

The banner features a background image of hands reaching out. On the left, a hand is held palm up. On the right, a hand is held palm down, with fingers slightly curled. The text is centered and reads: "EUROPEAN HUMANITARIAN FORUM 2023" in large blue letters, "Brussels, 20-21 March" in smaller blue letters, "#EHF2023" in grey, and "NEW GLOBAL REALITIES | Shaping humanitarian action together" in small grey letters at the bottom. On the right side of the banner, there are logos for the European Commission (the flag and the text "European Commission") and "sweden 2023.eu" in blue and yellow.

EUROPEAN HUMANITARIAN FORUM 2023

Brussels, 20-21 March

#EHF2023

NEW GLOBAL REALITIES | Shaping humanitarian action together



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European Humanitarian Forum (EHF) 2023 Regional Warm-up Sessions – Asia & The Pacific

Factoring in the consequences of Climate Change in humanitarian action in Asia Pacific

I. Background

The contents of this paper were gathered through discussions held at the 2022 *Regional Humanitarian Partnership Week* co-organized in Bangkok, Thailand from 09 to 14 December 2022, by the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), Asian Disaster Risk Reduction Network (ADRRN), Community World Service Asia (CWSA) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). In addition, this paper reflects the dedicated consultation event titled '*Factoring in the consequences of Climate Change in humanitarian action in Asia and the Pacific*' held on November the 16th, 2021 at the DG ECHO Regional office, co-hosted by ICVA and the DG ECHO Regional Office in Bangkok, and attended by 61 people representing 26 organization and institutions.

II. Key asks to the EHF

- **Invest in comprehensive risk analysis and in building the evidence base:** The changing risk landscape requires an integrated approach centered on overlapping and cascading risk drivers and their impact on the vulnerabilities faced by communities, including displacement. This should be driven locally and more systematically incorporated into the Humanitarian Programme Cycle, including a clear focus on the evaluation stage of the program.
- **Promote the centering of communities in climate response,** at all stages from risk analysis to program design and implementation. The youth represent an essential demographic to engage with in that regard as part of broader gender and inclusion lenses.
- **Balance financing on climate action and better coherence and connectivity of financing.** Greater coherence of climate, disaster risk, and humanitarian financing mechanisms is needed. How do humanitarian agencies and donors engage with the “Loss and Damage” calls for codification.
- **Strengthen investment in understanding displacement,** and integrate it into Climate Adaptation and Disaster Risk Managements plans. The Asia-Pacific Disaster Displacement Working Group represents to this end a developing example of multi-stakeholder cooperation platform.
- **Invest in greening humanitarian operations** by operationalizing both DG ECHO’s Minimal Environmental Requirements and the Climate and Environmental Charter for Humanitarian Actors.
- **Improve connections between development, peace, and humanitarian communities of practice,** by actively contributing to the Sendai Framework mid-term review.
- **Document and amplify existing good practices,** by continuing the facilitation of experience sharing platforms such as the present consultations.

III. Other conclusions

- **The current humanitarian system is not fit to address the impact of climate change on (escalating) humanitarian need.** The 2022 Regional Humanitarian Partnership Week highlighted the fact that gaps are present in the early warning systems (EWS) in the Asia Pacific region. Lack of comprehensive and coherent EWS negatively impacts the process of managing responses to compounding effects of climate change. At the same time, States in the region have invested in EWS components, which are ready to be used and will benefit from even further investment efforts. Better contextualization of humanitarian action can be done by building on traditional practices and knowledge which requires a mind shift from “capacity building” to “capacity strengthening” of local organizations and institutions. The latter are at the frontline of climate risk preparedness and response. On November the 16th, 2021 when asked “Is the current humanitarian system suited to deal with the effects of climate change”, all 20 participants responded ‘no’ or ‘not sure’.
- **Change in the risk landscape.** The risk landscape in the Asia Pacific is changing. While it was acknowledged that changes and progress are being made, inadequate analysis of how climate change impacts risk, vulnerability, target populations, and the asynchronous interaction between development/humanitarian/resilience systems, means that the sector is not currently able to meet the humanitarian needs resulting from unmitigated climate change and environmental degradation. We are often dealing with multiple, simultaneous, cascading hazards and (compound) risks which our systems and governments are not adequately prepared for. Climate change amplifies risk and vulnerability as it combines with other drivers of crisis such as poverty, insecurity, discrimination, and conflict. Particular attention needs to be paid to conflict-affected populations that display the least adaptive capacity to impacts of climate change. Collectively, much more needs to be done within the humanitarian sector and more broadly with other stakeholders, to unpack and clearly understand how conflict and climate change interact. The immediate consequences of these complex risks can include system breakdowns and reversal of development gains. One-size-fits-all humanitarian approach is no longer fit-for-purpose. The humanitarian system alone cannot address these needs and, consequently, there is a need to engage in a more meaningful triple nexus approach analysis and approach. Systemic resilience implies a governance model, an equal partnership, the best use of technology and a way to sustain building resilience.
- **Disaster Displacement.** Climate change impacts mobility flows. For many of those who are internally displaced in the region, the nature of the displacement is cyclical and seasonal, posing new challenge to both themselves and the humanitarian community. Many are also in urban areas and move for a multitude of reasons, seeking livelihoods and improved access to services. Understanding the underlying causes and drivers of mobility is key to identifying adequate solutions and partnerships.
- **Need for better coordination and harmonization across the triple nexus.** The discussion around climate change has long been on the agenda however it was noted that conversations often happen on multiple platforms, in parallel and rarely joined up. Whilst the widespread interest in tackling the issue is welcomed, there is still the challenging question of how to best collaborate in a way that meets the needs of affected populations.

IV. Additional resources

- ICVA has recently developed and published its vision on Greening the Humanitarian System (DFAT funded project) <https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/humanitarian-horizons/greening-the-system/>
- ‘The Road to COP27: Strengthening humanitarian perspectives’ webinar (<https://phap.org/PHAP/Events/OEV2022/OEV220630.aspx>)