

PARTNERS FOR RESILIENCE

KEY MESSAGES

6th Session of the Africa Regional Platform and 5th High-Level Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction Mauritius, 22-25 November 2016

Context | Africa is reeling from the impacts of the strongest el Niño ever recorded and which resulted in a severe drought and floods across the continent. More than 35 million people are estimated to have been impacted by 2015/2016 el Niño. In previous years, Africa had faced equally severe droughts/floods and while still trying to fully recover, vulnerabilities were compounded with increased food insecurity, disruption of livelihoods and education for children, destruction of infrastructure, increased health risks (diarrhea and malnutrition), insecurity because of conflict over diminishing resources, and rural to urban migration spurred by desperation in rural economies.

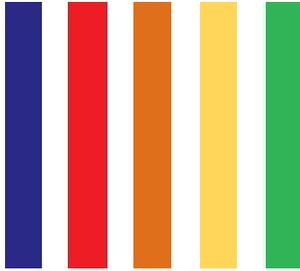
Droughts and floods, water scarcity, sand storms and environmental degradation are not the only challenges Africa faces. Next to these impacts of Climate Change and environmental degradation, are mal-development projects, rapid and unplanned urbanization which converge to increase risks and make people more vulnerable for disasters.

But, it's not all gloom and doom because **Africa is also experiencing positive development trajectories** with good examples of some initiatives that are socially and environmentally responsible. Improving infrastructure and increasing investments in all social sectors creates jobs and improves livelihoods, particularly if these are risk-proof. African governments are also signatories to key international policy frameworks and agreements on sustainable development (SDGs), climate change (UNFCCC), urbanization (New Urban Agenda) and disaster risk reduction (Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction). **Building community resilience is paramount for Africa to continue its economic development ambitions and consolidate its development gains.**

Who are we? | Partners for Resilience (PfR) is a large group of civil society organisations, from the humanitarian, development and environmental field, who have been working for several years on Integrated Risk Management (IRM) to **build community resilience**. The Partners for Resilience is comprised of five Netherlands-based organisations: the Netherlands Red Cross, Cordaid, CARE Netherlands, the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, and Wetlands International and some 50-plus local partners worldwide.

In the African context, the PfR network of civil society organisations works in Mali, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan. PfR considers situations where risks stretch across national boundaries and supports governments and other stakeholders to find appropriate solutions.





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The Partners for Resilience (PfR) plays a crucial role to partner with communities, governments, civil society organisations, academia, public and private finance sector to build and strengthen community resilience. At this important Africa High Level Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction, and in the context of climate change, ecosystem management and the need for strengthened community resilience, the PfR urges for the following considerations in the Outcomes of the Conference:

- **People and communities at risk of disasters should be partners and remain central** in policy and programme design & implementation by applying core principles on integrated risk management (IRM)- locally driven risk assessments across geographic and time scales, inter-sectorial and multi-stakeholder programmes, climate change and ecosystem considerations, and a gender-conscious. **Investments in DRR must be strengthened at local level and ensure local structures link to sub-national and national mechanisms.** The IRM approach also ensures a coherence across the key international policy frameworks/agreements;
- Because of increased frequency of droughts/floods, **all stakeholders should support African Governments to fast-track** the operationalization of the Drought Resilient and Prepared Africa Strategy endorsed at the 2016 Namibia African Drought Conference, to develop Country Specific Drought Resilience Programmes and commit resources for drought/management, all of which link to SendaiFDRR, SDGs, UNFCCC and New Urban Agenda;
- African Governments, through the leadership of the African Union should be supported by all stakeholders, to **commit to a systematic way to review progress attained in various African agreements** and commitments made on risk reduction initiatives to avoid re-inventing the wheel. For example, the 2016 Namibia Declaration; 2016 AU-EU Ministerial Conference in Netherlands; 2015 Yaoundé Declaration; 2013 High Level Meeting on National Drought Policy; 2011 Ending Drought Emergencies, all of which are anchored and/or link to Sendai FDRR. This requires the cooperation and collaboration of all stakeholders. There are national initiatives already on-going to track resilience initiatives, thus at continental level, policy discussions must recognise these efforts in 'new' commitments;
- Acknowledgement of the key role of Sahelian floodplains and Sub-Saharan river basins and wetlands systems to regulate water flows and therefore prevent droughts and floods. **Investments in these natural systems is an effective climate adaptation strategy and support of resilient livelihoods of local communities.**



More info at www.partnersforresilience.nl
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