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# Assessment of the Impact of the Swiss NGO DRR platform

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# 1. Executive Summary

The Swiss NGO DRR Platform (Platform), founded in September 2011, strives to further strengthen and professionalize the efforts of the Swiss NGO community that is applying an integrated risk management approach and strives to strengthen resilience at the community level, increase the effectiveness and quality of Swiss NGOs' work related to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) and to share experience and knowledge amongst organizations. For this purpose, the Platform promotes the diversity of know-how and experience, provides guidance for increased effectiveness and advocates for the importance of DRR/CCA for increased resilience.

Over the past seven years the Platform has constantly increased its membership to currently 17 organizations.

The Platform serves as a forum for its member organizations to facilitate activities in the following three domains:

- Exchange and learning: practitioners' workshops and learning events in Switzerland and abroad, annual face to face (F2F) event.

- Conceptual support and technical advice: methodologies for the operationalization of concepts, collection of good technologies and practices, guidance for quality control.

- Raising awareness and advocacy: contribution to the implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR and the shaping of other policy processes, participation in international networks.

The assessment has been carried out to shed light on the impact of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform's work since its foundation in 2011, primarily on its member organizations and secondarily on key partners (SDC, GNDR, ETH/EPFL, CDE).

The assessment methodology combined individual interviews with a participatory assessment workshop in Switzerland and quantitative surveys for Platform members and field staff. In this sense, the evaluation method integrates evidence and fact-based information with perception-based information.

The assessment analysed how the Platform has contributed to outcomes in the form of change in the behaviour, relationships, actions, activities, policies, or practices in the work area of DRR/CCA (outcome harvesting approach). The main changes overserved since the founding of the Platform together with a rating of the Platform's contribution to each of the changes are summarized in the outcome map below.

DRR evolved from being an add-on to a topic that is mainstreamed in the work of Swiss NGOs

Swiss NGOs have gradually operationalized the concepts and principles of DRR more systematically in their projects and initiatives

Swiss NGOs increasingly count with the required capacities for effective DRR / CCA work

Professionals based in the field have been empowered in their DRR/CCA role

Focal points & participants of platform meetings increasingly exchange beyond their organizations and are better informed about DRR / CCA.

Swiss NGOs increasingly collaborate to improve and harmonize approaches and their interventions based on lessons learned and regular exchanges.

The international DRR community evolved from an initial focus on response to disasters towards approaches that contribute to integrated DRR

Swiss NGOs moved towards integrated programming to enhance overall resilience of target groups

Swiss NGOs increasingly explore new approaches and means for DRR and analyze which approaches bear a potential to improve their interventions

DRR and CCA has become a strategically relevant area of work for SWISS NGOs

Swiss NGOs have increased programme activities in DRR and CCA

**1** Members and partners use and increase their DRR and CCA capacities

**2** Increased effectiveness of platform members & field-based partners (Swiss approach)

**3** Increased voice to raise awareness and advocate for risk-informed, carbon neutral & resilient dev.

**4** Recognized as key actor by Swiss and intern. DRR and CCA professionals and practitioners

A broad range of sector professionals and students became better informed about DRR

The platform has become recognized as a DRR competence centre in international cooperation

In the Swiss context, civil society has become part of the process to develop framework conditions and policies around DRR and CCA

**Major contribution to this outcome;** On a scale from 1-10 the platform's contribution was on average scored 6 or higher

**Some contribution to this outcome;** On a scale from 1-10 the platform's contribution was on average scored between 5 and 6

**Indirect or lagged contribution;** On a scale from 1-10 the platform's contribution was on average scored between 4 and 5

**Negligible contribution; ;** On a scale from 1-10 the platform's contribution was on average scored below 4

FIGURE 1 – SWISS NGO DRR PLATFORM OUTCOME MAP

The table on the following pages summarizes the results related to the key questions for the assessment. The Platform's performance related to each of the key assessment questions is rated using the following scoring system:

Exceeds expectations

Meets expectations

Generally meets expectations but with room for improvement

Major improvements required

| Criteria | Key question | Rating | Summary of assessment results |
|---|---|---|---|
| Effectiveness | *Institutional capacities*: do Platform member organisations have increased institutional capacities in DRR/CCA, including DRR/CCA mainstreaming, which they attribute to the work of the Platform? | 🟢 | Member organizations increased their DRR/CCA capacities both at institutional and individual staff level. This development was in many cases clearly attributed to the work of the Platform. |
| | *Conceptual support*: do Platform members implement DRR/CCA interventions, including DRR/CCA mainstreaming, more effectively based on the application and uptake of inputs or instruments? | 🔵 | The Platform has developed a range of tools and approaches that found their way into the operational and project practices of member organizations. DRR/CCA are not yet systematically applied though and members use different approaches. |
| | *Commitment*: What changes can be observed in relation to the DRR/CCA commitment of member organisations due to the work of the Platform? | 🟢 | Most member organizations have strategic objectives linked to DRR/CCA and several NGOs invested into DRR concepts, the development of in-house expertise and the establishment of DR/CCA projects on the ground. In many cases, it was mentioned that the Platform was instrumental to achieve these changes. |
| | *Partnership/alliances:* What changes can be observed in relation to coordination and collaboration of the member organisations due to the work of the Platform? | 🟠 | The Platform managed to lay the foundation for increased coordination and collaboration by building relationships and triggering initial efforts to develop joint DRR/CCA proposals. This has not yet resulted in tangible cooperation projects, which may be attributed to a narrow focus on thematic concepts that were not complemented with process oriented support (e.g. for the development of proposals) and to an inward orientation towards Platform members, while some key actors (e.g. private sector) were only engaged to a limited extend. |
| | *Field outreach*: did the Platform achieve to bring conceptual support and capacity building to the member organisations in the field? | 🔵 | The assessment revealed several examples how Platform members used newly gained skills during project design and implementation or shared knowledge with field staff. This impact seems relevant and efficient. The direct impact pathway of capacitating field staff was also mentioned but seemed punctual (benefiting individual field staff who had opportunities to engage with the Platform) rather than contributing to a systemic change in the way how members implement projects. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Advocacy*: did the Platform contribute to raise awareness for DRR/CCA nationally and internationally? | 🔵 | The Platform clearly contributed to raise awareness and shape the way how Swiss NGOs address DRR and to a lesser extend CCA. The constant engagement with public sector actors in Switzerland is likely to have also contributed to maintaining attention to the topic. Internationally, the Platform worked through the Swiss delegation and international platforms, but some interviewees indicated that the impact on the awareness of the international community was not significant. |
| | *Policy dialogue*: did the Platform achieve to influence GNDR and other institutions aiming to shape the global DRR/CCA frameworks and dialogue? | 🔵 | Through its engagement with the Swiss government the Platform contributed to shaping the Swiss position in the Sendai process. The positioning / relations of some of the core group members in international networks allowed to position the Platform well in GNDR. Internationally the Platform is however only one of many actors that all contribute to shaping the DRR/CCA framework conditions. |
| Relevance | *Prioritisation*: does the work of the Platform relate to the demands and needs of the member organisations? | 🟢 | Members were often not able to specify their 'DRR/CCA needs' but were generally content with the services of the Platform. Given its history, it has to be considered that the Platform cannot be classified as a demand-oriented Platform but as a Platform that contributes to setting the agenda and creating demand for DRR/CCA. |
| | Are *structure and working mode* of the DRR Platform appropriate to deliver its purpose? | 🔵 | The governance structures and working mode are considered fit for purpose and allowed the Platform to implement tangible projects and influence the agenda of its members and the DRR/CCA community in Switzerland. In future, these structures may need to evolve towards engaging a wider circle of active members. |
| | *Recognition*: how relevant do member organisations and key partners of the Platform rank the Platform as an actor in DRR/CCA in Switzerland and internationally and based on what reasons? | 🔵 | Nationally, the Platform is considered a very relevant actor in the field of DRR. Regarding CCA this only applies to a limited extend. Internationally, the Platform is a relevant partner for the Swiss governments efforts around DRR/CCA but the Platform by itself is not recognized as a key player. |
| Sustainability | *Ownership*: did the Platform achieve a sustainable involvement of member organisations in the Platform activities? | 🟢 | Members are invested in the Platform and especially the larger NGOs provide resources to play an active role in the Platform. With a broad range of existing and emerging thematic platforms the NGO DRR Platform must continuously offer clear added value to maintain this involvement though. |
| | *Independence*: have measures been taken up to advance the Platform and its goals independently from the financial contribution of SDC? | 🔴 | While members pay membership fees and make additional contributions related to selected mandates, the Platform remains highly dependent on SDC funding. The Platform has not been able to leverage funding from other donors to date. |

Based on insights gained throughout the 'Assessment of the Impacts of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform', it can be concluded that the Platform is an example for a very successful, lean thematic platform that helped to establish and operationalize DRR within the work of its members and successfully contributed to the Swiss engagement in international DRR processes. This applies to a lesser extend to CCA.

By analyzing the assessment results vis-à-vis a tentative business model of the Platform that was developed, based on the current status quo, the following recommendations were developed:

- Recommendation 1: To leverage the Platform's potential to build cooperation among members, the Platform should explore moving beyond the current thematic focus on DRR/CCA concepts and tools. Complementing offers could support focal points in identifying DRR/CCA project opportunities or develop and implement more successful joint DRR/CCA proposals, among others.

- Recommendation 2: The Platform should specify how it seeks to change field interventions of their members towards more sustainable DRR/CCA sensitive projects and programmes and define related objectives.

- Recommendation 3: If the Platform decides to move towards providing more field level support, different options for 'regionalization' should be explored through pilot interventions or prototyping of support services to fully understand the requirements for offering such support and generate first hand insights into what field staff and partners require.

- Recommendation 4: The Platform should systematically tap the experiences of its members with regards to sustainability of DRR efforts in relation to past major disasters and derive both good practices and lessons learned to inform future interventions of Swiss NGOs.

- Recommendation 5: To contribute towards more effective DRR/CCA work of Swiss NGOs the Platform could use experiences around Eco-system-based adaptation to gradually develop 'blue prints' for Swiss DRR/CCA signature project approaches.

- Recommendation 6: Given the closely aligned agendas, the Platform needs to establish how it will complement government efforts at international level or hold government to account regarding DRR/CCA commitments.

- Recommendation 7: In line with the idea of a Swiss Approach the Platform could advocate that all Swiss DRR/CCA actors coordinate on key topics and align behind a Swiss Voice, which considers and where feasible adapts civil society positions (established through the Platform).

- Recommendation 8: It should be explored how the core group could integrate other members more actively into the operational work and decision making processes of the Platform.

- Recommendation 9: The Platform should consider to establish a wider range of strategic partnerships with, through and beyond the Platform members to cover emerging DRR/CCA topics.

- Recommendation 10: The Platform needs to systematically explore partnerships that bear the potential to make the Platform less dependent from SDC and complement the knowledge, experience and networks of member focal points.

# 2.  Introduction

## Swiss NGO DRR Platform

The Swiss NGO DRR Platform (Platform), founded in September 2011, strives to further strengthen and professionalize the efforts of the Swiss NGO community that is applying an integrated risk management approach and strives to strengthen resilience at the community level, increase the effectiveness and quality of Swiss NGOs' work related to DRR and CCA and to share experience and knowledge amongst organizations. For this purpose, the Platform promotes the diversity of know-how and experience, provides guidance for increased effectiveness and advocates for the importance of DRR and CCA for increased resilience.

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The Platform serves as a forum for its member organizations to facilitate activities in the following three domains:

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- Raising awareness and advocacy: contribution to the implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR and the shaping of other policy processes, participation in international networks.

Over the past years these efforts were spelled out into the following programme outcomes (objectives):

| Outcomes from 2017 – 2018 logframe | Outcomes from 2015 – 2016 logframe |
|---|---|
| The Platform members in Switzerland and field-based partners have used and increased their institutional capacities in DRR/CCA and mainstreaming of DRR/CCA. | The Platform members in Switzerland and in the field have increased their institutional capacities in DRR/CCA through mutually learning and sharing of experience. |
| A common "Swiss Approach" developed and used in focus countries has increased the effectiveness of Platform members and field-based partners. | The Platform members have increased their effectiveness in DRR/CCA interventions through conceptual and technical support by the Platform working groups. |
| The Platform has increased its voice to raise awareness and to advocate for a risk-informed, carbon neutral and resilient development. | The Platform has increased its voice to raise awareness and to advocate for a risk-informed and resilient development of local communities in Switzerland and internationally. |
| The Platform is recognized as key actor by Swiss and international DRR/CCA professionals and practitioners. | The Platform is internally further consolidated and has improved its public visibility and network. |

The Platform is structured by the following main bodies:

- Member Assembly: approves the program and annual plan of action and decides on the topic of the year including the topic of the annual F2F and the learning events.

- Steering Committee: oversees and takes decisions at a strategic level, which are required for a smooth steering of the Platform, including the approval of ad-hoc working groups and their specific mandates as part of the annual plan of action

- Core Group: ensures coordination and quality insurance at the operational level. This refers to internal coordination amongst Platform members as well as coordination with SDC and other external institutions and actors for mutual updates, to enhance alliances and to foster synergies for upcoming events and products.

## Purpose of the assessment

The assessment is meant to shed light on the impact of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform's work since its foundation in 2011, primary on its member organizations and secondary on key partners (SDC, GNDR, ETH/EPFL, CDE). The geographic focus lies on HQ level with potential to expand to focal countries of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform. The assessment:

- is summative and retrospective in nature, its focus is on effectiveness and – where linked – relevance and sustainability, and explicitly not on efficiency,

- shall inform the next program phase of the Platform and its findings and recommendations shall be used by the Platform to contribute to shape the program orientation and content,

- shall be potentially used by the Platform in its interaction with key partners and other actors to showcase impact.

# Assessment questions

To achieve this purpose the following key assessment questions were provided to guide the assessment:

| Criteria | Key question |
|---|---|
| Effectiveness | *Institutional capacities*: do Platform member organisations and partners have increased institutional capacities in DRR/CCA, including DRR/CCA mainstreaming, which they attribute to the work of the Platform? |
| | *Conceptual support*: do Platform member organisations and partners implement DRR/CCA interventions, including DRR/CCA mainstreaming, more effectively based on the application and uptake of inputs or instruments of the Platform? |
| | *Commitment*: What changes can be observed in relation to the DRR/CCA commitment of member organisations (incl. human and financial resources) due to the work of the Platform? |
| | *Partnership/alliances:* What changes can be observed in relation to coordination and collaboration of the member organisations due to the work of the Platform? |
| | *Field outreach*: did the Platform achieve to bring conceptual support and capacity building to the member organisations in the field? |
| | *Advocacy*: did the Platform contribute to raise awareness for DRR/CCA nationally and internationally? |
| | *Policy dialogue*: did the Platform achieve to influence GNDR and other institutions aiming to shape the global DRR/CCA frameworks and dialogue? |
| Relevance | *Prioritisation*: does the work of the Platform relate to the demands and needs of the member organisations? |
| | Are *structure and working mode* of the DRR Platform appropriate to deliver its purpose? |
| | *Recognition*: how relevant do member organisations and key partners of the Platform rank the Platform as an actor in DRR/CCA in Switzerland and internationally and based on what reasons? |
| Sustaina-bility | *Ownership*: did the Platform achieve a sustainable involvement of member organisations in the Platform activities? |
| | *Independence*: have measures been taken up to advance the Platform and its goals independently from the financial contribution of SDC? |

# 3.  Methods

In line with the suggestion from the Terms of Reference we suggest to use the Outcome Harvesting approach for the assessment. Outcome Harvesting seeks to document how a given program has contributed to outcomes in the form of change in the behaviour, relationships, actions, activities, policies, or practices. Based on the compilation of evidences related to such outcomes in the Platform's area of work, the approach then works backward to determine whether and how the program contributed to the observed changes.

To comprehensively answer the key assessment questions related to the effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of the Platform's work the outcome harvesting results were complemented with further qualitative and quantitative research into the effects of the Platform's work since its founding.

The assessment methodology combined individual interviews with a participatory assessment workshop in Switzerland and quantitative surveys for Platform members and field staff. The evaluation method integrates evidence and fact-based information with perception-based information on the individual, organizational and Platform levels and puts a strong focus on the prospects for future action. The team was grateful to interview a wide number of key individuals in and around the Swiss NGO DRR Platform who engaged in open and frank discussion.

## 3.1 Kick-off meeting

To ensure common understanding of the ToR and the completeness of available documentation, the assessment started with a conference call with the members of the Core Group. This kick-off meeting was used to align the expectations towards the assessment, convey the DRR Platform's key statements / messages to the assessor team and establish key information sources for the inception phase research (key informants and relevant documents).

## 3.2 Inception phase research

Throughout the first two month of the assignment the consultants reviewed relevant documents and conducted around five initial qualitative phone interviews with members of the Platform. The analysis and 6 initial interviews were used to establish outcome areas and initial evidences related to changes in the behaviour, relationships, actions, activities, policies, or practices of the Platform's target groups. These findings were used to design a structure and facilitation approach for a participatory assessment workshop.

## 3.3 Participatory assessment workshop

On September 7th, a participatory assessment workshop was organized with 13 representatives of the Platform's member organizations and two external participants (from SDC and formerly GNDR).

The workshop was used to complement and validate initial findings from the inception phase. For this purpose, the participants initially revised and complemented the tentatively identified outcomes. Selected outcomes were further evaluated, looking at the time before the founding of the Platform, today and at how the outcomes should evolve in the future. To derive feasible recommendations for the future work of the Platform, the consultants presented key elements of how the Platform generates value, in the format of an initial business model. This business model was revised and adapted by the participants, considering the results of the participatory analysis of the current and potential future outcomes that the Platform could focus on.

Throughout the workshop, information gaps were identified to inform in which areas data and information needed to be collected in follow-up to the workshop through additional qualitative interviews and a quantitative survey.

## 3.4  Complementary qualitative research

To complement the information that was compiled during the inception phase a total of 14 additional interviews were carried out with focal points of member organizations, non-member NGOs, SDC and other external stakeholders of the platform. The qualitative interview guidelines were adjusted for each interview to harvest relevant perceptions and perspectives on the Platform's work and complement in information gaps.

## 3.5  Quantitative data collection

To complement the qualitative information, two surveys were designed and circulated to different target groups:

Survey for Platform members – A comprehensive survey with 59 questions was developed based on the Platform's baseline survey, which was restructured and complemented with questions related to the significance of the outcomes of the platforms work. The survey was completed by 13 respondents.

Survey for member organizations' field staff – To generate better informed insights into the extent to which the Platform managed to provide support to field staff as well as into the relevance of the Platform's work for projects on the ground a short survey was sent out to field staff of member organizations. The survey was completed by 28 respondents.

## 3.6  Key constraints in carrying out the assessment

- Due to resource and time constraints the assessment focused on direct stakeholders – Platform focal points and representatives of partners of the Platform – and no qualitative interviews were conducted with indirect beneficiaries (e.g. field staff). By sharing a short online survey, which included a range of open questions, insights into field staff's perceptions were generated but these cannot be considered comprehensive or representative.

- Due to the complexity of negotiation processes around the Sendai framework and other international agreements, it was not possible to attribute specific sections of the resulting documents to the platforms contributions. Instead, the outcome harvesting approach was used to document how stakeholders perceive the platforms work.

- Due to the network character of the Platform, many of the outcomes are linked to the actions of member organizations. The assessment does not differentiate which share of the outcomes is attributed to the platforms work and which share to the individual organizations efforts. The assessment results should therefore not be aggregated with evaluations of DRR/CCA efforts of member organizations to avoid double reporting.

# 4. Results

## 4.1 Outcome map

The following figure summarizes the results of the outcome harvesting process in an outcome map for changes in the behaviour, relationships, actions, activities, policies, or practices within the DRR/CCA community. Colours indicate how Platform members perceive the relevance of the Platform's contribution to these changes[1].
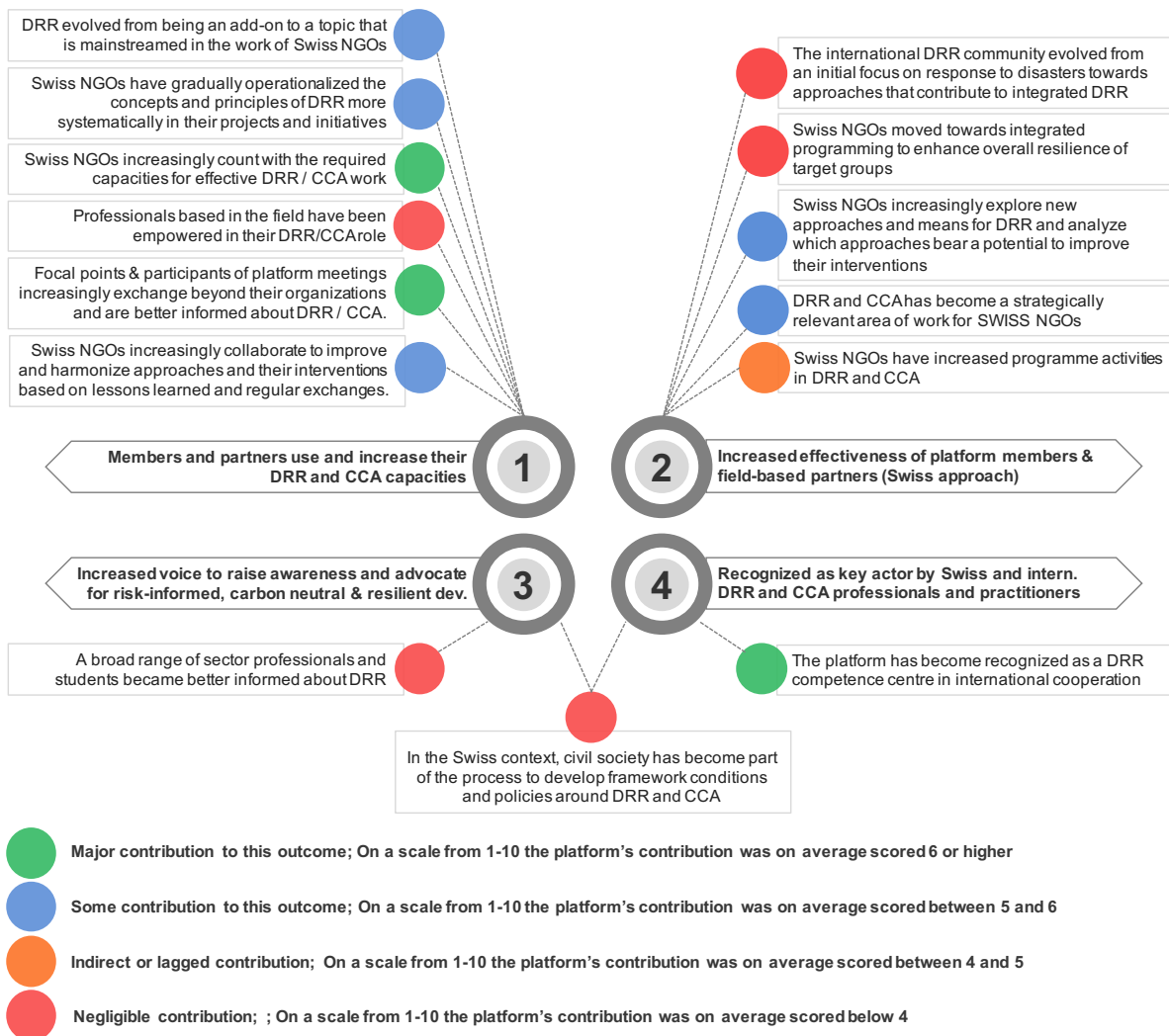


The standard deviation of the above mapping is around 2, with the highest deviation for the outcomes that were scored to have a negligible contribution. This means that especially in the areas, where the Platform's contribution is indicated as red (negligible contribution), there were some members, who believed that the Platform actually had a more significant contribution.

Based on this outcome mapping, the achievements and results related to the assessment questions were further specified and are presented in the following section.

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[1] Evaluation of platforms contribution is based on the response of 13 of the 17 platform members to the member survey.

## 4.2 Results for the assessment questions

The following section summarizes the findings of the research related to the assessment questions specified in the terms of reference. Each of the questions is answered based on the results of the qualitative interviews. Wherever possible the results were complemented with quantitative findings from the online surveys. To provide meaningful and tangible responses to the questions, achievements are summarized and complemented with selected examples. Many of the achievements cannot be fully attributed to the platforms activities, but are also linked to the independent work of the member organizations and to other developments in the DRR/CCA community. For this reason, an explanation regarding the Platform's contribution is added to each achievement. Further challenges that emerged throughout the interviews, data collection and analysis, are listed. Based on this analysis, the Platform's performance is rated with regard to each of the assessment questions, using the following scoring system:

✸ Exceeds expectations

✸ Meets expectations

✸ Generally meets expectations but with room for improvement

✸ Major improvements required

### 4.2.1   Effectiveness

#### Institutional capacities

Do Platform member organizations have increased institutional capacities in DRR/CCA, including DRR/CCA mainstreaming, which they attribute to the work of the Platform?

| What has been achieved | Examples | Platform contribution | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|
| Increased number of DRR advisors and specialists in Swiss NGOs. | - 2/3 of survey respondents have a DRR/CCA/Resilience focal point / advisor (on av. 80% staff time) | The Platform advocated for DRR focal points and contributed to raising awareness at management level of NGOs. | Dedicated DRR advisors are not an option for some of the smaller members. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | - SRC employed two DRR specialists to enhance know-how management<br>- Terre des hommes (Tdh) has hired a DRR advisor | | |
| Advisory services on DRR/CCA have been setup in some Swiss NGOs. | - Tdh has a portfolio of signature programmes (WASH, etc.). Through DRR, Tdh tries to enhance the overall impact of these programmes. | 'Without the Platform we would not be where we currently stand with the topic at HEKS' | |
| Staff of Swiss NGOs has been capacitated on DRR/CCA. | - The Platform provided mandates that allowed individuals involved to dedicate time to learn about the topic.<br>- High interest of members and non-members to attend face-to-face events organized by the Platform.<br>- All survey respondents would likely or very likely recommend the Platform's learning events | Informant: 'The DRR Platform has become an important, if not the most important actor for capacity building of Swiss NGOs [in the field of DRR]' 9 out of 13 survey respondents considered the Platform the most important training institution for their staff in DRR and CCA | Decline in requests and attendance at events after initial wave of capacitation of member NGOs |
| Individuals involved in the Platform are better informed about what is happening around DRR/CCA. | - Informant: 'I tried to learn about informal urban structures but have achieved much less than in the area of DRR where I used the Platform'. | Organization of face to face events and publishing topic papers. | |

Member organizations increased their DRR/CCA capacities both at institutional and individual staff level. This development was in many cases clearly attributed to the work of the Platform.

## Conceptual support

Do Platform member organizations and partners implement DRR/CCA interventions, including DRR/CCA mainstreaming, more effectively based on the application and uptake of inputs or instruments of the Platform?

| What has been achieved | Examples | Platform contribution | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|
| Member NGOs have internalized and adapted DRR concepts that were developed and promoted by the Platform | - At Caritas, e.g. inception phases are increasingly used to carry out risk assessments<br>- At the SRC a DRR concept was developed<br>- ADRA uses the DRR tools of their international network. New tools and concepts of the WOCAT publication were integrated into these approaches. | Processes around specific mandates contributed to building ownership for the resulting DRR concepts among those members engaged in the respective mandates.<br>Learning events, continuous exchange and knowledge sharing through the Platform helped establishing DRR standards (e.g. need for comprehensive risk assessments) among Swiss NGOs | Despite these achievements, two thirds of the survey respondents indicated that their organization considers risk and emissions **only occasionally** at the stage of project planning. During project implementation only 40% consider risk and emissions 'Most of the time' and at the evaluation stage 40% responded that their organization seldomly considers risk. |
| Swiss NGOs increasingly explore new approaches and means for DRR | - DRR Platform learning events introduced new topics: e.g. use of drones by Terre des homme / Medair or inclusiveness in DRR by CBM. | The Platform served as the entry point for its members to organize events that introduced new topics. Exposure to new topics led to intensive exchanges in the community. | The Platform members still practice quite different DRR approaches – from "Fundamental and comprehensive to more simple and pragmatic". This can be considered as a challenge but also as an opportunity. |

The Platform has developed a range of DRR (and to a much lesser extend CCA) tools and approaches that found their way into the operational and project practices of member organizations. DRR/CCA are not yet systematically applied though and members use different approaches.

## Commitment

What changes can be observed in relation to the DRR/CCA commitment of member organisations (incl. human and financial resources) due to the work of the Platform?

| What has been achieved | Examples | Platform contribution | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|
| DRR and CCA has become a strategically relevant area of work for SWISS NGOs | - Staff engaged with the Platform has in many cases lobbied to lift the DRR/CCA topic to a more prominent level<br>- Organizing the higher level 'public days' which helped to mainstream the topic at management level<br>- DRR or CCA is a strategic or main objective of 10 out of 13 NGOs responding to the survey[2] | The Platform significantly contributed to sensitizing the management level of NGOs and the community for the topic. The latter helped to motivate and provide a feeling of empowerment of individuals to push the topic. | Increased funding from SDC and the shift toward framework contracts is considered the main trigger for strategic interest in DRR |
| Some of the member NGOs have made formal commitments to enhance their DRR engagement | - In the last four years, Tdh has framed a statement of commitment for the coming years that is specifying certain steps that they are going to take.<br>- This year, Tdh had a budget for seed funds to explore e.g. nature-based solutions | Informant: 'Whenever I speak internally I leverage the Platform ('the Platform is doing this…'). The Platform has enabled me to do this.' | Investments are gradually diverted into other topics like Climate Change, Migration and Reconstruction. This may affect the prioritization of DRR within some of the member organizations. |
| Some of the member NGOs increased their engagement in DRR on the ground | - Swiss Red Cross had a considerable increase in DRR programming, e.g. by complementing health programmes in Bolivia with the development of local DRR committees<br>- DRR is also reaching Humanitarian Aid (e.g. through Haiti project financed by Glückskette). | In many of these cases it was mentioned that the Platform was instrumental to canalize the increase in activities. | |

Most member organizations have strategic objectives linked to DRR/CCA and several NGOs invested into DRR concepts, the development of in-house expertise and the establishment of DRR/CCA projects on the ground. In many cases, it was mentioned that the Platform was instrumental to achieve these changes.

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[2] 12 out of the 13 respondents highlighted Resilliance, CCM, CCA or DRR as strategic or main objectives of their organizations

## Partnership / alliances

What changes can be observed in relation to coordination and collaboration of the member organisations due to the work of the Platform?

| What has been achieved | Examples | Platform contribution | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|
| At the personal level the focal points and participants of Platform meetings increasingly exchange beyond their organizations | - The Platform 'switched on a collegial atmosphere of collaboration, mentoring, motivating and enjoying exchange'<br>- Events provided networking opportunities and an understanding that other organizations work similarly | Platform projects, meetings and learning events provided opportunities to establish personal relationships with colleagues from other organizations. This lowered the boundaries for inter-organizational exchange and collaboration. | |
| Swiss NGOs increasingly collaborate to develop programmes and DRR/CCA interventions | - Tdh and HEKS are collaborating informally on developing contingency plans | Contacts and exchanges at networking events led to the development of joint project proposals among members. | None of the informants could name proposals that were developed by consortia that emerged from the DRR Platform and were accepted. |
| Swiss NGOs collaborate to improve and harmonize concepts / approaches and their interventions based on lessons learned and regular exchanges | - The process to develop WOCAT provided opportunities to build cooperation in Switzerland and the focus countries<br>- Some concepts like the risk staircase, which was first published in 2011, are applied across all organisations | The Core Group was a key Platform to harmonize DRR concepts. | The Platform has not established meaningful cooperation with the private sector yet. Many members see an opportunity in such cooperation. |
| New partnerships with academic institutions were established | - Based on materials of the Platform and with speakers a university curriculum was piloted together with NADEL.<br>- Other cooperation projects e.g. with University of Bern, EPFL were realized | The Platform convinced academic partners of the importance of the topic and was persistent until realizing joint projects. | It is not yet clear if the cooperation with NADEL will be continued. |

The Platform managed to lay the foundation for increased coordination and collaboration by building relationships and triggering initial efforts to develop joint DRR/CCA proposals. This has not yet resulted in tangible cooperation projects, which may be attributed to a narrow focus on thematic

concepts that were not complemented with process oriented support (e.g. for the development of proposals) and to an inward orientation towards Platform members, while some key actors (e.g. private sector, actors who work on DRR/CCA in Switzerland, development actors and academia from other countries) were only engaged to a limited extend.

## Field outreach

Did the Platform achieve to bring conceptual support and capacity building to the member organisations in the field?

| What has been achieved | Examples | Platform contribution | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|
| Some regional and local project field staff benefited from the learning events and face-to-face meetings. | - Terre des homme's regional advisor for Asia has significantly benefited from learning events and uses the acquired knowledge about CEDRIC for his field work<br>- 18% of respondents from the field survey indicated that they had participated in the Platform's events | Facilitated events that were at one point attended by all member NGOs, including some of their field staff | The Platform does not systematically monitor and evaluate the outreach to the field |
| Focal points used the DRR knowledge gained during their engagement with the Platform to shape and design projects | *Story:* A Core Group member explained how the learning events allowed her to develop a thorough understanding about ECO DRR concepts and raised her interest to sign up for an additional online course (beyond the Platform). In 2016 her organization was approached to develop a proposal on disaster preparedness in Tadzhikistan. Beyond the efforts to increase preparedness she built on this understanding and integrated nature-based solution approaches into the proposal. She believes that this made the resulting project 'Resilient Khatlon' much more interesting for the target group, as it helped to increase the understanding why gully erosions happened and how these could be reduced. This was also possible because there had been previous efforts on watershed development that helped to showcase the long-term impact of nature based DRR. The project is now in its second phase. | | |
| | - CBM focal point contributed DRR expertise to the design of projects in Pakistan and Niger | The Platform made focal points aware of new DRR trends and enabled them to understand approaches through learning events and specific mandates | |

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|---|---|---|---|
| Information and materials are shared with field staff through the Platform focal points | - DRR experts pass on materials produced by the Platform to staff in the field and disseminate them at other instances (e.g. conferences) | The Platform produced information and educational materials on DRR | It remains a challenge to evaluate the uptake of this information and to which extend it influences decisions at field level. |
| Relevant DRR topics are developed and documented | - Through voices from the field, peer reviews and the community resilience framework, the Platform captured relevant topics from the field level<br>- Almost 75% of the respondents to the field staff survey agree or strongly agree that 'the inputs or instruments of the Platform helped me implement DRR and CCA interventions, including DRR/CCA mainstreaming, more effectively' | The Platform leverages its membership to identify cases and topics through their field projects | It remains unclear to which extend resulting publications reach practitioners beyond the inner circle of the Swiss DRR community. |

The assessment revealed several examples how Platform members used newly gained skills during project design and implementation or shared knowledge with field staff. This impact seems relevant and efficient. The direct impact pathway of capacitating field staff was also mentioned but seemed punctual (benefiting individual field staff who had opportunities to engage with the Platform) rather than contributing to a systemic change in the way how members implement projects.

## Advocacy

Did the Platform contribute to raise awareness for DRR/CCA nationally and internationally?

| What has been achieved | Examples | Platform contribution | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|
| Swiss NGOs increasingly harmonize their positions and jointly communicate on DRR topics in Switzerland | - NGOs started using the Platform to agree on what should change when it comes to DRR priorities in Switzerland and pursue their interests in a coordinated manner | In Switzerland the DRR Platform focusses on influencing the work of government (SDC, BAFU and BABS) through consultations, the DRR Platform's network and personal contacts. | It is not clear, if there is a substantial difference between the position of the Platform members and SDC and hence whether there is a real advocacy role of the Platform towards SDC. |

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|---|---|---|---|
| Some of the member organizations that have international structures influenced the DRR approaches of other country offices | - CBM focal point could engage more actively on developing the DRR strategy for the CBM federation, partly because of the engagement in the Platform. As a result, a DRR advisor is now being hired. | Through the Platform events, mandates and materials, focal points gained expertise in DRR that enabled them to provide advise within the international networks of their organisation. | |

The Platform clearly contributed to raise awareness and shape the way how Swiss NGOs address DRR and to a lesser extend CCA. The constant engagement with public sector actors in Switzerland is likely to have also contributed to maintaining attention to the topic. Internationally, the Platform worked through the Swiss delegation and international platforms, but some interviewees indicated that the impact on the awareness of the international community was not significant.

## Policy dialogue

Did the Platform achieve to influence GNDR and other institutions aiming to shape the global DRR/CCA frameworks and dialogue?

| What has been achieved | Examples | Platform contribution | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|
| The Platform was able to contribute to bringing the Swiss Voice into the Sendai Framework development process. | - SDC representative: 'The Platform produced text and positions that in parts were adapted one to one in the Swiss position [for the Sendai framework]'<br>- Former GNDR director, recalling the Platform's position: 'Generally, [the Platform promoted] the Swiss position […] a much more integrated approach, positioning DRR as a developmental issue. The Swiss NGOs and government are trying to do this a lot more practically than others. They try to operationalize this [integrated DRR] concept.' | Core group members were part of the Swiss delegation and member positions were consolidated and translated into positions that were brought into the Swiss position. | The Sendai process provided a clear goal. Once the framework was approved, the objective was not clear anymore. This remains a challenge. |
| The Platform started tackling boundaries between | | The Platform engaged organizations from both development cooperation | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| humanitarian and development professionals and between DRR and CCA. | | and humanitarian aid in the development of DRR concepts, thereby forging shared approaches. | |

Through its engagement with the Swiss government the Platform contributed to shaping the Swiss position in the Sendai process. The positioning / relations of some of the core group members in international networks allowed to position the Platform well in GNDR. Internationally the Platform is however only one of many actors that all contribute to shaping the DRR/CCA framework conditions.

### 4.2.2 Relevance

#### Prioritization

Does the work of the Platform relate to the demands and needs of the member organisations?

| What has been achieved | Examples | Platform contribution | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|
| The Platform's services are tailored to support the Platform member organizations | - 11 out of 13 members who responded to the survey agree or strongly agree that the work of the Platform relates to the demands and needs of the member organizations. | Needs of many smaller members are met by providing access to tools, guidance notes, indicators, events and related processes | The Platform was established as a mechanism to push the DRR topic. Demand for the topic primarily came from SDC. Especially small members do not have specific needs for services from the Platform but rather look if the offer is interesting. Half of the respondents to the field staff survey only considered the Platform's work somewhat or not so relevant. |

Members were often not able to specify their 'DRR/CCA needs' but were generally content with the services of the Platform. Given its history, it has to be considered that the Platform cannot be classified as a demand-oriented Platform but as a Platform that contributes to setting the agenda and creating demand for DRR/CCA.

#### Working mode

Are structure and working mode of the DRR Platform appropriate to deliver its purpose?

| What has been achieved | Examples | Platform contribution | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|
| The operational Core Group of the Platform is recognized as an appropriate mechanism to ensure meaningful contributions through the Platform. | - Informant: 'Biggest achievement is that the Platform is so productive. Somebody who has no idea can come in and benefit, just as somebody with lots of experience. And then there are the drivers of specific topics, who equally have an opportunity to pull together more knowledge and resources.' | The Core Group is recognized to be the backbone of the Platform ensuring their performance, efficiency and quality. Many informants confirmed that the 'capabilities of the Core Group are very strong' | - Small organizations are only marginally involved. This is however not perceived as a problem per se. As one informant put it: 'Core members and larger organizations have to be catered to, as they design DRR programmes. For us it is the sharing and networking that is beneficial.'<br>- The Core Group member organizations are most active in the Platform – "I do not hear a lot from other members."<br>- The Platform is geographically very 'Bern-centred'. |
| The Platform has established a well-documented governance structure | Most members agree that they have the possibility to launch issues, which are followed up | n/a | - Governance structures and decision-making processes are not fully clear to all members |

The governance structures and working mode are considered fit for purpose and allowed the Platform to implement tangible projects and influence the agenda of its members and the DRR/CCA community in Switzerland. In future, these structures may need to evolve towards engaging a wider circle of active members.

## Recognition

How relevant do member organisations and key partners of the Platform rank the Platform as an actor in DRR/CCA in Switzerland and internationally and based on what reasons?

| What has been achieved | Examples | Platform contribution | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|
| Throughout long-term cooperation, the Platform has become a trusted partner of SDC, GNDR, PEDRR, recognized for its expertise in DRR | - Former GNDR representative: 'The Swiss NGO DRR Platform is quite unique [in a positive way] in its character. I have not seen anything alike in other countries.'<br>- The Platform plays an important role in and for GNDR – "The Swiss Platform helped us out of the financial crises".<br>- The Platform raised more awareness / alertness for DRR/CCA within SDC and the Humanitarien Aid.<br>- Some informants perceived that "The Platform clearly brings the Swiss Voice to the international level.' | The Platform became the 'one door to knock at' for SDC, when it comes to the perspective of civil society on DRR.<br>The Platform also influences the GNDR agenda as well as the design and funding of GNDR projects – and supported also funds for methodology workshop in Geneva.<br>The Platform is perceived as a highly interconnected partner in a "network of networks". | - The Platform is not so much recognized for expertise in CCA.<br>- The influence of the Platform on the DRR/CCA community working in Switzerland is not strong. |
| The Platform is somewhat recognized at international level | - Members have a very mixed perception on whether the Platform is relevant at international level<br>- Generally the Swiss government is recognized as an important international actor in the DRR arena and the Platform has contributed to their positions | Engagement in international processes (e.g. Sendai Framework), platforms and conferences | - The link to EU initiatives and other relevant programmes outside of Switzerland as well as the private sector is still weak. |
| Recognition of the Platform's work by different academic institutions | - Several academic institutions, like NADEL, university of Bern, EPFL | Throughout the past two years the Platform convinced the NADEL, that | The Platform is not considered relevant at international level – this |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | involved the Platform to publish on the topic DRR/CCA.<br>- After several years, a participant of one of the learning events, who works at the university of Graz was looking for capacity development materials and contacted the DRR Platform. | it would be an option to organize a course on DRR, which would reach new target groups. Moreover, the Platform produced information and educational materials on DRR that provided a track record that built required trust to engage in cooperation.<br>The annual thematic event and the learning events were used to engage with a wider group of professionals from different backgrounds (including international actors) | may also not need to be the ambition. |
| The Platform is known by field staff of member organizations | - More than 85% of the respondents to the field staff survey indicated that they know the Platform | Dissemination of materials and communication through member organizations | |

Nationally, the Platform is considered a very relevant actor in the field of DRR. This only applies CCA to a limited extend. Internationally, the Platform is a relevant partner for the Swiss governments efforts around DRR/CCA but the Platform by itself is not recognized as a key player.

### 4.2.3 Sustainability

## Ownership

Did the Platform achieve a sustainable involvement of member organisations in the Platform activities?

| What has been achieved | Examples | Platform contribution | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|
| The Platform is considered to work efficient and smooth | - "I did not come across another organisation in this sector really performing as a network" | Effective operational Core Group engages members and sets priorities that engage members | While there is strong ownership among parts of the membership, the responses to interview requests ('I / we did not have anything to do with |

| | - Members are regularly engaged in and often lead Platform activities | | the Platform over the past years') from some members showed that this is not the case for all members. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Swiss NGOs that work internationally assign focal points for the Platform | - The number of members has constantly increased over the past years | Outreach to the NGO community through learning and face to face events | - There are many networks and platforms on related topics, which brings about competition for the limited resources of (particularly small) member organisations<br>- NGOs working on DRR within Switzerland have not joined the Platform |

Members are invested in the Platform and especially the larger NGOs provide resources to play an active role in the Platform. With a broad range of existing and emerging thematic platforms the NGO DRR Platform must continuously offer clear added value to maintain this involvement though.

## Independence

Have measures been taken up to advance the Platform and its goals independently from the financial contribution of SDC?

| What has been achieved | Examples | Platform contribution | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|
| A small share of the Platform's budget is covered by membership fees. | - Members provide financial contributions through membership fees | Members are willing to pay for the services and benefits that the Platform generates for them | SDC funding is very important and will also be important in the future. |
| Members make additional contributions for the realization of selected mandates that are implemented under the Platform. | - | The Platform engages members in the process of defining mandates and generates buy-in | No additional donors or significant funding sources have been established |

While members pay membership fees and make additional contributions related to selected mandates, the Platform remains highly dependent on SDC funding. The Platform has not been able to leverage funding from other donors to date.

## 4.3 Business model

A business model describes the rationale of how an organization (private business, NGO, government organisation, etc.) creates, delivers, and captures value in economic, social, cultural or other contexts.

The business model approach was used to establish how the Platform creates value and served as a basis for developing feasible recommendations. Based on the literature review and initial interviews during the inception phase, the consultants developed a tentative description of the Platform's business model. This business model was reviewed and adapted by members of the Platform during the participatory assessment workshop.

The resulting business model is presented below. Business models are not static and need to be continuously refined. In this sense, the model below cannot be considered an accurate description of the Platform but is meant to reflect the understanding of the consultants of how the Platform generates value.

The tentative business model developed throughout the assessment shows the following approach: The Platform, creates value to different target groups within the member NGOs, practitioners outside of Switzerland and SDC by different means of: 1) Increasing the quality of DRR and CCA work, 2) increasing the visibility of Swiss DRR engagement and the organizations involved, 3) leveraging resources and cooperation, 4) providing learning opportunities and information on DRR and CCA and 5) facilitating exchange and networking among practitioners.

To achieve this, the Platform engages its target groups through different types of events and trainings, makes the experiences of members available to other members, enables focal points to establish networks through the operational work of the Platform and develops and shares tools and learning materials on DRR and CCA.

## Key partners

Member NGOs

SDC DRR network

Swiss DRR Working Group

Other thematic SDC networks (Aguasan, etc.)

SDC, BAFU, BABS

GNDR, PEDRR, GPDRR

Alliance Sud, Klimaallianz

NADEL, CDE, EPFL

## Key activities

Networking with Swiss & intern. DRR actors

Research and product development through specific mandates

Organize different types of events and networking opportunities

Development of publications and knowledge products

Participate in national and international events and working groups

Reporting and administration

## Key resources

Connections to relevant SDC thematic networks

Tools such as the 'good practice collection' (WOCAT), the learning course (curriculum) or the indicator toolbox

Functioning working model (with operational Core Group at the centre)

Member network with strong buy-in

Branding and website

SDC funding

## Value propositions

**Enhanced quality and monitoring of Swiss NGO services in the area of DRR/CCA**

**Increase visibility of Swiss DRR/CCA engagement**

**Leverage resources through joint activities**

**Increase institutional capacities through learning tailored to your NGO**

**Establish DRR/CCA in projects for increased impact**

**Gain visibility and have a stronger voice in advocacy**

**Explore options for cooperation**

**Engage in agenda setting to live up to your NGOs mission**

**Learn and exchange on DRR and CCA in a trustful environment**

**Build a supportive network**

**Establish an understanding of DRR/CCA**

**Stay up to date in the field of DRR/CCA**

**Be informed about DRR and find arguments for policies**

## Customer relationships

**Personal**

**Reporting**

**Personal**

**During trainings and events**

**Through conferences, focal points, website / indirectly**

**During events and through personal relations**

## Channels

**Events of SDC thematic networks**

**Membership in Swiss NGO DRR Platform with access to offers**

**Trainings and events**

**Alternative forms of learning**

**Mainstreaming tools**

**Conceptual support and technical advice**

**E-learning and learning materials**

**Short events (brown bag lunch, etc.) and contributions to conferences**

**Knowledge products**

**Impact and innovation awards**

**Events**

## Customer segments

**SDC officers for relevant programmes and regional DRR/CCA advisors**

**Management of Swiss DRR and CCA NGOs**

**HQ Project staff of NGOs**

**Field staff, development practitioners, students / academia and local partners in relevant fields**

**Policy makers**

## Cost structure

Personnel costs

Administrative costs

Representation at strategic events

Travel costs

Promotion and marketing costs

External consultants

## Revenue streams

**SDC grants**

**In-kind contributions**

**Co-Financing of investment costs / work on specific mandates**

**Membership fee (approx. 10'000 CHF per year)**

The following table provides an overview of Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in relation to the business model, that were identified by Platform members. It has to be noted that the exchange of Platform members related to the business model was focussed on options to further improve. Hence, the following overview has a bias towards weaknesses and threats.

|  | |
|---|---|
| - Very committed Core Group<br>- Trust and strong relationships between members<br>- Diversity of members and of their experiences<br>- Ability to mobilize new members | - Multiple target groups are a challenge for the Platform's focus<br>- DRR/CCA is a very broad topic with a potential to become fuzzy (especially when it comes to mainstreaming)<br>- Heterogenic Platform members with varying ability to contribute resources for the implementation of key activities<br>- Low / decreasing attendance at learning events<br>- Available, new technologies for learning have not been fully used<br>- Engagement of small NGOs is limited |
| **Strength** | **Weaknesses** |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
| - Casting the network wider<br>- Explore the governance structure further to cater to different target groups | - System boundaries of DRR/CCA are not clear and continuously shifting<br>- Donor dependency / framework conditions for funding may change<br>- Saturation of some products (e.g. trainings, etc.)<br>- Competition around climate finance poses a challenge to effectively engage in CCA |

# 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on insights gained throughout the 'Assessment of the Impacts of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform', it can be concluded that the Platform is an example for a very successful, lean thematic Platform that helped to establish and operationalize DRR within the work of its members and successfully contributed to the Swiss engagement in international DRR processes. This applies applies to a lesser extend to CCA. This section of the report provides more detailed conclusions and recommendations on how the Platform could evolve to remain successful in the future. Conclusions and recommendations are structured along the four main objectives of the Platform.

### 5.1.1 Members and partners use and increase their DRR/CCA capacities

The Platform aims at developing DRR/CCA capacities and supporting members both in Switzerland and in the field.

Based on the assessment results it can be concluded that the Platform is clearly meeting this objective when it comes to supporting member organizations in Switzerland. Here, members appreciate the range of capacity development and networking events that are organized by the Platform. Furthermore, mandates for Platform projects helped developing expertise of focal points and engaged members in cooperation processes.

Several members mentioned that the engagement with the Platform facilitated processes to develop joint proposals with other members. While these proposals have not yet been successful, they speak for the Platform's high potential to forge coalitions and thereby facilitate the development of more comprehensive and effective DRR/CCA interventions.

> *Recommendation 1: To leverage the Platform's potential to build cooperation among members, the Platform should explore moving beyond the current thematic focus on DRR/CCA concepts and tools. Complementing offers could support focal points in identifying DRR/CCA project opportunities or develop and implement more successful joint DRR/CCA proposals, among others.*

The Platform's work reaches initiatives on the ground through different avenues – both directly and indirectly. In some cases, field staff and partners participated directly in Platform activities (direct way). An example for a more indirect pathway is the dissemination of concepts and materials through Platform focal points during field visits and project missions. Member organizations also apply DRR/CCA concepts propagated by the Platform in the development of proposals and projects, which are then implemented on the ground. It remains unclear how the Platform seeks to support field level interventions: Some interviewees related field level support to direct participation of field staff in Platform activities[3], while others believed field outreach should primarily happen through the member organizations and not through Platform activities.

> *Recommendation 2: The Platform should specify how it seeks to change field interventions of their members towards more sustainable DRR/CCA sensitive projects and programmes and define related objectives.*

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[3] This may be attributed to the logframe indicator on learning events in the field.

When reviewing the intervention logic to provide field level support, the Platform should consider the implications for a potential future business model. Strategic positioning could aim at:

1. Remaining a lean Platform that focusses on supporting focal points from the different member organizations in Switzerland with limited resource requirements. In this case the Platform could build on its current activities and continuously elaborate more effective ways to ensure indirect impact on field projects
2. Evolving into a Platform that will provide dedicated support to a larger group of professionals in Switzerland and abroad (likely in specific focus regions). that would have to extend and adapt its value proposition, operational work and strategic positioning to cater to extended / new target groups.

A business model that focusses on more concerted support to field level interventions could explore different approaches towards 'regionalizing' the Platform, e.g. through regional advisors, using structures of other platforms to provide regional level or local support in different target regions.

> *Recommendation 3: If the Platform decides to move towards providing more field level support, different options for 'regionalization' should be explored through pilot interventions or prototyping of support services to fully understand the requirements for offering such support and generate first hand insights into what field staff and partners require.*

In case the Platform decides to remain a lean network that focusses on professionals based in Switzerland, products and outputs could be further geared towards the requirements at field level to increase the indirect impact on local projects. For this purpose, the Platform needs to systematically tap the knowledge and experiences of its members and leverage them to generate feedback from the ground on existing offers. An example for a field oriented intervention that emerged throughout the assessment is the curation and presentation of different DRR/CCA tools and approaches in a way and format that supports DRR-oriented project management at field level.[4]

### 5.1.2   Increased effectiveness of Platform members & field-based partners (Swiss approach)

One of the Platform's objectives is to establish a common and effective Swiss Approach to DRR. Most Platform members and some external stakeholders are aware and agree that this constitutes an integrated DRR approach. This approach is summarized in the Risk Staircase Model developed by the Platform. As part of risk management efforts, many members have e.g. embraced the need for thorough risk assessments during project planning.

Understanding and operationalization of DRR beyond such risk assessments is often less clear. Some members (particularly the active Core Group members) provided examples of tangible measures along the Disaster Management Cycle. Yet, many other interviewees were not able to break down what the 'Swiss Approach' could look like on the ground or what distinguishes it from other DRR approaches.

At the time of writing the evaluation report, the world witnessed the impacts of the earthquake and devastating tsunami in Palu, Indonesia. To this background, one of the informants pointed to the need to focus on the question how DRR efforts can be made sustainable. In many large-scale disasters

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[4] It was suggested that this could build on the experiences compiled in WOCAT but would focus on practical tools (e.g. Excel templates, etc.) that could be used by field staff.

warning systems were put in place and DRR initiatives had been implemented before. However, too often these do not help when disasters strike. This could arguably be a relevant pillar of a Swiss DRR approach and a topic that could be led by the DRR Platform, as individual NGOs are not able to evaluate approaches much beyond their own initiatives.

> *Recommendation 4: The Platform should systematically tap the experiences of its members with regards to sustainability of DRR efforts in relation to past major disasters and derive both good practices and lessons learned to inform future interventions of Swiss NGOs.*

The Eco-system based adaptation approach was referred to by many members as an example for an approach that is in line with DRR/CCA experiences and approaches used in Switzerland and by Swiss NGOs. Many projects using this approach have been documented (e.g. in the WOCAT publication) and a wide range of experiences exist among the Platform members.

> *Recommendation 5: To contribute towards more effective DRR/CCA work of Swiss NGOs the Platform could use experiences around Eco-system-based adaptation to gradually develop 'blue prints' for Swiss DRR/CCA signature project approaches.*

Developing signature projects around Eco-system based adaptation or other DRR/CCA approaches will require significant investments to systematically analyse existing experiences and results and pilot, test and evaluate the resulting signature approaches. Realizing such an effort could however contribute to building a tangible answer to what constitutes the Swiss approach and would likely increase the prospects of Swiss NGOs to be recognized for meaningful contributions towards realizing the ambitious agenda of the SFDRR, the Paris agreement and the SDGs.

### 5.1.3  Increased voice to raise awareness and advocate for risk-informed, carbon neutral & resilient development

Within Switzerland the Platform has become **the** mechanism (or 'door to knock at') that institutionalizes civil society engagement with government on DRR questions. The Platform seeks to advocate for the 'effective implementation of SFDRR with local action on a need based, participatory and people-centred approach'.[5] This position is shared by SDC and other Swiss governmental institutions like BAFU and BABS with a stake in DRR. As a result the Platform and the Swiss government had closely aligned agendas for international advocacy work. During the Sendai (and to a lesser degree the Paris) process this setup enabled effective cooperation between the Platform and government, where the knowledge and conceptual support of Platform members support found its way into the Swiss position. Since 2015, the internationally endorsed SFDRR provides a clear framework and direction for DRR work.

At international level this means that the Swiss government is not engaged in resource intensive negotiation processes where the Platform's support would be required. This raises the question what role the Platform should play regarding international DRR/CCA advocacy in the future.

> *Recommendation 6: Given the closely aligned agendas, the Platform needs to establish how it will complement government efforts at international level or hold government to account regarding DRR/CCA commitments.*

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[5] According to the platform's 2017 – 18 logframe

Throughout the interviews and consultations, a few options emerged that could be further explored:

- Member NGOs are often embedded in international networks (this also particularly applies to smaller members like e.g. CBM, ADRA, etc.). Through such members the Platform could aim to leverage broader international support for specific positions.

- The 'Swiss DRR approach' is about integrated disaster risk reduction. This approach is shared by other countries, like e.g. the Netherlands or Japan. The Platform could aim at building coalitions with civil society from countries that support similar approaches to make a bigger contribution to promote the Swiss approach at the international level (with an emphasis on the shared principles).

- The Platform is currently supporting the development of an approach for 'shadow reporting' related to the SFDRR. This could become an important mechanism to scrutinize the efforts to implement the Sendai framework of the Swiss government and governments in those countries where Swiss NGOs work on DRR/CCA.

While the Swiss government and the Platform are closely aligned in their positions, there was one DRR topic that was somewhat contested: Some Platform members perceived that the Platform missed out on the opportunity to contribute to the discourse around micro insurances and the cooperation with insurance companies on DRR. To this background it would be advisable to regularly map emerging DRR topics and clarify the Platform members' position related to each one of them.

> *Recommendation 7: In line with the idea of a Swiss Approach the Platform could advocate that all Swiss DRR/CCA actors coordinate on key topics and align behind a Swiss Voice, which considers and where feasible adapts civil society positions (established through the Platform).*

Establishing a Swiss voice that considers civil society positions could serve as a role model in international policy processes and would increase the legitimacy of Swiss positions.

### 5.1.4 Recognized as key actor by Swiss and international DRR/CCA professionals and practitioners

This fourth objective / outcome is divided into the internal functioning of the Platform and the appreciation and recognition of the Platform's work by external actors.

Regarding the governance of the Platform, the work of the operational core group was highly appreciated by all members. This mechanism has been instrumental to ensure a functioning and productive network. The core group members are the most active Platform members and have a strong influence on the decisions and positioning of the Platform. This 'special' position of core group members is not considered problematic by other members. Some informants did however point out that the overall governance and decision-making processes were partly unclear for members who are not in the core group.

> *Recommendation 8: It should be explored how the core group could integrate other members more actively into the operational work and decision making processes of the Platform.*

Organizing Core Group meetings at the offices of other member organizations could be one way to pull less active members into the 'inner circle'. Another option could be to invite members as observers to core group meetings.

The Platform has a strong orientation towards its own membership at HQ level and the cooperation with SDC. During a strategic workshop that took place during the same time as the impact assessment, four main target groups were defined, being SDC, HQ staff of Swiss NGOs, field staff of Swiss NGOs and 'others'. The first three target groups speak to a clear orientation towards the Platform itself. This is a key strength ensuring that Platform activities are tailored towards the needs of DRR/CCA focal points. At the same time, the issue of identifying and leveraging potential strategic partners for the Platform emerged repeatedly to explore emerging topics, address CCA more effectively and become financially more independent of SDC funding.

> *Recommendation 9: The Platform should consider to establish a wider range of strategic partnerships with, through and beyond the Platform members cover emerging DRR/CCA topics.*

When it comes to financing partners, the Platform should make concerted efforts to diversify funding (e.g. SECO), or tapping corporate funding sources (e.g. from Swiss based insurance or re-insurance companies). For this purpose, the Platform should be open to look for both core funding and financing of specific mandates that are in line with the platforms mission, vision and objectives.

Especially in CCA, where only few focal points count with expertise and experience, the Platform should establish closer working relationships with external partners to make expertise accessible to members. Current partnerships with academic institutions could be complemented with thematic networks around EU initiatives. The development of partnerships and engagement with Swiss actors like Alliance Sud and Klima Allianz as well as (Re-)Insurance companies like Zürich Insurance Group or SwissRe should be explored systematically.

> *Recommendation 10: The Platform needs to systematically explore partnerships that bear the potential to make the Platform less dependent from SDC and complement the knowledge, experience and networks of member focal points.*

To develop sustainable partnerships, the Platform should clarify what it brings to the table in each case and establish resource requirements and implications that each new partnership has for its business model (with a specific focus on how the partnership contributes to enable the platform to deliver upon its value proposition). What the platform can offer ranges from providing access to the network of Swiss NGOs and their implementing structures in developing countries, over implementing capacities to the accumulated expertise held by the Platform members.

# 6. Annexes

## 6.1 Terms of Reference

See separate document

## 6.2 List of persons interviewed

| Name | Organization | Role | When |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Eveline Studer | Helvetas | CG | First round of interviews |
| Judith Macchi | HEKS | CG | First round of interviews |
| Jana Junghardt | Caritas | CG | First round of interviews |
| Anton Jöhr | SRC | CG | First round of interviews |
| Nicole Stolz | Caritas | SC | First round of interviews |
| Beat von Däniken | SRC | SC | First round of interviews |
| Philippe Beutler | SDC | external | Second round of interviews |
| John Brogan | Tdh | member | Second round of interviews |
| Liesa Sauerhammer | Plan int. | external | Second round of interviews |
| Manuel Rothe | CBM | member | Second round of interviews |
| Nicola Schönenberger | Innovabridge | member | Second round of interviews |
| Nina Saalismaa | Zoi | member | Second round of interviews |
| Mike Perekrestenko | ADRA Switzerland | member | Second round of interviews |
| Ernst Lueber | Swiss Solidarity | external | Second round of interviews |
| Markus Zimmermann | NDR Consulting GmbH | external | Second round of interviews |
| Lucy Pearson | GNDR | external | Second round of interviews |
| Bruno Heghebaert | IFRC | external | Second round of interviews |
| Darcy Molnar | NADEL / ETH Zürich | external | Second round of interviews |
| Judith Reusser | swissaid | external | Second round of interviews |

## 6.3 List of documents / secondary data consulted and used

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## 6.4 Survey results of the member survey

See separate document