Local leadership for global impact

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Thank you to all our members, partners, supporters, staff and other stakeholders who have contributed their time, expertise and advice during this member-led strategy development process, facilitated by our Independent Strategy and Communication Advisor, Andrew Bidnell from InsideOut Consulting.

During an 8-month period we invited all our members to share their thoughts on priority areas for focus over the coming 5+ years. Our Strategy Facilitating Team facilitated this process using a combination of our online Community Platform and 12 face-to-face regional workshops. 550 affiliate and associate members contributed to our all-members survey, and nearly 200 people attended the workshops run around the world between July-September 2019. We also met with, and received extremely valuable input from a range of other expert stakeholders, including donors, academic partners, NGO groups, UN institutions and of course, our staff.

Our Strategy Drafting Committee, comprising Board and Secretariat members, consolidated the various inputs which were then shared with the Technical Advice & Strategy Steering Committee, staff and Regional Advisory Group members.

This member-led process has been a real team effort which in itself has been a valuable learning process with different conversations taking place and ideas being shared around the world. We are grateful to everyone involved and look forward to continuing these conversations over the coming months as we share, implement and deliver this strategy together.

Approved by the GNDR Global Board on February 6th, 2020.

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For more than a decade our network of civil society organisations, working to strengthen resilience and reduce risk in communities most at risk worldwide, has steadily grown in size and impact. We are now more than 1,200 organisations, many of them grassroots and local community groups who are working in over 120 countries. We are excited to share this member-led global network strategy that will guide our collective work over the coming five years.
Over the past year, together we have been reflecting on the world in which we live and looking ahead to the next decade to identify current and emerging risks, threats, challenges and opportunities. We have been seeking to understand the difference that we as a diverse network can make. In developing this strategy we have sought to build on the strong foundations that have been created.

We set ourselves the challenge of consulting worldwide, listening, learning and developing a clear direction for the next five years, and we are now excited to share this member-led strategy. It is designed to help guide activities, project planning and points of focus so that together we can support the people most at risk in strengthening their resilience and preventing hazards from becoming disasters. We are enormously grateful to the hundreds of members from across the globe who have actively participated in the development of this strategy, along with the input from a range of important stakeholders, including donors, academic partners, NGO groups, UN institutions and of course, our Board members and Secretariat team.

An overriding conclusion from this strategic exercise has been that our work as a network is needed more than ever. While media headlines capture some of the large-scale disasters that occur, the communities living in vulnerable circumstances, with whom our members work, are experiencing disasters that are out of the spotlight and increasing in intensity and impact on a day-to-day basis. People living in poverty are not only disproportionately affected by these everyday disasters, but are also often excluded from decision-making processes when development options are considered. The multiple global development frameworks contributing to Agenda 2030 offer important steps forward; however, from the perspective of communities most at risk, greater coherence is required to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and desired impact. At the same time, space for civil society to connect, share and influence is shrinking in many places around the world. Urgent change is needed, and this strategy maps out three particular goals that we have set ourselves for the next five years: we must strengthen the collaboration, mobilisation and solidarity of civil society organisations; we must champion a localisation movement; and together we must strive for risk-informed development.

Many of the successful activities developed over GNDR’s past decade will continue, particularly our Views from the Frontline programme, which is playing a key role in amplifying local voices and experience to influence approaches to risk-informed development. Members have also identified a range of new and innovative ways in which we can support each other and deliver changes that will increase the impact we are having at the disaster frontline. We are continuously struck by the positive difference that many, often small, organisations are making. It is incredibly inspiring to see the improvements that can be made, which gives us hope and motivates us to continue our efforts to develop our unique network and provide the interface between civil society organisations at the frontline and local, national and international policy-making institutions and governance structures.

Thank you for joining us in this journey. Together let us ensure that the views and voices of people most at risk are heard, and that their experience, knowledge and expertise are used to influence policies and practices that make a positive impact at the local level.

In solidarity,
Farah Kabir, Chair of the Global Board
Bijay Kumar, Executive Director
6th February 2020
Our vision

A WORLD IN WHICH EVERYONE WORKS TOGETHER TO STRENGTHEN THE RESILIENCE OF PEOPLE MOST AT RISK AND PREVENT HAZARDS FROM BECOMING DISASTERS
Esther Muwereza, 24, lives in Namwongo, a slum in Kampala, Uganda and was a participant in Views from the Frontline. Credit: Jumba Martin
OUR NETWORK

GNDR is the largest international network of civil society organisations working to strengthen resilience and reduce risk in communities worldwide. We are more than 1,200 organisations, many of them grassroots and local community groups as well as national, regional and international organisations and networks.

We support the interface between civil society organisations at the frontline and local, national and international policy-making institutions and governance structures. GNDR members work together to amplify the voices of people most at risk and to influence policies and practices. We strengthen our capacities by creating knowledge, and through collaborative learning and action. Together our network is working to make an impact in over 120 countries.

“Your work is essential because you are actually bringing the voices of the communities to the national policy...if we don’t have organisations such as yourselves their voices will never be observed.

Ms. Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for DRR
OUR VALUES

GNDR members believe that we can achieve more through collaboration.

Our core values bind us together:

Commitment to work together in a collaborative, inclusive and participatory manner

Transparency and accountability

Equity and respect for diverse identities, needs and perspectives

Trust and openness to listen, share and learn from one another
GNDR’s origins can be traced back to the UN ‘World Conference for Disaster Reduction’ in January 2005. The need for a global network of civil society organisations working together towards disaster reduction was identified during the conference to support a more coordinated voice for civil society in DRR policy, and to focus on bringing voices from communities affected by disasters into global policy fora. This embryonic idea was made a reality in 2007, when our network officially started its journey.

2007 > 2020

1,200+
GNDR Members

120+
Countries
Since then, together with the support of various donors, partners and a growing membership of over 1,200 organisations in more than 120 countries across the world, we have built a dynamic, collaborative civil society network. Capacity is being strengthened at different levels, policy and practice is being influenced using a variety of tools and methodologies including the innovative Views from the Frontline (VFL) approach, and focus is being maintained on the reality of communities most affected by disasters.

We have developed from a disaster risk reduction advocacy network seeking to influence policies, to conducting innovative research, partnering on capacity strengthening programmes, contributing to the coherence debate, and bringing a risk lens to development. Our focus on unreported and unsupported ‘everyday disasters’ has informed mainstream thinking and there has been a growing emphasis on localisation to understand local needs and to support members with their work.

Over the past decade, important progress has been made to connect with a range of different stakeholders who value partnering with GNDR members as an effective way of reaching out to, and learning from, the local level. We value the growing partnerships with donors and will continue to develop a collaborative approach. Using our convening capabilities internationally, and increasingly regionally and locally, members have led a range of activities including evaluations, community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) work, community exchange visits, an influential ‘Everyday Disasters’ campaign, connecting communities most at risk live to Global Platforms, and the development of Cookbooks on Coherence and CBDRM.

Governance has been an important point of focus and our network has evolved from being steered by trustees, to establishing a globally representative governance structure that is collectively providing oversight to the network’s membership. This is supporting greater accountability and closer communication and connection to members. Members have elected regional board representatives; we have convened regional advisory groups, established national focal points, and encouraged participation of members in a range of international, regional and national gatherings. Use of technology is also improving and helping communication, as well as reducing our carbon footprint. The recent launch of the Community Platform – an online forum that enables communication across the membership – is a valuable platform that offers exciting opportunities for the coming years.

As more civil society organisations learn about GNDR and the benefits of contributing to, and learning from, a growing global network, the number of members continues to increase. With this growth comes increasing demands from members who value the impact that GNDR can make. Our small Secretariat team based across Bangkok, Dakar, London, Nairobi, New Delhi and Santiago is helping to support members as effectively as possible. Meeting the demands of members remains an ongoing challenge and securing further resources is a priority. Continuing to enhance our connection to members will be a feature of this next strategic period.

The experience and learning from our journey so far has helped to inform GNDR’s strategy for the next five years.

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**“**

GNDR has been instrumental in encouraging UNDRR to establish a mechanism for civil society to formally input into the Sendai process. The group has now recently been established.

Mid-term evaluation of 2016-20 strategy conducted by INTRAC, 2018

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There is much more awareness of DRR than fifteen years ago – more of an interest at high level discussions where Sendai planning raised that awareness and GNDR has contributed in bringing community voices to those high level discussions.

Respondent interviewed in the Frontline evaluation, 2018

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**“**

GNDR’s approach to build resilience is very wide and inclusive, by gathering perspectives from all stakeholders, not just from civil society.

Jozias Blok, DEVCO

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GNDR Members have stated they understand their own communities better because of the Frontline programme.”

Mid-term evaluation of 2016-20 strategy conducted by INTRAC, 2018

Views from the Frontline

Launched in 2009, the original focus was a community survey to gather frontline data and perceptions of the Hyogo Framework for Action, to amplify local voices and influence international decision-making. The VFL concept has since expanded to include more countries, more communities and has deepened the understanding and analysis possible when hearing the first-hand realities of life on the frontline of disasters. Members can use the survey findings in different ways: convening community meetings; designing action plans; facilitating national multi-stakeholder workshops with governments, private sector and NGOs to develop national workplans; influencing other international frameworks such as Sendai, Sustainable Development Goals; and more.

An indicator of the progression and growing influence of VFL can be seen in the 2019 programme which aims to strengthen the inclusion and collaboration between people at risk, civil society and governments in the design and implementation of policies and practices to reduce risks and strengthen resilience. VFL is the largest independent global review of disaster risk reduction at the local level and the data is free and openly available online at www.vfl.world. Using this knowledge, members will be implementing 750 community action plans focussed on building resilience across 50 countries in 2020. The continued development of the VFL approach, and associated learning from the process and findings, provides a strong platform on which to build further activities and enhance our advocacy.

750 Community action plans focussed on building resilience across 50 countries in 2020
The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management.

UNDRR Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction, 2017

Resilience is the capacity of a system, be it an individual, a forest, a city or an economy, to deal with change and continue to develop. It is about how humans and nature can use shocks and disturbances like a financial crisis or climate change to spur renewal and innovative thinking.

Stockholm Resilience Centre
At the heart of the growing local, national and international influence of our members are seven guiding principles.
1. Start at the local level

Recognise the local context and understand community perspectives of risk

It is vital that the experience of different challenges faced by people across the world is used to inform not just global frameworks and national policies, but also the approaches to implement these policies at the local level. The realities for people on the disaster frontline, living with fragility, insecurity and informality, need to be understood so that policies and practices are appropriate and effective.

2. Partner and collaborate

Work with and across all groups and levels to pursue the interests of people at risk

At the heart of the creation and continued development of GNDR is the belief that civil society organisations are stronger together. Partnering with organisations within and across different regions and sectors on shared actions provides solidarity, increases the opportunity to secure political space and enhances impact. Collaboration goes beyond civil society partnerships: an all-society approach is needed to include a range of state and non-state actors such as communities most at risk, different community groups, government departments, international agencies, faith groups, other networks, the private sector, media, academia, and more. The way forward is to connect with each other, form partnerships, learn and work together.

3. Include all groups

Ensure the inclusion of all groups, particularly those most at risk

People and groups within society are often affected in different ways by the impacts of extreme hazards and threats. Different levels and types of vulnerability are often a consequence of disparities and inequalities within countries. We must recognise the intersectionality of discrimination that leads to vulnerability, including gender, ethnicity, disability, LGBTQI+, religious minorities, elderly, youth and children. In particular, special attention must be given to people living in poverty and in vulnerable situations who have limited access to government planning and decision-making processes. They are the most impacted by the effects of these processes and who possess substantial local capacities, indigenous knowledge and expertise.

LOCAL VIEW

Inclusion of communities most at risk in the planning and implementation of actions ensures the most appropriate intervention.

In the Dominican Republic, communities’ assessments of threats, consequences, actions and barriers indicated that what the local government was focusing on (flood risk), was not what communities most at risk perceived as their main threat (water pollution). The local disaster risk reduction committee is now prioritising anti-pollution measures instead of flood preparedness.

“We used to work in a participatory way. Now we work in an inclusive way.”

Lidia Ester Santana, Community member, Haina, Dominican Republic
also community resources being gathered together for collective action. Various funding channels should be mobilised, ranging from institutional sources such as international donors, bilateral cooperation agencies, UN and INGOs, to individual-based sources such as individual contributions or diaspora groups' contributions. In addition, the private sector (from multinationals to small and medium enterprises) has a role to play in mobilising resources for community resilience.

GNDR is in a unique position to support the resource mobilisation aspect of a localisation movement: the Secretariat can act as a liaison between big institutional donors and its member organisations, while the diversity of the network membership can be leveraged to strengthen knowledge, expertise and experience in taking the lead in policy-making and planning for resilience.

**LOCAL VIEW**

Resources should be channelled to the local level.

Chilean municipalities have been supported by external donors and the government to improve their work on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. They have set up a national network to advise the government on these issues. Locally, they are engaging communities most at risk in knowledge-sharing and dialogue in order to improve municipal capacities.1\(^{1/2}\)
Align policies with practices

Ensure coherence across disaster risk reduction, climate change and other development frameworks and activities

GNDR believes that the perspective of communities at risk must be part of all international frameworks.

In complex, uncertain and unpredictable situations, vulnerable households adopt coping strategies that are holistic, flexible, and iterative. People do what they can to both protect and enhance lives, livelihoods and assets. The complex, intertwined nature of the threats and hazards to which people are exposed cannot be adequately addressed with a focus on single-issue solutions. Coherence starts with taking the perspective of communities most at risk and ensuring that coherent approaches across different levels and the various post-2015 agreements meet at the frontline - where policies result in practices.

Be accountable to local communities most at risk

Ensure that we are accountable and challenge others to do the same

Community accountability is about engagement with communities most at risk, with whom our members work, and being responsible to local people and responsive to their needs and the risks they face. GNDR members are ultimately seeking to strengthen the resilience of people most at risk, and we are therefore accountable to them for our actions. A strong civil society, accountable to local communities, can then play a vital role in supporting, facilitating and demanding that governments and other actors fulfil their mandates, duties and obligations and are accountable to populations at risk.

We have had the opportunity to attend meetings to exchange ideas and experiences with other African members. We now keep in regular communication, which has helped us in our planning and implementation and also with our fundraising.

Alzouma Mounkaila, Bonferey Action Directe pour la Protection de l’environnement (ADPE), Niger
A core strength of our network is the diversity of experience and expertise that members bring. This creates an ability to undertake different roles and work across different levels (local to global), and to span the different development frameworks and agendas. Here are six interconnected roles that our network plays.

**Catalyst**

We spark action and energy across and beyond this movement of civil society organisations to speed up an all-society approach for resilience; we facilitate and support local action by working in solidarity with people most at risk.

**Capacity Strengthener**

We strengthen capacities and capabilities through member-to-member and member-to-partner support.

**Convenor**

We develop and strengthen relationships and partnerships by connecting local, national and international actors, working across different levels, agendas and frameworks.
GNDR brings a much needed bottom-up approach to the multilateral policy dialogue. A network such as GNDR, by the people and for the people, provides valuable evidence that helps to raise the communities’ voices.

*Sergio Perez Leon, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation*
Disasters are increasing in intensity and impact and they are having a disproportionate impact on communities living in poverty, with whom GNDR members are working around the world. Some large-scale disasters make global headlines, but most disasters take place out of the media spotlight. Cyclone Idai in Southern Africa, the 2018 tsunami in Sulawesi, Indonesia, the ongoing Rohingya crisis in South Asia, Typhoon Hagibis in Japan, and displaced populations in Syria are reminders of the importance of our work. But 68.5% of all economic losses in the period 2005–2017 were attributed to extensive risk events. These are the ‘everyday’ unseen disasters that cause much of the vulnerability faced by low-income households and communities on the disaster frontline. Every year since 2000, over a quarter of a billion people have lost their home, livelihood or health as a result of a disaster. For people living in poverty and in vulnerable circumstances, the consequence of multiple hazards and threats is the loss of lives and livelihoods. The world in which they live is one where experiencing disaster is a regular occurrence.

Global economic systems produce and perpetuate economic inequality. This inequality means that economic growth is not reducing relative poverty. It heightens risk and intersects with age-old forms of systematic exclusion and discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability, age, caste, and more. Access to appropriate technology, knowledge and other resources is unequal. Growing economic inequality exacerbates social problems such as youth unemployment and gender-based violence, and denies people their dignity and their rights. Violence, insecurity, and vulnerability to hazards and threats are all part of the inequality equation. Last year the richest 26 people owned the same as the poorest 3.8 billion people - half of humanity. Almost half of the world’s population barely escape extreme poverty, living on less than $5.50 a day.
G20 countries hold 84% of global wealth and this inequality entrenches wealth and power in the hands of a few, creating societies and structures that are shaped to represent the interests of the elite minority at the expense of the majority of society. This growing inequality at an international level is also seen at national and local levels.

With disasters having a disproportionate impact on those living in the poorest and most vulnerable situations, it is important that international focus is

“We are using the Frontline findings in our conversations with government about a Disaster Risk Reduction Bill in Uganda, and our advocacy efforts have finally been taken to the next stage.

Frederick Olinga, Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations, Uganda
placed on global agreements. These include the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Agenda for Humanity, the New Urban Agenda, and the Global Compact for Migration. Taken individually, none of these frameworks engage with the full spectrum of threats and risk drivers that affect communities at the frontline. But taken collectively, they reflect the range of risks and means of addressing risks and securing sustainable development. Yet greater coherence is needed to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and the achievement of common and respective goals. Taking a frontline perspective, by looking through the local lens and coordinating actions, will help to avoid duplication, maximise gains and achieve the desired impact.

The ‘localisation agenda’ emerging from the World Humanitarian Summit process has highlighted four areas for focus: capacity strengthening, funding changes, coordination and measurement. Whilst there are a range of views as to what really constitutes ‘localisation’, the experience of GNDR members is that policies and practices must be informed by the realities on the ground, otherwise development will be ineffective and may even exacerbate threats and vulnerability further. Communities most at risk and local civil society groups, who can amplify these local realities, are often not given the opportunity to play these leading roles. Since our launch in 2007, GNDR has been consistently campaigning for a greater local focus and our continually developing ‘Views from the Frontline’ programme has helped to sharpen this focus.

Two-thirds of local civil society organisations say they are unable to advocate community priorities at their National Platforms for DRR.

Nearly half of local governments think that local investment projects do not take local risks into account.

Source: VFL 2019

**COHERENCE HAPPENS IN DIFFERENT WAYS**

**Integration**

At the local level there is integration:

actions that address multiple threats at the same time, informed by the perspectives of people most at risk.

**Coordination**

At the national level there is coordination:

different departments coordinate their activities so that there is no duplication, or one activity that hinders another.
At the international level there is communication and alignment: the various frameworks and the implementation plans for these frameworks are known across sectors; and goals, targets, and indicators are aligned.

Effective coherence requires strong local, national and international connections that uphold the interests of people who are most at risk.

Communication

Now perhaps more than ever, is a critical time for GNDR to continue building and strengthening advocacy, learning, and local action on risk-informed development.
SIX DRIVERS OF RISK

1. Climate change
2. Conflict
3. Gender inequality
Looking ahead to the next five years, there are many established, and also emerging, threats and challenges affecting the lives and livelihoods of people living in vulnerable situations with whom our members work. As well as natural hazards, these include climate change, pandemics, economic and financial instability, terrorism and transnational criminal networks, cyber fragility, geopolitical volatility, various forms of conflict and much more. Six interconnected drivers of risk have been emphasised by GNDR members and stakeholders for particular focus in this next strategy:

4. **Food and water insecurity**
5. **Urbanisation**
6. **Forced displacement**
1. Climate change

Climate-induced disasters accounted for 90% of all major disasters between 1998 and 2017 and are now happening at the rate of one a week – mostly out of the international spotlight. Climate change threatens to annihilate the development efforts that the world has made in recent times. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report that limiting global warming to 1.5ºC goes hand in hand with reaching world goals set for sustainable development and eradicating poverty, and unprecedented transitions in all aspects of society are required to keep warming to 1.5ºC compared to 2ºC or higher.

Extreme weather events and rising sea levels are the new norm and the frequency and intensity of sudden-onset hazards is predicted to increase, and worsen the impacts of slow-onset hazards. Patterns of weather and rainfall will change around the world with droughts becoming more common and severe in some places, and floods in others.

Environmental degradation seen in deforestation, loss of biodiversity, deterioration of drainage patterns, unscientific development and other factors, is increasing risks to society and the land. Climate and environmental risks are clearly priority challenges that drive risk in a multitude of ways: rising sea levels, desertification, wildfires, water scarcity, extreme weather, crop failures, displacement, migration and increased risk of different types of conflict. In one way or another these affect all the communities with whom GNDR members work with.

The impacts of climate change mean that disaster losses are rising. The last 20 years have seen a rise of 251% in direct economic losses from climate-related disasters, and it is the people most at risk who are often disproportionately impacted – particularly those in the global south. Our focus on risk-informed development requires us to provide the frontline perspective to the climate justice debate on loss and damage, to identify methods to further converge climate change adaptation into disaster risk reduction, to advocate for climate and disaster risk-informed investment, and campaign for action at an all-society level. GNDR members in all regions have highlighted this important challenge which would benefit from the collective strength of our network.

LOCAL VIEW

Ensure local-level monitoring so that the effectiveness of interventions can be assessed by those who aim to benefit from these interventions.

Communities in Cadiz, Philippines were involved in a participatory planning process to develop the city’s 5-year DRR and CCA plan. The process involved communities’ participation from the very start of the intervention, but also their engagement in steering the activities (through the creation of a locally-led steering group) and in monitoring their success (through participatory Monitoring and Evaluation structures).
2. Conflict

Many GNDR members operate in fragile states, and in contexts where democracy is unstable or under threat. The impact of climate change, as well as other threats, exacerbates this fragility, and 58% of deaths from so-called ‘natural disasters’ occur in the top 30 most fragile states, with numbers of people affected often unreported or vastly under-reported. For every $100 spent on response in fragile states, only $1.30 was spent on DRR between 2005 and 2010.\footnote{SIX DRIVERS OF RISK CONFLICT} Disasters are increasingly happening in conflict areas and when conflict, including political violence, is part of the local reality, traditional approaches to risk reduction are challenged.

The experience of many GNDR members is that communities in their countries are faced with violence and fragility which increases their vulnerability to disasters. Recognition of how conflict, in various forms, drives vulnerability is therefore critical when designing frontline risk-reduction strategies. Conflict and socio-political confrontations also challenge the notion of the centrality of the state in establishing policies and mechanisms as the primary entry point to reducing risk. With a growing occurrence of fragility and conflict in different forms, members are expressing an urgent need for our network to better understand and prioritise the link between conflict and risk-informed development. The issue of integrating development, humanitarian, and peace-building actions is one that has gained relevance in the international space. While the importance of the so-called ‘triple nexus’ (development - humanitarian action – peace) is well understood, its operationalisation remains a challenge. Our contribution as a global network is to learn from the local reality, to share and amplify this learning. This is an area in which members are requesting greater focus.

For every $100 spent on response in fragile states, only $1.30 was spent on DRR between 2005 and 2010.

**LOCAL VIEW**

**Policy coherence.**

In Honduras, communities most at risk identify conflict as a barrier to reducing the impact of floods.\footnote{SIX DRIVERS OF RISK CONFLICT}
3. Gender inequality

One of the major barriers to risk-informed development, which interconnects with all other drivers of risk, is gender inequality. Unless development is systematically gender transformative, we will see disasters placing women into intractable cycles of poverty.

Research across the world shows that women and girls remain discriminated against in education, employment, health, political representation, and much more. In addition, women and girls are disproportionately affected by disasters and, whilst often being the first responders, are regularly discriminated against when recovery and rehabilitation efforts take place. The consequences are damaging not just for individuals, but for families, communities and society as a whole. Patriarchy is manifested in various forms and societies are losing out by not harnessing the diversity of skills, experiences and perspectives from the whole of humanity, rather than just half of the population. While the World Economic Forum highlights that progress is being made, it still predicts that globally, gender parity is a long way off and there are enormous gaps to be closed, particularly in the economic and political empowerment dimensions.12

Experience of GNDR members working with local communities is that, for transformative progress to be made in the reduction of risk and strengthening of community resilience, a focus on gender inequality is critical when understanding the drivers of risk, identifying points of focus and designing and developing different activities. It means ensuring that women who face risks and are in vulnerable situations are empowered to provide solutions, demand rights, services and increased access to information, and participate in decision-making processes. In the next five years, this means us standing together to bring about a shift from women being viewed as a homogenous group with a ‘one size fits all’ approach to reducing their risk, to developing distinct ways of building resilience relevant to the diverse contexts and factors which women are experiencing, including age, culture, class, caste, and more.
Food and water insecurity are seen by many to be the biggest threats to our future. A lack of nutritious food, harmful water management and water scarcity, are all connected to multiple socio-cultural factors and economic policies, and this increasing threat has been highlighted by GNDR members in different parts of the world as an area for particular focus.

Food security is defined when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet dietary needs for a productive and healthy life. However, the fact is that while enough food is produced in the world to feed each person 2,800 calories every day, more than most adults require, one in nine people are chronically malnourished. Water security is considered ‘the reliable availability of an acceptable quantity and quality of water for health, livelihoods and production, coupled with an acceptable level of water-related risks.’ More than a billion people live in water-scarce regions and predictions are that 3.5 billion could face water scarcity by 2025. 700 million people worldwide could be displaced by intense water scarcity by 2030. The availability of freshwater has fallen short of adequately meeting its demand in most parts of Asia, Africa and the Middle East, and nearly two billion people in the world lack access to clean water.

Land encroachment, unplanned expansion, over-exploitation of resources, deforestation, corruption and the corporatisation of land and water are all contributing to increasing food and water insecurity. It is the communities living in poverty, with whom GNDR members are working, who are most at risk. They face the challenges of availability, accessibility and affordability of nutritious food and clean water. GNDR members report that a lack of these basic necessities is causing deaths, malnutrition, disease and conflicts around the world.
5. Urbanisation

More than half of the world’s population are now living in urban areas — increasingly in highly-dense cities. Urbanisation across many low-to-middle income countries has increased rapidly over the last 50 years. Nepal and Mali, for example, have seen the share of people living in urban areas more than quadruple; in Nigeria and Kenya, they have more than tripled. When this urban growth is unplanned, slums develop and risk increases with a lack of access to basic resources. Increasingly, more and more disasters are reported from the urban areas of low and middle income countries, and with many GNDR members working with communities most at risk in these urban settings, this trend of growing urbanisation and the associated risks that this can entail is an important area for future focus.

More than 379 million urban residents are at risk of river flooding, while 157 million are threatened by earthquakes, while 157 million are threatened by windstorms. Adding to this, sea-level rises are threatening millions of people living in coastal cities less than 5 meters above sea level.18

Furthermore, 80% of the world’s largest cities are vulnerable to a variety of hazards, with flooding, earthquakes and windstorms being the biggest threats. 379 million urban residents are at risk of river flooding, 283 million urban residents are at risk of earthquakes, while 157 million are threatened by windstorms. Adding to this, sea-level rises are threatening millions of people living in coastal cities less than 5 meters above sea level.18

Locally, the 2019 water crisis in Chennai was the result of multiple factors. These included climate change, population growth and poorly planned urban development over water reservoirs. LV5
UNHCR reports that 2018 saw the world’s forcibly displaced population reach a record high: 70.8 million people were forcibly displaced due to persecution, conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations, or other reasons.¹⁹ On a daily basis 37,000 people are fleeing their homes because of conflict and persecution. With the average length of displacement reaching 25 years, it is critical that it is not only the short-term needs of internally displaced people and refugees that are met, but also that they are able to build longer-term resilience. Large-scale population movements within and across borders can reduce access to essential services and livelihood options, and increase exposure to violence, poverty and insecurity, not just for displaced populations but also for host communities.²⁰

Building resilience when people are on the move is inherently difficult. How can we support communities most at risk to withstand and transform in spite of shocks, when their livelihoods have been left behind? How can we build disaster resilience of communities who have lost connection with their support networks? Many of GNDR’s members work with both host communities and displaced people to reduce that risk in extremely challenging circumstances. This growing trend is another challenge for our network: we need to consider how we work together, across and beyond our membership, to support those people most at risk.
# Theory of Change

## What is our vision?

A world in which everyone works together to strengthen the resilience of people most at risk and prevent hazards from becoming disasters.

## Why is this not happening?

Instead, disasters are increasing in impact and they are disproportionately impacting the most marginalised because:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why is this not happening?</th>
<th>Our vision can be achieved if:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSOs have shrinking space to amplify local realities</td>
<td>Partnerships and joint actions between CSOs are created or strengthened, and civic space is widened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions are not appropriate as they are not informed by local realities</td>
<td>There is an increase in local actors deciding on resilience priorities and securing sufficient resource</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development is often not risk-informed and creates more risk as poverty, disasters, and climate change are addressed incoherently</td>
<td>Development takes into account the range of threats at the local level</td>
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TO BRING ABOUT THESE CHANGES, GNDR WILL NEED TO:

### Strengthen the collaboration, mobilisation and solidarity of CSOs

**We can achieve this goal if:**
- CSOs recognise the benefit of collaboration over competition
- CSOs are able to collaborate

**Mechanisms and policies are in place to enable collaboration**
- CSOs are held to account to collaborate

### Champion a localisation movement

**We can achieve this goal if:**
- Governments and INGOs believe CSOs should lead
- Local CSOs have capacity to lead and be accountable to communities most at risk

**The enabling environment for local CSOs to lead exists**
- Global and national actors are held to accountable for localisation

### Strive for risk-informed development

**We can achieve this goal if:**
- Different sectors believe they must build resilience whilst advancing development
- Evidence-based knowledge exists and is applied on how to do effective risk-informed development in six critical contexts

**Different sectors at different levels have the opportunity to collaborate**
- All actors, not just DRR practitioners, have clear roles for taking risk into account
Looking ahead, we have three interlinked goals:

GNDR gives us the courage and strength to make our governments accountable within and outside of the country. With GNDR, I don’t feel alone. I am part of a global community.

Sarwar Bari, Pattan Development Organisation, Pakistan
Strengthen the collaboration, solidarity and mobilisation of civil society organisations

Over the past decade our network has grown in numbers, diversity and strength. We are establishing ourselves as truly global and increasingly influential in pursuing risk-informed development. Now we must realise this potential by ensuring members have the mechanisms, resources and commitment to work collaboratively across and beyond our network.

There is a need to transform the way society interacts and place greater emphasis on citizens disproportionately impacted by disasters. We need to enhance and maintain a clear focus on collaboration and solidarity so that we are able to work together effectively across countries and continents and build a global movement for transformative change.

We must continuously re-energise and harness the commitment and dynamism that members bring to the work they do around the world. To ensure our network is able to effectively represent people living in poverty and vulnerable situations in some of the most challenging places on earth, we must also strengthen our accountability and governance structures.

LOCAL VIEW

Development increases existing risk or creates new risk.

In Malaysia, the local authority of Seberan Perai took a participatory approach to developing its new strategy. Following recommendations from the community, the strategy includes a common set of actions that aim at simultaneously increasing environmental protection, DRR, inclusive governance and local economic development.396
Sustainable development cannot be achieved without local level leadership. Local communities most at risk must be enabled to participate, influence and take decisions on risk-informed development policies and practices because they are the people most at risk. They have critical knowledge and experience of the threats they face and their consequences, the actions which help to reduce risk and barriers to those actions. For GNDR members working at the frontline of disaster risk, the idea of localisation is a revolutionary approach that turns traditional hierarchical global thinking on its head. It means strengthening the capacity of local communities most at risk in terms of knowledge and skills; establishing effective systems and procedures in terms of governance and accountable management practice; supporting an enabling policy environment of the national/sub-national governments, donor agencies, INGOs and private sector; ensuring there are linkages among local actors at the horizontal level and across the local, national, and international levels, to engage, influence, implement and enforce accountability; and transferring financial resources so that actions match words.

A localisation movement connects local communities in all countries around the world and amplifies their voices at the relevant national and international levels. It emphasises upholding the human rights of people most at risk and recognises that there is knowledge, expertise and commitment at all levels, but local communities most at risk and frontline organisations must have space to influence, access to resources and the power to take decisions. A localisation movement with these characteristics is needed to make the transformative change that is required for a world in which people most at risk are able to prevent hazards becoming disasters.

For GNDR, localisation does not solely focus on channelling humanitarian assistance funds to local actors. It refers to structural changes at local, national and international level, where local actors (local authorities, CSOs, small businesses, communities most at risk) have the capacity, resources and power they need to decide how to strengthen their own resilience.

**LOCAL VIEW**

Inclusion of local communities in the planning and implementation of actions ensures the most effective intervention. In Somalia, elderly people were consulted in the development of plans to improve water access in their community. Their knowledge of traditional underground water sources supported the project activities. The identification of these water sources and assigning their use to nomads or pastoral groups helped to reduce the potential for conflict between the two groups.

For GNDR, localisation does not solely focus on channelling humanitarian assistance funds to local actors. It refers to structural changes at local, national and international level, where local actors (local authorities, CSOs, small businesses, communities most at risk) have the capacity, resources and power they need to decide how to strengthen their own resilience.
Sustainable development can only be achieved when local risk is fully understood. Risk is potential for adverse impacts on the lives, livelihoods and assets of people. And levels of risk are determined by the threats people face, their vulnerability, and their capacities. When development is not risk-informed, communities report that far from offering progress, this so-called ‘development’ is actually creating risk, increasing existing risk and wiping out any potential gains.

Critical to understanding and assessing the complex threats and risks, challenges and opportunities, uncertainties and options faced by communities most at risk, is the need to partner with those people who are most at risk. Where these partnerships happen, the need for coherence among sectors and policies is clear, especially in crisis or post-crisis contexts: violence, hazards and political instability are all part of the same equation for communities living in vulnerable circumstances. If we understand the need for humanitarian action as a failure of development, a stronger integration of development, humanitarian, peace-building policies, actions and actors is required. Further understanding and implementation of the triple nexus approach is essential to achieve sustainable development which is risk-informed and builds the resilience of people most at risk.

Through a range of member-led activities, GNDR is ideally placed to ensure that local knowledge, expertise and realities are contributing to the development plans of all actors, including government, international institutions and the private sector, so that policies and practices are more risk-informed. Even in one location, a community can face a diversity of needs and risks. Those needs and the means to reduce risk are all connected.

This challenge is not just locally, but also nationally and internationally. Governments have committed to implementing a range of international frameworks and, taken together, they reflect the range of risks and needs of a community. But often these frameworks lack coherence at the local level and are implemented in isolation, by different government departments. This not only creates inefficiencies and the potential to reduce, rather than build resilience, but also misses the connections between these needs and the underlying causes of risk.

For GNDR, risk-informed development is about prioritising risks faced by communities living in the most vulnerable situations, and taking account of these risks when designing and delivering development plans and actions. A risk-informed approach from the perspective of people most at risk enables more sustainable and resilient development and challenges everyone involved to recognise that development choices create risk as well as opportunity.

LOCAL VIEW

Risk-informed development.

In Chad, communities most at risk have identified corruption as a barrier to preventing floods in many regions.599
ACHIEVING OUR GOALS
A community member in Haina, Dominican Republic, tells of her experience of the Riesgolandia project during a GNDR country exchange visit. Credit: Lidia Santana/SSID
CULTURE

OUTCOMES
CSOs recognise the benefit of collaboration over competition

Indicators of success:
Increase in CSOs’ understanding of the benefits of collaboration, as measured by annual membership survey

ACTIVITIES
Run ‘Collaboration not Competition’ campaigns highlighting the benefits of working together
Disseminate success stories of collaboration to help CSOs see that collaborative resilience building is achievable

CAPACITIES

OUTCOMES
CSOs have the necessary skills and capacities to collaborate

Indicators of success:
Increase in collaboration capacities of members, as measured in annual capacity assessment.

ACTIVITIES
Assess and strengthen capacities to collaborate, including how to develop partnership strategies, how to work in consortium fundraising bids, and how to broker and maintain partnerships with different types of actors. This could be done through trainings, mentorships, and guidebooks
Produce a guidebook on How to Build Resilience Collaboratively

Strengthen the collaboration, mobilisation and solidarity of CSOs
ACHIEVING OUR GOALS
GOAL 1

**STRUCTURES**

**OUTCOMES**
Mechanisms and policies are in place to enable collaboration

**Indicators of success:**
National and regional coordination groups meet annually, as measured by meeting reports
Increase in use of Community Platform, as measured by Salesforce Analytics

**ACTIVITIES**
Hold National Coordination Meetings of our members so that they can mobilise around shared issues and establish collective work plans
Run regional collaboration workshops every two years to create space for CSOs to meet regionally and design joint actions
Further develop the Community Platform as an online platform for organisations with shared interests to connect and collaborate
Strengthen cross-language working spaces, including by trialling innovative interpretation options

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

**OUTCOMES**
CSOs are held to account to collaborate

**Indicators of success:**
Increase in proportion of donor funding that is delivered to consortiums that include local organisations, as measured by Partner Survey
All GNDR projects assess partners based on collaboration principles, as measured by GNDR annual reports

**ACTIVITIES**
Design criteria to assess levels of collaboration for donors to use when selecting projects and for GNDR to use when selecting partners

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**IMPACT**

**What will success look like?**
Partnerships and joint actions between CSOs are created or strengthened, and civic space is widened

**How will we measure this?**

**Quantitative indicator(s)**
- Increase in % of local CSOs who report they can amplify priorities of communities most at risk to national platforms
- Number of partnerships created
- Number of partnerships strengthened
- Number of joint workplans implemented

**Qualitative indicator(s)**
- Stories of collaboration from all GNDR regions

**Source(s)**
- Annual membership survey
- VFL survey conducted at the end of strategy

**Baseline(s)**
- 55% of local CSOs report being able to amplify voices at national platforms effectively, with some limitations or occasionally (VFL 2019)
GOAL 2

ACHIEVING OUR GOALS

CULTURE

OUTCOMES
Governments and INGOs believe local CSOs should lead
Indicators of success:
Increase in government and INGO understanding of the benefits of localisation, as measured by Partner Survey
Number of government policies with reference to local evidence on risk, as measured by policy analysis

ACTIVITIES
Establish a Campaign for Local Leadership which will include the social and financial benefits of local actors leading
Profile innovative work of CSOs on GNDR website in a Spotlight Series
Hold Evidence Festivals showcasing the vast range of local data and stories local actors hold

CAPACITIES

OUTCOMES
Local CSOs have capacity to lead and be accountable to communities most at risk
Indicators of success:
Increase in the capacity of CSOs to lead (financial management, project management, gender mainstreaming, representation skills), as measured by the annual membership survey

ACTIVITIES
Organise roundtables with donors and local CSOs to understand the capacities they want to see in local organisations and realities on the ground
Assess and strengthen institutional capacities of CSOs, including around how to access and manage grants, donor reporting, and gender mainstreaming. This may be through trainings, webinars, and mentorships, and will necessitate mobilising and exchanging existing capacities across the members and partners
Run local action planning workshops and seek funds to support community actors analyse evidence and design small projects

Champion a localisation movement
**OUTCOMES**

The enabling environment for local CSOs to lead exists

*Indicators of success:*
Increase in awareness by donors of individual local CSOs and their work, as measured by Partner Survey

Number of donors revising reporting requirements to make it easier for local organisations, as measured by Partner Survey

Number of government policies outlining clear roles of local actors, as measured by policy analysis

**ACTIVITIES**

Create a Member Match programme to promote spaces for local actors and global actors to meet at online and face-to-face connection events

Increase visibility of members and their work through social media, Spotlight series, and stronger branding as GNDR

Design advocacy initiative calling for simplified reporting requirements from donors, and policies to outline roles and responsibilities of local actors

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**OUTCOMES**

Global and national actors are accountable for localisation

*Indicators of success:*
Number of people accessing localisation monitors, as measured by Google Analytics

**ACTIVITIES**

Monitor inclusion of local actors through our Views from the Frontline programme

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**IMPACT**

*What will success look like?*  
Increase in local actors receiving funds and decision-making responsibilities from governments and multi-lateral institutions

*How will we measure this?*

**Quantitative indicator(s)**
- Increase in % of members from communities most at risk who say they can access resources for DRR
- Increase in % of local actors who say they have a say in resilience decision-making processes

**Qualitative indicator(s)**
- Stories of collaboration from all GNDR regions

**Source(s)**
- Annual membership survey
- VFL survey conducted at the end of strategy

**Baseline(s)**
- 22% of members from communities most at risk say they can access funds easily, with some limitations, or occasionally (VFL 2019)
- 16% report being included in assessing threats, preparing policies and plans, and taking action to reduce threats (VFL 2019)
ACHIEVING OUR GOALS

GOAL 3

CULTURE

OUTCOMES

All sectors believe they must build resilience whilst advancing development

Indicators of success:
Number of humanitarian and development actors reporting understanding of the benefits of risk-informed development, as measured by Partner Survey

Number of international documents that mention the importance of risk-informed development, as measured by policy analysis

ACTIVITIES

Campaign on coherence looking at the full picture of the experience of a most at risk community when designing development initiatives, showcasing the benefits (in economic and non-economic terms) of risk-informed development

CAPACITIES

OUTCOMES

Evidence-based knowledge exists and is applied on how to do effective risk-informed development in the context of six drivers of risk

Indicators of success:
Increase in knowledge of how to do risk-informed development in all six contexts, as measured by post-activity evaluations and annual membership survey

Application of new knowledge on how to do risk-informed development in all six contexts, as measured by post-activity evaluations and annual membership survey

ACTIVITIES

Launch 'A Decade To Get It Done' – a series of local action-research programmes on some of the biggest barriers and challenges for risk informed development, producing cookbooks on subjects such as ‘How to build resilience for people on the move?’ and ‘How to build resilience in conflict settings?’ These research programmes will be linked with regional universities to create incubators of knowledge

Strengthen capacity of members and others to implement approaches to risk-informed development in these complex contexts. This will be through a Community Exchange programme and the development of cookbooks, trainings, webinars, and mentorships

Establish an Innovative Solution Bank to allow members to deposit new approaches online and learn from others

3

Strive for risk-informed development
**STRUCTURES**

**OUTCOMES**
Different sectors at different levels have opportunities to coordinate

**Indicators of success:**
Increase in coordination between different departments, as measured by Partner Survey

**ACTIVITIES**
Hold national collaboration meetings between different sectors and departments

Campaign on flexible national budgeting that allows for resources to be allocated for risk in an integrated way

Establish 'A Seat at the Humanitarian Table' initiative to allow local CSOs bringing a resilience perspective to be a part of humanitarian decision-making processes

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

**OUTCOMES**
All actors, not just DRR practitioners, have clear roles and responsibilities for taking risk into account

**Indicators of success:**
Humanitarian and development standards include consideration of risk, as measured by policy analysis

Number of governments that are aligning their reporting process for global frameworks, as measured by policy analysis

**ACTIVITIES**
Support institutions to integrate risk perspectives into development and humanitarian standards

Encourage governments to align their national and local targets and indicators for development, DRR and climate change adaptation

Design online platform or app for people to report when development is not risk-informed

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**IMPACT**

**What will success look like?**
Development takes risk into account

**How will we measure this?**

**Quantitative indicator(s)**
- Increase in % of members from communities most at risk who perceive that development plans and activities consider risk

**Qualitative indicator(s)**
- Stories of risk-informed development from all GNDR regions

**Source(s)**
- VFL survey conducted at the end of strategy
  - Annual membership survey

**Baseline(s)**
- 33% of members from communities most at risk think that local investment projects and local development plans take into account risks in some way (VFL 2019)
Members have identified various activities that will take us towards our three goals. Some relate to previous work that has taken place and some are fresh ideas for which fundraising will be required. Here is a look at ten of these activities:

A visit to Pencahue in the Maule region of Chile, as part of a reciprocal exchange between members from Dominican Republic and Chile to share and learn community-based disaster risk management practices.

Photo: Diego Alejandro Bravo Majin
A decade to get it done

There are 10 years left to achieve the ambitious goals of the SDGs, SFDRR and Paris Agreement. Yet many challenges stand in the way of the world collectively reaching these goals. As a network we will identify some of the biggest challenges preventing successful risk-informed development. These may include: How do you build resilience of communities on the move? As megacities grow, how can we strive for risk-informed development in informal settlements? How can we effectively utilise ecosystems to protect the most marginalised from emerging and increasing threats? How can we reduce disaster risk without the presence of a stable government, as is common in conflict-torn states? We will undertake local action research around these intractable challenges, tapping into members’ experience and connecting CSOs with universities to create regional incubators for knowledge creation. We plan to add to our current Cookbook range with the outcomes of this research.

Evidence Festivals

There is such a wealth of stories, data, and insights inside communities and grassroots organisations. Yet all too often this is left sitting on shelves. National and international actors crave this evidence to help them design more tailored, and therefore more effective, risk-informed development. We want to showcase this local evidence in festivals to bring it into the public domain. These events may have different themes year-to-year, including eco-DRR, women’s voices, or urban risk perspectives, and use different virtual, online and offline formats.

Views from the Frontline

We are passionate about bringing local voices to national and international conversations. As such, for the last 10 years we have been collecting local perspectives on risk and resilience and sharing this disaggregated data with the world. In 2019 we surveyed 100,000 people and this research will inform local actions, national plans, and global monitoring. You can find the most recent data, stories and findings at www.vfl.world
Many donors want to fund local CSOs as part of the localisation agenda. However, these funding institutions often require accountability mechanisms that many small organisations do not have the structures to fulfil. GNDR will support institutional strengthening of members, including through webinars on accessing and managing grants, mentorships on gender mainstreaming, and personalised training on other organisational needs. Part of strengthening is to increase visibility as the world needs to hear more about the work of local civil society organisations and their positive impact on communities most at risk. We will highlight specific community projects from different members, raising awareness of potential partners and funding institutions. We will also support members to increase their profile by creating a strong GNDR identity and brand that helps build credibility locally, nationally and internationally.

On our Community Platform, members will be able to deposit a new approach for others to withdraw, adapt and replicate. Each year we may focus on one of our six risk drivers, such as food and water insecurity, urbanisation or gender inequality.
We want to make sure that risk is not created or exacerbated by any action. Instead we want to see all actions actively building resilience. This is critically important in the aftermath of a disaster. The mechanisms to design response and recovery all too often exclude local CSOs, and yet it is these actors who can provide insights on community realities, including how to ensure humanitarian interventions strengthen the longer-term resilience of livelihoods and buildings. GNDR will endeavour to connect local CSOs to humanitarian coordination mechanisms, helping them get a seat at the table.

In order for members to align actions and advocacy, GNDR has been supporting meetings for GNDR members to get together in their countries. We will continue supporting these national coordination meetings and help members use them to share skills gained through our other activities.
What can a CSO from one region learn from a CSO in another region around preventing losses in lives, livelihoods and assets? Continuing from our first set of south-south exchanges held in 2018, the network would like to hold further immersive opportunities for members to learn from each other’s contexts and work. This could include exchanges between communities most at risk from different parts of the world that share the challenge of water scarcity, or two communities trying to build the resilience of people who have been internally displaced.

There is a huge variety of organisations in GNDR, ranging from large INGOs to grassroots organisations. We want to connect likeminded members who complement each other’s strengths. We will hold face-to-face events and create online spaces for INGOs to identify local partners in the areas they work, for community-based organisations to find institutions with necessary resources, and for national NGOs to find new regional networks to join.
With over 1,200 members across over 120 countries, we are able to mobilise a movement of people to highlight the financial and social benefits of shifting responsibilities and funds for risk-informed development to local organisations. We will utilise joint advocacy skills, produce shared campaign materials, and maximise our position at national, regional and international events to bring about change. We will particularly empower youth to lead the way in these campaigns.

Campaign for local leadership

Balram Sethi, 38, takes part in a discussion about resilience building with members of a self-help group in Odisha, India. Balram, who works for a local civil society organisation, was a surveyor for Views from the Frontline. Credit: Sarika Gulati
For our members around the world to gain maximum benefit from being part of GNDR we need to ensure our internal structures, resourcing and organisation are as strong as possible. Four key points of focus for the coming strategic period are Funding, Governance, Accountability and Organisational structure and capacities.
Rukmani Adikati (back) and her mother-in-law Bagyvati Adikati (front) from Nuwakot district, Nepal, live now safe in Rukmani’s earthquake-resistant home, with support from GNDR member NSET, after the 2015 earthquake destroyed it.

Photo: Lambert Coleman
Funding

For our network to have its desired collective impact, funding is crucial – for member organisations and for the Secretariat. Since the adoption of the last strategy, GNDR’s Secretariat has been working to support members to increase their funding, and to increase funding for the coordination role. We have recruited a full-time fundraiser; created an online portal where grant opportunities are shared; run training sessions on how to mobilise local resources and how to write impacting grant proposals; transferred 42% of our 2019/20 income to partners; and established partnerships with six new donors. To broaden opportunities of continuing to receive European funding, an organisation has now been established in the Netherlands called Stichting GNDR.

As GNDR membership grows and civil society space shrinks around the world, the expectations of the network are increasing. Our network needs to reach more members with our capacity strengthening, create more innovative and inclusive coordination mechanisms, mobilise larger campaigns, and implement joint research and monitoring projects with a larger knowledge base and reach. This requires more financial and human resources to play these convening, knowledge brokering and amplifying roles.

This 2020-2025 strategy represents a new phase of thematic focus and ambition for the network, and to enable delivery we need to secure committed and adequate funding - funds for specific activities, untied funds to support implementation of this strategy, and core funding to enable support across a growing membership. An analysis of GNDR’s current fundraising structures, capacities and context has highlighted strengths and opportunities on which to build and maximise, and weaknesses and threats to take into account and strengthen:

- We have strong relationships with an expanding group of institutional donors, yet a relative lack of contacts with potential non-institutional donors.
- Institutional funding for DRR is decreasing, but our new strategy broadens out from the silo of DRR and has six specific areas of focus that align with global trends and so appear in donor funding streams.
- Most funds come from project grants, but the need for core costs is increasing due to rising demands for convening and research from the growing membership.
- The size, profile and diversity of our membership is something to mobilise and showcase for fundraising, but

The Secretariat helped us receive modest funds that allowed us to purchase stabilising cord for anti-erosive works at the Feri Feri hill - an area prone to flooding in our community.

Alzouma Mounkaila, ADPE, Niger
Diversify our funding sources so we also receive money from corporates. Whilst this can include project grants from trusts and foundations, we will prioritise establishing a strategic partnership with a company.

3. Apply for funds from regional donors, at first prioritising the regional offices of international institutional donors.

4. Invest in partnership-building for consortium fundraising.

5. Support members to fundraise individually for their projects, especially through mechanisms such as GlobalGiving.org.

I will always remember the crucial conversation I had with one of the Secretariat members about our engagement with a donor. I was making a decision whether to proceed with a due diligence check with a donor agency that has been a supportive donor to GNDR. From that conversation I got encouragement, advice and inspiring words of affirmation to proceed. I felt empowered to take the process forward. We were successful in our application and now have a long term relationship with the donor.

Loreine Dela Cruz, Center for Disaster Preparedness, Philippines
Governance

It is important to ensure that our governance structures allow for members to drive our collective work. We will strive to deliver this strategy through a representative governance mechanism, and our GNDR Governance Manual, approved by the GNDR Board in October 2018, outlines the structures and controls in place to check that GNDR’s resources are used appropriately and that the organisation operates in accordance with its Constitution.

Governance is not simply about having the right documents or financial controls, or solely about the management of risk and performance. It is also about the organisation’s culture and values, Board and Trustees oversight, staff behaviour, attitude and accountability and about having clearly defined roles and responsibilities within and outside the organisation. The Governance Manual also sets out clear relationships between GNDR members, the Global Board, Regional Advisory Groups (RAGs), Trustees, Executive Director and staff in terms of running GNDR and pursuing our mission.

A GNDR Governance Working Group has been established to develop plans for strengthening representative governance further during the period of this strategy and, guided by the Governance Manual and our strategic direction, will trial new mechanisms and approaches to continue oversight of GNDR’s work.
Accountability

A network can collectively achieve substantial change. However, it requires everyone to play their part and an obligation from each individual or organisation to account for its activities and accept responsibility for them. For GNDR, different aspects of accountability to be considered include member-member, secretariat-member, donor-network, regional representative-regional member, and more. Underlying these various different relationships is our fundamental accountability to the local communities most at risk with whom members work. Important to being accountable is the way we build relationships with local communities, through formal and informal meeting structures and organisational relationships that enable learning and sharing of ideas and use of our communication tools. A Working Group on Accountability has been established to identify and trial mechanisms, incentives, and standards to ensure the Secretariat are accountable to the membership, members are accountable to each other and the network as a whole, and we are all accountable to communities most at risk. This will include building on various global quality and accountability frameworks, such as the Core Humanitarian Standards on Quality and Accountability, so that members can collectively agree to subscribe and promote the framework that has been agreed.

Organisational structure and capacities

This strategy sees a shift in the focus areas for GNDR. For example, more emphasis is put on institutional strengthening of members which will include research, member-to-member collaboration, regional and global campaigning, resource mobilisation and resource transfer. Our journey as a network continues to progress and we must develop functions and structures that enable effective representation of 1,200+ members who bring different strengths and areas of expertise to the network. Some of the skillsets required from the Secretariat are changing and we will be aligning the skills and experience in the Secretariat to meet the needs of this new strategy, ensuring that the Secretariat is equipped and structured to support and facilitate members, partners, and other stakeholders to engage, develop and deliver various activities over the coming years.

The nature of our work is that this five-year strategy and associated operational plans and policies will be constantly reviewed and developed at global, regional and national levels. Members working together will be supported to build partnerships and secure funding locally, and also centrally, by GNDR’s Secretariat team and the Board.

Progress will be monitored regularly by the Global Board and, as in the previous strategic period, subject to funding, an independent strategy review will be conducted to support ongoing learning and development.
GLOBAL BOARD

Ms Claire Tiffen
Trustee
Operational Lead Eurasia and North Africa, Tearfund

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Caribbean Regional Representative
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Dr Emad Eldin Adly
North Africa & West Asia Regional Representative
General Coordinator, Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED)

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On behalf of our members, we would like to emphasise our appreciation to all those donors who have been part of funding the GNDR journey so far.

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1 The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 was formulated by UNISDR to explain, describe and detail the work that is required from all different sectors and actors to reduce disaster losses. It was developed and agreed on with the many partners needed to reduce disaster risk - governments, international agencies, disaster experts and many others - bringing them into a common system of coordination. The HFA outlines five priorities for action, and offers guiding principles and practical means for achieving disaster resilience.

2 Global Assessment Report 2019 - https://gar.unisdr.org/sites/default/files/reports/2019-05/full_gar_report.pdf. GAR highlights “At no point in human history have we faced such an array of both familiar and unfamiliar risks, interacting in a hyperconnected, rapidly changing world. New risks and correlations are emerging. Decades-old projections about climate change have come true much sooner than expected. With that come changes in the intensity and frequency of hazards. Risk really is systemic, and requires concerted and urgent effort to reduce it in integrated and innovative ways.”

3 Every day for a year the GNDR Secretariat tweeted details of a disaster happening around the world to highlight disasters passing under the radar and yet impacting the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of thousands. Our members around the world sent information and we also found disasters in the local news. Some days we were overwhelmed with the number of disasters and tweeted more than one. https://gndr.org/programmes/advocacy/365-disasters.html

4 Global Assessment Report 2019 - https://gar.unisdr.org/sites/default/files/reports/2019-05/full_gar_report.pdf. Extensive risk is used to describe the risk associated with low-severity, high-frequency events, mainly but not exclusively associated with highly localised hazards. Intensive risk is used to describe the risk associated with high-severity, mid to low-frequency events, mainly associated with major hazards.


6 Oxfam 2019 Report on Inequality


8 According to Philip Alston, the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights: “Climate change threatens to undo the progress of the past 50 years (...). poverty reduction.”

9 https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/


ENDNOTES
Nahar King Welfare Organization; National Integrated Development Association; National Rural Development Program; National Rural Support Programme; New Hope Organization; PKA Education Society; Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum; Pakistan Rural Initiative for Emergency Preparedness, Response and Development; Pakistan Rural Initiatives for Emergency Preparedness, Response and Development; Centre for Human Rights Development; Rural Development Society; Participatory Welfare Services; Pattan Development Organisation; People, Development & Policy Initiatives; Root Work Foundation; Royal Pillars Welfare Foundation; Rural Aid Pakistan; Rural Development Foundation; Rural Alliance for Development; Rural Economic and Educational Development Society; Rural Infrastructure and Human Resource Development Organization (RIHRDO) KPK; Pakistan; Saath Development Society; Sahak Social Welfare Association; Sangtani Women Rural Development Organisation; Save The Children; South Africa; Sri Lanka; St. Andrew's; Sylvia's Welfare Organization; Society for Human Rights and Prisoners Aid; Strategy to Empower People; Sukaar Welfare Organization; Sungi Development Foundation; Sustainable Development Organization; Sustainable Environment and Development; Taal; Sparyar (Ever Spring); United Rural Development Organization; Youth Association for Development; Youth for Human Rights Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Asia Lanka Social Development Co-operation; Duryog Nirvar; Environment & Community Development Information Centre; Integrated Development Association; Janathakshan (Gee) Ltd; Rural Centre for Development; South Asia Partnership Sri Lanka; World Vision Sri Lanka.

Southern Africa

Eswatini: Christian International Swaziland; Madagascar: Association Haitba; Angono-lohay-Johnny; Association Volajia; Centre d'Action pour la Promotion de la Resilience; Centre d’Etudes et de Recherches Economiques pour le Developement; Jeunes Actifs pour le Developpement Durable Madagascar; Malagasy Youth for Sustainable Development; SampanAsa Momba; Fampandrososa FIKM; Vohary Salama; Young Progress Association; Malawi: Action for Environmental Sustainability; ActionAid Malawi; Badilda Foundation; Centre for Climate Change and Environment Management; Civil Society Network on Climate Change; E-Life; Forum for Concerned Young People; Foundation for Community Support Services; Grassroots Movement for Health and Development; Green Palm Governance, Compliance and Management Centre; Malawi Red Cross Society; Outreach Scout Foundation; Peoples Federation for National Peace and Development; Radio Tigabane; Student Christian Organization of Malawi; Sustainable Development; Time Orphan Support; Time Orphan Support; Malawi; Mauritius: Association Ccultural Para Desenvolvimento Sustentavel; Association Esbamaba; Association Moçambicana das Mulheres de Carreira Juridica; Association Para Promocao e Desenvolvimento da Mulher; Christian Council of Mozambique; Conselho Cristao de Mozambique; Food for the Hungry Mozambique; South Africa: Disaster Management Institute of Southern Africa; Gender and Disaster Network Africa Region; South African Youth Centre for Disaster Risk Reduction; Southern Africa Society for Disaster Reduction; Zambia: Disaster Management Training Centre. Zimbabwe: Action24; Aquaculture Zimbabwe; Centre for Gender and Community Development in Zimbabwe; Counselling Services Unit; Economic Justice for Women Project; Ecumenical Church Leadership; EDZAI ISU Trust; Family/AIDS Caring Trust; Health Education Food Organisation; HelpAge Zimbabwe; Masvingo Centre for Research and Community Development; Mentgwe for Community Development; Nyahunure Community Trust; Participatory Learning & Action for Community Empowerment; Rosseti Foundation; Zimbabwe: Action24; Sinumaupenyi Integrated Youth Academy Zimbabwe; Volunteer Service Overseas Zimbabwe; Young Volunteers for the Environment Zimbabwe; Youth Agrarian Society; Youth-led Innovative Engagement with Leadership and Development Trust; Zero Regional Envi; Tanzania Organisation; Zimbabwe: United Nations Association; Zimbabwe Women Youth Empowerment and Development.

West & Central Africa

Benin: African Monitoring Observatory on Climate, Waters, Earth, and Cultures; Centre de Recherche et d’Expertise pour le Developpement Local; Entraide Mutuelle et Perpetuels Secours; Initiatives pour un Developpement Integré Durable; Jeunes Volontaires pour l’environnement Benin; Organisation pour le Developpement Durable; le Renforcement et l’Autopromotion des Structures Communautaires; Participation Active des Dirigeants Jeunes Eilles Niant l'Aboule; Promotion Jeunesse Unie pour le Developpement; West Africa Network for Peacebuilding Benin. Burkina Faso: Action for the Promotion of the Initiatives Locales - ONG APIL Burkina; Actions for L’Eco- Developpement du Monde Rural; Africare Burkina Faso; Alliance Technique D’Assistance au Developpement; Association “Saubors”; Burkina Faso; Eaux pour Tous”; Association des Arts Solidaires; Association Développement Solidaire Durable; Association Dignus; Association pour le Developpement des Initiatives Communautaires Africaines; Association SOS Santé et Developpement Paalga; Réseau des Jeunes pour l’Environnement; West Africa Network for Peacebuilding Burkina Faso. Cameroon: Association Camerounaise pour le Developpement, l’Entraide Sociale et la Protection de l’Environnement; Association des Amis de Ngouandja; Association des Jeunes Ambitieux de Nkongondo Douala; Association Sportive et Culture des Jeunes de Nkongondo; Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch; Cameroon League for Development-Regeneration and Participation; Centre for Development and Peace, CAMPE; COMITE NATIONAL OMEP (Organisation Mondiale pour l’Education Precoce) ou Association des Camerounais pour l’OMEP; Community Agriculture and Environmental Protection Association-Cameroun; Community Information For Civic Action; Development; Education; Forestry; Land; Organizations; Forests; Resources and People; Geotechnology Environmental Assessment and Disaster Risk Reduction; Global Movement of Solidarity; Green Horizon; Integrated Youth Empowerment Center; International Centre for Environmental Education and Community Development; Jeunes Volontaires pour l’environnement-Cameroun; Ligue pour la Didactique de l’Education relative à l’Environnement; People Earthwise; People Empowering People (PEP) Africa; Refugee Welfare Association Cameroon. Central African Republic: Centre de Recherche et Appui au Developpement; Centre pour l’Information Environnementale et le Developpement Durable; Femmes Sans Frontieres pour le Developpement; Global Ecosphere Network antenne de la Republique Centrafricaine; Groupe d’Action, de Paix et de Formation pour la Transformation; Initiative des Jeunes pour la promotion de la Non-violence en Centrafricaine; Jeunes Volontaires pour l’environnement Centrafricaine; Jeunesse En Marche pour Centrafricaine; Jeunesse Unie pour la Protection de l’Environnement et le Developpement Communautaire; Militant pour la Paix et l’Environnement; ONG la Verde; Organisation D’appui a la Promotion des Initiatives Locales; Organisation Non gouvernementale Internationale Centre d’Action pour le Developpement du Monde Rural Centrafricaine-France; Projet Engineering; Reseau Climat des Jeunes du Sud-Sahara en Centrafricaine; Reseau des Organisations de Jeunes pour l’environnement; Reseau des Organisations de Jeunes pour la Paix et l’Environnement en Centrafricaine. Chad: Association d’Action pour la Recherche et le Developpement du Kanem; Association pour l’autopromotion Rurale; Forum des Jeunes Professionnels de l’Eau du Tchad; Lead Tchad; Organisation des Jeunes pour la Promotion et le Developpement; SOS SAHEL International Tchad; UNION DES FEMMES OPPRIMEES; Union for Promotion / Protection, Human Rights Defense and the Environment. Gabon: Alliance pour la Promotion Sociale et Laide au Developpement; Association Fondation Villageoise de Gestion de la Nature; Association Gabonaise d’Aide aux Femmes Indigenes et Indigentes; Cercle de Recherche pour la Santé Durable; Environnement Sans Frontieres; Femme, Environnement, Santé et Education; GABON ECOLOGIE; Jeunes Volontaires pour l’Environnement Gabon; ONG GLOBAL HUM INTERNATIONAL; Reseau des Organisations Libres de la Societe Civile pour la Bonne Gouvernance au Gabon; Solidarite Environment Humainiste Christian et Sante. Gambia: Adventist Development & Relief Agency, The Gambia; Agency for Village Support; Beakanyang; Children and Community Initiative for Development; Gambia Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children; Global Youth Innovation Network Gambia Chapter; Health and Development Initiative; Household Disaster Resilience Project; Proactive Youth for Socio-economic and Health Rights; Saama Kairo Federation; Shalom, The Gambia; Sirimang’s Foundation for Development; WorldView The Gambia; Wuli and Sandu Development Agency; Young Volunteers for the Environment The Gambia. Ghana: Abibiman Foundation; Abundant Grace Female Foundation; Abuk, Odi; Abubu Traditional Village; Centre Against Human Trafficking; Community and Family Aid Foundation; Eliza Relief Foundation; Global Green Environmental Network; Green Africa Youth Organisation; Greener Impact International; Human Rights Reporters Ghana; Nyankonton Aid Association; PAIRS; Paradise Heritage Foundation; RESEARCHERS’ ALLIANCE FOR SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES; Western Region Coastal Foundation; WUZDA - Ghana. Guinea: Agence Humanitaire Pour Le Developpement; Cercle des Formateurs et Acteurs Communautaires de Guinee; Developpement Pour Tous; Maison des Femmes Guinee; Pour l’Environnement et le Developpement; UNION DES FEMMES OPPRIMEES; Union pour Sauvegarde de l’Environnement; Organisation des Oeuvres Pour la Solidarite et le Bien Etre Social; Food for the Hungry DRC; Forum des Organisations Nationales Humanitaires et de Developpement en Republique Democratique du Congo; Humanite Asbl; Jeunes Volontaires de Guinee; Ligue pour la Paix et l’Environnement; Alliance T echnique D’Assistance au Développement; Cercle de Recherche pour la Santé Durable; Environnement Sans Frontieres; Femme, Environnement, Santé et Education; UNFPA; Rights Defense and the Environment. Arica and Sandu Development Agency; Young Volunteers for the Environment The Gambia.
OUR LOCATIONS

Bangkok
CWS-Asia/Pacific, 10th Floor, CCT Building, 328 Phayathai Road, Ratchathewi, Bangkok 10400, Thailand
Tel +66 (0)2 214 6077

Dakar
54, Rue Carnot
Dakar
BP 337
Senegal
Tel +221 33 889 34 30

London
8 Waldegrave Road
Teddington
TW11 8HT
United Kingdom
Tel +44 (0)20 8977 7726

Nairobi
Rura Court Karen
70 Ndege Road
P.O. Box 76573-00508
Nairobi
Kenya
Tel +254 779 338528

New Delhi
15-A, Institutional Area
Sector IV, R.K. Puram
New Delhi
Delhi 110022
India
Tel +91 11 2617 4272

Santiago
Oficina 412
Brown Norte 100
Ñuñoa
Santiago
Chile

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GNDR Offices