**Indian Council
of World Affairs**

DISCUSSION PAPER

DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT
TRENDS AMONG REGIONAL GROUPINGS AND IN IORA

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DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT
TRENDS AMONG REGIONAL GROUPINGS AND IN IORA

▌ SUMMARY

Disaster Risk Management (DRM) is an important issue in international relations, national and international policy planning, and practice. The study of DRM has proliferated in government institutions and businesses and States have developed DRM toolkits albeit at different levels of sophistication based on national capacities and understandings. The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) acknowledges that the "Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is the "World's Hazard Belt" and is prone to disasters, both natural and man-made. The IORA has recognised DRM as one of its six Priority Areas. The Jakarta Concord, signed by the IORA Member States identifies the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, an international policy framework, as the guiding document for IORA to pursue Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in the region. IORA Member States must develop DRM toolkits based on national capacities and understandings.

▌ KEY ISSUES

🌀 Several Regional Groupings and Member States have formulated DRM policies in accordance with Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030;

🌀 Making DRM dialogue and cooperation a high priority for the IORA;

🌀 Frequency and intensity of disaster events have increased in the Indian Ocean necessitating advanced understanding and practice of DRM among IORA Member States

Disaster Risk Management (DRM) is an important issue in international relations, national and international policy planning, and practice. It has figured prominently in the United Nations, is part of the dialogue within regional groupings, has found reference in development discourses, business processes, trade, infrastructure, supply chains, etc. There is ample evidence of the primacy of humans as the recipients of relief, and building resilient infrastructures is considered critical.

The discourse on DRM now has a sophisticated glossary and numerous terms associated with this discipline of study, knowledge and practice are clearly defined.[1] These vocabularies appear in global, regional, sub-regional, and national frameworks, and by far, have similar meanings which allow for convergences on DRM issues among regional groupings, States and non-government organisations.

The study of DRM has proliferated in government institutions and businesses, and is an important discipline of study at the school level. Several related programmes have mushroomed across the globe through physical classroom teaching, and online courses are designed for capacity building and competency development in DRM practice. DRM studies are now 'a must' in the career and curriculum development of legislative and development officials, civil-defence practitioners and volunteers at the State, provinces, city, and municipalities' levels for planning, engineering, and management. These help build robust framework for DRM, which is critical for

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1 For instance, Disaster Risk Assessment; Disaster Risk Reduction; Disaster Prevention; Preparedness and Mitigation; Disaster Response; Disaster Recovery; Facilitators and Enablers; Institutional Capacity; Coordination; etc.

national and local efforts in the delivery of rescue, relief, recovery, restoration, reconstruction and rehabilitation.

At the global level, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) 2015-2030,[2] is a "concise, focused, forward-looking and action-oriented post 2015 framework for disaster risk reduction" and helps to "identify modalities of cooperation based on commitments to implement a post 2015 framework for disaster risk reduction."[3] The Framework was adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, on March 18, 2015. It is a successor of and builds upon the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters. The SDFRR calls for focused action within and across sectors

Understanding Disaster Risk;

Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk;

Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience;

Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction
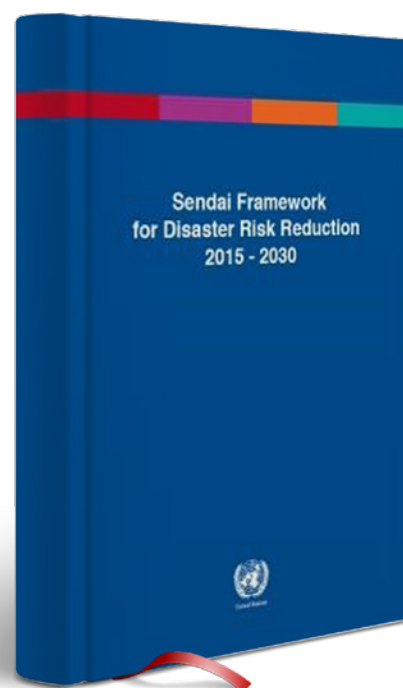
by States at local, national, regional and global levels in four priority areas.[4]

Although the SFDRR offers States an opportunity to "enhance their capacities to deal with disaster risk at all scales and across all sectors" as also "places the primary responsibility of reducing disaster risk on the member states" but it is a "non-legally binding framework". The Framework should be seen as an attempt to "underscore the importance of broad-based collaboration among governments, with the private sector and other stakeholders, reaching beyond the traditional DRR community".[5]

At another level, there are several convergences between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SFDRR. The 2030 Agenda "recognises

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2   The DRR Framework was adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held from 14 to 18 March 2015 in Sendai, Miyagi, Japan,

3   "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030", https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/frameworks/sendaiframework (accessed 07 September 2020).

4   Ibid.

5   Implementing the Sendai Framework in Africa: Progress against the Targets (2015–2018)", https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13753-020-00266-x (accessed 07 September 2020).

and reaffirms the urgent need to reduce the risk of disasters" and sees "specific opportunities to achieve SDGs through reducing disaster risk" based on (SFDRR) 2015–2030.[6] Importantly, several SDGs and targets are closely connected with DRM[7] and can contribute to "reducing disaster risk and building resilience, even where disaster risk reduction is not explicit."[8]

DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT IN ASEAN

The ASEAN has a rich institutional history of developing mechanisms for collectively managing disasters. The ASEAN Experts Group on Disaster Management was set up in 1971 to encourage Member States to cooperate and decrease the adverse consequences of disasters.[9] This was followed by the signing of the Declaration on Mutual Assistance on Natural Disasters by ASEAN Member States in 1976 under which Member States were committed to provide assistance based on their capabilities. The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and the 2008 and Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar were actual natural disaster events for the ASEAN to display and prove its capacity, skills and response in disaster management.

At another level, in 2004, the ASEAN and the UN announced the Joint Strategic Plans of Action on Disaster Management and it

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6   Disaster risk reduction", https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/disasterriskreduction (accessed 07 September 2020)

7   For instance, Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all); Goal 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation); and Goal 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable).

8   "Disaster risk reduction", https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/disasterriskreduction (accessed 07 September 2020).

9 "The Implementation of a Disaster Management Agreement in ASEAN: Towards Regional Preparedness?", https://reliefweb.int/report/ myanmar/implementation-disaster-management-agreement-asean-towards-regional-preparedness#:~:text=Introduction-,The%20 ASEAN%20Agreement%20on%20Disaster%20Management%20and%20Emergency%20Response%20(AADMER,Group%20on%20 Disaster%20Management%20first (accessed 06 September 2020).

was symbolic of a strong and systematic cooperation between the two organisations.[10] It also announced the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2010-2015 which was successfully put to the test during the 2013 Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) which devastated parts of Central Philippines.[11] In 2016, ASEAN adopted the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and the new AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020 was developed as a successor to the initial WP of 2010-2015.[12]

The AADMER entered into force on 24 December 2009. It is "the first and only legally-binding and comprehensive regional agreement on disaster management in the world, along with the establishment of ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) that followed, and the experience of the region in dealing with some of the greatest disaster events that ever occurred in the world's history, have made several regional counterparts from other regions of the world come to ASEAN to learn from it."[13]

At the heart of the AADMER is cooperation among the Member States and it mandates robust national DRM systems with specific 'laws and policies' in Member States
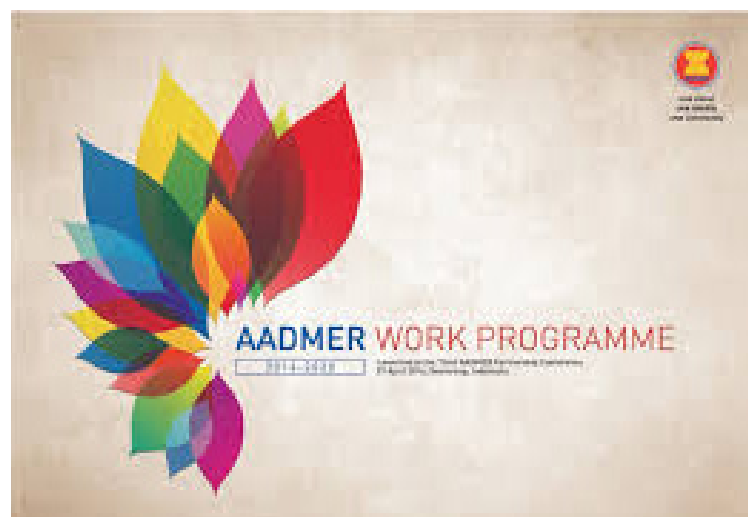
administrative systems. The AADMER also underscores that ASEAN Member States control disaster response in their own territories. The AADMER also covers Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

The "ASEAN Disaster Law Mapping Implementing AADMER: ASEAN Country Profiles"[14] prepared by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) offers some interesting insights into the existing national / domestic DRM system of national laws, regulations and decrees, and DRM system guidelines, policies and plans for national disaster preparedness and response. These national systems are the building blocks for regional coordination.

Over all, the AADMER is an inclusive regional disaster management framework and fits well into the 'ASEAN way', of "strict

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10 "ASEAN-UN Joint Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management 2016 – 2020", https://asean.org/storage/2017/12/ASEAN-UN-JSPADM-2016-2020_final.pdf (accessed 07 September 2020).

11 Ibid

12 Ibid

13 "AADMER WORK PROGRAMME 2016-2020", p.59, https://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/AADMER-Work-Programme-2016-2020-v1.6.pdf (accessed 05 September 2020).

14 "ASEAN Disaster Law Mapping Implementing AADMER: ASEAN Country Profiles", https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/AADMER%20Implementation%20Country%20Profiles%20FINALpdf.pdf (accessed 05 September 2020).

adherence to national sovereignty and non-intervention"[15]. The Agreement however "does not set exact targets to be fulfilled nor is it equipped with an enforcement mechanism to be activated in the case of non-compliance" but this "weakness is partly mitigated by the AADMER work program's relatively clear formulation of activities for member states in the different areas of the program, which can be monitored by the secretariat."[16]

▌ EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union (EU) does not have a "specific treaty" among its Member States dealing with disaster management.
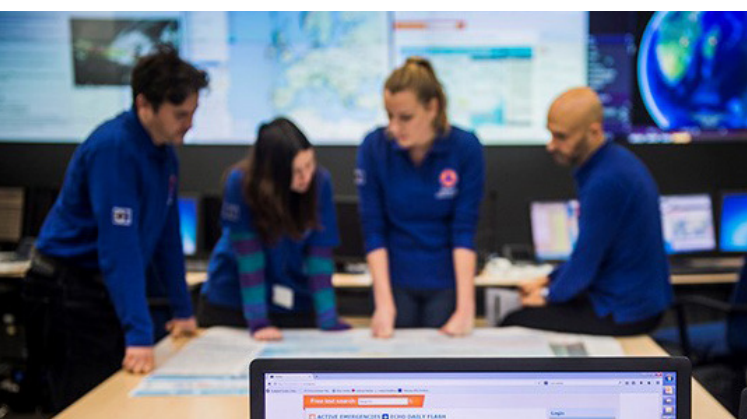
However, the 1980 Lisbon Treaty does "spells out EU's role in the area of common foreign and security policy" under which it "introduces a solidarity clause (of a voluntary nature) when a Member State is the victim of a terrorist attack or a natural or man-made disaster".[17]

The EU has an agreed framework which fosters a culture of protection, prevention and resilience against disasters and takes a "cross-sectoral overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the Union may face" which is based on the "national assessments of the main risks of natural and man-made disasters across the EU 28 Member States and the six non-EU countries participating in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)".

The objective of the UCPM is "fostering the mobilisation of assistance in event of disasters and improving preparedness at national level in collaboration with Community institutions". Furthermore, European Emergency Response Capacity is a 'voluntary pool of pre-committed response capacities of the Member States'. The Emergency Response Coordination Centre, based at the Commission's headquarters, ensures permanent monitoring and immediate reaction, and through the MIC collects, analyses and disseminates real-time information on disasters. In essence the UCPM is a demonstration of solidarity among both the Member States and non-EU Member States and any assistance can be requested by any affected country, as well as by international organisations through the Mechanism.

The EU supports the SFDRR and its seven targets, but is most active in

15 "Something old, something new: Disaster risk reduction in international law", http://www.qil-qdi.org/something-old-something-new-disaster-risk-reduction-international-law/ (accessed 07 September 2020).

16 Ibid

17 "Your Guide to Lisbon Treaty", https://europa.rs/images/publikacije/20-Your_Guide_To_The_Lisbon_Treaty.pdf (accessed 07 September 2020).

"civil protection, and national disaster risk management systems are being strengthened to prevent, prepare for and respond to disasters". Furthermore, the EU works with "developing countries to help societies and vulnerable communities develop resilience to crises and shocks" and "disaster risk reduction through the Sustainable Finance Action Plan".[18]

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REGION

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) States have taken major steps in the area of DRM. The Latin American Parliament (Parlatino) has recommended adoption of a protocol for DRM that "promotes building organizational resilience and the incorporation of a DRR approach in the design of public policies during the planning process for development and implementation of emergency response programmes."[19] The 35 Member States grouping adopted the 'Asunción Declaration: Guidelines towards a Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015-2030' which identifies "priority guidelines to be taken into account in developing the action plan and advancing implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas"[20]
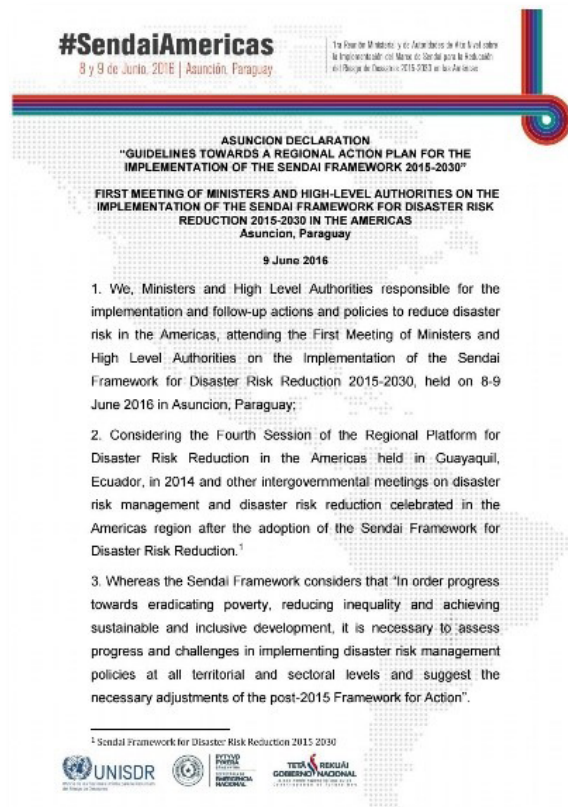
The Asunción Declaration has promulgated "Guidelines towards a Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas 2015-2030". The declaration lays out guidelines for specialist intergovernmental bodies in the region and encourages them to "align their policies, frameworks, strategies, plans and programmes with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030[21] in support of their member countries." The Guidelines also call for a "Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in

18 "EU support to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) and its seven targets", https://ec.europa.eu/echo/gpdrr_en (accessed 07 September 2020).

19   "Disaster Risk Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean: A guide for strengthening public-private partnerships", p.9., http://www.sela.org/media/3219729/la-rrd-en-disaster-risk-reduction-in-lac.pdf (accessed 10 September 2020).

20   "LAC Countries Adopt Guidelines for Regional DRR Action Plan", http://sdg.iisd.org/news/lac-countries-adopt-guidelines-for-regional-drr-action-plan/ (accessed 07 September 2020).

21   Asuncion Declaration "Guidelines Towards a Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015-2030" https://www.preventionweb.net/files/49235_asunciondeclaration2016.pdf (accessed 14 September 2020).

the Americas 2015-2030". The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) is planning to develop a regional action plan on the basis of the progress attained within the framework of the Mechanisms for International Humanitarian Assistance (MIAH).[22]

AFRICAN UNION

Disaster Risk Reduction has been on the agenda of the Africa Union (AU) for nearly two decades and in 2004 it announced the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction including a Programme of Action for its implementation.[23] The AU Member States (55 countries) have signed the Tunis Declaration on Accelerating the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.[24] The Declaration has also "identified five additional targets that are needed for African states to realize the ideals of the SFDRR".[25]

A Plan of Action (PoA) for the implementation of the SFDRR was also adopted. It has a 5-year programme which identifies specific activities that are "prioritized based on continental, regional, national and sub-national/local

strategic needs" through the consultation processes of the Africa Working Group on DRR (AWG). Significantly, the PoA also applies to the "AUC and other relevant organs of the African Union, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and national ministries, agencies and departments responsible for DRM, as well as their sub-national/local structures". Furthermore, the overall responsibility for the implementation for the PoA rests with Member States and "non-State stakeholders play a key role as enablers in providing support to States".[26]

ARAB STRATEGY FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2030 (ASDRR)

In 2009, the Arab States region and the League of Arab States (LAS) through its Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) called for an Arab Strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction (ASDRR) which outlined the "strategic vision and priorities, and core areas of implementation to reduce the risk of disasters and enhance institutional and coordination arrangements to support implementation at the regional, national

22 "Disaster Risk Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean: SP/VRRASPPRRD-ALC/Di N° 2-16 A guide for strengthening public-private partnerships", http://www.sela.org/media/3219729/la-rrd-en-disaster-risk-reduction-in-lac.pdf (accessed 07 September 2020).

23 "Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction", https://www.unisdr.org/files/13093_AFRICAREGIONALDRRSTRATEGYfullPDF.pdf (accessed 10 September 2020).

24   "Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa", https://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/policies/v.php?id=51164 (accessed 10 September 2020).

25   "Implementing the Sendai Framework in Africa: Progress against the Targets (2015–2018)", https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13753-020-00266-x (accessed 07 September 2020).

26 "Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa", https://www.preventionweb.net/files/49455_poaforsendaiimplementationinafrica.pdf (accessed 10 September 2020).

and local level."[27] The grouping also organised Arab Conference on DRR in 2013, 2014 and 2017.

In 2015, the grouping joined in adopting the SFDRR and the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (ASDRR) 2030 was agreed in 2018 by the Arab states which also adopted the Arab Coordination Mechanism for Disaster Risk Reduction (ACMDRR). It has identified three phases for the implementation of the Arab Strategy[28] and the countries in the Arab State region have so far progressed well at regional, national and local levels.

At the structural level, most countries in the Arab region have "identified a focal point for disaster risk reduction and designated as the official national coordinator for Sendai Framework Monitoring".[29] Furthermore, 'Words-into-Action' guideline on National focal points, national platforms and local platforms for disaster risk reduction, and Technical guidance for monitoring and reporting on progress in achieving the global targets of the SFDRR have issued.[30]

ASIA-PACIFIC FORUM ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION (APEC)

The APEC acknowledges the "high vulnerability and exposure of the region to disasters due mainly to its geographic situation" and its past declarations and statements, have expressed their commitment to address natural disasters.[31] Significantly, the APEC has made note of the SFDRR and called for an action plan to operationalise the APEC DRR Framework which aims for disaster-resilient Asia-Pacific economies.

The APEC acknowledges the need for "multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral and strategic interventions" to ensure that the regional economies are more resilient. The APEC Action Plan for the DRR Framework is based on its current work and other relevant international arrangements and the APEC Emergency Preparedness Working Group is the designated agency to coordinate the development of the Action Plan.[32]

27 "Prioritized Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2030 to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030", https://www.preventionweb.net/files/57759_draftarabplanofpriortyaction2018202.pdf (accessed 10 September 2020).

28 "Prioritized Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2030 to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030", https://www.preventionweb.net/files/57759_draftarabplanofpriortyaction2018202.pdf (accessed 07 September 2020).

29 Ibid

30 Ibid

31 "Annex A - APEC Disaster Risk Reduction Framework", https://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Annual-Ministerial-Meetings/2015/2015_amm/annexa (accessed 06 September 2020).

32 APEC Disaster Risk Framework and Action Plan Presentation", https://www.apec-epwg.org/media/2395/d9a2f92fff4f81400a9a416a1e71ac91.pdf (accessed 14 September 2020).

GENERAL TRENDS IN DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

The above mapping of DRM trends among regional groupings and multilateral organisations offers some interesting insights. These are listed below.

- DRM is high on the agenda of international community and resonates across international organisations, regional and sub-regional groupings.

- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2020) is acknowledged by regional groupings and States alike, and serves as an important benchmark for DRM.

- DRM figures prominently in the development discourses led by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which "recognizes and reaffirms the urgent need to reduce the risk of disasters" and sees "specific opportunities to achieve SDGs through reducing disaster risk.

- DRM has penetrated deep into every facet of human activity and disaster risk toolkits have been designed and promulgated by States and regional groupings, which offer practical guidance on how to choose which disaster risk instruments are most suitable for which circumstance.

- DRM has nurtured multilateral cooperation among States notwithstanding different political and ideological leanings.

- States have developed DRM toolkits albeit at different levels of sophistication based on national capacities and understandings.

- It is acknowledged that a socially committed private sector and an active civil society are the backbone of DRM.

SUMMARY OF DRM PRACTICES AMONG SELECT GROUPINGS

The table below provides a quick summary of DRM Practices among the above groupings.

Grouping	ASEAN	EU	LAC	AU	ASDRR	APEC
Agreed Framework	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Legally binding Framework	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Dialogue Architecture (Standing vs Ad hoc)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guidelines	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Action Plans	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Prevention and Mitigation
Preparedness
Response and Rehabilitation
Build Back Better

DRM AND INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) acknowledges that the "Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is the "World's Hazard Belt" and is prone to disasters, both natural and man-made. Natural disasters under the group of Climatological (cyclones and droughts), Geological and Tectonic (earthquakes and tsunamis) and Hydrological (floods and tidal surges) origins are very common and recurring phenomena in the region. Invasion by desert-locusts in few IORA Member States (Kenya, Tanzania, Iran, Yemen, and India) in recent times can be added to the list of natural disasters which calls for international cooperation.

The IORA has identified DRM as one of its six Priority Areas. Its focus is on the "development of knowledge and capacities by governments, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to and recover from hazards and emergency situations" and covers "preparation, mitigation and recovery". Furthermore, the IORA notes that "governments around the

world have committed to take action along the guidelines of the Sendai Framework to reduce vulnerabilities to natural hazards, and IORA is greatly influenced by the same".[33]

In particular, para 16 (d) of the 2017 Jakarta Concord,[34] calls for strengthening the "regional disaster preparedness, community resilience, and disaste risk management" in accordance with the SFDRR and "enhancing cooperation with stakeholders in addressing issues related to disaster and climate change through capacity building including sharing of information, experiences and best practices to improve community resilience to minimize disruption of economic activities". Despite the criticality of DRM for the Indian Ocean region and it being a Priority Area in its own right, it has "not received the attention it requires"; only six meetings on this issue were held between 2005 and 2015.[35]

In February 2019, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) organised the "Meeting of IORA Cluster Group on Disaster Risk Management". Among the many issues that came up during deliberations, the IORA Action Plan (2017-2021) was identified as the "guiding framework for the drafting of the DRM Work Plan" and participants were

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33 "Disaster Risk Management", https://www.iora.int/en/priorities-focus-areas/disaster-risk-management (accessed 07 September 2020).

34 "Jakarta Concord: The Indian Ocean Rim Association: Promoting Regional Cooperation for a Peaceful, Stable and Prosperous Indian Ocean", https://www.iora.int/media/23875/jakarta-concord-7-march-2017.pdf (accessed 07 September 2020).

35 "Draft Report Meeting of IORA Cluster Group on Disaster Risk Management", 5 – 6 February 2019, New Delhi, India.

encouraged to give "clarity to the objectives pertaining to the future of DRM within IORA".[36]

In a noteworthy development, on 23 September 2019, Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, announced the global Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) at the UN Climate Action Summit 2019 held in New York City. The CDRI is an inclusive multi-stakeholder global partnership of national governments, UN agencies and others which addresses the challenges of building resilience into infrastructure systems and development associated with it.

The table provides a quick summary of DRM Practice in the IORA.

GROUPING	IORA
Agreed Framework	Yes
Legally binding Framework	No
Dialogue Architecture (Standing)	No
Guidelines	No
Action Plans	No

Finally, the IORA littorals are replete with disaster events and their symptomatic effects are visible in the coastal areas and as far into the heartland. In recent times, natural catastrophic events such as cyclones, storms, earthquakes, and floods have impacted the IORA Member States. In some cases, there has been unprecedented increase in frequency and intensity which necessitates an advanced understanding and practice of DRM among Member States. This necessitates urgency in building regional, national and local capacities and in times of crisis, provide assistance to the affected State in accordance with the mandate of the IORA Charter.

36 Ibid.

■ ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

It is important to develop a standing regional architecture for DRM within IORA for dialogue and seamless cooperation. Emergency assistance has the potential to strengthen the very foundations of this grouping. IORA should strengthen cooperation in DRM through:

- Building upon 'capacity building including sharing of information, experiences and best practices' as agreed in the Jakarta Accord;

- A dedicated DRM dialogue mechanism should be set up within IORA;

- The IORA Cluster Group on DRM may be converted into a Standing Working Group to conduct dialogue and oversee cooperation;

- The Working Group may be tasked to draft DRM Work Plan that builds upon the Jakarta Concord and the IORA Action Plan (2017-2021) as agreed to by the IORA Cluster Group on DRM;

- An Emergency Response Centre may be set up within IORA to coordinate assistance at the time of disasters. This is particularly important for smaller island states who may require urgent assistance due to their limited capacities to respond to any disaster.

- The Emergency Response Centre could also serve as post-disaster recovery facility for assessment of damage and loss, recovery planning and implementation, and mitigation measures etc.

- IORA Members States could work towards sharing of best practices related to respective legal/ statutory frameworks on DRM

- In devising cooperation modalities in DRM, consideration be given to the requirements of African Member States of IORA with limited capacities to deal with disasters.

- IORA could consider cooperation and building synergies with the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and individual IORA Member States could consider joining the CDRI.

■ ADDITIONAL ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- A Compendium of existing national / domestic DRM structures, guidelines, policies and plans for national disaster preparedness and response of IORA Member States would be a useful document to enhance knowledge about DRM among IORA Member States. The Working Group can oversee the preparation of such a compendium which can form the basis for further cooperation.

- DRM is a cross cutting theme and its success necessitates an integrated approach involving participation by multiple stakeholders at relevant levels to bring added value. DRM should also be discussed in different existing dialogue frameworks of IORA.

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