectedly, the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction system builds on partnerships and takes a global approach to disaster reduction, seeking to involve every individual and community in moving toward the goals of reducing the loss of lives, socio-economic setbacks, and the environmental damages caused by natural hazards. The following highlights important institutions and recent developments in the international and African DRR agendas.

Third United Nations World Conference On DRR: This meeting convened from 14-18 March 2015, in Sendai, Japan, and adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. The Sendai Framework aims to achieve the following outcomes over the next 15 years: substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses of lives, livelihoods, and health, and the economic, physical, social, cultural, and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities, and countries. This is intended to be undertaken through four priorities of action (understanding disaster risk; strengthening disaster risk governance; investing in DRR; and enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction), to achieve a set of seven global targets. The global targets are to:
- substantially reduce global disaster mortality;
- substantially reduce the number of people affected by disaster;
- reduce direct disaster economic loss in relation to global gross domestic product;
- substantially reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services;
- substantially increase the number of countries with national and local DRR strategies;
- substantially enhance international cooperation to developing countries to implement the Framework; and
- substantially increase the availability of, and access to, multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster risk information and assessments.

Global Platform for DRR: Established in 2006, the Global Platform for DRR aims to serve as the primary multi-stakeholder forum for all parties involved in DRR to raise awareness on DRR, share experiences, and guide the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction system. It held its first session in 2007.

The sixth session of the Global Platform took place from 13-17 May 2019, focusing on the theme, "Resilience Dividend: Towards Sustainable and Inclusive Societies." At the meeting, UNDRR launched the 2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction, which provides an overview of countries' progress toward achieving the Sendai targets. A Chairs' Summary of the event outlined recommendations for a mid-term review of the Sendai Framework, and called for DRR to be fully integrated in the implementation of the SDGs.

Regional Platforms for DRR: Regional DRR Platforms are multi-stakeholder forums that provide an opportunity for DRR stakeholders, at the regional level, to showcase practical applications, exchange experiences, and develop joint statements, strategies, and action plans, which guide decision makers and practitioners. Recognizing that risks and vulnerabilities go beyond national boundaries, the Platforms reflect the commitment of governments to improve coordination and implementation of DRR activities, while linking to international and national efforts.

UNDRR regional offices serve as the supporting secretariats for regional platforms. There are currently five regional platforms, for: Africa; the Americas and the Caribbean; Arab States; Asia-Pacific; and Europe and Central Asia.

Africa Regional Platform: The biennial Africa Regional Platform brings together Member States, RECs, development partners, and other DRR stakeholders to review progress, and share experiences, good practices, and lessons learned on DRR at the regional level. It seeks to build a consensus on the way forward to enable Member States to deliver on their commitments to the Sendai Framework.

The Sixth Africa Regional Platform and the Fifth High-Level Meeting on DRR took place in Balaclava, Mauritius, in November 2016. Convening from 22-24 November, the Africa Regional Platform focused on enhancing understanding of disaster risk, improving disaster risk governance, increasing national and regional resilience, enhancing disaster preparedness, and linking the Sendai Framework to Africa, through an African Programme of Work. The Fifth High-Level Meeting on DRR, which convened on 25 November, adopted the outcomes of the Platform. Ministers and high-level representatives considered and adopted the Programme of Action for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030 in Africa. The PoA is the guiding continental framework to advance the DRR agenda in coherence with sustainable development, climate change, and other related actions for resilience. They also adopted the Mauritius Declaration on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework in Africa.

The Africa-Arab Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction took place from 9-13 October 2018 in Tunis, Tunisia, under the theme "Towards Disaster Risk Informed and Inclusive Sustainable Development." The meeting consisted of the Seventh Africa Regional Platform and the Sixth High-level Meeting on DRR, and the Fourth Arab Conference on DRR. At this meeting, Ministers and Heads of Delegation adopted the Tunis Declaration on Accelerating the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Africa Regional Strategy for

Disaster Risk Reduction. The Declaration, *inter alia*: calls on the AUC to prepare a biennial report on DRR in Africa; and urges African states and local authorities to include DRR and resilience approaches in relevant national legal frameworks not only in disaster management acts, but also in sectoral legislations.

Pre-Conference and Side Events

The pre-conference and side events summarized below took place on 16 November, except for the "Taking Stock of Disability Inclusion in DRR Across Africa" event, which took place on 17 November.

Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework

David Owino, DRR Association of Journalists, opened the session, noting the biennial Africa Regional Platform is critical for bringing together DRR stakeholders to review progress and exchange lessons learned at the regional level.

Amjad Abbashar, Chief, UNDRR Regional Office for Africa, said the focus of the session is to introduce and consult on the mid-term review of the Sendai Framework (MTR SF) in Africa. He said countries are expected to initiate the MTR SF before the end of 2021 using a "whole-of-government" approach to conduct an inclusive and broad process throughout 2022.

Kai Gatkuoth, Technical Coordinator, DRR, AUC, stated disasters are becoming more frequent and interconnected. He noted a rise in extreme climate events, pandemics, and conflict, saying COVID-19 could rollback all gains made thus far. He underscored the MTR SF's role in better understanding these issues and how to address them in the context of the Sendai Framework.

Momoko Ishikawa, UNDRR, opened the presentation on the MTR SF, outlining the decisions calling for the mid-term review.

Marc Gordon, MTR SF, UNDRR, said the session serves as a first exchange on the MTR SF. He outlined the objectives of the review, including: taking stock of implementation for the period 2014-2023; assessing progress and challenges; highlighting new and emerging issues; and identifying changes in context since 2015. He said the expected outputs will assist countries and stakeholders to prioritize accelerated cooperation and action for 2023-2030 at all levels. He said the MTR SF is both retrospective and prospective; will take input from reviews of other global frameworks; and will be informed by strategic and guiding questions for consultations and review on cross-cutting themes. Stating the review will conclude in 2023, he underscored the significant ambition needed to complete the MTR SF.

During the ensuing discussion, participants addressed: incorporating a whole-of-government approach to understanding risk; conducting risk monitoring in fragile countries; increasing private sector involvement in DRR; and integrating gender and vulnerable populations' concerns into the MTR SF.

Sendai Framework Monitoring in Africa: Status and Way Forward

Diana Patricia Mosquera Calle, UNDRR Office for Africa, moderated this session.

Amjad Abbashar presented on national reporting using the Sendai Framework Monitor, an online platform to systematically report on disaster losses. He said progress is being made, with 28 countries reporting data, 18 of which have validated targets and indicators. He noted that although new countries have joined, progress is slowing down, which could be a result of insufficient institutional capacity and a lack of data sharing. He cited DRR strategies and early warning systems as the most reported on targets, indicating these are likely to be priority areas for countries. He urged, among other things, increasing the number of countries reporting, enhancing the disaggregation of data, and coordinating with multiple sectors to exchange disaster data as this is still a challenge.

Nomsa Dube, AUC, presented on the Sendai Framework Monitor Regional Module for Africa. She noted the regional module is part of operationalizing the monitoring and reporting framework of the PoA. She said the benefits of the module include increasing the ease of reporting and the accessibility of reports, as well as encouraging reporting on global indicators. To accelerate reporting, she urged countries to start with data entry using the module as soon as possible. She suggested annual data review workshops can improve the uptake of reporting through the module as it assists in institutionalizing DRR reporting.

Jean-Pierre Minkoulou, CAMEROON, presented an application to report DRR data and improve monitoring capacities, consisting of six modules including on managing risks and data collection. Yolande Ella, CAMEROON, provided an overview of the difficulties encountered in developing this application, highlighting a lack of technical assistance and capacity. She also said that as data is collected through focal points, not all areas have had sufficient data collection.

Ané Bruwer, National Disaster Management Centre, SOUTH AFRICA, presented on the South African experience with establishing the Sendai Framework Monitor baseline. She said South Africa uses an outcomes approach, with the expected outputs of disaster loss reporting, which include the establishment of a national disaster loss database, reporting on programme performance, and reporting on the Sendai Framework targets' implementation. She outlined key challenges, including fragmented pockets of data and lack of systematically recorded data.

Media Orientation

Adair Ackley, UNDRR Regional Office for Africa, moderated the session. Jenty Kirsch-Wood, UNDRR, highlighted the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction for 2021, a Special Report on Drought. She said the report calls for: the establishment of a global mechanism for drought management;

Diana Patricia Mosquera Calle, UNDRR Regional Office for Africa

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adapted risk governance; and drought interventions to be responsive, inclusive, and considered more systematically.

David Owino emphasized the need to raise the profile of DRR in the media. He noted the world is "desperate for solutions and not just heartbreak," explaining challenges around pitching success stories that have to do with prevention.

Jeanette Elsworth, UNDRR, reflected on the role of the media, explaining that traditionally, the focus has been on aftermath reporting of what went wrong and how to avoid it happening again. She highlighted UNDRR's efforts in awareness raising, and the development of tools and knowledge, stressing that risk is everybody's business and resilience is all about responsibilities.

Making Cities Resilient 2030 (MCR 2030): Cities and Partners Engagement in Africa

Moderator Tarryn Quayle, ICLEI – Africa, introduced the MCR2030 initiative and conducted an interactive session, including questions and answers from the virtual floor.

Isabel Njihia, UNDRR Regional Office for Africa, provided an overview of MCR2030. She highlighted the resilience roadmap, which offers a wide range of tools to support cities and local authorities, and stressed that the journey for each is unique. She outlined the strategic objectives of MCR2030 and described the three stages of the resilience journey, moving from knowing to planning and, eventually, to implementing. Njihia described critical milestones and required steps and criteria for each stage of the process, and focused on the Resilience Hub, where countries share their knowledge and expertise. She elaborated on participating entities including core partners, supporting entities, and specialist service providers.

Mutarika Pruksapong, UNDRR Global Education Training Institute, explained how cities can join the MCR2030 dashboard, a closed online platform allowing cities to record and monitor progress along the resilience roadmap, share insights and lessons, and link with partners and service providers. She explained that cities, local governments, and participating entities can join MCR2030 and access the dashboard.

In the ensuing discussion, participants discussed various aspects of MCR2030, including: multi-level governance and how to facilitate further engagement; ways to improve reporting on target E of the Sendai Framework (number of countries and local actors that have DRR strategies in place); ways to foster national engagement; visibility of success stories; the role of civil society organizations; and financing and innovative ways to fund implementation.

Scaling Up DRR in Humanitarian Action

Nadia-Elise Gateka, Norwegian Refugee Council, Mali, moderated the session.

In keynote remarks, Paola Albrito, Head, UNDRR Regional Office for Europe, underlined that reducing disasters is everyone's business and urged humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors to work together. She emphasized the need for a comprehensive, whole system response to climate

and disaster risk, as well as joined-up and comprehensive risk analysis. Noting the need to break down silos, Albrito highlighted the Checklist on Scaling up DRR in Humanitarian Action, prepared by UNDRR in collaboration with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and other partners. She said the checklist is a practical tool to ensure humanitarian action goes hand in hand with prevention.

Adesh Tripathee, Regional Head, Disaster and Crisis, Prevention, Response and Rehabilitation, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), highlighted his organization's approach to disaster and the climate crisis as: prevention, response, recovery, and community resilience building. Providing examples of IFRC's support to Sub-Saharan African countries, he highlighted lessons learned, including the need for: budget allocation for DRR activities; humanitarian actors' buy-in; and local-led action and community engagement.

Benedetta Di Cintio, OCHA, presented on Niger as a case study example of scaling up DRR in humanitarian action with support from OCHA. She outlined actions undertaken by the government, including: establishment of the Civil Protection Agency and the National Policy for Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management; creation of the Tripartite Technical Committee on the Humanitarian-Development Nexus; and launch of the "New Way of Working" through a country roadmap for implementing the nexus approach.

Banak Joshua Dei Wal, Director General, Disaster Management, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, SOUTH SUDAN, underscored that humanitarian action and DRR must go hand in hand, and must align with the needs and priorities of both national governments and local communities. He called for better understanding of risk, integrated with planning and preparedness.

Issa Sanogo, UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, Madagascar, underlined the need for: emergency preparedness; early warning systems at the community level; and international cooperation that aligns with national priorities.

African Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices on DRR

This session, moderated by Yolanda Cristina Lopez-Maldonado, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), focused on African indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) systems and practices on DRR.

Kai Gatkuoth stressed that recognizing ILK systems means local communities can partake in policy decisions and implementation. He drew attention to practical ILK systems and practices on DRR that can be validated.

Nalejileji Tipap, Pastoralist Indigenous Non-Governmental Organizations' Forum, presented the Forum's work on indigenous women. She highlighted indigenous' women's knowledge on weather forecasting and climate change, describing the use of signs from the natural world, using species of trees, insects, birds, and animals as indicators.

Joseph Karanja, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net), UNESCO, contextualized Indigenous

Kai Gatkuoth, Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, AUC

Peoples and local communities' vulnerability to disasters, noting they are "one of the most eco-literate and adaptive human beings." He emphasized knowledge co-production, combining ILK and science to improve decision making on DRR, and presented the BES-Net initiative.

Tabi Joda, Executive Director, GreenAid, stressed that ILK systems and practices are not only strong for adaptation, but also for building social coherence that enhances resilience. He noted early warning mechanisms in ILK systems and emphasized the sustainable character of Indigenous Peoples and local communities' practices, contrary to modern production methods. He underscored that ILK should be fully recognized and incorporated in decision making.

The ensuing panel discussion centered on the fact that ILK systems are evolving, have been tested, and, although vulnerable to climate risk, are actually quite resilient. One participant suggested that technology and science could enhance ILK, for example, through the use of apps. A participant noted the need to avoid implying that ILK must be integrated into science, asserting the two are heterogeneous. Participants also called for addressing injustice in the global policy system and countering a western-centric view of ILK.

Gender and DRR Management/Management in Times of COVID-19

Babatunde Lyanda, African Risk Capacity, AU, moderated this session. In a keynote address, Marie-Josée Kandanga, UN Women, highlighted the multidimensional impacts of COVID-19 on women in Africa. She noted women played a disproportionate role in the COVID-19 response as health workers and homemakers. She discussed other impacts affecting women, including an escalation of domestic violence linked to lockdowns, increased unpaid work, and job losses. She also noted that school closures have resulted in a higher number of early marriages as well as higher rates of female genital mutilation. On other impacts, she explained many women were afraid of accessing health services during the pandemic due to fears of infection. Kandanga stressed the need for disaggregated data, as well as evaluating specific needs and impacts on women.

Tapiwa Uchizi Nyasulu-Rweyemamu, AUC, highlighted the need for: gendered financial responses to COVID-19; responses grounded by sound gender analysis and sex disaggregated data; high impact, synergized, scalable programmes; strategic partnerships, multisectoral responses, and partnerships with civil society organizations; the full inclusion of women as active citizens; and the enforcement of existing commitments to gender policy and women's empowerment.

Robert Agyarko, African Risk Capacity, highlighted the socio-economic and health implications of pandemics on women and girls, including the prevalence of gender-based violence, child marriages, and loss of income due to lockdowns and curfews. He called for preventative actions including: the protection of lives and livelihoods; addressing structural inequalities that make women and children more vulnerable; innovative gender responsive fiscal policies; and better disaster preparedness for health emergencies.

Lorraine Mbodza, ZIMBABWE Gender Commission, highlighted socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, especially on women and other vulnerable groups in Zimbabwe. She said women have borne the brunt of the pandemic, which has amplified existing inequalities, and increased the burden of care on women and adolescent girls, reinforcing traditional gender roles. She noted the informal sector has been heavily impacted and more women have lost their livelihoods. Emphasizing the need for strategies to strengthen resilience and social protection systems in Africa, she outlined stimulus packages aimed at small and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe, with 42% of recipients being women-owned enterprises.

Investing in Resilient Infrastructure

Abhilash Panda, UNDRR, moderated this session. Atsuko Toda, Director, Agriculture Finance and Rural Infrastructure Development, African Development Bank, said the Bank is reprioritizing infrastructure based on:
- focusing investment opportunities in supply chains, such as investing in logistics and transport infrastructure to enhance the supply chain resilience;
- building infrastructure to reduce the length of supply chains, so value addition and processing can happen much closer to production areas; and
- focusing infrastructure investments in specially clustered locations.

Noting a lot of infrastructure is financed through public sector financing, she stressed the need to mobilize more private sector finance to achieve efficiency, accountability, and performance gains.

Aneerood Sookhareea, Second in Charge, National DRR and Management Centre, MAURITIUS, noted that despite considerable investment in infrastructure, development, urbanization, disasters, and climate risks are continuing to put pressure on the country's infrastructure. He highlighted planned and ongoing measures, including: national risk resilience assessments for the transport sector; strengthening the capacity of

academic institutions; and the recently launched "Infrastructure for Resilient Island States," which aims to, among other things, promote disaster and climate resilience of infrastructure assets in small island developing States.

Michael Sudarkasa, CEO, Africa Business Group, ARISE Africa, underscored the need for more resilient cities and rural areas. He explained his organization is working to raise the profile of the need for more resilient infrastructure by engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, primarily the private sector. Sudarkasa noted a previous focus on responding to crises and stressed the need to emphasize prevention.

Thokozile Zulu, Director of Solid Waste, Steve Tshwete Municipality, South Africa, said the municipality is working towards becoming a smart city. She described planned and ongoing efforts, including: development of a solar system; planned creation of a waste management facility in line with South Africa's zero waste to landfill goal; and an upgraded integrated waste minimization strategy.

Sophie De Coninck, UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), described UNCDF's Local Climate Adaptive Living (LoCAL) Facility, which, she explained, applies the principles of fiscal decentralization, local planning, and public financial management to climate change. She said the Facility is a performance-based climate resilience grant that provides financial top-ups to countries to cover the additional cost of making infrastructure resilient.

Africa Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for DRR

Chiara Menchise, International Center for Environmental Monitoring (CIMA) Research Foundation, moderated this session, outlining the Africa Road Map for Improving the Availability, Access and Use of Disaster Risk Informatin for Early Warning and Early Action, including in the Context of Transboundary Risk Management, which she said seeks to shift from managing disasters to managing risks. She further highlighted the Africa Multi-hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) for DRR, including: the IGAD Disaster Operations Center launched on 26 October 2021, and the AUC Continental Situation Room and the African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development (ACMAD) disaster operation center, to be launched on 26 November.

Luca Maestripieri, Director General, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, underscored the need for prevention, disaster preparedness, and understanding risk. He highlighted Italian support for the Road Map and the UNDRR project to boost disaster risk management (DRM) in Africa, as well as strengthening MHEWS across the continent.

Diana Patricia Mosquera Calle, UNDRR, provided an overview of the Road Map, noting it is based on the four traditional elements of early warning: risk knowledge; monitoring and forecasting; dissemination and communication; and preparedness and response. She explained it aims to enhance the capacity for data exchange and coordination among national, regional, and continental actors, and includes cross-cutting elements, such as legal and institutional frameworks, capacity development, and financing mechanisms.

Lusajo Ambukege, AUC, presented on the AUC Continental Situation Room, which will be located on the AUC premises in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He said it will, *inter alia*: coordinate transboundary DRM and emergencies; receive and develop situation event reports from AU Member States and then generate its own report for sharing with AUC organs; apprise AUC organs of ongoing disasters and emergencies at the continental level; provide early warning information to Member States; and activate the continental emergency approach. He described two key products of the Situation Room: Continental Watch, to provide early warning information to Member States; and event situation reports.

Andre Kamga Foamouhoue, Director General, ACMAD, said the Centre aims to provide products and services for use at different levels. In particular, he said the focus is on drought, heavy rains and floods, and extreme temperatures and heat waves. He said the early warning system aims to anticipate these kinds of situations and is already working through the regional centers and meteorological services. He provided examples of ACMAD's work.

Jully Ouma, IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC), presented on the ICPAC Situation Room and Disaster Operations Center, saying the Situation Room aims to strengthen early action. He provided an overview of the MHEWS, highlighting drought has already been assessed in the IGAD region. In terms of anticipatory early actions, he underscored the publication of a climate outlook, which disaggregated data into different sectors to inform early action by stakeholders.

Sandra Delali Kemeh, Africa Youth Advisory Board on DRR, AUC, presented the Africa Media Monitor (AMM), which is used to complement information derived from the web-based platform MyDewetra. Information is collected using a network approach, but is verified or from reliable sources, Kemeh stated. She provided an overview of the AMM's functionality and products, saying any news is based on the opinions of the data source and not those of the AU.

During the discussion, panelists addressed questions submitted through the conference chat function. On whether the situation room can be replicated, Ambukege said it is possible. Ouma

Chiara Menchise, CIMA Foundation

said enquiries had already been made by Somalia to replicate the ICPAC situation room at the national level. Other issues considered included publicly accessible data, how ACMAD communicates uncertainties in seasonal climate forecasts, and how to compensate for the low density of climate monitoring sites in Sub-Saharan countries.

Taking Stock of Disability Inclusion in DRR Across Africa

This side event, which took place on 17 November, was organized by CBM (an international Christian development organization) and the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and focused on promoting disability-inclusive DRR.

Elham Youssefian, Inclusive Humanitarian and DRR Adviser, IDA, noting the goal of the Sendai Framework is to ensure a more inclusive and resilient DRR for Africa, urged all activists to participate in the consultations taking place as part of the review. She also discussed an IDA project Putting Persons with Disabilities at the Centre of Humanitarian Preparedness and Response, which aims to foster inclusive approaches to DRR and humanitarian action.

Olivia Chibgwe, Civil Protection Unit, ZIMBABWE, outlined national efforts to promote disability inclusive DRR, such as: inclusive materials focusing on DRR, designed specifically for persons with hearing impairments; information, education, and communication materials produced in braille; engaging the Department of Disability Affairs in DRR programming; and incorporating CBM in the National Civil Protection Committee to ensure disability issues are raised and addressed.

Simon Munde, Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi, discussed Malawi's experience in implementing the guidance for prioritizing disability inclusion in DRR developed in collaboration with CBM. He urged disability inclusiveness in every DRR process, including contingency planning and mapping of evacuation routes.

Talal Waheed, CBM Global Advisor for DRR, underlined that early warning systems must be disability inclusive, not just in infrastructure, but also regarding communication.

Eighth Africa Regional Platform for DRR

Opening Ceremony

The Eighth Africa Regional Platform for DRR formally opened on Wednesday, 17 November. Prior to the formal opening ceremony, Amjad Abbashar presented the work of the drafting committee, which, he explained, will produce the outcome document for the regional platform in the form of the Nairobi Declaration.

Master of Ceremonies Gordon Muga, Under Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, Kenya, introduced the speakers of the opening ceremony.

Stephen Jackson, UN Resident Coordinator, Kenya, underscored a current drought emergency affecting Kenya and the Horn of Africa. He noted "hazards are becoming more complex, interrelated, frequent, and of a more pronounced magnitude, largely attributed to the climate emergency." He added that

in regions such as the Horn of Africa, hazards are aggravated by increased political turbulence, and weak management and response systems. He stressed that efforts to address complex development challenges are outpaced by disasters and called for enhanced regional cooperation to build a multi-dimensional resilience strategy in Africa. He emphasized the importance of the meeting, and of enacting a continental dialogue, including on the Africa PoA for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework.

Providing the context, Guleid Artan, Director, IGAD-ICPAC, noted that reducing disasters calls for risk assessment, robust risk governance mechanisms, and more investment in DRR, as well as addressing the imbalance in financing and investment. He highlighted that IGAD has inaugurated ICPAC in Nairobi, which will provide timely regional early warning on impending disaster risk, drought, floods, and migratory pests in the first phase.

Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for DRR, UNDRR, highlighted challenges, noting the region has been underserved with only 5% of the population vaccinated against COVID-19, as well as experienced great loss and damage due to climate change, with conflict and natural hazards complicating DRR work. She emphasized the need for robust local strategies for DRR, international cooperation underpinned by clear vision, good planning, and competence.

Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Development, AUC, urged robust international frameworks and standard operating procedures as well as data sharing and exchange of policies to support the effective operation of situation rooms. She further underscored the institutionalization of a DRR unit within the AU. She highlighted the need for: a paradigm shift; comprehensive disaster recovery programmes with a clear recovery roadmap; and investing in better collection and management of disaster risk data for more informed decision making.

Karanja Kibicho, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, KENYA, urged participants to use the platform to take stock of the current situation, assess what has been achieved over the intervening two years, and determine what needs to be done over the forthcoming

Talal Waheed, CBM Global Advisor for DRR

two years. He stated development programmes must be risk informed and underscored the importance of gender parity. He said Kenya will continue to work on creating supporting legal frameworks to effectively respond to disasters that may occur.

Plenary Sessions

Is Africa on Track to Achieve the Sendai Framework and Its Africa Programme of Action? Amjad Abbashar moderated this session, citing DRR progress on the continent, with a behavioral change starting to appear as focus shifts from disaster management to DRM.

Kai Gatkuoth said disaster risk, exposure, and vulnerability are increasing, while coping capacities remain stable, indicating capacities are inadequate in the face of increasing disasters. He outlined progress in the priority areas of understanding disaster risk, strengthening risk governance, disaster risk financing for resilience and preparedness, and building back better. He provided an overview of the Sendai Framework targets, stating disaster mortalities (Target A), direct economic losses (Target C), the number of countries with DRR Strategies (Target E), and the availability of and access to MHEWS (Target G) have increased. He noted the number of affected persons (Target B) had decreased. On disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services (Target D), he cited insufficient data for analysis. He also said international cooperation remains low.

Challenges, he said, include that while investment in resilience is still low, disaster risk is rising and becoming increasingly multi-dimensional. Going forward, he urged accelerated implementation of the Sendai Framework and the PoA with priority given to, *inter alia*, making DRR and resilience a development priority, establishing early warning systems at all levels, and institutionalizing DRR at national and local levels.

Cecilia Aipira presented on the COVID-19 recovery framework for Africa, which was commissioned by the AUC and is being developed by the UN Development Programme. She explained the framework aims to:
- assess the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 in Africa;
- identify regional trends on the impact and value of a collective approach to addressing economic and human impacts of the pandemic;

Stephen Jackson, UN Resident Coordinator, Kenya

- provide guidance to Member States in planning and implementing short-, medium- and long-term recovery; and
- spell out a transformational policy agenda the AU and Member States can adopt to deal with current and future systemic challenges.

Aipira outlined the framework development process, explaining the scoping and situational assessment stage ran from July-September 2021, and the drafting stage is ongoing, from October - December 2021. She said the final stage, which will be to support the AUC to endorse the framework, will run from January 2022 and beyond.

Aipira concluded by presenting some of the preliminary short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations, including: implementing health system reforms; sustaining monetary and fiscal responses for economic recovery; greening the recovery; and investing in improved, accelerated human capital development.

In the subsequent discussion, speakers explained why data governance is so difficult in Africa, noting problems related to: high cost of regular data collection; lack of institutional responsibility for data collection; limited data collection capacity; and insufficient legislative backing to DRR institutions to require other ministries to provide them with data.

Progress in Implementing the Sendai Framework and Its Africa PoA at National and Local Levels: The Experience of Kenya: Moderator Amjad Abbashar highlighted cooperation with the National Disaster Operations Centre (NDOC) in Kenya, applauding its work on DRR legislation and other related activities.

Charles Owino, Director, NDOC, KENYA, focused on his country's experience in implementing the Sendai Framework and the Africa PoA. He presented the current legal and institutional DRM framework in Kenya and highlighted the development strategy.

Owino discussed activities at the national level towards the four priority actions of the Sendai Framework. On understanding disaster risk, he underscored courses in academic institutions, production of hazard atlases, and conferences and public awareness activities. On strengthening risk governance, he focused on national response and DRM plans, including county contingency plans, and highlighted the organization structure and the result-based management approach. On investing in DRR, he discussed disaster risk financing, post-disaster needs assessments, and county integrated development plans. On enhancing disaster preparedness, he noted flood, earthquake, and tsunami risk preparedness, development of early warning triggers and satellite data, and national DRR and contingency plans. He concluded by drawing attention to DesInventar Sendai, a database on disaster loss, damage, and effects caused by emergencies or disasters, and updated by NDOC.

Moderator Abbashar concluded the session, highlighting efforts to decentralize DRR activities, stressing that empowering local governments and communities in Kenya provides a useful lesson.

Disaster Risk Governance in the Context of Systemic Risks and Covid-19: Moderator Thandie Mwape Villadsen, IFRC, opened the session stressing the increasing interconnectedness of our societies, which has led to increased system interdependency. Emphasizing the complexity of systemic risk and inadequacy of governance to address the problem, she noted the session would focus on identifying key measures to strengthen disaster risk governance drawing from the African experience.

Mami Mizutori underscored the need to look closely at the three elements that make up a disaster: hazard, exposure, and vulnerability. She called for: interconnected, systemic solutions under a comprehensive, coordinated, whole of society, and government approach; better understanding of systemic risk and interconnected impacts; and investing in a long-term resilience vision.

Vêlayoudom Marimoutou, Secretary General, Indian Ocean Commission, stressed the need for a multi-level approach and global action based on solidarity to face global challenges and systemic risk. He provided an overview of challenges faced in the Indian Ocean, including regarding attracting necessary funding and governance. He described the Commission's activities for vulnerability reduction in the region, including on forecasting, early warning systems, and information exchange.

Elack Olivier Andriakaja, Général de Brigade, Director General, National Bureau for Risk and Disaster Management, MADAGASCAR, shared insights from his country's DRM efforts. He described roles and responsibilities of different national institutions at the strategic and operational levels. He also drew attention to partnerships with different UN organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.

Bilubi Ulengabo Méschac, Mayor of Bukavu, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), provided an overview of DRR in the context of COVID-19 and the eruption of the Nyiragongo volcano. He highlighted actions relating to multi-risk management, risk identification, and efforts to raise awareness. Elaborating on a holistic management system to reduce risk, he explained that a transdisciplinary office has been established to map DRR and an early warning and communication system has been rolled out. Méschac also highlighted efforts to train

Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, UNDRR

Amjad Abbashar, Chief, UNDRR Regional Office for Afr**ica**

stakeholders on resource mobilization, lobbying, and advocacy for DRM

Panelists responded to questions on: whether good risk governance is being prioritized in Africa; and current coordination mechanisms at the national and local levels for tackling COVID-19.

Special Session: Coordination and Cooperation for Multi-Hazard Impact-Based Early Warning Systems in Africa: This session was moderated by Ricardo Mena, Director, UNDRR. Delivering opening remarks on behalf of Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, Kai Gatkuoth emphasized that an early warning system is irrelevant if it cannot trigger early action, and early action fails if not backed up by reliable, long-term financial mechanisms. He highlighted AUC initiatives, including the development of MHEWSs and early action programmes, with the support of development partners, in which a key deliverable includes the establishment of a multi-hazard situation room.

Marina Sereni, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, ITALY, explained that as part of its collaboration with UNDRR, the Italian Government funded a project, in 2020, aimed at equipping the AUC with a Continental Situation Room to facilitate exchange, monitoring, and analysis of DRR data and information through a free open-source platform.

Petteri Taalas, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), stressed the need to urgently scale up efforts on early warning in Africa, noting that multi-hazard and impact-based early warning systems are crucially important and one of the cornerstones of WMO action on the continent. He further added that WMO is scaling up engagement with UN and humanitarian partners to address capacity gaps, emphasizing the need to shift from response to prevention and anticipation.

Kai Gatkuoth provided an overview of the Africa Framework for Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Early Action. He highlighted the decisions leading to the approval to begin work on the Framework, including decisions from the AU Executive Council and the AU Assembly. He provided an overview of the contents of the Framework, noting it is in line with meeting Target G of the Sendai Framework (early warning systems and disaster risk information and assessments). He said delivery of

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Guleid A. Artan, Director, ICPAC

the Africa Framework will require the involvement of multiple stakeholders.

Guleid Artan said ICPAC is the premier climate center in East Africa to produce early warnings and weather forecasts, and promotes coproduction and codesign of climate services. He said the key to these products and services is linking early warning to early action. This means, Artan stated, cooperation and coordination are needed, noting close cooperation with disaster agencies in the region. Working with others to advance innovative approaches and work on early forecasting, he said, includes issues around financing. He stated the launch of the MHEWS in ICPAC is an example of productive collaboration.

Tixon Nzunda, Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister's Office, TANZANIA, underscored the value of cooperation with UNDRR on a number of programmes and projects, including development of disaster risk profiles, economic analysis, and a roadmap. He noted the importance of strengthening engagement with national meteorological organizations and the Ministry of Water as key to achieving DRR objectives.

Luca Rossi, Deputy Chief, UNDRR Regional Office for Africa, discussed early warning systems as a critical component of DRR. He noted efforts are often hindered by lack of an institutional framework with clear rules and responsibilities, calling for timely and reliable information from the ground. He presented a consultative and inclusive process for developing a roadmap for improving early warning systems in Africa, including data gathering, management, and dissemination.

Marine Collignon, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, FRANCE, noted her country's support of the initiatives on early warning and DRR, stressing the impact of disasters on vulnerable people and communities, multiplied by the effects of climate change. She drew attention to the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems Initiative, emphasizing France's role to deliver early warning systems in least developed countries and small island developing States, including through projects in Africa.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed, *inter alia*, ways to ensure lessons learned are made available to relevant actors and attempts to include indigenous early warning systems and knowledge.

Special Session: Improved Understanding and Management of Disaster Risk in Africa: Gemma Connell, Head, Regional Office for Southern and Eastern Africa, OCHA, spoke on the data requirements of humanitarian agencies and practitioners. Providing examples, she said data must be made publicly available to adequately prepare for and respond to emergencies. On publicly available data, she noted the establishment of the Centre for Humanitarian Data to collate all publicly available data into one repository. She stressed data must be interoperable, of high quality, and not compromise people's safety.

Ahmed Amdihun, IGAD, spoke on DRM in the region. He said monitoring and forecasting products are important, underscoring IGAD's role in publishing climate advisories. He emphasized the role of the coproduction of knowledge to make data more understandable and actionable. He said data on risk is important to understand forecasts. He noted forecast and monitoring products must be attached to anticipatory actions, allowing for a full understanding of risk.

Amdihun drew attention to work with UNDRR to develop a regional risk profile to understand exposure, capabilities, and other risk elements, which will improve both response and the ability to respond. He underscored the establishment of the Situation Room to enable regional monitoring of hazards and issue early warning alerts.

Sihle Mzileni, Organisational Strategy and Sustainability Director, National Disaster Management Agency, ESWATINI, said Eswatini views DRM as part of sustainable development; thus, DRR is mainstreamed into the broader development agenda. He stressed understanding risk comprehensively is important to formulate strategies to prevent new risks and manage current ones. He noted that the development-related sectors in Eswatini lead on DRM efforts nationally. He underscored the importance of strengthening data management and the need for robust financing mechanisms to support DRM.

Johan Minnie, Head, Disaster Operations Centre and Systems Integration, City of Cape Town, South Africa, explained that, as a result of COVID-19 and the response to it, people suffering from housing insecurity moved out of their lodgings and into flood-prone areas, and, when winter arrived, the flooding risk became a reality. He described Cape Town's resilience strategy, highlighting:
- a layered risk assessment that focuses on risk construction and the variables that make up risk;
- a targeted approach defining the tipping points in a system and intervening at those points at strategic, tactical, and operational levels;
- working tactically and operationally with stakeholders on a seasonal or hazard-specific basis to shape risk reduction and response; and
- institutional capacity for risk reduction, noting that in Cape Town, this includes an Advisory Forum, a DRM Centre, and risk reduction and preparedness planning groups.

Ahmed Amdihun, IGAD

Parallel Working Sessions

Enhanced Cooperation for an African Network of Excellence on Early Warning for Early Action: This session was moderated by Rakiya Babamaaji, National Space Research and Development Agency, NIGERIA, who underscored the need for a wide range of stakeholders to encourage enhanced cooperation.

Andrea Toreti, European Commission Joint Research Centre, addressed the Centre's work on climate services to enhance climate resilience and adaptation. He called for reducing risk through transforming data, such as climate observations, predictions, and sectoral knowledge. He highlighted a number of data platforms that can assist in this regard, such as the East Africa Drought Watch. He stressed the need to design the next generation of climate services that generate outputs through co-creation.

Mariane Diop Kane, WMO Africa Regional Office, said addressing disaster risk is possible, urging the use of early warning systems in this regard. She drew attention to WMO's drought and water management programmes, underscoring that water stress in African countries is increasing. Kane said they are working to scale up efforts and partnerships to enhance access to information and relevant climate products.

Lisbet Rhiannon Hansen, UN Environment Programme (UNEP)-DHI Centre on Water and the Environment, explained that the Centre works with partners on water resources management. She said to ensure the sustainability of projects, they, among others, reuse tools in subsequent projects, as well as hold hybrid or online training and capacity-building sessions. She also noted they develop post-project sustainability plans to ensure lessons learned are taken forward.

Francois Kayitakire, African Risk Capacity (ARC), spoke on ARC's work, which helps African governments improve their capacity to better plan, prepare, and respond to disasters. He said they make an impact by providing effective tools for early warning systems, although, he said, modelling flood risk remains a challenge.

In closing, Toreti stressed enhancing dialogue among partners at different levels; Kane urged strengthening collaboration among stakeholders and improving regional centers' capacity; Hansen called for considering how future interventions can be sustainable

and work to ensure greater cooperation and partnership; and Kayitakire stressed the need to improve continental capacity.

Strengthening the Peer Review Mechanism for DRR: Moderator Valery Yao Yao, African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), presented on lessons learned on the APRM, a mutually agreed instrument voluntarily acceded to by AU Member States as an African self-monitoring mechanism. He stressed recent disasters reveal the need for a revised approach to governance resilience where societies have the capacity to absorb shocks and recover. He further discussed the current APRM methodology and value added in DRR.

Amjad Abbashar highlighted UNDRR's support to governments and stakeholders to build political momentum and commitment to reduce existing risks. He highlighted cooperation with the APRM, stressing the need to ensure its work benefits from existing DRR mechanisms. Abbashar highlighted two areas of focus: understanding risk, including data and early warning system issues; and risk governance and having the right connections between the institutions to deliver on DRR. He called for further work on including Sendai Framework indicators in APRM methodology, highlighting a technical group on applying DRR methodologies and complementing the APRM approach.
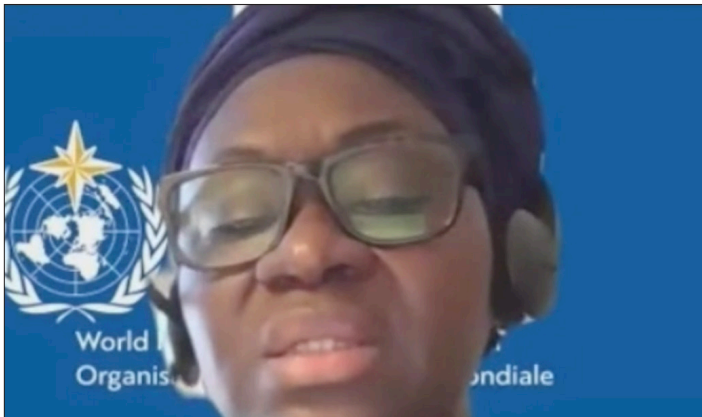
Stella Nyambura Mbau, Abundant Earth Foundation, and Founder, LOABOWA, emphasized the need to: empower vulnerable groups in rural communities with early warning systems for early response capabilities; follow a participatory approach in disaster risk governance; and develop a knowledge database on DRM accessible to all stakeholders.

Tapiwa Nyasulu-Rweyemamu highlighted the need to develop detailed tools to take into account the resilience indicators, building on the country review reports and the Sendai Framework. She noted the peer review attracts additional attention on data and indicators. She drew attention to the need to consider gender disaggregated data in the peer review process to have gender-responsive interventions. She further called for Member States to dedicate budget lines to support potential disaster responses.

Addressing Disaster Displacement: Lena Brenn, IGAD, moderated this session. Ivana Hajžmanová, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, provided an overview of internal displacement in Sub–Saharan Africa. She explained that

Rakiya Babamaaji, National Space Research and Development Agency, Nigeria

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Mariane Diop Kane, WMO African Regional Office

conflict is a major driver but disaster a close second, with disaster displacement rates increasing every year in the region.

Simon Addison, International Institute for Environment and Development, highlighted the gap in disaster displacement analyses, which fail to integrate vulnerability, resilience, and adaptive capacity in existing models. He explained these analyses tend to be generated at a very high generalized level, which does not help with operational planning at subnational and local levels.

Nelson Tivane, Norwegian Refugee Council, Mozambique, highlighted various tools, including the UNDRR Words into Action Guidelines on Disaster Displacement. He also mentioned a checklist companion tool to the guide, on addressing disaster displacement in DRR policy and practice, as well as an e-learning course on disaster displacement.

Fathia Alwan, IGAD, highlighted support to IGAD Member States in implementing tools to better prepare for, prevent, and respond to disaster displacement. She emphasized support for the inclusion of disaster displacement across different policy areas to ensure a holistic approach, mentioning policy mapping to assess how displacement and other forms of human mobility are currently addressed in IGAD Member State policy on DRR, climate change, and development.

Providing a local perspective, Emmanuel Okecho, Disaster Preparedness Officer, UGANDA, explained that displacement is both internal and external. Internal displacement is mainly due to climate change, while people arriving from neighboring countries are displaced due to climate change and conflict. He highlighted national policies to address these displacement dynamics as well as the establishment of a displacement contingency fund consisting of 1.5% of the previous year's budget. He also discussed efforts to fast-track resettlement of people known to be living in high-risk places.

Higino Rodrigues, National Institute for Disaster Management and Reduction, MOZAMBIQUE, called for support for the operationalization, dissemination, and implementation of the national policy and strategy for disaster displacement management.

Comprehensive Disaster and Climate Risk Management in Africa: This session, moderated by Stella Ngugi, IFRC, focused on main elements for a comprehensive climate and DRM approach.

Animesh Kumar, Head of the UNDRR Office in Bonn, Germany, underscored that loss and damage were included for the first time in the cover decision at the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, emphasizing the urgency to scale up action and support. Kumar highlighted the main elements of a comprehensive climate and DRM approach, including analysis, planning, and financing, and underscored UNDRR's related support to Member States.

Agnes Ndaaba Okecha, Uganda Red Cross Society, called for: integrating DRR and climate change adaptation in binding legislative frameworks; establishing clear communication and coordination channels among different actors; establishing an enforcement mechanism to ensure compliance; and providing adequate resources for DRR.
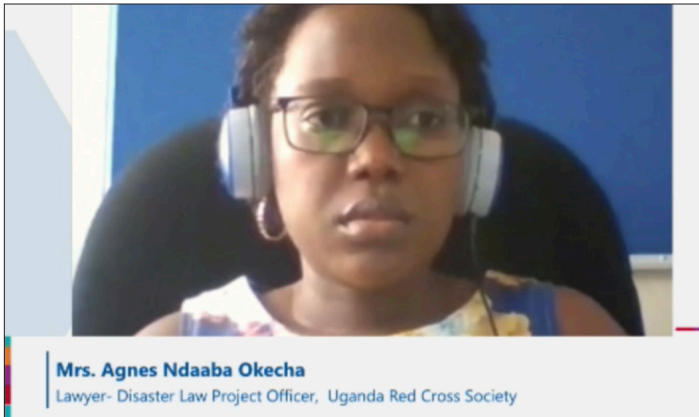
Toussaint Adjehounou, Assistant Director General, National Agency for Civil Protection, BENIN, described Benin's efforts and experience on DRR and implementation of the Sendai Framework. He outlined an inclusive consultation system for stakeholders and a coordination mechanism across different sectors. He offered examples of sustainability projects, stressing the need to align DRR and climate change adaptation efforts and to attract the necessary resources.

Aboubakar Diane, AUC, noted five million people have been displaced because of climate-related disasters, calling for a comprehensive strategy on DRR and climate change adaptation. He highlighted various relevant AU initiatives and drew attention to the African strategy for climate change, which includes a strong DRR element. On challenges, he noted insufficient funding and lack of coordination, adding that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework, and the Paris Agreement have joint characteristics and offer an opportunity for policy cohesion and cooperation.

In the ensuing discussion, participants focused on subnational entities' DRR plans, and gender mainstreaming and social inclusivity. Ngugi summarized main messages, including the need for: strong governance systems backed by legal frameworks that clarify the roles and responsibilities of different actors; DRR policies linked to sustainable development policies leaving no one behind; and collection and analysis of data to track progress on disaster and climate risk.

Enhancing Resilience at the Local Level: This session was moderated by Amjad Abbashar. Kai Gatkuoth reflected on opportunities for empowering government systems at the local level. He noted that wealth generation creates risk, calling for striking a balance between urban and rural resilience and for the creation of smart cities as well as smart villages. He called for building on local governance and solutions, and for "decolonizing global hostility toward indigenous knowledge systems."

Oumar Sylla, Acting Director, Regional Office for Africa, UN-Habitat, highlighted diagnostic tools that leverage and strengthen resilience at the local level, including the City Resilience Profiling Tool and City Resilience Action Planning Tool. He explained that the profiling tool uses diagnostic methodology to

Mrs. Agnes Ndaaba Okecha
Lawyer- Disaster Law Project Officer, Uganda Red Cross Society

Agnes Ndaaba Okecha, Uganda Red Cross Society

determine shocks, stresses confronting cities, and is designed to provide resilience scale information. In terms of limitations, he noted that diagnostic tools can be complex, data heavy, and are only a first step for building resilience.

Kobie Brand, Deputy Secretary General, ICLEI, and Regional Director, ICLEI–Africa, emphasized that climate resilience should be a major priority for African cities with the urban population projected to increase to 744 million by 2030, up from 33 million in 1950. She prioritized proactive adaptive planning and embedding climate considerations into city planning policies, highlighting MCR2030 as a unique cross-stakeholder initiative for improving local resilience.

Marilyn Mbogua, Regional Lead Africa, Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Risk, elaborated on best practices for ensuring community engagement for resilience. She explained the network's approach is based on: starting at the local level; partnerships and collaboration; including all groups; promoting gender equality; mobilizing differing resources; aligning policies with practices; and being accountable to local communities most at risk. She went on to discuss "Views from the Frontline 2019," a forward-looking monitoring process that supports inclusive people-centered approaches to DRR.

Financing and Investment in DRR: This session was moderated by Kehinde Balogun, UN University Institute for Environment and Human Security. Jean-Paul Adam, Director, Technology, Climate Change and Natural Resources Management, UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), spoke on the importance of investing in DRR, urging investors to view this as an opportunity rather than a cost. He highlighted UNECA case studies showing high rates of return for investing in "transformative sectors" to, among others, rehabilitate natural parks or use resilient seeds in agriculture. He noted these activities also resulted in concomitant job creation.

Francois Kayitakire said the ARC is a specialized agency of the AU to help countries respond to climate-related disasters by largely focusing on sovereign insurance to cover the cost of emergency response. The mechanism, he said, is set up for countries to have timely access to funds in a predictable manner. He outlined challenges including the inherent difficulty for some African countries to pay their premiums. He said next steps

include investing in ideas developed to ameliorate disaster risk, where these ideas would otherwise not have made it to market.

Cecil Nartey, Africa Disaster Risk Financing Programme, African Development Bank, said the Programme works with countries to ensure a proactive approach to DRR, by focusing on two key areas: capacity building, and financing. He said work in these two areas includes assistance to define risk profiles, development of contingency plans, and development of disaster risk financing strategies.
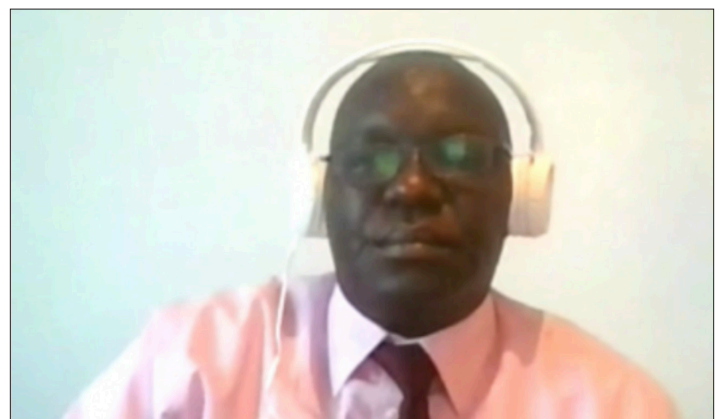
Martha Getachew Bekele, Development Initiatives, discussed a project aimed at supporting the Ethiopian National DRM Commission in tracking investments in DRR in the country. She outlined key findings from the project, including that: less than 1% of the national budget is invested in DRR; DRR investments tend to target floods, landslides, epidemics, and drought; and approximately two-thirds of the budget is spent on disaster response.

Waseefah Elahee Doomun, Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, MAURITIUS, said 5% of gross domestic product is spent addressing climate issues, and includes investment in renewable energy, resilience, and COVID-19 recovery. She noted further funding has been allocated to help fund efforts to mitigate the effects of an oil spill in July 2020.

Seventh High-Level Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction

Master of Ceremonies Gordon Muga opened the meeting on Friday, 19 November. Mami Mizutori highlighted progress since the adoption of the Tunis Declaration in 2018, including: 25 African countries having DRR strategies and action plans aligned with the Sendai Framework in place; greater use of risk knowledge for decision making; strengthening capacities for early warning and early action; and operationalizing the Sendai Framework Monitor with 28 countries using it. Mizutori underscored challenges, calling for solidarity to strengthen recovery from the pandemic, and address drivers of disaster risk and climate change. She noted the outcome of the Regional Platform will feed into the Global Platform on DRR taking place in May 2022 in Indonesia.

Kai Gatkuoth, on behalf of Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, focused on the interconnectedness of hazards, calling for better

Gordon Muga, Under Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, Kenya, and Master of Ceremonies

understanding, managing, and financing DRR, and for multi-hazard governance and cooperation. He highlighted recent achievements guided by the Tunis Declaration and drew attention to the Biennial African Report on DRR. He underscored: operationalization of the Situation Room and the relevant framework for early warning and action; the COVID-19 recovery framework; strengthening risk governance and resilience; mainstreaming DRR and climate change adaptation; and the development of a roadmap for urban resilience.

Highlighting the regional context, Workneh Gebeyehu, Executive Secretary, IGAD, noted people are being displaced due to flooding and other natural hazards. He outlined IGAD's responsive policies, strategies, and action plans, including a revised regional strategy for disaster risk aligned to the Sendai Framework, and emphasized that implementation is the priority.

Leila Chikhaoui-Mahdaoui, Minister of the Environment, TUNISIA, recalled the Seventh Session of the Africa Regional Platform, jointly held with the Fourth Arab Conference on DRR, which she said Tunisia was honored to host. Reflecting on outcomes, she discussed, among other things, the Tunis Declaration on Accelerating the Implementation of the Sendai Framework and the Africa Regional Strategy for DRR.

Fred Okengo Matiang'i, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, KENYA, welcomed participants to Nairobi and expressed the commitment to enhance capacity and strengthen resilience on DRR in the region. He called for forging ahead to ensure effective risk preparedness, especially in the context of emerging risks, stressing the need to implement the Sendai Framework.

Election of the Bureau

Leila Chikhaoui Mahdaoui, Chair of the current Africa Regional Platform Bureau, announced Kenya as the incoming presidency of the regional platform and a new bureau composed of Gabon, The Gambia, South Africa, and Tunisia. Accepting his appointment as President, Fred Okengo Matiang'i pledged his commitment to ensuring the Platform advances the course of reducing disasters and risks in the region. Participants then adopted the meeting agenda.

Report of the Regional Platform

Charles Owino, Chair of the Drafting Committee, presented the report of the Regional Platform. He noted delegates reviewed progress on implementation of the Sendai Framework and its Africa PoA, and discussed the way forward to accelerate their implementation on the continent. He said both the Nairobi Declaration and the PoA Matrix 2021-2025 were considered for presentation at the High-Level Meeting for adoption.

Africa Framework for Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Early Action

Kai Gatkuoth presented the Africa Framework for Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Early Action. He provided an

Cecilia Aipira, UN Development Programme (UNDP), presents the COVID-19 recovery strategy for Africa

overview of the contents of the Framework, highlighting its importance given the exponential rise in disasters in Africa.

COVID-19 Recovery Framework for Africa

Cecilia Aipira analyzed the COVID-19 recovery framework for Africa, focusing on goals, key partners, and preliminary findings and recommendations.

In the ensuing discussion, participants focused on ways to incorporate indigenous knowledge to enhance early response and on linking existing national early warning systems.

Stakeholders' Voluntary Commitments

Stephen Jackson, on behalf of UN Kenya, presented seven commitments, namely to:
  • support Kenya and stakeholders to achieve the aspirations of the Sendai Framework and the revised matrix;
  • improve the structure of the cooperation framework with Kenya with respect to DRR, multidimensional resilience, and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
  • renew efforts to strengthen financial and technical support to implement DRR strategies and plans in coherence with climate change plans;
  • support the government in times of humanitarian crises and disaster with a "leave no one behind" and "build forward better" approach;
  • support the legislative process in Kenya on DRR and a new national policy and strategy at all levels;
  • support MHEWS and early action systems; and
  • support enhanced collaboration between the national and county governments to improve DRM.

Marilyn Mbogua, Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction, called on developed countries to withdraw trade barriers and make available COVID-19 related treatment, tools, and techniques, and urged increased use of local knowledge and expertise to ensure coherence across sectors.

Tabi Joda, GreenAid, committed to engaging with DRR stakeholders to enhance conservation of ancestral knowledge systems to accelerate implementation of the Sendai Framework. He called on stakeholders to recognize Indigenous Peoples and

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the use of traditional knowledge, and urged translation of the Sendai Framework and the Africa PoA into indigenous languages.

Ahmed Amdihun, IGAD, committed to advance the generation of, access to, and use of risk information to support preparedness and response plans; strengthen the capacity of DRR institutions in Member States; and promote more investment in DRR and resilience.

Mohammed Mukhier, IFRC, highlighted his organization's Pan-African initiatives on zero hunger, tree planting and care, and investing in Africa's national society development on sustainability, good governance, and financial stability.

Meschac Bilubi Ulengabo, DRC, urged national governments to provide financial support to local governments to build resilience. He also called on the international community, civil society, and universities, among others, to provide technical support to local and regional governments to fulfil their DRR objectives.

Judy Wambugu, East Africa Network Lead, ARISE Africa, discussed commitments to, *inter alia*: strengthen the ARISE Africa network and emerging partnerships; launch a pilot small and medium enterprises' resilience initiative in DRC, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa; and launch a pilot resilience infrastructure initiative in DRC, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, and other select AU countries.
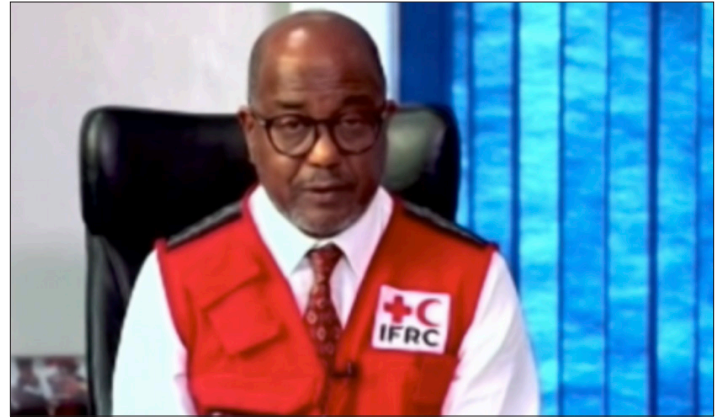
Djillali Benouar, Professor and Chair of Science and Technology Houari Boumediene, Algeria, highlighted commitments, including on: promoting scientific research on DRR; identifying research and technology gaps; recommending research priorities for universities; and disseminating best practice examples.

Samuel Godfrey, UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), reaffirmed continued commitment to supporting countries to integrate DRR in government policies and actions on the ground in the key sectors of education, nutrition, health, social policy, protection of children, and WASH, and to ensure DRR efforts across the board are more effective for children and youth.

Maxime Houinato, Director for East and South Africa Region, UN Women, highlighted efforts to reduce gaps relating to capacity, resources, and information. He recommended: enhancing the capacity of women's organizations to participate in the formulation of policies; working on frameworks that support the development of DRR policies in Africa; developing finance packages to support investment in overcoming identified gaps; and ensuring coordination of DRR takes into account women's considerations.

Bamba Adama, Vice-Chairperson, Africa Youth Advisory Board on DRR, provided examples of youth contributions to DRR across the continent and called for their meaningful engagement in DRR efforts.

Michael Dunford, Regional Director for Eastern Africa, UN World Food Programme, emphasized the need to prioritize the development of new tools, strategies, and investment cases to mitigate the impact of shocks such as climate change. He noted

Mohammed Mukhier, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

that sufficient solutions at scale are needed to be implemented via regional institutions, government at all levels, and robust community engagement.

Presentation of the POA Matrix for 2021-2025

Kai Gatkuoth presented the PoA Matrix for 2021-2025 to the Ministers and Heads of Delegation.

Matrix of the PoA (Phase II: 2021-2025) to Implement the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030: The Matrix focuses on the four priorities of the Sendai Framework, namely:
• understanding disaster risk;
• strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk;
• investing in DRR for resilience; and
• enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to "build back better" in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

The Matrix includes strategic areas of intervention, key activities, level of implementation, lead institutions, results, targets, and timeframes for each priority.

Strategic areas of intervention on understanding disaster risk include: risk and vulnerability assessment and analysis; research and innovation in DRR; disaster loss and damage data systems; interactive knowledge and information sharing; science-driven DRR; inventory and mainstreaming of DRR, resilience, and climate risk in educational systems; and the biennial reporting on the PoA.

On strengthening disaster risk governance, strategic interventions are: enhancing coordination mechanisms and DRR institutional capacities at continental, regional, sub-regional, national, and sub-national levels; gender and inclusion mainstreaming in DRR; transboundary DRR; subnational and local-level DRR; strategic coherence among DRR, climate change adaptation, and the SDGs; mainstreaming DRR in development planning; regional networks and partnerships; and regional DRR centers.

Regarding investing in DRR for resilience, the Matrix recognizes as important areas of strategic intervention: international, continental, and regional funding mechanisms;

Bamba Adama, Africa Youth Advisory Board on DRR

domestic funding for DRR, climate change adaptation, and resilience; multi-sectoral domestic funding; and alternative funding.

On enhancing disaster preparedness, interventions include, among others: preparedness and contingency planning; establishment of continental MHEWS, and early action situation and coordination centers; response mechanisms and mechanisms for cooperation; and risk sensitive post-disaster recovery and reconstruction, and "building back better."

Adoption of the Nairobi Declaration

Charles Owino then presented the Nairobi Declaration, noting comments received on the draft Declaration have been taken on board. The Declaration was adopted without amendment.

Nairobi Declaration on Accelerating the Path to Achieving the Goals and Targets of the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa: In the Nairobi Declaration, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations responsible for DRR in Africa adopt both the Matrix of the Africa PoA and the Africa Framework for MHEWS and Early Action.

They call on:
• Member States, RECs, local authorities, the private sector, academia, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders to support the rollout and implementation of the Matrix and the MHEWS Framework;
• the UN and other international and regional organizations, and international and regional financial institutions, to consider the Matrix of the PoA, as well as the MHEWS Framework in multilateral and bilateral development assistance programmes.
• RECs, the AUC, UN organizations, Parliamentarians, the private sector, academia, civil society organizations, development partners and other stakeholders to strengthen capacity for resource mobilization, implementation and mainstreaming DRR into planning, budgeting, monitoring, and reporting processes;

• the AUC, UNDRR, and other partners to support integration of DRR and the Sendai Framework Monitor into the APRM processes, methodology, and questionnaire, to facilitate assessment of Member States' resilience; and
• Member States and other stakeholders to actively participate in and contribute, through inclusive and evidence-based processes, to the MTR SF.

The Ministers and Heads of Delegations also request:
• the AUC to continue to regularly prepare the Biennial Report on the PoA;
• Member States, RECs, the AUC, the private sector, and development partners to strengthen financial and technical support to use the existing Sendai Framework Monitor system for monitoring and reporting on progress in achieving all targets of the Sendai Framework and the PoA;
• Member States, RECs, the AUC, and development partners to strengthen support to the African Science and Technology Advisory Group, as well as the Youth Advisory Board on DRR as key instruments contributing to the realization of the outcomes of the Sendai Framework and the PoA;
• the AUC to accelerate the development of the COVID-19 recovery framework for Africa for consideration and adoption by the Fourth Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment; and
• the Government of Kenya, as Chair of the Eighth Africa Regional Platform and the Seventh High-Level Meeting on DRR, to submit the Nairobi Declaration to the AU Policy organ for endorsement and advocate for the follow-up and implementation of this Declaration.

They reiterate:
• the need for scaling up investments in nature-based solutions for DRR, climate action, and supporting sustainable land and biodiversity management, as well as ensuring the early and full implementation of the AU Green Recovery Action Plan and the Africa Green Stimulus programme as key instruments for building resilience; and
• the need for Member States to ensure stronger partnerships between institutions responsible for DRR, environmental management, climate change action, planning and finance, and other sectors to ensure a coherent, integrated and whole-of-society approach to DRR and climate change adaptation at all levels.

Lastly, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations:
• call for Member States and RECs to increase the annual budgetary allocation and establish innovative financing solutions, to implement gender-sensitive and inclusive DRR strategies, programmes, and plans of action, in coherence with climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation, combating desertification, sustainable development actions, and the Great Green Wall initiative (which aims to restore degraded landscapes in the Sahel) at all levels;

- further encourage the adoption of a whole-of-society approach that integrates women, children and youth, local communities, the elderly, people living with disabilities, displaced people, and other people in vulnerable situations, as well as consider ILK systems and practices, age, and cultural perspectives in the design and implementation of DRR and climate change adaptation strategies and plans;
- mandate the Africa Working Group on DRR to coordinate the development of the Africa position for the 2022 Global Platform for DRR; and
- ensure these processes are inclusive, participatory, and Member State-driven.

Official Statements by Ministers and Heads of Delegations

RWANDA highlighted risks experienced at the national level, including as a result of climate change and rapid urbanization, and described strategies and measures to reduce risks and deal with potential conflicts. She called for integrated management to combat climate shocks and disaster risks, expressing her country's commitment to the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the SDGs.

SOUTH AFRICA welcomed the Nairobi Declaration and the Matrix, highlighting the inclusive whole-of-society approach. She stressed that while responses to disasters are important, there is a need to focus on prevention and predictive mitigation strategies, harmonizing legislation, and programmes in Africa to act collectively as one.

SOUTH SUDAN underscored the country's vulnerability to natural disasters, noting recent desert locust invasions and flooding. He drew attention to the development of a national DRM policy, and the related legal and institutional framework. As major challenges, he highlighted lack of sufficient funding and technical capacities

TUNISIA described the COVID-19 pandemic's impact and highlighted climate change vulnerabilities in the region. She drew attention to: strengthening capacities at the local level to integrate DRR priorities in national development strategies; and national projects to strengthen resilience. She called for building synergies and supporting sustainable investment to implement the Nairobi Declaration.

GHANA said her country sees DRR as a development issue and is therefore developing a national disaster strategy. She urged fast tracking implementation of the PoA.

MAURITIUS outlined national DRR initiatives, including: creation of a land drainage authority for flood prevention and better urban planning; an early warning system for heavy rainfall; and integration of DRR education into the primary school curriculum.

THE GAMBIA emphasized the need for bilateral partnerships and private sector engagement, and highlighted the establishment of The Gambia's National Disaster Management Agency. GABON highlighted a national contingency plan aimed at helping the vulnerable population, as well as measures to mitigate

COVID-19 through the establishment of a pilot committee and vaccination campaign.

DRC expressed thanks to African states and the international community for the support and assistance received following the occurrence of natural hazards in the country.

THE COMOROS highlighted a national plan for monitoring implementation of the Sendai Framework and reiterated engagement and support with AU Member States in the management of disasters.

GUINEA BISSAU highlighted vulnerability to disasters and the necessity of DRM. MALAWI emphasized the need for Africa to prioritize resources towards tangible actions, such as protecting and dredging rivers and lakes and establishing dykes to prevent flooding.

The Economic Community of Central African States expressed thanks for the fruitful deliberations, welcoming the recommendations contained in the Nairobi Declaration and called for financial support for their implementation.

KENYA underscored that humankind cannot avoid disasters but should instead focus on reducing risk, highlighting national actions to mitigate disaster risk such as hazard mapping.

Chair Matiang'i thanked Ministers and Heads of Delegations for their commitment to DRR and implementation of the Nairobi Declaration. He lauded the Eighth Africa Regional Platform for contributing to an enabling environment that will help countries to continue implementing the Sendai Framework and its Africa PoA. This, he said, will help countries achieve the SDGs and the goals of Africa's Agenda 2063. Matiang'i closed the meeting at 6.36pm East Africa Time.

Upcoming Meetings

2021 European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction: The European Forum for DRR is the regional platform structure of Europe. The 2021 Forum will be structured along a threefold approach, and will: take stock of lessons from the COVID-19 crisis, showcasing good practices in Europe and Europe's role in the world; review progress to date in implementing the Sendai Framework and articulate what changes are needed for a transformative agenda on DRR; and commit to ensuring a disaster impact is never again so severe as the COVID-19 pandemic, articulating new commitments to achieve greater resilience in Europe. **dates:** 24-26 November 2021 **location:** Matosinhos, Portugal **www:** www.undrr.org/event/2021-european-forum-disaster-risk-reduction

Leadership Roundtable - Better reflecting risk management and insurance in the Sustainable Development Goals: This leadership roundtable aims to bring together governments, the UN, the private sector, and civil society to promote, among others, understanding the depth of the impact of the triple crises of COVID-19, the resultant economic downturn, and climate change on society, and how this informs the post-2030 agenda for the SDGs and the response of the risk management sector. **date:** 24 November 2021 **location:** virtual **www:** www.uneca.org/events/better-reflecting-risk-management-and-insurance-in-the-sdgs

Technical Forum on Sendai Framework Monitoring: This Forum will bring together governments and stakeholders to discuss how to transition from data collection to analysis and decision making for climate and disaster risk resilient development. It will provide an opportunity to share good practices in Sendai Framework reporting and monitoring, as well as avenues of support to the process. It will also explore the central role of disaster-related statistics in scaling-up and strengthening risk governance at the regional and national levels. **dates:** 7-8 December 2021 **location:** virtual **www:** www.undrr.org/event/technical-forum-sendai-framework-monitoring

Asia-Pacific Partnership for Disaster Risk Reduction Forum 2021: This Forum will: share and review regional progress in DRR; highlight key regional priorities in Asia-Pacific; and discuss implementation of the new Asia Pacific Action Plan 2021-2024. **dates:** 8-9 December 2021 **location:** virtual **www:** www.undrr.org/event/asia-pacific-partnership-disaster-risk-reduction-app-drr-forum-2021

Second IGAD Water Forum: The Second IGAD Water Forum is being convened under the theme "Groundwater for resilience." It will provide an opportunity to explore issues around five sub-themes: groundwater for peace and stability; groundwater for climate change and drought resilience; groundwater for socio-economic development; innovation in groundwater financing and technological development; and capacity building in groundwater. **dates:** 25-27 January 2022 **location:** Entebbe, Uganda **www:** igad.int/divisions/agriculture-and-environment/2709-1st-announcement-for-2nd-igad-water-forum-entebbe-uganda-5-7-october-2021-groundwater-for-resilience-a-virtual-and-face-to-face-event

Eighth Session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development: Held under the theme, "Building forward better: A green, inclusive and resilient Africa poised to achieve the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063," the eighth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development will review implementation of SDGs 4, 5, 14, 15 and 17 as well as review implementation of Agenda 2063. It will identify strategies and policies to help build back better from COVID-19, with a view to scaling up implementation going forward. It will also develop Africa's regional input to the 2022 High-Level Political Forum to be held in New York in mid-2022. Two main outcomes are expected to be adopted: summary and key messages; and a declaration of the Forum. **dates:** 3-5 March 2022 **location:** Kigali, Rwanda **www:** uneca.org/eighth-session-of-the-africa-regional-forum-on-sustainable-development/about-arfsd-2022

Seventh Session of the Global Platform for DRR (GP2022): GP2022 will be held on the theme "From Risk to Resilience: Towards Sustainable Development for All in a COVID-19 Transformed World." The meeting will take stock of Sendai Framework implementation, recommend actions for policymakers, highlight good practices, and raise awareness. The outcomes will be synthesized in a Co-Chair's summary and will contribute to the inter-governmental mid-term review of the Sendai Framework scheduled for 2023. **dates:** 23-28 May 2022 **location:** Bali, Indonesia **www:** www.undrr.org/event/seventh-session-global-platform-disaster-risk-reduction-gp2022

For additional upcoming events, see sdg.iisd.org/

Glossary

ACMAD	African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DRM	Disaster risk management
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
IGAD ICPAC	Climate Prediction and Applications Centre
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ILK	Indigenous and local knowledge
MCR2030	Making Cities Resilient 2030
MHEWS	Multi-Hazard Early Warning System
MTR SF	Mid-term Review of the Sendai Framework
PoA	Programme of Action
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
UN OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNDDR	UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

Participants pose for a group photo during the opening ceremony

Online at: enb.iisd.org/8th-Africa-Regional-Platform-Disaster-Risk-Reduction