

As the world's largest humanitarian network, IFRC prioritizes disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) as essential pillars for a sustainable future. In a time of growing needs and tightening resources, investing in DRR and CCA is not just about reducing risks – it's about saving lives, protecting livelihoods and preserving human dignity. These investments reduce long-term humanitarian costs and help communities thrive in the face of escalating climate and disaster risks.

## Our focus

### 1 Make locally led action the default

Trust, fund and empower local actors. Resilience starts with the people closest to the risks – support them to drive solutions that last.

### 2 Invest ahead of disasters

Shift from reaction to anticipation. Prioritize funding that prevents and reduces climate and disaster impacts and builds long-term resilience – it is cost effective, saves lives and livelihoods and expands people's options.

### 3 Break the cycle – put the root causes of risk at the centre of action

Collectively cut to “the why” – why are communities and people too often left behind, trapped in cycles of disasters? For transformative action, we must address risk drivers and enhance long term resilience to save and improve lives and livelihoods.action: we can save lives, protect livelihoods, and reduce harmful displacement.

## Our role in DRR as the IFRC network

As the world's largest humanitarian network, the IFRC and its National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies are uniquely positioned to reduce disaster and climate risks. Our long-term presence in communities allows us to support locally led, inclusive risk reduction grounded in trust and local knowledge. We work alongside communities to identify risks, map vulnerabilities and co-develop practical, trusted actions that save lives, protect livelihoods and expand people's options when hazards strike. This includes strengthening early warning systems, local preparedness and response capacities, health and sanitation, and risk-informed development – ensuring that marginalized and at-risk groups are meaningfully included and protected.

The IFRC network also plays a key advocacy and convening role, influencing global, regional, and national DRR and DRM laws and policies to promote effective, inclusive, people-centered risk governance. We bring the voices of communities to decision-making spaces – from climate negotiations to disaster risk governance platforms. Through initiatives like *Early Warnings for All* and the *Climate and Environment Charter*, we help shape a global agenda that prioritizes proactive, preventive approaches to disaster risk.

By leveraging the auxiliary role of our National Societies to public authorities, our deep community presence and partnerships across sectors, we bridge the gap between humanitarian, development and climate action – helping to build long-term, community-led resilience that is accessible and accountable to all in the face of growing and complex risks.



# Make Locally Led Action the Default

Every day the climate crisis is affecting people's physical and mental health. Global temperature records are being broken month after month, as climate change makes heatwaves – an already silent and deadly killer – more extreme. The scale and nature of climate sensitive health risks is shifting and will continue to do so, such as those from vector and water borne diseases, which are exposing new populations and increasing existing vulnerabilities. It is the most vulnerable communities and people, including displaced persons, who are impacted the most, multiplying existing vulnerabilities due to limited access to safe water, sanitation, food and education. We need to get prepared and adapt fast, for people and the environment.

## Why is this important?

- Less than 10% of climate adaptation finance reaches the local level<sup>1</sup>
- As of December 2024, 131 countries report having national DRR strategies in place, while only 109 reported having local DRR strategies



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## Our key asks

### Invest in inclusive local leadership and directly in communities.

Resilient communities need strong local leadership. Invest in local organizations, institutions and governance to drive risk reduction and climate adaptation that is timely, trusted and rooted in local realities. Communities often have existing coping strategies and local solutions that can be supported at lower cost than large-scale external interventions.

### Prioritize inclusive action.

Resilience efforts must reflect the needs of all. Ensure those most at risk, including displaced and marginalized groups, are not just consulted but actively engaged in the design, leadership, implementation and monitoring of risk reduction plans at every level.

### Fund resilience at the source.

Provide direct, flexible and sustained financing to local actors, rooted in communities, to enable early action, stronger preparedness and long-term risk reduction that leaves no one behind.

<sup>1</sup> [Delivering real change: getting international climate finance to the local level](#)

# Invest Ahead of Disasters

As climate risks grow and disasters become more frequent and severe, the cost of inaction is rising. Communities on the frontlines are paying with their lives and livelihoods, having to flee their homes repeatedly. We urgently need a shift from reactive aid to proactive investment. Proven solutions like early warning systems, risk education, nature-based solutions and locally led community action are low-cost and high-impact. But these solutions remain underfunded, especially in fragile, conflict and violence-affected contexts and in locations where internally displaced people and refugees reside.

To build lasting resilience, we must scale up financing for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation – particularly flexible, predictable financing that is rooted in communities and inclusive by design. Investing today means saving lives tomorrow, expanding choices for people to stay in their homes or move safely and voluntarily, and promoting resilience for years to come.

## Why is this important?

- Although statistics vary, every US\$1 invested in risk reduction and prevention can save up to around US\$15 in post-disaster recovery<sup>2</sup>
- Only 3.1% of finance for crises is arranged in advance (2018-2022)<sup>3</sup>
- As of 2024, around one-third of the global population was still not covered by early warning systems<sup>4</sup>



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## Our key asks

### Scale up proactive, risk-informed finance.

Increase funding across sectors. Prioritize flexible, predictable investments in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation that reach the most at-risk communities. Ensure funding mechanisms are accessible to local actors and tailored to the needs of at-risk groups. Increase coherence across climate, development and humanitarian financing to enable more coherent risk-informed action.

### Ensure no one is left behind.

Channel investments to where they are needed most, not just where they are easiest to deliver. Increase funding and adapt policies, procedures and partnerships to support DRR and CCA in protracted crises and fragile, conflict- and violence-affected areas, including in IDP and refugee camps and settlements.

### Support locally led early warning and anticipatory action.

Increase pre-arranged disaster funds to enable faster, earlier responses that protect communities, address diverse needs, and expand people's choices and agency. Provide replenishment guarantees for countries and entities for disaster risk financing instruments used to fund anticipatory action (e.g. contingency funds, crisis modifiers, pooled funds).

<sup>2</sup> UNDRR

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.disasterprotection.org/publications-centre/the-state-of-pre-arranged-financing-for-disasters-2024>

<sup>4</sup> Global status of multi-hazard early warning systems 2024 | UNDRR

# Break the Cycle – Put the Root Causes of Risk at the Centre of Action

Disasters do not impact everyone equally. Vulnerability – shaped by poverty, inequality, displacement, gender, age and disability – determines who is hardest hit and slowest to recover. When we fail to address these underlying drivers, we reinforce the cycle of risk and crisis. Breaking that cycle means putting vulnerability at the centre of disaster risk reduction and climate action. We must scale proven local action in protracted crises, fragile, conflict and violence-affected contexts. This means investing in people – especially those who are marginalised or chronically at risk. It also means designing policies and funding mechanisms that strengthen the ability of communities to cope, adapt and recover, before shocks strike.

To protect those most at risk, we must take successful disaster risk reduction initiatives to scale and be brave in new partnerships which go further and deeper in transformative action for underserved communities. We must replicate local solutions, embed risk reduction into development and climate plans and strengthen resilience in an integrated way across sectors and systems. This is how we shift from managing disasters to managing risk – and from recovery to lasting resilience.

## Why is this important?

Of the 32 countries classified as highly or very highly vulnerable, 27 were also considered fragile or extremely fragile – yet they received less than US\$1 per person in DRR or climate adaptation finance<sup>5</sup>

In 2023 alone, disasters triggered 26.4 million internal displacements – many of them in already fragile or conflict-affected contexts<sup>6</sup>

44% of the global population remain poor by a standard of \$6.85/day, and many live in urban areas highly exposed to climate and environmental shocks<sup>7</sup>



IFRC/Mongolian Red Cross Society

## Our key asks

### Recognise that effective DRR starts with tackling the root causes of vulnerability

– including poverty, inequality and exclusion. Risk reduction is incomplete and unsustainable if it overlooks the social, economic and structural factors that put people at risk in the first place. This means integrating social protection, inclusive governance and risk-informed development into national policies and plans.

### Strengthen resilience from the ground up.

Scale up effective, locally led actions that reduce risk and strengthen resilience — from risk education and nature-based approaches to inclusive early warning systems and beyond. These approaches are already making a difference. Now is the time to take them further, faster and make sure no one is left behind.

### Build partnerships across DRR, climate and development sectors.

Replicating local solutions is essential - but not enough. We must go further by embedding risk reduction into development and climate strategies, aligning efforts across sectors and systems to build resilience that lasts.

<sup>5</sup> [20221108\\_ClimateSmartFinance.pdf](#)

<sup>6</sup> [2024 Global Report on Internal Displacement \(GRID\) | IDMC - Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Poverty, Prosperity, and Planet Report 2024 - World Bank Group](#)