

Non-state stakeholder dialogue and report

DKKV Young Professionals Sendai Framework Exchange: Summary and Results

This document was prepared by the DKKV Young Professionals, the junior experts in the field of disaster risk reduction and management of the German Committee for Disaster Reduction (DKKV). The following is a compilation of the results of discussions of the DKKV Young Professionals about the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 with respect to the to the Mid Term Review (MTR SF). This discussion paper aims to complement the official report of the German Federal Government, coordinated by the National Focal Point for the Sendai Framework (NFP) and the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework (IMAG Sendai), with the perspective of the Young Professionals.

The statements in this document reflect the opinion of the DKKV Young Professionals and do not necessarily reflect the position of DKKV.

How was the paper drafted?

In regard to the [Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework](#) the **DKKV Young Professionals** exchanged views on the 'Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030' (SFR) with **DKKV Board Member Reimund Schwarze** (Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research - UFZ). Regular online meetings were used as an exchange platform for this. In order to create a basic common knowledge base, Reimund Schwarze introduced the topic with two presentations on global frameworks and the basics about the SFR in this context. **DKKV Member Horst Kremers** (CODATA-Germany) provided input on the topic of 'information management'. The importance of documenting processes and involving society in the development of information materials was emphasised.

'Strategic and Guiding Questions' discussed

1. How have decisions in the public and private sectors and in civil society been made more sustainable through the implementation of the SFR?
2. Are the root causes and drivers of disaster risk now better understood and systematically addressed in all sectors, at all levels and in all disciplines?
3. What are the main successes, challenges and obstacles during the implementation of the SFR, and which lessons have been learnt?
4. What have been the key changes in how governments and other actors have implemented the SFR since 2015? What are the major changes, emerging issues and themes expected in the period until 2030?
5. What adjustments are needed in policy, regulatory and legal frameworks, strategy, knowledge, organisation or investment to address new/emerging threats?
6. What would be the greatest disaster risk reduction and resilience enhancement outcomes for people, assets and ecosystems over the remaining life of the SFR and beyond 2030?

The next step was to use the 'Strategic and Guiding Questions' from the SRF to guide the conduct of consultations and reviews and the preparation of inputs and reports (including voluntary national reports) for the MTR SF. During the exchange meetings, half of the strategic questions could be discussed. A final meeting was completed with a presentation by **DKKV Member Johann Goldammer** (Global Fire Monitoring Centre - GFMC) on 'Agricultural and Vegetation Fires'. The SFR aims, among other things, to minimise the impact of such natural hazards. The results of the exchange format are summarized below.

Which achievements can be demonstrated in the evaluation of the implementation of the SFR?

While dealing with the implementation of the SFR in the context of the current Midterm Review, it was identified that the implementation of the SFR in Germany has had some success. So far, some pilot cities in Baden-Württemberg, e.g. Karlsruhe and Pforzheim, have developed [municipal heavy rainfall risk management concepts](#). The heavy rain event in Braunsbach on 30 May 2016 can be described as the trigger for this. This can be seen as a positive 'lesson learned' for achieving the objectives of the SFR. In addition, several reports and recommendations for action have been published to support the achievement of the Sendai Targets. These include, for example, the six-part [report](#) by the German Environment Agency (UBA), which provides an important basis for the future development of adaptation in Germany. The DKKV provides access to further 'lessons learned' studies that deal with topics such as natural hazards like heavy rainfall, heat and drought.

Which weaknesses could be identified?

However, there were also weaknesses identified during the implementation of the SFR in Germany. For example, the federal system in Germany creates horizontal and vertical coordination problems. In addition, traditional and local knowledge of communities is scarcely or only to a small extent incorporated. Affected stakeholders need to be given more attention and report on their experiences to identify gaps where necessary. To do this, the transfer of practice should be promoted by improving accessibility to the contents of the SFR for the general population. This is because there is often not enough time in practice to deal with the document sufficiently. In addition, the SFR is little known, especially at the local governmental level, therefore the implementation of the goals is given little attention here. This highlights the lack of a systematic approach that applies to all sectors. The fact that the new [Leipzig Charta Urban Agenda](#) does not refer separately to crises and resilience also shows that the topics of disaster risk reduction and civil protection are not structurally integrated all over urban development efforts. The predominant reference to sustainability in urban planning can be an impulse to make stronger reference to some co-benefits, such as regional energy security and availability as well as regional employment promotion. So far, the SFR does not consider these equally with prevention. If sustainability in the sense of the UN Goals (SDGs) is also structurally aimed at in planning for regional and local measures in Germany, as through the Leipzig Charta Urban Agenda, then disaster risk reduction could also be sufficiently (broadly) embedded as a planning task.

A significant reduction in disaster risk in Germany has not yet been observed through the SFR. The COVID-19 pandemic and the flood disaster in the Ahr valley in July 2021 show that there are gaps in communication and learning processes have emerged from the experiences of the crisis rather than through precautionary measures such as the SFR. In this context, the DKKV has just recently published a [new edition of its series on the 2021 flood disaster](#).

Which possibilities exist to improve the implementation?

Only half of the SFR implementation period has been completed, so there is still room for improvements. Some opportunities that can be exploited in the future are presented below.

Networking, such as the German Strategic Alliance of Authorities on Adaptation to Climate Change (Deutsche Strategische Behördenallianz 'Anpassung an den Klimawandel'), promotes the exchange of knowledge between institutions on climate change issues. Similar networks can emerge through the SFR to ensure its implementation. For example, the implementation of the framework in Germany is continuously coordinated and updated by the SF focal point at the Federal Office for Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (BBK). In addition, the Federal Government has recently adopted the [Resilience Strategy](#), which is intended to promote development towards risk-informed action and a more resilient society. The Resilience Strategy offers a forward-looking framework and provides orientation for future action.

In addition, research projects that implement the SFR in their research agendas are funded, such as the [ESPRESSO project](#) (Enhancing Synergies for disaster PREvention in the EurOpean Union), in which DKKV also participated. The project is guided by the approach to disaster risk management as defined in the SFR for Disaster Risk Reduction and the corresponding EU Action 2015-2030. Each section of the paper analyses a Sendai Priority in relation to the phases of the disaster risk management cycle (risk assessment and prevention, preparedness, response and recovery) in a way that provides a critical perspective and identifies key research gaps to be explored.

In addition, civil society influenced research agendas can be used. Current events, such as the COVID-19 crisis, the 2021 floods and the war in Ukraine, are leading to increasing awareness and sensitivity to the issue of disaster risk among the population. This increasing sensitivity can be favourable for the implementation of preparedness measures. Additionally, this window of opportunity can and should be used to involve the population and the voices of affected people more in the implementation of the SFR.

What risks and challenges does the SFR face?

The Young Professionals have identified some risks and challenges that could negatively impact the achievement of the framework in Germany. On the one hand, they noted that the successes so far have probably been rather unintentional or only due to external impulses, such as the heavy rain event in Braunsbach. Thus, the successes cannot necessarily be seen as a result of the implementation of the SFR. In addition, the opinion is represented that a more precise differentiation of the risk concept is necessary. Currently, there are different understandings of risk as well as approaches in the German research landscape, which can lead to different advances and understandings. It is clear from experience reports that the SFR consists of broadly defined guidelines that must be followed by concrete implementations of their own. This requires initiative and communication at various levels, which is made more difficult in Germany by the federal and thus decentralised system. Another barrier is COVID-19; the pandemic will probably continue to influence and slow down many processes in the future. Together with other crises, such as the war in Ukraine, extreme natural hazards or growing social inequalities amplified by inflation, priorities must be set by decision-makers for the distribution of capacities and funds. It is important to keep in mind what the actual goal of resilience, and thus of the SFR, is.

Which tasks need to be addressed in order to push forward the implementation of the SFR?

In addition, the DKKV Young Professionals dealt with possible tasks for responsible actors to ensure the implementation of the SFR in Germany. For a sustainable establishment of disaster risk reduction measures and risk management plans, awareness of risk and disasters must be raised at all levels. Raising awareness of these risks will help to avoid them in the future. In order to reach the whole society, the issues could be raised and discussed through faith organisations, charities, migrants' associations or similar institutions. Appropriate information management is necessary to reach different groups in society. For example, it is important to translate the information material into many languages, to avoid technical terms or to use generally understandable language so that the information is made accessible to as many people as possible. In addition, society could be directly involved in the development of the information material. This requires a social differentiation that perceives the social differences between social groups, which can lead to differences in vulnerability. Through this form of citizen participation, communication can be targeted to specific groups, and, in the best case, risk awareness can be raised.

In favour of generating awareness at all levels of society, the development of a general local awareness strategy is urgently needed, which can be adapted by the municipalities to their own circumstances. This can result from a transfer of recommendations and hints from the framework. Examples of this are cooperations with consumer advice centres, local work and communication, campaigns at the local level and climate managers with a 'distribution function' in cities / municipalities, who takes over the implementation of the framework in the municipality or city and the dissemination to the population. Beyond awareness, it is of great importance to generate participatory involvement and commitment. Furthermore, it is important to promote cooperation between the operational and scientific sectors. To this end, science must be understood as a service provider for operational practice. Political tools should be used more intensively in the future, while at the same time supporting educational work among the population. Future policy measures could, for example, aim to prevent construction projects in risk areas, to further establish climate risk insurance or to promote the financing of compulsory insurance. In addition, the designation of risk areas and the expansion of warning and reporting chains should be promoted. The planned introduction of the cell broadcast system for the distribution of warning messages in Germany starting in 2023 is a step in the right direction here. For the entire population, but especially for decision-makers, a central and well-known data platform on which all information is bundled and exchanged could be advantageous. In this way, the problems already described, which can arise due to federal and decentralised structures, can be contained.

Input 'Landscape Fire Management' by Johann Goldammer

The discussion after the presentation by DKKV member Johann Goldammer focused on the question of where Germany stands nationally in dealing with vegetation fires. It quickly became clear that the expertise of the agricultural and forestry sector in Germany needs to be more involved in this context. The municipal level, which is responsible for fighting such fires, also needs more technical and material support from the federal and state governments. Therefore, in addition to the implementation of an exchange programme between the federal states, the creation of clear procedures for cooperation is also necessary. To drive these processes forward, disaster management ministries should be integrated at the state level. Another insight from Mr. Goldammer's contribution is that direct and indirect health costs from landscape fires need to be taken more into account in (inter-/) national scientific and political processes.

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