REPORT ON WEBINAR – “FUND RESILIENCE NOT DISASTERS”

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OVERVIEW

“Fund Resilience not Disasters” webinar hosted by SIDRRA project on the theme of the international day for disaster risk reduction calls for closing existing social inequalities

The increasing frequency and intensity of disasters, particularly affecting developing countries, necessitate enhanced investment in disaster risk reduction (DRR) efforts. However, both national and global investments in DRR are insufficient, with only 2% of official development assistance (ODA) allocated for disaster preparedness and prevention. Humanitarian assistance to these countries has also declined, from 3.6% (2015-2018) to 3.3% (2019-2023). Many vulnerable low-income countries receive minimal DRR funding despite facing high risks.

Traditional donors are shifting their focus away from humanitarian aid, prompting discussions on alternative financing mechanisms. Moreover, development planning often neglects risk assessments, leading to increased vulnerability and new risks, as over 90% of major disasters from 1990 to 2021 were climate related.

The theme for the 2025 International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) is “Fund Resilience, Not Disasters,” emphasizing the need for increased funding in disaster preparedness and integrating risk-informed strategies into development. The IDDRR calls for enhancing DRR funding and ensuring that all investments are resilient and risk informed.

In line with this theme, a webinar titled “Fund Resilience not Disasters” was organized by the Strengthening Inclusive Disaster Risk Governance for Climate Resilience in Asia (SIDRRA) project, which aims to strengthen resilience among at-risk communities in Asia. This consortium-driven project consists of: The International Rescue Committee, Duryog Nivaran, and the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network. Implementation is supported by the Philippine Business for Social Progress, Mercy Malaysia, CWS Japan, and Janathakshan.

The webinar featured discussions on the importance of preventive disaster measures, innovative financing mechanisms, and amplifying local voices in decision-making. Panelists included representatives from traditional aid sectors and alternative financing models, focusing on the challenges faced by traditional institutions and exploring new funding avenues.

Key speakers highlighted the necessity of identifying risks, implementing mitigation plans, and investing in community leadership. The SIDRRA project also emphasizes the importance of networks in enhancing community resilience and supporting locally led disaster risk governance initiatives across various Asian countries. The consortium is committed to elevating grassroots efforts to ensure policy and funding support for building resilience.

AGENDA

Item	Speaker	Duration
Signing-in, welcome & overview of the theme	**Moderator** **Anastasia Maylinda Titilestari (Linda)** Yakkum Emergency Unit	5 minutes
Why fund resilience, not disasters	**Takeshi Komino - Chair** Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network	5 minutes
Project SIDRRA's approach to resilience	**Cathy Gordo - Project Director** Climate Resilience Project in Asia International Rescue Committee	5 minutes
Shifting priorities in financing resilience initiatives & exploring alternative financing models Moderated by **Ramona Miranda - Director** Duryog Nivaran	**Safi Ahsan Rizvi - Advisor** National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) India, **Radhika Abeynaike - Director** Strategy and Learning, The Asia Foundation, Sri Lanka, **Muhammad Tahir Waqar - Senior Programme Manager** National Rural Support Programme, Pakistan, **Swati Chowdary - Vice President** Network & Development Women's World Banking, **Mr. Dam Vertido** Mindanao Land Foundation, Philippines.	35 minutes
Q & A	**Moderator** **Anastasia Maylinda Titilestari (Linda)**	30 minutes
Closing remarks	Ryce Ruangkhao Chanchai - Gender Advisor UNDRR	10 minutes

INTRODUCTION

As disasters are increasing in frequency and intensity, with developing countries bearing the brunt of the impacts, it is crucial to enhance investment in disaster risk reduction efforts.

Both national and global investments in disaster risk reduction are not adequately meeting the demands for risk reduction. Major donor countries have significantly cut their official development assistance (ODA), with only 2% of ODA now dedicated to disaster preparedness and prevention. International humanitarian assistance to developing countries has also decreased over the years, dropping from 3.6% between 2015 and 2018 to 3.3% between 2019 and 2023 (UNDRR, 2025). Another study (GSDRC) examining a 20-year period finds that disaster risk reduction (DRR) finance is highly volatile and concentrated, with many vulnerable low-income countries—despite facing the highest risks and having low resilience—receiving almost negligible amounts.

The shift in traditional donors' priorities from humanitarian assistance to other areas has prompted discussions about relying less on them from the Global North and exploring alternative financing mechanisms in other nations or regions.

Adding to the problem, most development planning remains risk-blind, leading to greater impacts. Infrastructure projects, urban expansion, and private investments often prioritize short-term economic gains without integrating risk assessments or climate projections. For example, the UNDRR's Global Assessment Report 2022 highlighted that over 90% of all major disasters between 1990 and 2021 were climate-related; yet, risk considerations are still rarely embedded in investment decisions. As a result, development efforts inadvertently create new risks, compounding existing vulnerabilities.

The theme for the 2025 International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) is "Fund Resilience, Not Disasters." This theme underscores the urgency of increasing funding for disaster preparedness and prevention while embedding risk-informed strategies into development planning. The 2025 IDDRR has emphasized two key calls to action:

1. Increase funding for disaster risk reduction within public budgets and international assistance.

2. Ensure that all public development and private sector investments are risk-informed and resilient.

This theme aligns with Sendai Framework Priority Three: Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience, and Key Objective 5: Mainstreaming gender equality criteria into risk-informed development and disaster risk reduction investments.

A webinar “Fund Resilience, Not Disasters,” was hosted by the Strengthening Inclusive Disaster Risk Governance for Climate Resilience project. Supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Strengthening Inclusive Disaster Risk Governance for Climate Resilience in Asia (SIDRRA) project aims to enhance adaptability and strengthen resilience among at-risk communities in Asia while amplifying local voices in decision-making processes. It also promotes multi-stakeholder engagement to ensure that adaptation strategies are grounded in the realities of those most affected. By bridging policy and practice, the project helps local knowledge influence regional resilience agendas.

This consortium-driven project consists of the International Rescue Committee, Duryog Nivaran, and the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network. Implementation is supported by the Philippine Business for Social Progress, Mercy Malaysia, CWS Japan, and Janathakshan.

The Strengthening Inclusive Disaster Risk Governance for Climate Resilience in Asia (SIDRRA) consortium partners hosted a webinar titled “Fund Resilience, Not Disasters” in line with the theme of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Promoting discussion on the importance of investing in preventive measures for disasters and enhancing resilience over reactionary measures in post-disaster services was the objective of the webinar.

The webinar featured two segments of panel discussions. The first segment represented traditional aid sectors, including international financial institutions and donor agencies. This panel focused on the challenges and priorities faced by traditional institutions in the evolving landscape. The second panel discussed alternative and innovative financing mechanisms, such as those from the private sector and inclusive financing initiatives. This segment explored how these innovative mechanisms can help meet the increasing demands for disaster risk reduction.

The two panel discussions centered on the themes of “Traditional Financial Institutions: Challenges and Shifting Priorities” and “Exploring Alternative Financing Models.” Throughout the webinar, participants emphasized the importance of building resilience by amplifying local voices, promoting localized solutions, enhancing community-led disaster preparedness, and strengthening inclusive risk governance.

The panel was moderated by Ramona Miranda, Director of Duryog Nivaran, and included the following panelists: Safi Afhsan Rizvi, Advisor to the National Disaster Management Authority, India; Radhika Abeynaike, Director of Strategy and Learning at the Asia Foundation, Sri Lanka; Muhammed Tahir Waqar, Senior Programme Manager at the National Rural Support Programme, Pakistan; Swati Chowdary, Vice President of Networking and Development at Women's World Banking; and Dam Vertido, representing the Mindanao Land Foundation, Philippines. Concluding remarks were delivered by Ryce Ruanghkao Chanchai, Gender Advisor to UNDRR.

Anastasia Maylinda, Secretary General of the Asia Disaster Risk Reduction Network (ADRRN), provided an overview of the webinar theme in her opening remarks, explaining that the discussion would explore innovative financing mechanisms and highlight the importance of local voices and inclusive risk governance.

Takeshi Komino, Chairperson of ADRRN, shared his experiences specifically related to the contexts of Indonesia and the Philippines. He highlighted that in both countries, dry months are now longer than rainy months, with intense sporadic rain leading to increased flooding risks. He expressed the need for constant identification of emerging risks and the implementation of risk reduction plans, along with the necessity for context-specific best practices related to climate change adaptation and investments aimed at making communities resilient. He emphasized the importance of investing in community leadership and spontaneous actions, stating that these are essential for creating meaningful movement.

He noted the need for more evidence-based research to identify effective approaches that can be replicated. The International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction serves as a reaffirmation of our commitments.

Cathy Gordo, Project Director of the Climate Resilience Project of Asia, part of the SIDRRA consortium, explained the critical role of networks in enhancing the resilience of community-level organizations across South and East Asia. The consortium-led initiative adopts an inclusive and integrated.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Tracking the Flow of Finance is Key

The flow of financing towards resilience has primarily been directed towards large-scale energy infrastructure investments, which are critical for local economies, especially during periods of climate and economic disruption. However, the capital that reaches women and small enterprises remains limited. The key challenge is to effectively track the flow of finance in relation to resilience, focusing on how money moves through the system.

Paying for the Maintenance of Ecosystems to Ensure Access to Clean Water

Dam Vertido from the Philippines shared the experience of Davao City in addressing the water quality issues of spring water, which faces threats due to various land uses within the same ecosystem. There are systems in place for lobbying to restore the ecosystem that provides water to millions residing in the city. Indigenous tribes protect the ecosystem in Mount Ako, ensuring a continuous water supply to Davao City. Payment for Ecosystem Services has been introduced as a resilience mechanism to protect the ecosystem. In the city, consumers—ordinary citizens—compensate the protectors of the ecosystem, which contributes to the protection and development plan for the ecosystem. Indigenous communities safeguard their homeland, while the urban poor in the city are the most affected by insufficient water supply. Implementing a payment for ecosystem services helps communities benefit from a continuous supply of clean water.

India Mandates Allocations for Preparedness

The National Disaster Management Authority of India shared the government's allocations for mitigation and preparedness. Out of a total budget of 30 billion, 30% is designated for two areas: 20% for mitigation and 10% for preparedness and capacity building. Previously, such provisions were not available. As a result, when government programs were implemented at the community or village level, these two aspects were often missing. Now, it is mandated that 30% of the budget must be spent on preparedness.

Post-Disaster Spending Attracts Politicians Seeking Votes

When budget allocations are made for prevention, they often lack visibility for politicians, whereas spending during post-disaster situations is dramatic and can attract more votes. Consequently, post-disaster spending overshadows preparedness efforts, leading to fragmented budgets for Disaster Risk Reduction across ministries with no clear accountability.

Addressing Gaps in Governance

Many countries still rely on emergency reallocations when a crisis arises. There are limited examples of layered financing approaches, such as buffers or insurance schemes. Additionally, there is a governance gap at the local level in

Funding Available to Local Government Authorities

Resilience is not solely a technical issue; it is also socially grounded and locally owned. Financial resources must be localized, as resilience is built in the streets, not in ministries. Funding needs to be redirected to provinces and municipalities, as local authorities are best equipped to address issues such as clearing drainage, stabilizing slopes, and enforcing permits.

Collaborating with Climate Tech Ecosystems

In Pakistan, there was a suggestion to engage climate tech ecosystems, which include startups and new businesses utilizing technology and innovative ideas to support mitigation and adaptation efforts.

Equipping Financial Institutions with Inclusive Products and Delivery

It is critical to ensure that financial institutions are equipped to provide products and services that reach women and other marginalized groups. Regional rural banks in India, for example, combine savings, microinsurance, and flexible credit, supported by digital payments, to remain active during disruptions. For instance, Annapurna Finance employs hazard mapping to identify borrowers who may face floods and cyclones, allowing the institution to reach out to them proactively.

Investments in Resilience Avoid Losses

Investing in resilience is financially beneficial. Every dollar invested in disaster resilience infrastructure can save at least four dollars in avoided losses. Early warning systems that effectively reach women, persons with disabilities, and marginalized communities can save lives and livelihoods before disasters strike. When financing mechanisms incorporate gender equality and social inclusion, they become more effective, sustainable, and equitable. Inclusive finance is a vital component of resilience financing strategies.

Financing Resilience to Address Preexisting Inequalities

Financing for resilience must not reinforce existing inequalities; rather, it should work to close them. This entails ensuring that women, marginalized groups, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and those most at risk are not merely passive beneficiaries but active co-designers of resilience strategies.

CONCEPT NOTE

International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction 2025

"Fund Resilience, Not Disasters" – A Webinar

Date: 16th October, 2025
Time: 11:30 am Bangkok time (10:00 am India, 1:30 pm Japan, 14:30 Australia)
Duration: 90 mins
Platform: Teams

Background

As disasters are increasing in frequency and intensity, with developing countries bearing the brunt of the impacts, it has been important to enhance investment in disaster risk reduction efforts.

Both national and global level Investments in DRR are not adequately meeting the demands of risk reduction. Major donor countries have significantly cut down the official development assistance (ODA), with only 2% of ODA now dedicated towards disaster preparedness and prevention. International humanitarian assistance to developing countries has also decreased over the years, from 3.6% between 2015 and 2018 to 3.3% between 2019 and 2023 (UNDRR, 2025)[1]. Another study (GSDRC) looking at a 20-year period finds that DRR finance is highly volatile and concentrated, with many vulnerable low-income countries, despite facing the highest risk and having low resilience, receiving almost negligible amounts.

The shift of traditional donors' priorities from humanitarian assistance to other areas has prompted discussions on relying less on Western aid and exploring alternative financing mechanisms within nations or regions.

Adding to the problem, most development planning remains risk-blind, leading to higher impacts. Infrastructure projects, urban expansion, and private investments often prioritise short-term economic gains without integrating risk assessments or climate projections. For example, the UNDRR's *Global Assessment Report 2022* highlighted that over 90% of all major disasters between 1990 and 2021 were climate-related, yet risk considerations are still rarely embedded in investment decisions. As a result, development efforts inadvertently create new risks, compounding the existing vulnerabilities.

The theme for the 2025 International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR), which is commemorated on 13 October, is "Fund Resilience, Not Disasters". The theme underscores the urgency of increasing funding for disaster preparedness and prevention and embedding risk-

[1] Concept note, IDDRR day 2025 , UNDRR

informed strategies into development planning. The 2025 IDDRR has emphasised two key calls to action:

1. Increase funding for disaster risk reduction, within public budgets and international assistance.
2. Ensure all public development and private sector investments are risk-informed and resilient.

The theme aligns with Sendai Framework Priority Three: Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience, and KO 5: Mainstream gender equality criteria into risk-informed development and disaster risk reduction investments.

Project SIDRRA and Its Priorities

Supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Strengthening Inclusive Disaster Risk Governance for Climate Resilience in Asia (SIDRRA) project aims to enhance adaptability and strengthen resilience among at-risk communities in Asia and amplify local voices in decision-making processes. It also promotes multi-stakeholder engagement to ensure that adaptation strategies are grounded in the realities of those most affected. By bridging policy and practice, the project helps local knowledge influence regional resilience agendas. Through this mandate, the project contributes to more inclusive and effective climate adaptation policies and practices across Asia, empowering vulnerable communities to better cope with the impacts of climate change and disasters.

The SIDRRA project adopts a comprehensive, multi-tiered approach to promote inclusive disaster risk reduction in the region.

1. Amplify local voices of partners and networks to influence decision-makers to fulfil their commitments to inclusive climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction actions.
2. Address power imbalances that women, marginalised communities, and other vulnerable groups face. Addressing these gaps is an essential step towards ensuring that policies, systems, and actions are equitable and inclusive.
3. Advance grassroots adaptive actions so that communities, local governments, and other stakeholders work together towards disaster preparedness and mitigation actions that are specific, customised, and effective.

This consortium-driven project consists of three leading organisations: The International Rescue Committee, Duryog Nivaran, and the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network. Implementation is supported by the Philippine Business for Social Progress, Mercy Malaysia, CWS Japan, and Janathakshan.

To commemorate IDDRR 2025, SIDRRA consortium partners will come together to organise a webinar.

Objectives of the Webinar

The webinar will promote discussions on the importance of investing in preventive measures of disasters and enhancing resilience over reactionary measures of post-disaster services. The discussions will focus on the importance of resilience building through amplifying local voices, promoting localised solutions and community-led disaster preparedness, and strengthening inclusive risk governance.

As we reiterate the importance of funding DRR planning, we will also hear from the financing institutions on the limitations and challenges that have led to the persistent gap between investment in risk reduction and increasing disaster risks, and explore alternative and innovative financing mechanisms that the Asia-Pacific regions must adopt in this shrinking funding landscape. The discussion will also focus on how CSOs/NGOs can support the government in developing strong projects in this scenario.

Modality

The webinar will have two segments of panel discussions; the first one will represent traditional aid sectors such as international financial institutions and donor agencies. This panel of traditional donors will focus on challenges and priorities of traditional institutions in this changing scenario. The second panel will represent alternative/innovative financing mechanisms, such as the private sector and inclusive financing mechanisms, which will discuss how these innovative mechanisms can help meet the increasing demands of disaster risk reduction.