



**Twenty-third Session of the Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction
Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe
11-12 November 2025**

Outcome report



Photo of participants attending the twenty-third session of the Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction



Introduction

The twenty-third session of the Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction was held from 11 to 13 November 2025 in Victoria Falls under the theme “Moving from commitments to action: delivering on the Windhoek Declaration and the Africa Common Position to the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2025”. The meeting was attended by 87 participants, including 23 online, who were drawn from member organizations of the Working Group and other invited stakeholder entities, including Regional Economic Communities (RECs),¹ Member States,² United Nations entities and civil society organizations, and organizations of person with disabilities. Despite an improvement in women’s participation compared with the previous session, sustained efforts are still needed to achieve gender parity in future sessions.

The session was chaired by the African Union Commission, while the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Regional Office for Africa served as a secretariat.

Objective

The main objective of the twenty-third session was to discuss strategic priorities and themes, and to agree on the way forward to accelerate the implementation of the Windhoek Declaration on advancing the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa, as well as the Africa Common Position to the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2025. The meeting also aimed at review progress in implementing recommendations from the twenty-second session of the Working Group.

Opening remarks

Opening remarks were delivered by Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution - Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe, Hon. Richard Moyo (MP), Mr. Amjad Abbashar, Chief, UNDRR Regional Office for Africa, Ms. Nana Dlamini, Acting Head, Disaster Risk Reduction Unit, Southern African Development Community, and Mr. Harsen Nyambe, Director, Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy, African Union Commission.

The following are among the issues that were highlighted in their opening remarks:

- Allowing Zimbabwe to host the twenty-third session of the Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction is a recognition of the country’s efforts to build resilience.
- The presence of the Minister of Local Government and Public Works, Zimbabwe, Hon. Daniel Garwe (MP), is a testament to the great importance the government attaches to disaster risk reduction.

¹ The Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and Southern African Development Community (SADC)

² Republic of Algeria, Republic of Namibia, and Republic of Zimbabwe



- The session provides a unique opportunity to integrate the priorities and commitments outlined in the Windhoek Declaration, the Africa Common Position, and The Geneva Call for Disaster Risk Reduction into the new implementation matrix for the Programme of Action for 2026-2030, to which the Group will contribute input during the meeting.
- The Working Group plays an important role in providing a platform for peer learning and supporting the implementation of the commitments we have made.
- Resilience building must remain a priority in the face of ever-increasing frequency, intensity, and duration of disasters. As disaster risk reduction is everybody's business, the continued engagement of all stakeholders is essential to advance progress in the implementing the Programme of Action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework across the continent.

They also thanked the Government of Zimbabwe, particularly the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, for hosting the meeting and hospitality accorded to the participants since their arrival. Furthermore, they expressed appreciation to all development partners, including the Government of Italy, the Government Germany, the European Union, and the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States for their continued support in advancing the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa, thereby contributing to progress towards the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

The meeting was officially opened by Minister of Local Government and Public Works, Zimbabwe, Hon. Daniel Garwe (MP). The Hon. Minister expressed gratitude to the African Union Commission, the United Nation Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Regional Office for Africa, and the Southern African Development Community for the opportunity to host the meeting. He emphasised that strengthening disaster risk reduction for resilience remains a priority for Zimbabwe and the continent as a whole. In this regard, he underscored the importance of the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2023 in Africa, the Windhoek Declaration, and the Africa Common Position – not only as instruments to enable Africa to speak with one voice, but also as frameworks to advance the theme of the twenty-third session of the Working Group.

The Hon. Minister called upon the Working Group and all stakeholders to move from commitments to action, including the implementation of the Early Warnings for All initiative by 2027 and ensuring gender-responsive and inclusive disaster risk reduction. Finally, he informed the Working Group of Zimbabwe's readiness to host the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2028.

Adoption of the programme of work

The programme of work was adopted as presented. The meeting comprised of ten sessions, including thematic panel discussions and breakout sessions focused on issues aligned with the theme of the meeting (see annex II).

Focus areas



The Working Group focused its deliberations on key strategic priorities emanating from the Windhoek Declaration, the Africa Common Position for the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2025, and the recommendations of the twenty-second session. These included:

- The development of a new Matrix for 2026-2030 to accelerate the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030;
- Advancing the Early Warning for All initiative and a Whole-of-Society Approach;
- The establishment and operationalization of a Disaster Risk Reduction Financing Mechanism and a Continental Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action; and
- Strengthening inclusive disaster risk reduction, infrastructure resilience, and risk-informed urban development in Africa.

In addition, the Working Group conducted an in-depth review of the status of the implementation of the recommendations adopted at its twenty-second session and acknowledged the following key achievements:

- **Enhanced capacity for reporting on the Sendai Framework:** Countries were supported, including through targeted capacity building, to strengthen their reporting using the Sendai Framework Monitor.
- **Mobilization of Africa's engagement in the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2025:** The Working Group played an important role in mobilizing active participation from across the continent. The Africa Regional Consultation Meeting was held successfully, resulting in the adoption of the Africa Common Position to the Global Platform. This Common Position enabled the continent to speak with one voice during the Platform and facilitated integration of the continent's priorities and concerns into the Geneva Call for Disaster Risk Reduction, the outcome document of the Platform.
- **Advances in Southern African Development Community (SADC) subregion:** The SADC Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction was launched. In addition, the subregion developed multi-hazard early warning systems and data sharing agreements to strengthen coordination among the Africa Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Action Systems. SAD and its member states also developed the SADC Framework for Resilience and its implementation plan, which have been validated.
- **Strengthening regional coordination mechanisms in the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) subregion:** Progress was made in enhancing the regional coordination mechanism with the view to harmonize disaster risk management policies in line with the Windhoek Declaration and the Sendai Framework. A CEN-SAD Policy Document on Disaster Risk Reduction and Urban Resilience was developed, along with a special solidarity fund to respond to humanitarian emergencies and disaster.
- **Development of the East Africa Disaster Dashboard:** The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) developed a beta version of the automated East



Africa Disaster Dashboard, which will support member states in improving the coverage and quality of reporting on the Sendai Framework Monitor.

- **Draft IGAD Anticipatory Action:** IGAD developed a draft Anticipatory Action platform for peer-to-peer learning, exchange of best practices, and development of a trigger system. The Platform will be launched in January 2026.
- **The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Regional Resilience Framework:** COMESA developed a Regional Resilience Framework in 2020, which was endorsed by the Council of Ministers. The Framework guides member states and stakeholders in developing and implementing their own resilience strategies. The implementation plan and resource mobilization strategy for the Resilience Framework are being updated.

The main challenges highlighted include increased vulnerability, largely attributed to climate change and inadequate investment in disaster risk reduction and resilience-building initiatives, limited progress in ensuring inclusive disaster risk reduction, the lack of effective information management and data-sharing mechanisms, and inadequate and unpredictable financial resources for disaster risk reduction.

To address these and other challenges that continue to undermine efforts accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework in Africa, RECs urged the Working Group to:

- Improve coordination among the African Union Commission, RECs, and Member States in implementing recommendations adopted by the Working Group and the priorities and commitments outlined in the Windhoek Declaration and the Africa Common Position for the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2025.
- Support efforts to strengthen partnerships for disaster risk reduction and enhance resource mobilization to close financing gaps at all levels.
- Support the development of the SADC Urban Resilience Programme by contextualizing the Africa Urban Resilience Programme.
- Revitalize and strengthen regional disaster risk reduction platforms.

Panel discussions and breakout sessions focused on the above-mentioned focus areas, enabling the Working Group to deep dive into issues critical for accelerating the implementation of the Sendai Framework by 2030.

The Working Group's contribution to the development of the new matrix for the Programme of Action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework in Africa for 2026-2030, facilitated the integration of priorities and commitments from the Windhoek Declaration, and the Africa Common Position to the Global Platform, and the Geneva Call for Disaster Risk Reduction into the matrix. Once adopted, the matrix will serve as a blueprint to guide the continent's efforts to advance progress on Sendai Framework by 2030, thereby contributing to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.



The session also included a field visit to the Zambezi River, hosted by Zimbabwe, which provided an additional opportunity to learn from the country's experience in applying DRR measures in wildlife conservation.

The twenty-third session concluded with the adoption of actionable recommendations (see annex I). The Working Group requested the African Union Commission and the UNDRR Regional Office for Africa to follow up with the identified lead and supporting entities on the implementation of these recommendations, to regularly update the Working Group on progress, and to prepare a consolidated report for discussion at its twenty-fourth session.

Date and venue of the twenty-fourth session

The twenty-fourth session is tentatively scheduled for April 2026 in the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) subregion. The African Union Commission will follow up with the ECCAS Commission regarding the exact dates and venue of the meeting and keep the Working Group informed on the final decision through its secretariat in due course.

Closing remarks

Closing remarks were delivered by Mr. Amjad Abbashar, Chief, UNDRR Regional Office for Africa, Ms. Nana Dlamini, Acting Head, Disaster Risk Reduction Unit, SADC, and Mr. Harsen Nyambe, Director, Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy, African Union Commission.

The speakers thanked the Government of Zimbabwe for successfully hosting the meeting and commended the Working Group for achieving visible transformation in the structure, content, format and inclusiveness of the meeting, as well as for the richness of the discussions, including through breakout sessions. Furthermore, they emphasised the need to continue moving from commitments to action, in line with the theme of the session, to ensure that the recommendations adopted at the meeting are translated into action at all levels. In addition, they expressed their appreciation to partners for their continued support.

In his closing remarks, the Chief Director of the Civil Protection Department, Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, Zimbabwe, Mr. Nathan Nkomo, underscored the alignment of the country's vision with the Sendai Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals and assured the Working Group of Zimbabwe's continued commitment to building resilience.

Annex I

Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction

Twenty-third session

Agreed recommendations/action points:

No.	Action	Lead entities	Support entities	Time frame
1.	Follow-up with the lead entities on pending Recommendations/Action Points from the Twenty-second Session of the AWGDRR and keep the Group informed of progress	AUC	UNDRR	By 31 March 2026
2.	Update the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Windhoek Declaration to facilitate the implementation of the Africa Common Position for the Global Platform for DRR 2025	AUC	RECs, UNDRR WMO	By 31 March 2026
3.	Establish the Disaster Risk Reduction Financing Facilitation Mechanism under the AWGDRR	AUC, UNDRR	RECs, Member States	By 31 December 2026
4.	Finalize and validate the Guidelines on resilience building	AUC	RECs, UNDP, NORCAP, UNICEF, WHO, IOM, GIZ, IFRC	By 31 March 2026
5.	Establish and operationalize the Continental Working Group on Anticipatory Action under the Africa Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Early Action System (AMHEWAS)	AUC	AUDA-NEPAD, IGAD, SADC, ECOWAS, ACMAD, UNDRR, WMO, FAO, IOM, UNICEF, GIZ, GreenAid International	By 31 March 2026
6.	Launch the Resilience Insight Africa knowledge hub	AUC	GIZ	By 31 March 2026
7.	Develop guidelines to support comprehensive and inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction action	AUC, UNDRR	RECs, UNICEF	By 31 March 2026



No.	Action	Lead entities	Support entities	Time frame
	plans, which are gender and disability sensitive			
8.	Organize a high-level advocacy session on the state of infrastructure resilience in Africa	AUC	CDRI, UNDRR, UNICEF, WMO	By 31 March 2026
9.	Finalize the new implementation matrix for the Programme of Action (2026-2030).	AUC	AUDA-NEPAD, RECs, UNDRR, WMO,	By 31 March 2026

Annex II

Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction

Twenty-third session

Programme of work

Time	Programme	Responsible/Facilitator
Day 1: Tuesday, 11 November		
08:30-09:00	Registration	AUC, UNDRR-ROA
09:00-09:15	Adoption of the agenda	Chair: Mr. Harsen Nyambe, Director, Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy, African Union Commission
09:15-10:30	<p>Session 1: Update on the status of implementation of the recommendations from the 22nd session of the AWGDRR</p> <p>Setting the scene: Ms. Zebad Alemayehu, UNDRR-ROA, 20 minutes</p> <p>Reflections on progress and next steps, including DRR coordination, by the Regional Economic Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Edith Bagambe, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), 7 minutes • Mr. Mansur Abubakar ISA, Programme Officer, Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), 7 minutes • Mr. Jully Ouma, Hazard Monitoring and Early Warning Specialist, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), 7 minutes 	Moderator: Ms. Teresa Pinto, DRR Technical Coordinator, AUC

Time	Programme	Responsible/Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Nana Dlamini, Acting Head- Disaster Risk Reduction Unit, Southern African Development Community (SADC), 7 minutes <p>Discussion, 22 minutes</p> <p>Chair’s summary and key takeaways, 5 minutes</p>	
10:30:11:00	Coffee break	AUC, UNDRR-ROA
11:00-11:30	<p>Session 2: Briefing on the outcome of the 2025 Global Platform for DRR and the Africa Common Position to the Platform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Geneva Call for Disaster Risk Reduction adopted at the Global Platform for DRR 2025, Presenter: Mr. Luca Rossi, Deputy Chief, UNDRR-ROA-ROA, 10 minutes Africa Common Position to the Global Platform for DRR 2025, Presenter: Prof. Emmanuel Osuteye, Urban Resilience Advisor, AUC, 10 minutes Discussion, 7 minutes <p>Chair’s summary and key takeaways, 3 minutes</p>	Moderator: Ms Nana Dlamini, Acting Head, Disaster Risk Reduction Unit, SADC
11:30-13:00	<p>Session 3: Validation of the draft concept paper and action plan for the Disaster Risk Reduction Financing Facilitation Mechanism under AWGDRR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting the scene: Mr. Luca Rossi, Deputy Chief, UNDRR-ROA, 10 minutes 	Moderator: Mr. Carinus de Kock, Periperi U

Time	Programme	Responsible/Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakout sessions, 45 minutes Report from breakout groups, 15 minutes Discussion, 15 minutes <p>Chair's summary and key takeaways, 5 minutes</p>	
13:00-14:00	Lunch	AUC, UNDRR-ROA
14:00- 15:00	<p>Session 4: Establishment of the Continental Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action: Rationale and anticipated roles of the AWGDRR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting the scene: Ms. Doaa Osman Sayed Osman, AUC, 10 minutes Breakout sessions, 30 minutes Report from breakout groups, Rapporteurs, 12 minutes Discussion, 5 minutes <p>Chair's summary and key takeaway, 3 minutes</p>	Moderator: Mr. Jully Ouma, IGAD
15: 00-16:30	<p>Session 5: From the four pillars of the Early Warning for All initiative to a Whole-of-Society Approach: how can we broaden the scope of early warning and early action to reach the milestone?</p> <p>Setting the scene: Ms. Tsitsi Trina Magadza, UNDRR-ROA-15 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakout sessions, 45 minutes Report from breakout groups, Rapporteurs, 15 minutes Discussion, 10 minutes 	Moderator: Dr Mariane Diop Kane, Programme Manager, WMO

Time	Programme	Responsible/Facilitator
	Chair's summary and key takeaways, 5 minutes	
16:30 -17:00	Coffee break	AUC, UNDRR-ROA
17:00: 17:30	<p>Session 6: Accelerating risk-informed urban development in Africa: reflections from the Resilient Initiative Africa project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenter: Ms. Ria Hidajat, Head, Resilience Initiative Africa (RIA) Project, German Corporation for International Cooperation, GIZ, 15 minutes • Discussion, 10 minutes <p>Chair's summary and key takeaways, 5 minutes</p>	<p>Moderator: Mr Nathan Nkomo, Chief Director, Department of Civil Protection, Republic of Zimbabwe</p>
Day 2: Wednesday, 12 November		
8:30-09:30	<p>Session 7: Guidelines on resilience building: operationalization of the Roots of African Resilience</p> <p>Setting the scene: Mr. Emmanuel Osuteye, Disaster Risk Reduction Unit, AUC, 10 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenter: Ms. Nomsa Dube, Policy development Expert, UNDP, 20 minutes • Discussion, 30 minutes <p>Chair's summary and key takeaways, 5 minutes</p>	<p>Moderator: Prof. E. Osuteye, AUC</p>
09:30-10:30	<p>Session 8: Inclusive DRR in Action: Progress and next steps</p> <p>Setting the scene: Ms. Katie Carlson-Akuno, UNDRR-ROA-ROA, 5 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive learning exercise to better understand exclusion, Federation of Organizations of Disabled People in Zimbabwe (FODPZ), 15 minutes • Plenary-reflections on key insights from the exercise, 20 minutes 	<p>Moderator: Mr. Mansur Abubakar ISA, Programme Officer, Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)</p>

Time	Programme	Responsible/Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the Advocacy Paper: the regional perspective, FODPZ, 10 minutes <p>Discussion, 8 minutes</p> <p>Chair's summary and key takeaways, 2 minutes</p>	
10:30-11:00	Coffee break	AUC, UNDRR-ROA
11:00-11:30	<p>Session 9: Exploring infrastructure resilience in Africa: vulnerabilities, responses, and opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenter: Ms. Raina Singh, Lead Specialist – Global Infrastructure Resilience CDRI, <i>15 minutes</i> • Discussion, 10 minutes <p>Chair's summary and key takeaways, 5 minutes</p>	<p>Moderator: Ms. Edith Bagambe, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, COMESA</p>
11:30-13:00	<p>Session 10: Breakout sessions: Matrix of the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa (Phase III: 2026-2030)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing on the objectives and expected outcomes of breakout sessions, and groups formation <p>Mr. Aboubakar Diane, AUC, 10 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakout groups (4 groups, each covering one priority area of the POA/Sendai Framework): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of progress in the implementation of Phase II: 2021-2025 	<p>Moderator: Dr Vincent Oparah, Head, Disaster Risk Management and Recovery, African Union Development Agency-NEPAD</p> <p>Facilitators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Aboubakar Diane, AUC • Mr. Mathewos Tulu, UNDRR-ROA

Time	Programme	Responsible/Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of the new Matrix (Phase III: 2026-2030), using the template provided <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matrix for Phase II: 2021-2025 • Windhoek Declaration • Africa Common Position to the Global Platform for DRR, June 2025 <p>The Geneva Call for Disaster Risk Reduction adopted at the Global Platform 2025</p>	
13:00-14:00	Lunch	AUC, UNDRR-ROA
14:00-14:10	<p>Playing Anthems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Union • Republic of Zimbabwe 	AUC
14:10-14:30	<p>Opening session</p> <p>Welcome remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution-Matabeleland North Province, Republic of Zimbabwe, Hon. Richard Moyo (MP) • Mr. Amjad Abbashar, Chief, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Regional Office for Africa, 5 minutes • Ms. Nana Dlamini, Acting Head, Disaster Risk Reduction Unit, Southern African Development Community, 5 minutes • Mr. Harsen Nyambe, Director, Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy, African Union Commission, 5 minutes <p>Official opening:</p>	Mr. Atupele Mwakalinga, Senior Policy Officer, AUC

Time	Programme	Responsible/Facilitator
	Minister of Local Government and Public Works, Republic of Zimbabwe, Hon. Daniel Garwe (MP) , 7 minutes	
14:30-14:40	Group photo	AUC, UNDRR-ROA
14:40-16:00	Session 10 (Contd.): Continuation of breakout sessions	Facilitators
16:00-	Cocktail hosted by the Republic of Zimbabwe	
Day 3: Thursday 13 November		
09:00 -10:30	Session 10 (Contd.): Reports from breakout groups: revised matrix for 2026-2023 for each priority area of the POA and Sendai Framework (based on the template provided) Rapporteurs	Moderator: Dr Vincent Oparah, Head, Disaster Risk Management and Recovery, African Union Development Agency-NEPAD
10:30-11:00	Coffee break	AUC, UNDRR-ROA
11:00-12:00	Session 10 (Contd.): Reports from breakout groups Rapporteurs	Moderator: Dr Vincent Oparah, Head, Disaster Risk Management and Recovery, African Union Development Agency-NEPAD
12:00-12:30	Session 11: Consideration and adoption of draft action points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presenter: Mr. Mathewos Tulu, UNDRR-ROA, 10 minutes Feedback/reflections from the AWGDRR, 15 minutes	Chair: Mr. Harsen Nyambe, Director, Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy, AUC
12:30-12:40	Session 12: Date and venue of the next AWGDRR meeting	Chair: Mr. Harsen Nyambe, Director, Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy, AUC
12:40 -13:00	Closing session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Amjad Abbashar, Chief, UNDRR Regional Office for Africa, 4 minutes 	Moderator: Mr. Atupele Mwakalinga, Senior Policy Officer, AUC

Time	Programme	Responsible/Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Nana Dlamini, Acting Head, Disaster Risk Reduction Unit, SADC, 4 minutes • Mr. Harsen Nyambe, Director, Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy, African Union Commission, 4 minutes • Mr. Nathan Nkomo, Chief Director Civil Protection Department, Republic of Zimbabwe, 5 minutes 	
13:00-14:00	Lunch	AUC, UNDRR-ROA
14:00-18:00	Field visit to Zambezi River in Zambezi National Park	Civil Protection Department, Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, Republic of Zimbabwe