

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

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UNDRR works in partnership with governments, the private sector, and civil society at global, national, city, and local levels to understand, reduce, and manage extreme heat risk and build resilience.

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) is the custodian agency of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The UNDRR works to provide leadership and support to accelerate global efforts in understanding, preventing, and managing risk to achieve inclusive decision-making, investment, and behaviour. It also coordinates UN system implementation, sustainable development, outcomes, and goals of the Sendai Framework.

UNDRR supports countries, local authorities, and other stakeholders in building resilience to extreme heat, advancing the Sendai Framework's goal to prevent and reduce new and existing disaster risk.

Lead Heat Entities:

Risk Knowledge, Monitoring and Capacity-
Development Branch

Technical Focal Points:

Marc Gordon, Senior Coordinator of the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework

Sanjaya Bhatia, Head, Global Education Training Institute (GETI) and Making Cities
Resilient 2030 (MCR2030)

Animesh Kumar, Head, UNDRR Bonn Office (Climate Change, Sendai Framework Monitor)

KEY FACTS

Between 2000 and 2019, extreme temperatures caused 13% of all disaster deaths worldwide, with 91% being the result of heatwaves.

In 2003, a major European heatwave across 15 European countries killed over 72,000 people, with the biggest impacts in Italy and France (20,089 and 19,490 heat-related deaths respectively).

In 2010, a summer heatwave led to more than 55,000 heat-related deaths in Russia, and more recently, two heatwaves in the summer of 2019 resulted in over 1,400 deaths in France.

The human cost of disasters: an overview of the last 20 years (2000-2019)

Extreme heat amplifies social vulnerabilities and public health risks.

In 2023, extreme heat, drought, wildfires, and severe flooding caused widespread damage across Europe, with urban areas facing intensified social problems such as loss of life from heatwaves, rising energy demands, and restricted mobility.

Despite the increasing frequency of these events, public perception of extreme heat remains insufficiently urgent, leading to underestimation of its risks. This lack of awareness results in higher public health burdens and greater strain on emergency services as people take unnecessary health and safety risks.

Flames of change: Innovating heat and wildfire governance for inclusive communities (2024)

Decision-Support Package on Extreme Heat

A decision-support package for extreme heat risk management is being developed through a collaboration with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). This package includes country analyses, evaluation of heat action plans, resource and capability mapping, heat literacy assessments, and evaluations of readiness among international organizations, culminating in the creation of a common framework for extreme heat risk governance. This also responds to the UN Secretary-General's Call to Action on Extreme Heat.

Core Partners: World Meteorological Organization (WMO), World Health Organization (WHO), Global Heat Health Information Network (GHHIN), 14 International Organizations and agencies

Risk Knowledge - Early Warnings for All

UNDRR leads Pillar 1 of the Early Warnings for All Initiative which aims to ensure all persons are protected by early warning systems. Pillar 1 works to strengthen risk knowledge as an essential component of inclusive, end-to-end early warning systems, notably helping countries increase their understanding of vulnerability and exposure, including to extreme heat. UNDRR produces normative guidance, tools and supports capacity-building of countries and partners to increase the use of risk knowledge to inform all pillars of early warning systems.

Core Partners: World Meteorological Organization (WMO), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems Initiative (CREWS), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and others

★ Featured initiative

Making Cities Resilient 2030 (MCR 2030)

Making Cities Resilient 2030 (MCR2030) is a unique cross-stakeholder initiative for improving local resilience through advocacy, sharing knowledge and experiences, establishing mutually reinforcing city-to-city learning networks, injecting technical expertise, connecting multiple layers of government, and building partnerships. The MCR2030 supported the development of an urban heat risk management resource package, including guidelines for cities. It also supported the [Flames of Change report](#) and accompanying special report on disability inclusion.

Core Partners: Resilient Cities Network, European Science and Technology Advisory Group, Americas and the Caribbean Science and Technology Advisory Group

Comprehensive Risk Management

UNDRR promotes a [comprehensive risk management approach](#) to strengthen the policy basis for implementation in countries. This provides an opportunity for extreme heat to be coherently integrated into disaster risk management strategies and national adaptation plans, which become key enablers for action. CRM is reported as part of the [Technical Expert Group on Comprehensive Risk Management \(TEG-CRM\)](#), under the Warsaw International Mechanism.

Core Partners: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) Executive Committee (ExCom)

Loss and Damage Data Support

UNDRR supports countries in collecting, analyzing and applying data on disaster losses and damages. This is done through a [global database](#) that helps countries systematically collect data on different events and their impacts. Of the 113 countries currently using this database, 27 have collected data on heat waves. UNDRR is now in the process of enhancing this database into a [disaster tracking system](#) for hazardous events and losses and damages that will further strengthen impact data and enhance national capacities to report on implementation of the Sendai Framework.

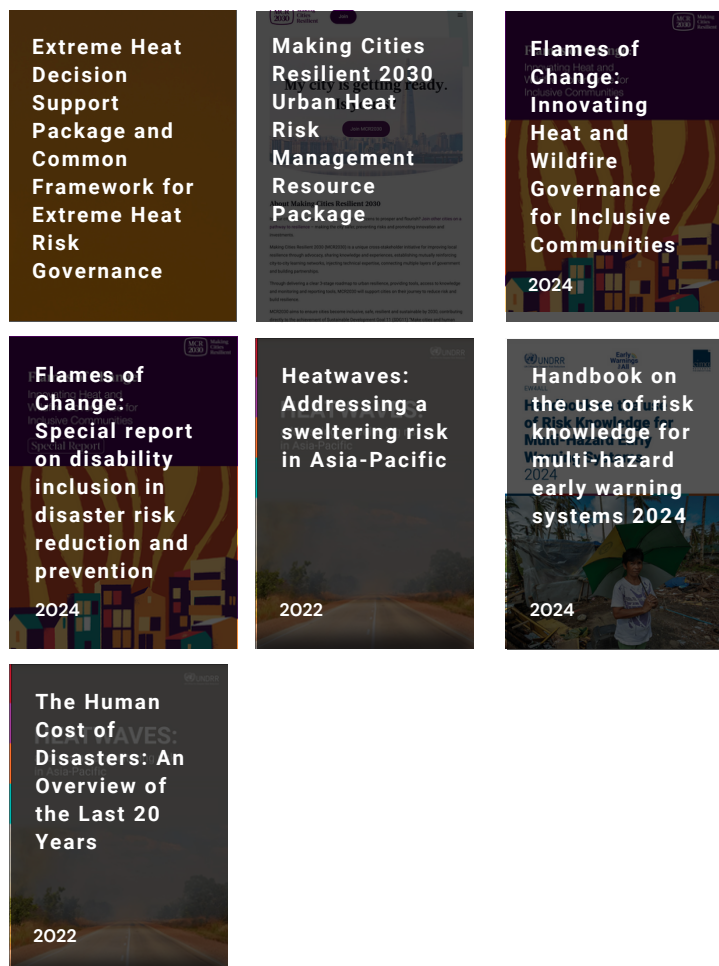
Core Partners: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) Executive Committee (ExCom)

Special Session on Extreme Heat at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

Extreme heat will be featured in a high-level event at the June 2025 Global Platform in Geneva. The event will see the launch of the Common Framework for Extreme Heat Risk Governance, and take stock of progress, share knowledge and good practices, in reducing extreme heat risk. The UN General Assembly recognizes the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction as a critical mechanism to review progress on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Since 2007, seven sessions of Global Platforms have taken place.

Core Partners: UN Member States, UN General Assembly





Foundational documents governing institutional heat activities

UN General Assembly Resolution A/77/L.70

Political declaration of the high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030

UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/69/283

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

Ministerial Declaration from the G20

Reaffirmed the commitment to institutionalize inclusive approaches to disaster risk reduction; to enhance collaborative efforts to explore opportunities to increase financing; to exchange knowledge and best practices; and to address the urgent need to reduce inequalities.

SUPPORTING THE SDGS, INCLUDING:



SEDAI FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Priority 1: Understanding disaster risk

Priority 2: Strengthening risk governance to manage disaster risk

Priority 3: Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience

Priority 4: Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to Build Back Better in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction



This heat action profile was developed by the [Global Heat Health Information Network](#) in partnership with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), as a contribution to the [United Nations Secretary-General's Call to Action on Extreme Heat](#) (2024). The content was validated by focal points from the profiled international organization, and captures a snapshot of its heat work at the time of publication. The profile will be periodically updated.

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