

Role of UNDRR (United Nations Disaster Risk Reductions)

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- The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction now in its current form is known as the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).
- It builds upon the experience gained during 1990 – 1999 which had been designated as the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.
- The UNDRR incorporates the principles which were adopted in the above-mentioned Decade including the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action, and the Geneva Mandate on Disaster Reduction.



UNDRR Mandate

UNDRR's mandate has been defined by many UNGA Resolutions, the most important of which is "to serve as the focal point for the coordination of disaster reduction and to ensure synergies among the disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system and regional organizations and activities in socio-economic and humanitarian fields".

Its main areas of work include ensuring that disaster risk reduction is applied to climate change adaptation, enhancing investments for disaster relief, creating disaster-resilient cities, hospitals and schools, and boosting international readiness for future calamities.

UNDRR Purposes

The purposes of the UNDRR are listed below:

- To facilitate the integration of management of risk into the development policies, programmes and projects of governments, communities and other agencies in disaster-prone areas.
- To enable communities to become disaster resilient thus, helping save lives and also protect social, environmental and economic assets.

UNDRR Activities

Some of the chief activities of the UNDRR are mentioned below:

- The UNDRR works via a network of international organisations, experts and scientific institutions, private sector, civil society and government officials in order to raise public awareness about disaster reduction.
- It also works to motivate commitment from authorities and encourage interdisciplinary and inter sectoral partnerships, which will ultimately enhance the existing knowledge on natural hazards and the reasons why disasters occur.
- It is tasked with the implementation, follow-up, support and review of the Sendai Framework.

UNDRR Global Assessment Report

The UN Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction (GAR) is a report of the UN on global efforts to reduce disaster risk.

- It is published once in two years by the UNDRR and is the product of the contributions of nations, public and private disaster risk-related science and research, and others.
- The latest GAR, UNISDR Global Assessment Report 2019, was published at Geneva in May 2019.
- The GAR 2019 was about understanding better the systemic nature of risk and one is able to recognize, measure and model risk. It also talks about strategies to enhance the scientific, social and political cooperation needed to move towards systemic risk governance.

Key Findings of GAR 2019

The below table describes some of the major findings of GAR 2019.

It identifies a range of major threats to human life and property, including air pollution, diseases, earthquakes, drought and climate change.	It has been projected that an annual investment of \$6 billion in DRR strategies would generate benefits of up to \$360 billion each year.
It warns that in the event of not acting more urgently to tackle intertwined risks could slow or even halt and reverse progress towards the UN SDGs.	Human losses and asset losses relative to the GDP tend to be higher in the countries with the least capacity to prepare, finance and respond to disasters and climate change, such as Small Island Developing States.
The report demands national governments to implement the Sendai Framework, moving the focus from disaster management to risk reduction.	Development aid utilised for systems such as early warning systems, constructing more resilient hospitals and schools, and assisting farmers to cultivate hardier crops in drought-prone areas was minute compared with funding for disaster response.

UNDRR and India

In the 20 year period of 1998 to 2017, India suffered massive economic losses of up to \$80 billion to disasters, said a UNISDR Report. India also ranks in the top 5 countries that face absolute economic losses to disasters.

- In March 2019, the Government of India launched an UN-backed initiative that will harness the power of the Private Sector in order to reduce the country's exposure to disaster and the huge economic losses that follow.

UNDRR ARISE India

ARISE stands for the UNISDR Private Sector Alliance for Disaster Resilient Societies.

- It is a UNISDR-led network of private sector entities, whose members voluntarily commit to aligning with the Sendai Framework.
- Members of ARISE include 140 countries worldwide including India, which joined it in 2019.
- The members share data, experience, projects and activities with each other. The level of involvement and resources is at the discretion of each member.
- Most activities and interactions are at local and regional levels, and ARISE is structured accordingly.