



# **Common African Position to the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction**

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**Delivered by H.E. Josefa Leonel Correa Sacko,  
Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture,  
African Union Commission**

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## 1. Preamble

Africa has recorded encouraging economic growth over the past decade and has become a home to seven of the fastest growing economies in the world. Despite an impressive economic growth, the continent continues to suffer from recurrent disasters that affect millions of people and have long term social and environmental impacts. Millions of people are currently facing severe droughts in eastern and southern Africa alone, while people and livestock are regularly affected by different hydro-meteorological disasters often resulting in mortality and economic losses and causing humanitarian challenges.

In recognition of the importance of disaster risk reduction in preventing disasters and mitigating their impact, Africa adopted a regional strategy on disaster risk reduction in 2004 and an associated Programme of Action for its implementation. The strategy, implemented in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action led to substantial achievements, including through the development of national and regional policy and coordination mechanisms. It also helped strengthen preparedness measures and promoted an overall consolidation of a culture of safety, sustainability and resilience.

With a view to sustaining the momentum, in January 2015 (before the Sendai Framework was agreed), the African Union Heads of State and Governments adopted a decision requesting the review of the Programme of Action in line with the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. This is a clear demonstration of Africa's continued commitment to disaster risk reduction and a recognition of its contribution to the realization of 'Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want', a strategic framework for the socio-economic transformation of the continent over the next 50 years.

## 2. Major DRR efforts to implement the Sendai Framework in Africa

The adoption of the 'Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030' marks the beginning of a new paradigm in the implementation of disaster risk reduction, shifting our focus from reducing 'disasters losses' to preventing 'disaster risk' through 'risk-informed development'. That the Sendai Framework makes a special mention of Africa in context of international cooperation and partnerships is evidence of the significance given to the extensive hazards and contextual vulnerabilities that the continent faces.

Africa was among the first regions to adopt a position on the post-2015 framework on disaster risk reduction in 2014. Further, within a month of the endorsement of the Sendai Framework by the UN General Assembly, the 7th Meeting of the Africa Working Group Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction [Extended] and Fourth High Level Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction met in Yaoundé, Cameroon, to develop a roadmap for the implementation of the Sendai Framework in Africa.

This led to a series of consultations, led by the Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction, culminating in the Sixth Africa Regional Platform and Fifth High Level Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction hosted by the Government of Mauritius in November 2016, with support from the African Union Commission, the Secretariat of the Southern African Development Community and UNISDR.

The Mauritius Declaration and the Programme of Action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework in Africa, adopted at this meeting, were endorsed by the African Union Summit, and will serve as the key instruments for strengthening disaster risk reduction in Africa.

Investment in disaster risk reduction is gradually increasing and remarkable progress has been made in implementing disaster risk reduction on the continent through effective coordination and partnership. We hope to see these figures continue to grow in coming years as a demonstration of our commitment to community-driven resilience building. With support from the European Union, as part of cooperation with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, the African Union Commission, Regional Economic Communities, African Development Bank, UNISDR, World Bank and Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery have been jointly implementing a major disaster risk reduction programme to build resilience of African regions, countries and communities to disasters.

### **3. Baseline situation related to the Sendai Framework's global targets**

One of the key features of the Africa Programme of Action is a comprehensive matrix with strategic areas of intervention, priority activities with timeframes, intended outputs and responsible organisations for implementation and coordination at the continental, regional, national and sub-national/local levels for each of the four priorities for action. These unpack the Sendai Framework and its priorities for action as they relate to Africa. To measure the progress of implementation of the Programme of Action, five targets have been adopted in addition to the seven targets of the Sendai Framework. These include integration of disaster risk reduction into curricula and into development and climate change mechanisms, enhancing domestic financing for disaster risk reduction, developing risk-informed preparedness plans, and, response, and post-disaster recovery and reconstruction mechanisms, and strengthening regional networks or partnerships for knowledge management and capacity development. These additional targets are also expected to work as indicative national targets for African Member States and Regional Economic Communities.

These targets will be monitored in line with the Sendai Framework Monitor based on the outcomes of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Indicators and Terminology relating to disaster risk reduction, as endorsed by the UN General Assembly, and work is currently underway by the African Union Commission to this effect.

We recognise that African Member States are at different levels and capacities in disaster risk management, especially in terms of data availability as it was illustrated at the recently concluded Data Readiness Review wherein several African countries participated. Despite the limitations and challenges we are facing and will continue to face in monitoring the Sendai Framework and the Africa Programme of Action, we remain committed to ensure that necessary data are generated with appropriate levels of disaggregation.

#### **4. Commitments to implement the Programme of Action**

Africa is committed to implement the Sendai Framework, including through the Africa Programme of Action. To achieve the intended objectives, we will:

- i. Facilitate the alignment, implementation, monitoring and review of the Africa Programme of Action across the continent in line with the Sendai Framework.
- ii. Promote the development and implementation of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework.
- iii. Strengthen and institutionalise partnerships with civil society, youth, women, local actors, private sector, academia, United Nations and International Organisations for coherent and coordinated support in the implementation of the Programme of Action.
- iv. Leverage awareness and advocacy to increase political commitment to mark the transition from reactive crises management to proactive risk management, including through developing implementation capacity on the continent and strengthening community-centred multi-hazard early warning and response system.
- v. Facilitate the transition from risk information and awareness to risk knowledge and evidence-based policy making including through the systematization of disaster loss accounting, risk profiling and modelling, and trans-boundary risk monitoring.
- vi. Increase domestic resource allocation for disaster risk reduction and investments in climate services, while ensuring institutionalisation and integration of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into development sectors vertically and horizontally.
- vii. Integrate disaster risk reduction concepts and practices in educational curricula from primary to tertiary levels.

We remain committed to the implementation of the Sendai Framework, together with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement on climate change, in Africa, in pursuit of the goals of the Agenda 2063. We call for technical and financial cooperation from the international community for an effective disaster risk reduction in line with the Sendai Framework and the Africa Programme of Action.