

Report of the Secretary-General - Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014 – 2024

Inputs from the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

II. An overview of recent socio-economic development in landlocked developing countries including impact of COVID-19 pandemic and building back better. Using recent data the section analyses recent developments in the social and economic situation of the LLDCs including progress made by LLDCs on the SDGs. It will highlight the impact of COVID-19 pandemic and recovery efforts and suggest policy recommendations to enhance the implementation of the VPoA and achievement of the SDGs by the LLDCs. The report will also provide an analysis of the impact on gender and youth and identify recommendations.

Over the past 12 months, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the systemic nature of risk and the cascading impacts of disasters across economic, environmental, political, and social systems and borders. COVID-19 socioeconomic impacts have increased vulnerability and exposure to disasters and reduce coping capacity including to the impacts of climate change. The recovery and rehabilitation provide an opportunity for Governments to embed risk reduction and resilience building in investments and in policies across sectors and to build back better. The Secretary-General has called on all countries including the LLDCs to apply the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and its core provision to “build back better”, in COVID-19 recovery and rehabilitation. It is therefore critical to prevent the next pandemic and to promote innovative and equitable socioeconomic recovery and rehabilitation solutions that eradicate inequality and reduce current and future disaster risk. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to ensure health systems consider current, emerging, and future risks so that they can be resilient in the face of disasters, including pandemics and the impacts of climate change.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNDRR developed a series of COVID-19 issue briefs and webinars to support national and local Governments to adopt a risk-informed approach to recover and rehabilitation, provided technical support to several LLDCs to update DRR strategies to include biological hazards as part of multi-hazard approaches to prevention and risk reduction as put forward in the Sendai Framework. Four^[2] LLDCs in Sub-Saharan Africa now include biological hazards in their national disaster risk reduction strategies and seven^[3] have developed a risk-informed COVID-19 preparedness and response plan. The EU-funded Central Asia Initiative “Strengthening disaster resilience and accelerating implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in Central Asia, with the support of the Regional Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction (CESDRR) in collaboration with the UNDRR and the WHO, provided a platform for five Central Asian LLDCs^[4] to analyze best practices learnt from the ongoing COVID-19 response; reflect on what needs to be done to strengthen the capacities of governments and communities to tackle a second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic; as well as to better anticipate future pandemic risks, particularly by looking at the synergies and opportunities for collaboration between the health and disaster management sectors.

The private sector is important partner in DRR in the LLDCs and in neighbouring transit countries. To support the private sector in building resilience to economic impacts of the pandemic and reduce risk and build resilience to future shocks, a COVID-19 Small Business Continuity and

Recovery Planning Toolkit was developed by UNDRR in partnership with Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, ILO, UNDP, UNIDO IFRC and was disseminated in Lao PDR and Nepal, among other countries, through partners, private sector networks and businesses. Designed to help small businesses rapidly take measures that can protect their businesses from the disruptions of COVID-19 and to utilize all resources that might be available to them to remain solvent and operational and help protect livelihoods.

In addition, UNDRR Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism (UNDRR-SEM) has produced a global SMEs guidance report ‘Reducing Risk and Building Resilience of SMEs to Disasters’¹. This provides recommendations for national policy frameworks and international support that address the specific needs of SMEs, including providing access to finance and financial products tailored to SMEs’ and combining enterprise risk management and business continuity management mechanisms to better incorporate and increase the focus on prevention and addressing interdependencies and inequities across value and supply chains.

III. Status of implementation of the priorities of the Vienna Programme of Action. This section assesses the progress made in the implementation of the VPoA highlighting the major progress and challenges experienced. It will be prepared using inputs submitted by Member States, UN system organizations and other relevant international organizations and analysis of available relevant statistical data for each.

Irrespective of their robust commitment to disaster risk reduction (DRR), the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) continue to suffer disproportionately high losses in human and economic terms due to their high levels of vulnerability and disaster risk which significantly exceed their capacity to respond to and recover from disasters thus consequentially in being left behind in the implementation of the Sendai Framework, Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) and, subsequently, in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Data reported by LLDCs in 2020 to the Sendai Framework Monitor (SFM) ^[1] on the progress towards the seven global targets of the Sendai Framework reveals that in 2020, 66% of LLDCs reported having national disaster risk reduction strategies in place versus 59% in 2019.

The environmental, social, and economic impacts of sudden- and slow-onset disasters and the climate crisis on the economies of the LLDCs, underscore the urgency of a disaster risk-informed approach to poverty reduction, economic growth, and sustainable development. In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the VPoA, DRR must be at the core of policies and investments for structural economic transformation and resilient infrastructure in LLDCs. To this end, the Sendai Framework provides governments with a policy blueprint to reduce disaster risk and build resilient economies and societies. In the Political Declaration of the Midterm Review, Member States have already established synergies between the implementation of the VPoA and the Sendai Framework. The most pressing issue now is the urgent attention and support of international development partners to help the LLDCs to implement the DRR and resilience elements of the VPoA and its midterm review. In particular, international support is needed for

¹ <https://www.undrr.org/publication/resilience-smes>

LLDCs to collect, analyze and apply disaster risk data in policy and investment decisions, in terms of capacity building, technology transfer and increase financing for DRR.

IV. Follow-up and review. The section will highlight progress in the activities of the United Nations system and other international organizations relating to implementation of the priorities of the VPoA including on the key activities of the Roadmap for accelerated implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action in the remaining five years. It will also review actions made by all stakeholders aimed at promoting the integration, synergy and coherence in the implementation and monitoring of, and follow-up to, the Vienna Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda at the national, regional and international levels.

The UNDRR is already implementing activities included in the UN Roadmap for Accelerated Implementation of the VPoA in collaboration with UN partners. In 2020, UNDRR along with partners in the UN system has recently developed a guidance document on how to integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

LLDCs need to develop national DRR strategies, that are fully aligned with the Sendai Framework. In LLDCs, DRR strategies can facilitate a transboundary approach to ensure the resilience of transit, communications, and trade networks between LLDCs and neighbouring countries. The development, implementation, and financing of national disaster risk reduction strategies is a crucial first step in integrating DRR into policies and investments across all sectors. Throughout 2020, UNDRR has supported countries to develop national disaster risk reduction strategies towards the 2020 deadline set by Target E of the Sendai Framework. For example, In Nepal UNDRR provided technical assistance to the development of the new national disaster risk reduction strategy. In Afghanistan, UNDRR contributed to an analysis on the disaster risk governance mechanisms currently in place and their limitation to deal with multi-hazard compounding risks and disasters with significant long-term socio-economic cascading impacts. In Afghanistan, Lao PDR and Nepal, UNDRR provided technical advice to improve collection, management, analysis, and reporting of disaster loss data. With UNDRR's support, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Lao PDR, Mongolia, and Nepal have now have 'Disaster Risk Reduction Status Reports [5]' which provide a baseline snapshot of the country's progress under the four priorities of the Sendai Framework, along with key challenges and recommendations for strengthening DRR governance. Through its EU-funded programme, UNDRR supported Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to develop national DRR strategies and collect disaster risk and loss data to guide resilient and risk-informed future investments. At the local level where much greater attention is needed on DRR and risk-governance, 56 cities in African LLDCs^[7] participate in the Making Cities Resilient campaign.

UNDRR will continue to provide capacity support to national and local governments in LLDCs in implementation of the national and local DRR strategies, while enhancing coherence with climate change and development plans. For example, to help accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework in Lao PDR, efforts will be taken to support the implementation of the new National Strategy for DRR. UNDRR will also support the Government of Afghanistan in development of a new DRR Policy in response to a request received. Mongolia offers a good practice example as

one of a few countries that has successfully achieved the Target (e) of the Sendai Framework at the national and local levels. A comprehensive DRR strategy exists at the national level, while the national development plan fully reflects DRR priorities including dedicated budgetary allocation. All the local governments have developed resilience action plans aligned with the national DRR strategy and are taking iterative steps towards their implementation. This has been supported by appointing DRR focal points at local level as well as the national level.

^[1] <https://sendaimonitor.undrr.org/>

^[2] Burundi, Rwanda (policy document), South Sudan (draft) and Zambia.

^[3] Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Malawi, Mali, Niger, South Sudan.

^[4] Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan

^[5] <https://www.preventionweb.net/collections/asiapacific-profiles>

^[6] Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan

^[7] Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe.