



G20

SOUTH AFRICA 2025



Solidarity

Equality

Sustainability

Sherpa Track

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1. INTRODUCTION

The theme of South Africa's Group of Twenty (G20) Presidency is *Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability*. This will guide its Presidency of the G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group (DRR WG) as interconnected and essential elements to accelerate implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (Sendai Framework).

1.1 Solidarity

South Africa's Presidency will emphasise the importance of global solidarity in DRR, fostering international cooperation to ensure that the most vulnerable nations and communities can access the resources and support needed to build resilience. South Africa's Presidency will champion global solidarity in DRR financing to work towards collective approaches, understanding, and principles to increase financing for DRR efforts that benefit all.

1.2 Equality

Equity and equitable outcomes will be a central pillar of South Africa's vision for the G20's DRR WG, advocating for fair and just distribution of resources and support and ensuring that the most at-risk populations receive the necessary investments to reduce vulnerability to disasters.

Recognising the disproportionate impact of disasters. South Africa aims to promote equitable financing mechanisms that prioritise those with the greatest need, bridging the gap within and among countries, due to differing capacities to manage disaster risks and recover from the impacts of disasters.

1.3 Sustainability

South Africa's approach to the DRR WG will be grounded in sustainable development, promoting strategies that not only reduce risks but also contribute to long-term environmental stewardship, social well-being, and economic growth. South Africa will advocate for financing solutions that align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), encouraging investments that not only reduce disaster risks but also enhance long-term resilience, environmental sustainability, and economic stability.

These three cross-cutting issues will shape the discussions, deliverables, and outcomes of the DRR WG. This presidency is also historic as it will be the first G20

Summit held in Africa. As part of its leadership, South Africa aims to not only bring the G20 to Africa but also to bring Africa to the G20, ensuring that the unique challenges and opportunities of the African continent are central to the global agenda. This G20 Summit offers a unique opportunity to showcase Africa's perspectives, innovations, and leadership in disaster risk management while reinforcing the need for a united global response to shared challenges.

At the heart of South Africa's Presidency will be the goal of moving from dialogue to concrete solutions. This includes advancing innovative financing mechanisms for DRR, promoting technology transfer, and encouraging capacity-building initiatives that empower countries to effectively manage risks. South Africa seeks to position the G20 as a platform for tangible progress, where commitments to equitable and sustainable development translate into real-world outcomes that build resilience across all levels of society.

2. SOUTH AFRICA'S PRESIDENCY: 2025

South Africa faces significant disaster risk challenges, influenced by a combination of natural hazards and socio-economic vulnerabilities. The country is highly susceptible to climate-induced disasters, including droughts, floods, and wildfires, which have intensified with climate change, impacting communities, agriculture, and water resources. For instance, the 2022 floods in KwaZulu-Natal affected over 40 000 people, highlighting the growing severity of such events. This frequency poses a serious threat to development, disrupting livelihoods and undermining economic growth, especially in rural and underserved regions.

One primary challenge in South Africa's disaster risk management is the uneven capacity across provinces and municipalities. Urban centres may have the resources and infrastructure for disaster preparedness, but rural areas are more exposed, with limited funding and technical expertise to implement comprehensive strategies. Rapid urbanisation has also led to informal settlements, which are highly vulnerable to floods and fires, underscoring the need for better integration of DRR into urban planning. However, South Africa has made significant achievements, such as establishing the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC), which coordinated response efforts and facilitated structured relief operations during the 2022 KwaZulu-Natal floods. Additionally, early warning systems (EWS), including the Flash Flood Guidance System, have reduced casualties by enabling timely evacuations.

Further progress includes integrating DRR into school curricula, raising public awareness about preparedness, and partnering with national and international organisations to enhance technical capabilities. In agriculture, the country has introduced climate-smart practices, such as drought-resistant crops and efficient irrigation, which have been effective in stabilising food production in drought-prone areas. These achievements highlight South Africa's commitment to building resilience, though continued efforts are essential to ensure equitable support across all communities.

3. PRIORITIES AND DELIVERABLES

The priorities of the G20 DRR WG were designed in response to the findings of the Mid-Term Review of the Sendai Framework and intended to accelerate implementation of the Sendai Framework. The South African Presidency acknowledges the work done by India and Brazil's presidencies in strengthening the work of the DRR WG and would like to retain all six priorities agreed upon under those presidencies. The deliverables will build upon the Ministerial Declaration of the WG under the Brazilian Presidency. In addition, during its presidency, South Africa would like to guide all six priorities through the overarching theme of *Solidarity and Global Cooperation*.

3.1 Overarching Focus: Solidarity and Global Cooperation

DRR is a shared global responsibility that demands coordinated international efforts to succeed. South Africa advocates for enhanced global cooperation, particularly through knowledge sharing, technology transfer, and capacity building to support developing and least-developed countries. Strengthening the implementation of multilateral frameworks, such as the Sendai Framework, is critical for fostering global solidarity and ensuring a unified approach to disaster risk management. The G20 DRR WG aims to strengthen ties between African nations and the broader international community, promoting coordinated disaster response and preparedness across the continent. Additionally, by bolstering South-South and triangular cooperation, the WG seeks to enhance access to disaster data, risk knowledge, technology, and financing, creating synergies, expanding regional expertise, and increasing resources. To contribute to this global effort, South Africa will share its experiences in international and regional

collaborations, offering insights and strategies that could strengthen DRR initiatives worldwide.

3.2 Priority 1: Addressing Inequalities and Reducing Vulnerabilities

3.2.1 To address inequalities in disaster risk, the G20 DRR WG is committed to promoting inclusive, community-driven strategies that prioritise vulnerable populations. By fostering international cooperation and sharing best practices, it aims to support sustainable development initiatives that reduce poverty and empower marginalised groups, including Indigenous Peoples, women, and youth. The WG also emphasises gender-responsive and disability-inclusive policies, advocating for equitable investment in resilience-building. Through these actions, the G20 DRR WG seeks to tackle the root causes of disaster vulnerability and ensure recovery efforts that leave no one behind.

3.2.2 During the Brazilian Presidency in 2024, the G20 DRR WG has prioritised tackling the socio-economic disparities that exacerbate the impacts of disasters, especially on marginalised communities.

3.2.3 Risk transfer instruments can address inequalities in DRR by providing financial protection for vulnerable communities, helping them recover quickly and reduce long-term economic impacts. Microinsurance products, designed for low-income households, small-scale farmers, and informal workers, offer affordable coverage and can support essential recovery needs. Inclusive insurance models, like parametric insurance, provide timely relief based on specific disaster triggers, allowing for swift payouts without lengthy claims. By covering those most at risk, inclusive insurance enhances resilience, reduces economic disparities, and fosters a more equitable approach to disaster recovery. However, for the most vulnerable populations, disaster risk transfer instruments are not accessible and/or affordable and need to be urgently addressed.

Proposed Deliverable(s):

3.2.4 Compendium of risk transfer solutions that can support vulnerable communities to access much-needed cash liquidity quickly in both pre- and post-disaster scenarios. (United Nations Capital Development Fund [UNCDF] in partnership with the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction [UNDRR], the UN University, Assessment of Results and Competencies [ARC], International Cooperative and

Mutual Insurance Federation [ICMIF], Insurance Institute of South Africa, Ministry of Finance of South Africa)

3.3 Priority 2: Global Coverage of Early Warning Systems

3.3.1 The G20 has prioritised global EWS under the "Early Warnings for All" initiative, led by the UN Secretary-General, with the ambitious goal of protecting every person on Earth through a multi-hazard EWS by 2027. These systems are essential for providing timely, actionable alerts that enable communities, especially the most vulnerable, to take preventive measures. Recognising their critical value, the G20 is committed to enhancing investments in research, development, and data sharing to strengthen global early warning infrastructure, ultimately aiming to reduce disaster impacts and protect lives and livelihoods. Universal accessibility is central to this vision, ensuring timely and relevant information reaches all populations. Cellular broadcasting emerges as a scalable solution, delivering real-time alerts directly to mobile devices without needing internet access, making it especially effective in rural and remote areas. Despite these advancements, challenges persist, including achieving interoperability across various mobile networks and devices, addressing regulatory and funding constraints, and ensuring full geographic coverage.

Proposed Deliverable(s):

3.3.2 Develop an input paper on the progress, barriers, and enabling mechanisms to deliver cellular broadcasting as a scalable solution for last mile delivery of EW. (The International Telecommunication Union [ITU], UNDRR, Ministry of Communications and Digital Technologies of South Africa, South African Weather Service [SAWS])

3.4 Priority 3: Disaster Resilient Infrastructure

3.4.1 Disaster-resilient infrastructure is integral to global resilience efforts, aligning with Target D of the Sendai Framework, which aims to significantly reduce damage to critical infrastructure and disruptions to essential services by 2030. As countries prioritise resilient infrastructure for sustainable and inclusive development, there is a growing emphasis on building systems that can withstand extreme weather events, including the increasing threat of extreme heat. This focus supports the UN Secretary-General's Call to Action on Extreme Heat, urging nations to protect vulnerable populations and adapt infrastructure to rising temperatures.

3.4.2 Extreme heat presents specific challenges to housing, which can become unsafe and uninhabitable, especially in densely populated and underserved areas. To address these impacts, it is essential to explore technologies that enhance the thermal performance of housing, such as materials that reflect heat or promote passive cooling. Learning from traditional housing designs, which often incorporate natural cooling techniques suited to local climates, can offer valuable insights for building resilient, heat-resistant homes. This blend of innovation and traditional wisdom is crucial for creating sustainable housing solutions that protect communities and support their health and safety amidst rising temperatures.

Proposed Deliverable(s):

3.4.3 Compendium of case studies highlighting flood-resistant housing and cyclone-proof facilities that incorporate climate-resilient design principles. (Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure [CDRI], UN Habitat, National Department of Human Settlement of South Africa, and the Housing Development Agency of South Africa).

3.4.4 Compendium of case studies showcasing traditional housing designs, which incorporate natural cooling techniques suited to local climates. (SEEDs, Periperi U, National Department of Human Settlement of South Africa, and Housing Development Agency of South Africa)

3.5 Priority 4: Financing for DRR

3.5.1 Financing DRR involves mobilising resources across the public and private sectors to support resilience and minimise disaster impacts, especially in vulnerable regions. Key mechanisms include domestic financing, private sector investment, and multilateral support from development banks, which play a crucial role in providing both financial resources and technical expertise. The G20 DRR WG has highlighted the importance of creating inclusive, locally-led financing strategies to address inequalities and support comprehensive recovery, especially in developing countries and vulnerable areas. Such initiatives aim to ensure that resources reach communities most impacted by disasters, fostering resilience and protecting development gains globally.

3.5.2 The G20 DRR WG has invited the DRR WG Knowledge Partners to develop voluntary high-level principles that align with Priority 3 of the Sendai Framework, focusing on "Investing in DRR for Resilience." By establishing these guiding principles, the G20 DRR WG aims to integrate DRR more fully into national agendas, advancing global progress in risk reduction and enhancing adaptive capacities across member states.

Proposed Deliverable(s):

3.5.3 Consulted draft high-level principles for financing in DRR for consideration by the DRR WG. (UNDRR with the engagement of the World Bank [WB], Centre for Disaster Philanthropy [CDP], the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean [CAF], African Development Bank [AfDB], Asian Development Bank [ADB], Inter-American Development Bank [IDB], United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs [UNDESA], G20 Sustainable Finance WG, Investors Advisory Board, South African Reserve Bank, and Ministry of Finance of South Africa).

3.6 Priority 5: Disaster Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

3.6.1 In disaster recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, the G20 prioritises rebuilding in a way that increases resilience and addresses inequalities. Many countries face the challenge of restoring not only physical infrastructure but also social systems and economies impacted by disasters. By integrating DRR measures into these phases, the aim is to "build back better," ensuring that communities are more prepared for future events. This approach emphasises localised planning and community engagement to tailor responses effectively, drawing on lessons learnt and evidence-based solutions.

3.6.2 The G20 DRR WG advocates for accessible, inclusive, and sustainable recovery efforts, underscoring the need to support vulnerable populations through adaptive social protection and equitable financial strategies. Regular recovery readiness assessments are essential for achieving sustainable post-disaster outcomes, ensuring that recovery mechanisms are continuously improved to meet emerging risks and challenges.

Proposed Deliverable(s):

3.6.3 Consulted and piloted Recovery Readiness Assessment Framework for consideration by the WG. (International Recovery Platform with partners such as UN Development Programme [UNDP], UN Environment Programme [UNEP], UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], WB, UN Office for Project Services [UNOPS], World Health Organisation [WHO], World Food Programme [WFP], Food and Agriculture Organisation [FAO], Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre [ADPC], Centre for Urban Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience [CUDRR], and NDMC of South Africa)

3.7 Priority 6: Ecosystems-Based Approaches for DRR/Nature-Based Solutions

3.7.1 Ecosystem-Based Approaches (EBA) and Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) offer sustainable pathways for DRR by leveraging natural ecosystems to mitigate hazards and build resilience. Recognising this, the G20 DRR WG emphasises the role of NBS in climate adaptation and land-use planning. By restoring ecosystems like wetlands, forests, and mangroves, countries can enhance environmental resilience, reducing the impact of disasters such as floods, droughts, and landslides. These natural buffers serve as protective barriers, absorbing excess water, stabilising soils, and regulating microclimates, thereby protecting vulnerable communities. Incorporating NBS into DRR strategies can also address social and economic inequalities, as these approaches often provide multiple co-benefits, including biodiversity conservation, enhanced local livelihoods, and support for sustainable development.

3.7.2 Yet scaling up EBA and NBS for DRR faces challenges such as limited funding, insufficient technical expertise, and competing land-use priorities. These approaches require sustained investments and knowledge-sharing among stakeholders, while also needing policy support and cross-sectoral collaboration to effectively integrate into national and local disaster strategies.

Deliverable(s):

3.7.3 Compendium of case studies and analysis of policies that incentivise investment in NBS, such as subsidies, tax benefits, and climate finance integration, which encourage both public and private sector engagement. (UNESCO with the engagement of UNDRR, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure [CDRI], AfDB, WB, UNEP, and the Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment of South Africa)