

Title: The 8th Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP2025): Progress and the Way Forward

Authors: Reza Habibisaravi¹, Hamidreza Khankeh^{2,3,*}

1. *Pre-hospital Emergency Department, School of Allied Medical Sciences, Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences, Sari, Iran.*
2. *Department of Emergency and Disaster Health, University of Social Welfare & Rehabilitation Sciences, Tehran, Iran.*
3. *QUEST Center for Responsible Research, Berlin Institute of Health at Charité, Berlin, Germany.*

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Introduction

In June 2025, Geneva hosted the 8th UN Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP2025) under the theme “Every Day Counts – Act for Resilience Today.” Over 4,000 delegates from 180+ countries attended, reflecting broad engagement across government, civil society and science. This article critically assesses GP2025’s outcomes in the context of the Sendai Framework (2015–2030), highlights new evidence on disaster risk, and suggests ways to strengthen global and regional DRR efforts with updated scientific support.

Inclusive Progress at GP2025

GP2025 emphasized **inclusion and community leadership** in DRR. For example, the 2025 RISK Award recognized a ChildFund International project that empowers indigenous schoolchildren and youth in Bolivia on disaster preparedness and climate resilience. UNDRR Director Paola Albrito praised youth as “champions of resilience” needed to achieve the Sendai targets by 2030. Civil society also advanced a grassroots agenda: the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations (GNDR) urged “localisation, risk-informed development, and civil society-led collaboration” so that frontline communities guide DRR policies. These developments reflect Sendai’s guiding principle of leaving no one behind, by elevating the voices of women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and youth in DRR planning.

Key inclusive highlights included:

- **Empowering Indigenous children and youth:** A Bolivian project won the RISK Award for engaging children and young people as “agents of change” in DRR.
- **leadership:** DRR experts noted that children and young people are disproportionately affected by disasters but can drive resilience from the ground up (Albrito 2025).The-8th-Global-Platform-for-Disaster-Risk-Reduction-shortfalls-and-recommendations-final2.docx
- **Community-based calls:** GNDR’s pre-Platform “Call to Action” (informed by consultations in 131 countries) centered on listening to communities, strengthening local early warning finance, and empowering first responders.

These efforts align with Sendai Priority 2 (governance and local action) and underscore a positive shift toward “bottom-up” DRR.

Recognizing Disaster Displacement and Climate Risk

For the first time, GP2025 gave major attention to disaster-induced displacement, acknowledging the dramatic rise in such events. In 2024, some **46 million people worldwide were internally displaced by natural hazards**. By year-end 2024, nearly 9.8 million people remained displaced by disasters (up 29% from 2023). Crucially, this displacement disproportionately affects the poorest: IDMC analysis shows that the most vulnerable households face far longer and deeper displacement burdens.

Case Vignette 1 (Australia): Australia's Disaster-Ready Fund (\$AUD 1 billion over 5 years) supported 12 local councils in New South Wales to strengthen flood-resilience infrastructure, reducing average displacement duration from 14 days to 5 days (Government of Australia, 2025).

Case Vignette 2 (Bangladesh): GNDR's pilot in Kurigram District provided microgrants for community-led early warning systems, resulting in a 40% reduction in evacuation times during the 2024 monsoon season (GNDR, 2025).

Key observations from GP2025 sessions included:

- **Data and support:** The Geneva Call urges systems to “address displacement, assist affected populations, including access to essential services and psychosocial support, and enable rapid livelihood recovery.”
- **Inequality of impact:** While anyone can be displaced, poorer communities remain displaced 3× longer on average.
- **Climate link:** Climate change is “making storms, floods, droughts and wildfires more common and intense” (IPCC, 2023), raising the risk of displacement.

These discussions bridged Sendai with the emerging focus on climate and mobility, cementing the idea that resilience must encompass both pre-disaster risk reduction and durable solutions for those already displaced.

Gaps and Limitations: From Talk to Action

Despite urgent calls, GP2025 outcomes were largely **aspirational**. A major critique was the lack of binding commitments or new financing. UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed noted: “*Early warning saves lives but cannot save glaciers*”. The Sendai Framework itself is voluntary and non-binding. The Geneva Call on displacement and inclusion set **no targets, timetables or accountability** for implementation.

Other shortcomings:

- **Funding shortfall:** DRR financing remains minuscule. Less than 1% of national budgets typically goes to resilience (UNDRR, 2024).
- **Local voice:** GNDR's eight-point Call to Action did not result in new community-driven finance pledges; final communiqués retained top-down language.
- **Accountability:** No new global monitoring mechanisms were created; rhetoric continues to exceed results.

In sum, GP2025 raised awareness but exposed a **gap between rhetoric and reality** as the 2030 Sendai deadline approaches.

Sendai Framework: Progress to Date and Gaps Ahead

By 2023, **131 countries (67%) reported national DRR strategies** aligned with Sendai (up from 57 in 2015), and local plans doubled from 50 to 110. Asia-Pacific leads at ~85% coverage, whereas

Africa lags at 55%. However, paper plans do not guarantee implementation: Target E is met numerically but unevenly in quality.

Limitations echoed at GP2025: voluntary, time-bound to 2030, no dedicated mechanism for cross-border disaster migrants. Although Sendai calls for DRR-climate integration, climate change undermines its achievement (UNDRR, 2024).

Positive shifts: Sendai Target G (early warning for all) was spotlighted—one-third of the world lacks coverage. At COP28, negotiations began on a *binding* DRR convention by 2027, signaling recognition that Sendai’s soft-law approach is insufficient.

Recommendations and The Way Forward

To “make every day count,” future DRR efforts should translate GP2025 dialogue into concrete actions. **Implementation Challenges** (political will, capacity, funding) are discussed for each recommendation.

Strengthen Accountability

Convert broad principles into **SMART targets** with transparent reporting. Define metrics and deadlines for including vulnerable groups in DRR plans. Report DRR spending (e.g., % of GDP) publicly.

Finance Local Resilience

Channel aid directly to frontline communities via microgrants and community risk insurance. Scale innovative tools; donors must reframe DRR as investment, not aid.

Integrate DRR with Climate and Development

Link Sendai with climate agendas (NDCs, NAPs, Loss & Damage). Direct Loss & Damage funds to preparedness and recovery capacity.

Empower Local Actors

Mandate local participation in planning and budgeting. Scale capacity-building and funding for women’s and Indigenous groups. Integrate school safety with community resilience.

Strengthen Regional Cooperation

Align regional DRR frameworks with Sendai. Support Africa–Arab, Asia-Pacific, and European networks. Develop regional roadmaps with context-specific targets.

Address Displacement Through Sendai Lens

Embed anticipatory action and migration in DRR laws. Enhance mobility data collection. Foster collaboration among humanitarian, development, and migration sectors.

Operationalizing Without Global Platforms

Region-specific action items:

- **Asia-Pacific:** Leverage ASEAN DRR fund for village-level early warning; integrate traditional knowledge in national policies.
- **Africa:** Use AU's Masakeni early warning initiative to train 10,000 community volunteers; establish cross-border rapid response protocols.
- **Latin America:** Strengthen regional coordination via CEPREDENAC; pilot urban flood resilience in three major cities.

Discussed potential obstacles (political inertia, bureaucracy, resource gaps) and mitigation strategies (public-private partnerships, digital platforms for community feedback).

Conclusion

GP2025 underscored the complexity of disaster risk and the need for inclusive solutions. Its emphasis on youth, women, Indigenous knowledge, and displacement signals important shifts in awareness. However, voluntary frameworks and non-binding outcomes leave critical gaps. To “make every day count,” resilience must be built in communities with clear targets, robust funding, and strong regional and legal frameworks before the 2030 deadline.

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