

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

Supporting resilient communities
through scaling up climate-smart
disaster risk reduction



KEY MESSAGES



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International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



INCREASING EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS, NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

The potential failure of climate change mitigation and adaptation and the resulting risks of extreme weather events have been categorised as two of the biggest global threats facing the world in 2019.[1] Climate and weather-related risks are on the rise[2] (e.g. extreme rainfall, storm surges, drought, etc.) and are exacerbating existing vulnerabilities, increasing the urgency to respond and adapt.

Risk factors such as rapid and unplanned urbanisation, population growth, conflict, weak governance and environmental degradation are ramping up exposure and vulnerability to climate-related risks the world over. This is expected to increase levels of displacement and the humanitarian needs of those affected.[3] Already, on average more than 25 million people are displaced every year by sudden-onset disasters.[4]

It is also widely expected that the effects of climate change will continue to increase the numbers of those displaced, particularly in developing countries.[5] Millions of people are also at risk of displacement by slow-onset hazards, with a recent World bank study estimating that up to 90 million people are at risk of displacement by sea level rise alone in East Asia and the Pacific.[6]

The humanitarian sector is already overstretched and will be unable to deal with the projected increase in disasters, unless we radically change our approach. Much more action is needed to reduce climate and disaster risks.

[1] WEF Global Risks report 2019

http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risks_Report_2019.pdf

[2] Over 80% of all disasters in the last ten years had weather-related triggers. IFRC, World Disasters Report 2018,

<https://www.ifrc.org/en/publications-and-reports/world-disasters-report/>

[3] UNISDR, Words into Action guidelines – Disaster displacement: How to reduce risk, address impacts and strengthen resilience, 2018 , <https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/58821>

[4] IDMC, Global Report on Internal Displacement 2018, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2018>

[5] IPCC, Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5 °C, 2018, <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

[6] World Bank Risk of sea-level rise: high stakes for East Asia & Pacific region countries, 2018, <http://blogs.worldbank.org/eastasiapacific/risk-of-sea-level-rise-high-stakes-for-east-asia-pacific-region-countries>



MILLIONS BEING LEFT BEHIND

Despite global commitments to leave no one behind, those most affected and vulnerable are not receiving the assistance they need. Older persons, people with disabilities, women, poor and socially marginalized people with lack of access to information, decision making structures, resources and social justice are disproportionately affected by hazards. Displaced persons also often live in disaster-prone areas. We have learnt that various risks increase during disasters and displacement, such as the risk of sexual, and gender based violence spikes in disasters.

Global investment in adaptation, risk reduction and preparedness is not prioritizing these people, and often fails to reach vulnerable communities at the local level where the need is greatest. Too often the focus of climate adaptation work is on the national level and on “climate-proofing” hard

investments such as infrastructure, meant to protect against potential impacts. Such investments do not address the needs of the vulnerable and marginalized communities nor do they take into account the role of landscapes and ecosystems in reducing risk from extreme events.

At the same time, many development and DRR efforts that reach the most people and support the achievement of targets, without necessarily taking a view of which geographical areas are most at risk of recurring shocks and which people are most vulnerable.

We also continue to see siloed approaches to investment, regulatory frameworks and programming, with DRR, climate adaptation, development and humanitarian work all dealt with by different laws, ministries/ departments, programmes and budget lines.



WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

We need to move from responding to disasters to building the capacity to anticipate, reduce, absorb, adapt and transform in the face of recurrent shocks and stresses– i.e. building resilience at all levels. Effective disaster and climate risk management requires understanding risk and how it affects the most vulnerable people, as well as the role of landscapes and ecosystems in managing risk. This means scaling up investment and improving the design and implementation of integrated regulatory frameworks and programming.

This also means supporting communities to develop their own understanding of their risks, to take their own responsibilities and action to make themselves safer, and to participate in official decision-making about prevention, risk reduction and response to risks.

The GPDRR is a key opportunity to move the policy conversation at the global level to better integrate climate change adaptation, DRR and adaptation policy, investment and programming, in particular looking towards the Global Climate Summit in September. Crucially, it is an opportunity to scale up action to create concrete change for vulnerable people. Below are the four key areas in which we recommend increased attention and action by all stakeholders.

- 1 Prioritize the most vulnerable people
- 2 Ensure global commitments translate into local action and impact
- 3 Strengthen early warning to enable early action by at-risk communities
- 4 Adopt an integrated approach to DRR and CCA



1 PRIORITIZE THE MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE



A better programmatic approach

- In order to scale up climate smart risk-reduction efforts in high risk communities, disaster management authorities and humanitarian and development practitioners need to invest more in mapping high-risk regions and communities and understanding the vulnerabilities, needs, priorities and capacities of high-risk communities before and after disasters.
- This means we need to get better at collecting and using data, and ensuring this data is sex, age and disability disaggregated, and includes an analysis of risks and impacts of displacement.
- Our response needs to be inclusive of the most vulnerable: Particular attention needs to be paid to whether we are addressing the specific needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups, including older persons, disabled persons, migrants and displaced people (and those at risk of displacement) – as research indicates that they are very often falling through the cracks. We need to take collective action to prevent displacement and to prepare to address displacement where it does occur.



Effective policy and regulatory frameworks

- Governments need to ensure that national disaster and climate laws, policies and plans, including DRM laws, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), include a focus on reducing risks for the most vulnerable people.
- Global policy discussions, including at the Global Climate Summit, need to promote an approach that prioritizes the most at-risk and the most vulnerable.



Investment

- Donors need to ensure systems and financing conditions are designed so that funds can and do reach most vulnerable and at-risk countries and communities;
- Donors and governments need to scale up support for climate smart DRR programming that prioritizes these most vulnerable communities and individuals.



What we pledge to do:

- Community-based and community-led solutions focused on the most vulnerable people are at the forefront of RCRC action. National RCRC Societies commit to undertake assessments of community-level risk and vulnerability where we work and to scale up and replicate support to local, community-based climate-smart DRR measures that build community resilience and reduce the impact of future disasters.



2 ENSURE GLOBAL COMMITMENTS TRANSLATE INTO LOCAL ACTION AND IMPACT



A better programmatic approach

- We need to work with, and through, local organisations and communities and support the institutional capacities of local actors, including local government authorities, CSOs and branches of National RCRC Societies, which have direct reach to communities.
- Much DRR and CCA programming is still based on a project-based model. We need to focus more on accompanying, enabling and connecting communities as they grapple with complex challenges. Individuals and communities must be supported to understand their own risks, to take action and participate in official decision-making processes.



Effective policy and regulatory frameworks

- Local-level policies and investment in CCA and DRR are necessary to reach local communities and strengthen local systems. Laws, policies and plans should enable local action and call for community participation in decision-making forums.
- Local and national organizations, including National RCRC Societies (who have a key role as auxiliary to their government) are key partners for resilience strengthening. They should be invited to participate in programming and decision-making, including in the development and implementation of NAPs and national and local DRR strategies.
- Global policy discussions, including the Global Climate Summit need to recognize the value of local level actors and action.



Investment

- In order for CCA and DRR investments to reach the local level, a greater proportion of international and domestic funds needs to be allocated to sub-national and local-level efforts to enhance resilience. This will allow local authorities and communities to implement locally-appropriate solutions, ultimately making best use of available resources.



What we pledge to do:

- We intend to scale up our work with authorities to promote national investments, law and policies that consider local needs and provide an enabling environment to build resilience. We aim to accompany those most at-risk to disaster and climate change and ensure locally-owned actions are informed by global best practice.
- Partners can join us in these efforts and become part of the 1 Billion Coalition for Resilience - an alliance that IFRC is building with partners across the world to help build the culture of engagement for resilience-building activities. We offer our network of local branches and community-based volunteers as a platform to engage with local communities to develop locally-led climate smart DRR strategies



3 STRENGTHEN EARLY WARNING TO ENABLE EARLY ACTION BY AT-RISK COMMUNITIES



A better programmatic approach

- All stakeholders need to work together to scale up systems for early warning/early action and preparedness for response, particularly to ensure at-risk communities are equipped to take action ahead of impact.
- Governments need to ensure that 'actionable' early warning information reaches communities, with national hydro-meteorological services ensuring availability of forecasting-information to support decision-making.
- National and local governments and communities need to develop forecast-based early action plans (with agreed thresholds for action and clear roles and responsibilities) and financing mechanisms that are embedded within disaster risk reduction strategies.
- All actors should improve support to at-risk communities to take early action before a disaster strikes based on these weather and climate forecasts.



Effective policy and regulatory frameworks

- Decision-makers should develop laws/ policies regarding early warning systems, stipulating roles and responsibilities and establishing coordination mechanisms for all actors involved and defining standards applicable for the collection of risk information.
- Disaster and climate laws/policies should expressly adopt 'early warning early action' as guiding principle of the DRM system, and forecast-based action (FbA) mechanisms should be developed to implement this principle, including budget allocations for FbA.
- Global policy discussions, including at the Global Climate Summit, need to focus on scaling up early warning and early action at the community level.



Investment

- The amount invested in hydro-meteorological infrastructure and technology for early warning systems (estimated currently at a few USD billion each year) should be matched by equal investment in ensuring that early warning systems reach, serve and enable action by communities at risk (for example, connecting to community EWS, consultation and training with communities, developing early action plans, outreach to hard-to-access communities). Donors and governments should increase investment in early warning systems that serve the most at-risk communities, in particular the most poor, marginalized and vulnerable.
- Donors need to increase flexible investments for climate-smart DRR, in particular through greater funding to local actors.
- Governments and donors need to increase investment in risk financing, such as forecast-based financing, participatory scenario planning and other good solutions, including expressly promoting local early warning and early action through investments in "no regret" early actions. Governments and donors need to institutionalize forecast-based action and financing at all levels



What we pledge to do:

- National RCRC Societies have developed specific expertise in community-based early warning early action and been leaders in the field of forecast-based action. We intend to enhance our EWEA work together with communities and governments, including through strengthened partnerships with national hydro-meteorological services and national disaster management agencies. We are committed to continue to operationalize and advocate for innovative approaches, such as Forecast-based Action and Financing, and its institutionalisation into laws, policies and plans



4

ADOPT AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION



A better programmatic approach

- Climate change/ environmental institutions need to work together with disaster risk management and humanitarian institutions at local, national, regional and global levels to effectively address rising climate and disaster risks.
- Local and national governments and other development/humanitarian actors need to ensure that risk reduction and preparedness measures take into account the latest climate science. Development projects need to be risk-informed, considering and addressing risks associated with disasters and climate change.



Effective policy and regulatory frameworks

- Governments need to ensure an integrated holistic approach to development, CCA and DRR in laws, policies and plans.
- Clear links should be made from the GPDRR to support ambitious commitments to “climate-smart DRR” and “risk informed climate change adaptation” at the Global Climate Summit in September this year.



Investment

- Donors also need to adopt a holistic approach to DRR, CCA and development support.



What we pledge to do:

- Of 2018, 72% of our DRR programmes considered climate risks, 23% of which took active measures to adapt to climate changes and we intend to increase the portion of RCRC DRR programmes that are climate-smart. As IFRC is scaling up support to development of national regulatory frameworks for climate-smart DRR that meets the needs of the most vulnerable and engages local communities.