

PARTNERS FOR RESILIENCE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS for the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2019

“Towards Sustainable and Inclusive Societies” Through Integration of Climate and Ecosystems into Disaster Risk Reduction

The Partners for Resilience Alliance (PfR) promotes integrated risk management approaches in countries where vulnerable communities are affected by disasters, mismanagement of land and water resources, and impacts from climate change. An Integrated Risk Management approach integrates current and future risks, and looks at the wider landscape and its natural environment as a system in which risks originate and manifest.

As such, Partners for Resilience partners help to take the implementation of the Sendai Framework (SFDRR) and the 2030 Agenda to the next level, working alongside governments in **achieving target E of the SFDRR**: the development of ‘national and local disaster risk reduction strategies in alignment with the SFDRR’ and **contributing to ‘leaving no one behind’**. The principles of PfR’s approach, referred to as Integrated Risk Management, include:

KEY ASPECTS OF INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT

- Putting people at risk centre-stage, building on local and traditional resources and knowledge
- Linking humanitarian and development domains by focusing on livelihoods
- Addressing risk at a landscape scale
- Managing and restoring ecosystems
- Working on different time scales to ensure adaptive planning
- Linking local realities with global processes
- Integrating disciplines and approaches to encompass different risks
- Partnering with communities, civil society organizations (CSOs), government, knowledge institutes, private sector, media, and more

From paper to action

The principles of Integrated Risk Management are increasingly encompassed in policy dialogues and policy documents discussing climate change, sustainable development, and urban and disaster risk reduction. These frameworks are advanced in the development of implementation strategies, particularly at the global level. We see, for instance, increased emphasis on ‘Leaving no one behind,’ in particular, regarding gender equity and inclusiveness. We also see increasing attention to nature-based solutions, and resilient water resources and ecosystem management as a critical connector between the climate change and DRR communities. In the process from paper to action, we conclude that:

- In national plans, Integrated Risk Management Principles are increasingly reflected, but require strengthening.
- In implementation from paper to action on the ground, where the most vulnerable people are, best practices need to be brought to scale.

Policy recommendations

Our recommendations, based on our experiences, good practices and challenges are for governments and others stakeholders to:

1. ACCELERATE THE INTEGRATION OF DRR IN THE ADAPTATION AGENDA WHICH IS GAINING INCREASING MOMENTUM

Continue and step up efforts to integrate a preventative approach to DRR into climate change adaptation, which is increasingly being brought to the forefront globally where mitigation discussions have been dominant. A priority is to step up investments in and maintaining natural buffers to enhance ecosystem's protective functions, and by investing in climate-resilient livelihoods whilst keeping communities at the center.

Leave no-one behind The most vulnerable and marginalized communities and individuals, among which are often women and girls should be identified and prioritized within DRR law and policy, investments and programming through localized decision-making and action, with support and empowerment for communities. Our efforts to link local activities with global processes, ultimately ensures the voices of those on the ground in political dialogue. This dialogue forms a continuous and relevant process to find new insights into the root causes of, and potential solutions to, significantly mitigate social inequity and injustice. It is important to draw special attention to the needs, roles and perceptions of local actors, as well as communities, civil society and vulnerable groups in the development and implementation of disaster risk reduction and adaptation plans. To make sure their perspectives are considered, and communities are recognized as co-developers and implementers by policymakers, on all relevant levels.

2. ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

UN figures indicate that 80% of people displaced by climate change are women. In a climate-fuelled disaster, such as a hurricane, typhoon or cyclone, poor women and children are up to 14 times more likely to be killed than men. Empowering women's participation within a differentiated perspective of gender roles contributes to better community resilience and builds their capacity as change agents. Thus, disaster risk reduction and response programmes should be based on appropriate gender assessments (incl. through gender markers) and gender action plans.

3. STEP UP EFFORTS TO HALT MAL-DEVELOPMENT DRIVING INCREASE OF WATER-RELATED DISASTERS

Freshwater resources are under increasing pressure from economic development and 'business as usual' approaches in terms of water infrastructure for energy, agriculture and coastal defence. Encourage 'risk-informed' development, tolerant of climate uncertainty that puts ecosystems and vulnerable communities centre-stage. Steps towards more sustainable performance of key commodities could also involve ensuring regulations towards no-net-loss and setting safeguards. Moreover, prevent plans for major development from going ahead if they cause ecosystem degradation and increase exposure of the poor and most vulnerable people to natural hazards and climate change impacts.

4. STEP UP INVESTMENTS IN FRONTRUNNER INITIATIVES AND BANKABLE PROJECTS ON GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Natural or green Infrastructure solutions and hybrid solutions are encouraged in the outcome documents of GPDRR-5 in Cancun. Build on and accelerate the successes and learning with designing such solutions, such as through large-scale pilots and development of standards. This will accelerate action and help overcome a lack of understanding and capacity to develop adaptive strategies more widely in the water management sector.

5. BETTER INTEGRATE ECOSYSTEMS AND THEIR SERVICES INTO URBAN DESIGN, LAND USE MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT

Ecosystems in urban areas can provide a wide range of ecosystem services for climate, livability and economy (even property value) if they are well-managed and incorporated into the urban fabric. Furthermore, cities should consider natural buffers in the rural hinterland of the city, beyond the city boundaries. Cities should therefore cooperate with municipalities in the wider region or landscape to establish a regional approach of land use planning to protect the buffers, anticipating changes from climate trends and urbanization.

6. INTEGRATE ECOSYSTEM SAFEGUARDING IN PEACEBUILDING INITIATIVES IN REGIONS VULNERABLE TO RISK

Put the spotlight on the linkages between DRR, water management, ecosystem loss and increased conflict risks, and build momentum and opportunities to develop more effective and joint responses of the water, security, and development sectors, with ecosystems at the center. For instance, **the squeeze of wetlands in the Sahel**, due to conversion, drainage and reduced freshwater flows, exacerbates human conflicts over access to water resources and productive land, driving conditions that stimulate instability and insecurity.

7. ENABLE THE BETTER REPORTING ON ECOSYSTEM LOSSES AND PROGRESS MADE ON NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

In the Sendai Monitor, the opportunity for reporting on ecosystems is currently limited to monitoring of impacts on green infrastructure caused by disasters through the green infrastructure related indicators in D-4 and C-5. Opportunity for reporting on progress made on Eco-DRR solutions is limited and should be improved, e.g. through custom targets and indicators.

8. SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERSECTORAL AND SOCIALLY-INCLUSIVE PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES

Institutional, policy and financial barriers to integrated approaches are very often the main bottleneck to replicating and scaling up the impact of these successes. Interdisciplinary and multisectoral collaborations from the local to the landscape level, with strong community engagement and empowerment, appear to be one of the keys to upscaling adaptation and enabling integration as they facilitate the sharing and building of knowledge, the brokering of solutions and trade-offs, the building of partnerships, and identification of policy adjustments. PfR is involved in providing successful approaches.

9. ENSURE THE MAINTENANCE AND INCREASE OF SPACE FOR MEANINGFUL CIVIL SOCIETY INCLUSION

Within enabling environment mechanisms, such as multisectoral collaboration and participative learning, there should be more recognition and support for the role of civil society. Civil society is able to bring perspectives from vulnerable groups to the table and help drive synergies by facilitating such integrated approaches and connecting diverse stakeholder communities.

10. PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL MECHANISMS FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING

According to the recent Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019, “the cost of disaster risk financing is likely to grow due to climate change.” In light of the historical responsibility of certain countries and companies causing most of the CO2 emissions, governments should introduce polluter-based international finance mechanisms (e.g. carbon taxes/levies on international transport, fossil fuel extraction levy) which can generate new and additional resources to support local-led initiatives to prepare for and respond to climate-related disasters (channelled e.g. through the Green Climate Fund or other mechanisms).



To obtain more information about the Partners for Resilience programme, please contact the alliance coordination team at: partnersforresilience@redcross.nl
