

**Programme 01.05.2019 – 30.04.2023**

**“Building Bridges”**



Local communities involved in building a bridge, Cambodia (© WorldVision)

## **Annual Report of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform** **Reporting period: 01.05.2021-30.04.2022**

**Website Version**

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## List of Abbreviations

CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ETH Nadel	Center for Development and Cooperation of ETH Zurich
F2F	Face to Face
GNDR	Global Network of Civil Society Organisation for Disaster Reduction
GPDRR	Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction
HEKS/EPER	Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirchen Schweiz
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
SDC DRR NW	SDC DRR Network
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SFDRR	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
SRC	Swiss Red Cross
YPO	Yearly Plan of Operation

## 1. Background

This report refers to the project contribution “Support to the Swiss NGO DRR Platform”, which extends over the period from 01.05.2019 to 30.04.2023.

The report provides an overview of the achievements during the third programme year, i.e. from 01.05.2021-30.04.2022 and an outlook to the fourth programme year. The annual report addresses the key achievements along the structure of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform.

Reference document:

- Programme 01.05.2019 – 30.04.2023 “Building Bridges” as proposal to SDC (March 2019)

### 1.1 Thematic context

Even though headlines around the world were dominated by disasters in the Global North, such as the historic flooding in Germany or the extreme weather events in North America, 2021 was a challenging year for the Global South in particular. The global pandemic saw extreme poverty rise again after more than two decades. In addition to Covid-19, climate-related extreme events, other disasters and conflicts left more than 253 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. The highest number in recent decades, which is expected to rise to 274 million people in 2022 (UN Global Humanitarian Overview 2022). The following events, among others, led to these high figures: Ethiopia is facing an extreme food security emergency due to a prolonged drought and conflict. In Madagascar, climate change is driving famine-like conditions in a conflict-prone country. Indonesia and East Timor were hit by cyclone Seroja in April 2021, causing flash floods and landslides. Massive wildfires in the Amazon region, devastating biodiversity-rich primary rainforest.

The IPCC's 6<sup>th</sup> assessment reports I-III, released in August 2021 and February/March 2022, paint a bleak picture of the future. 98% of the 1.1°C global warming since pre-industrialization is "unequivocally" due to human influence. Human influence has drastically increased the risk of compound extreme events since the 1950s – concurrent heatwaves and droughts, fire and compound flooding. With every additional 0.5°C of global warming, clearly discernible increases in these events is to be expected. And with a warming above 1.5°C, irreversible impacts, e.g. regarding species extinctions, (and concurrent extremes) are projected. Present adaptation strategies are insufficient and do not meet the goals of equity, well-being and ecosystem health. They insufficiently include poverty reduction, and the underlying social determinants of human vulnerability, including gender, ethnicity and governance. The Swiss NGO DRR Platform continues to advocate among members and partners in Switzerland and internationally for approaches and methods that attach great importance to the inequity in climate vulnerability and response, as well as the role of power and participation in implementation processes.

In November 2021, at the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, Ministers from 49 European and Central Asian Member States signed the Prevention Pledge and committed to making disaster prevention and resilience a priority and to accelerating the implementation of the Sendai Framework – also in preparation for the GPDRR in May 2022. The Member States recognize the need for urgent, transformative and collaborative action against existing, emerging, and future systemic risks. While the long-awaited breakthrough on the global political stage failed to materialize at COP26 in Glasgow, pledges by countries to double funding for climate change adaptation by 2025 compared to 2019 may be seen as a small ray of hope. However, a rocky

road to climate justice lies ahead. The need for the work of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform has never been higher.

## 2. Progress

The current programme of the Platform runs from 2019 – 2023 and was planned with ambition in a participatory process of the member organisations under the lead of the Core Group. Since the submission of the programme to SDC, the Platform faced both internal and external challenges that now require a substantial adjustment in terms of programme and working mode. Fluctuations in human resources, institutional restructuring and, obviously, the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic were felt already in the first two years of the current programme phase and continued to shape this year's programme implementation. Continuously, resources of field staff were bound for Covid-responses, making interaction beyond virtual exchanges impossible for most of the time. Whenever possible, Platform members identified windows of opportunity for f2f-exchanges (Mali and Switzerland) and transformed previously planned exchanges into virtual learning opportunities (Haiti).

The Platform has found a working mode to bring most mandates forward. However, many activities are delayed and some face substantial deviations in depth of implementation or resources committed. As this is a trend which, despite being strongly shaped by the extraordinary pandemic situation, has been ongoing in its third year, the Platform reviewed the implementation progress and provided recommendations for the remainder of the SDC programme contribution in form of a **request for a no-cost extension** from 30.04.2023 to 31.12.2025.

The third programme year also witnessed a couple of **highlights** for the Platform: The Learning Event on Gender Issues and the Position of Women in Climate and Disaster Resilience was the first one to be organised jointly with SDC and turned out to be a success in terms of content as well as organisation and networking. The second Swiss field-day, conducted on the topic of Nature-based Solutions in the Valais, was instructive on the subject, provided opportunities for networking and took place at a beautiful day and in a spectacular scenery. Finally, the Platform could celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in person, sharing insights on achievements and joint memories of the past decade.

In general, the Platform has progressed its work considerably in activity lines 2, 4 and 6, is behind in activity lines 1 and 3 and did not progress in activity line 5. The following sections describe progress in the reporting period in more detail.

### 2.1 DRR and CCA Mainstreaming

The **annual event on DRR and CCA mainstreaming** that was planned for March 2022, had to be postponed and will take place from 7 to 9 December 2022 at the SBB Centre in Löwenberg (near Murten). Initial work on content and methodology has started, working title: Integrating uncertainty: risk-informed and climate-resilient programming in international cooperation.

In order to have an introductory course/module on DRR and CCA Mainstreaming (in French, English and Spanish) ready at any time a new team member is joining an organisation, the working group members responsible for the **DRR and CCA Mainstreaming Webinar**

reconsidered the structure and design of the webinar in 2021. The working group decided to put more time and effort into the revision of the course material to bring it up to date and produce a two-part course with a voiceover that can be looked at, at any given time and place. The revision of the course materials and production of the short introductory course is ongoing in 2022. This new product will complement and most likely substitute the self-paced E-learning course from 2017.

Between May 2021 and April 2022 there have been several exchanges between ETHZ NADEL and the Swiss NGO DRR Platform. The Swiss NGO DRR Platform gave feedback to the announcement and programme of the **NADEL DRR course**, which will be held mid-May 2022. The Swiss NGO DRR Platform will be part of the first course day with ETHZ NADEL on 16 May 2022.

## 2.2 Nexus humanitarian aid – development cooperation

The activity line on the humanitarian development nexus slowed down after the successful organisation of the virtual annual event in April 2021. The [workshop report](#) was published in May 2021 and an article produced in the SDC DRR Network newsletter on early warning, early action, disseminated in May 2021 as well.

Plans to continue the nexus journey from the Platform perspective through regional learning events and/or webinars were unfortunately not followed yet, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and bound human resources.

## 2.3 Nature-based solutions

The third program year focused on the exchange of knowledge and expertise in the field of NbS between member organizations.

The **WOCAT-Regionalization** mandate was again affected by Covid-travel restrictions but as well by security concerns, for example in the case of the long planned NbS workshop in Haiti that again had to be cancelled in spring 2021. In exchange, the platform had a positive first experience in conducting an online mini-learning journey for DRR stakeholders in Haiti. Fortunately, the platform was also able to host a F2F NbS workshop in Bamako, Mali. 19 participants from 10 different organizations – including 4 Platform member organizations, SDC, and other international and local partner organizations – engaged in lively discussions about approaches to Eco-DRR and EbA; the main natural hazards their projects address; and various methods and techniques for reducing the corresponding risks. As a global learning event, the NbS webinar of July can be mentioned, where IUCN presented the IUCN Global Standard for NbS. Participants were informed about the eight NbS criteria as well as the corresponding sub-indicators required for the NbS designation of a project or intervention, such as working at the landscape scale or monitoring for biodiversity conservation outcomes.

Within the framework of the **valuation mandate**, the NbS working group was able to successfully participate in a small call by the GIZ EbA Support Facility, which led to the provision of technical support on ecosystem valuation as well as the ability for several working group members to participate in workshops on M&E for EbA conducted by the GIZ EbA Support Facility. The working group is now also a member of their Community of Practice. Based on a small internal tender, a watershed project of Helvetas in Tajikistan was selected to benefit from the EbA valuation case



study support, including a cost-benefit analyses. The case study is currently being developed in cooperation with GIZ valuation experts. In addition, the working group started to screen relevant literature on valuation methodologies and tools for the development of a valuation mapping overview. Based on the experiences of the case study and the mapping overview, the working group will develop a practice-oriented valuation guidance for member organizations.

With regard to the **signature approach mandate**, the platform received a request from the forest research team at HAFL to work on the development of a common approach in the field of forest valuation. The possibilities of a joint project submission are also currently being discussed.

The Platform's **Field Day** in the Valais mountains in September allowed for a personal exchange and networking of Platform members and SDC representatives after a long time. The aim of the field day was to achieve a better understanding of Switzerland-specific measures, strategies and research projects in the field of ecosystem-based adaptation and disaster risk reduction. Participants enjoyed expert input and presentations by authorities and scientists on the revitalization of the Dranse River, the irrigation of mountain meadows by combining traditional knowledge and remote sensing methods, the development of forests under the influence of climate change, as well as the value of protective forests in terms of rockfall hazards.

## 2.4 Climate change – fit for purpose

Between May 2021 and April 2022 the working group on the **Climate Change and Migration Nexus** further worked on the data collection of the case studies from Mali, Cambodia, Ethiopia and Honduras. Research questions were formulated and the mandate for the consultants collecting the field data elaborated. The data collection tools were tested in Mali in September 2021 under the lead of Helvetas and refined thereafter. A second data collection in Cambodia took place in February 2022 under the lead of Caritas Switzerland. The data collection for Ethiopia (HEKS) and Honduras (SRK) are planned to take place in the second quarter of 2022.

The **Weather, Water and Climate Services** mandate was on hold during the third programme year, due to staff changes within Helvetas. The work on it will be taken up again, once the Climate Change Advisor position is filled again in June 2022.

With regard to the further dissemination of the **Facing Climate Change stories**, the Swiss NGO DRR Platform is in exchange with the Swiss Climate Alliance. Also, HEKS/BfA have widely used the videos in presentations given to parishes around Switzerland to sensitize for climate justice in the frame of the ecumenical lent campaign of HEKS and Fastenaktion in March/April 2022.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2021, HEKS and Helvetas organised the second webinar of the **Climate Finance Webinar Series**. This time the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Government was presented to the Swiss NGO DRR Platform members. For the webinar Thomas Hirsch from [Climate & Development Advice](#) who has supported several submissions to the IKI and has also worked as an IKI evaluator before, introduced the structure and the different funding mechanisms of the IKI to the platform member organisations and also gave valuable tips on how to increase the chances of obtaining funding through the IKI. The event was attended by 27 participants and generated a particularly great interest from people working in field offices of Swiss NGOs.

Acknowledging the relevance of the IPCC's 6<sup>th</sup> assessment reports I-III, for DRR practitioners and beyond, the Platform organised two webinars around the first two working group reports. The first

**Webinar on the Physical Science Basis** followed the WG I report and took place in October 2021 and featured a presentation by Prof. Sonia Seneviratne from ETH Zurich on climate change related extremes. The second **Webinar on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability** followed the publication of the WG II report, with contributions from lead authors from Helvetas, University of Zurich and Mountain Research Initiative. Both webinars attracted a broad audience of 70 participants, of which 35 at least were from Platform member organisations.

## 2.5 Working at scale

The activity line 5 has not seen great demand by Platform member organisations and was also classified as the least relevant in the recent member survey of December 2021. Therefore, the Platform Core Group decided to cancel the activity line with immediate effect in order to reallocate available (human) resources to the activity lines that are in higher demand. Should any learning events or initiatives come up by direct demand from members, the Platform will find a way to incorporate them in its programme on an ad-hoc basis.

## 2.6 Leaving no one behind

On 26 May 2021, Save the Children, with the support of the LNOB working group members, organised a webinar on **How to better integrate the Leave-No-One-Behind Agenda & Disaster Risk Reduction**. Besides giving an introduction into the interlinkage of the two topics, three guest speakers from CBM Bangladesh, Save the Children Serbia and GNDR shared insights into how they are addressing these issues. The webinar was attended by 30 participants from different organisations and received a good overall feedback.

On 24/25 November 2021, the SDC DRR and Gender Networks together with the Swiss NGO DRR Platform organised and hosted a two-day Learning Event on **Gender Issues and the Position of Women in Climate and Disaster Resilience**, at Restaurant Dählhölzli in Bern. The F2F event brought together experts and development and humanitarian aid practitioners from SDC, the Swiss NGO community and academia, altogether 30 participants, including representatives from 7 different platform member organisations. The programme included a broad range of inputs from organisations including UN Women, University of Toronto and Zurich, Practical Action, Irdana, SDC, FOEN, Helvetas and HEKS. The event focused on three different dimensions of the topic: Understanding gender dimensions of disaster risk (management), Enabling and planning gender-responsive and transformative Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and integrating the gender lens in DRM learning and monitoring. Participants overall satisfaction with the event was high to very high. The event was also a success in the sense that it was a close and good collaboration of SDC and the Swiss NGO DRR Platform. The event will be followed up with a SDC newsletter on the topic, as well as a webinar to also share the insights of the event with a wider range of interested participants beyond Switzerland.

## 2.7 Advocacy and policy dialogue

### Swiss Consultative and Working Group on DRR

The Platform continues to be an active member of both gatherings. The Platform contributed to the Swiss statement in preparation of the EFDRR in November 2021, and is also represented in the group gearing up for the Global Platform DRR that is going to take place in Bali from 23 – 28 May. As from April 2022, the Platform is represented by Mirjam Gasser from CBM in the Consultative Group to ensure issues of accessibility and inclusion being considered in an intersectional way throughout discussions and products.

### GNDR

Jana Junghardt remains National Focal Point for Switzerland and contributes to the Regional Advisory Group for Europe. She has also become active in the Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism, contributing to the organization of the Stakeholder Forum adjacent to the GPDRR. The Platform has also contributed to official statements by GNDR in preparation of the Global Platform. The tripartite dialogue between SDC, GNDR and the Platform has not yet taken up speed.

### PEDRR

PEDRR meetings in 2021 and beginning of 2022 strongly focused on the preparation for GPDRR 2022, including the application of a PEDRR side event, which was accepted. The Platform representative also joined the annual PEDRR retreat in Geneva, which was held as a hybrid event and which served to develop the PEDRR vision for 2030 as well as the workplan 2022-24. Within PEDRR, the Swiss NGO DRR Platform can be seen as representing the grassroots level; an important level that must not be forgotten given the strong focus on higher-level policy and advocacy by the UN and science representatives.

### Climate Alliance

After the narrow "No" to the CO2 law in June 2021, the Swiss Climate Alliance had to refocus its political activities on important "climate" decisions at cantonal level. At the federal level, the Alliance focusses on giving support to the "Gletscherinitiative".

Activities to lobby for divestment of the Swiss National Bank and Swiss Pension funds are ongoing. There was also a very successful campaign being launched on how to make Swiss Agriculture more climate friendly. For the first time, the "[Prix Climat](#)", for innovative solutions in agriculture, has been awarded.

With regard to climate change issues and development cooperation a new working group consisting of representatives of development organisation amongst the alliance has formed. The group is currently thinking of ways on how to bring issues of "climate justice" to the attention of the broader Swiss public. In this group it is also discussed how to further use the "Facing Climate Change" stories.



## 2.8 Further activities

### Events outside the frame of the activity lines

**10th Anniversary of the Platform:** Strengthening the quality of DRR-projects and programming among Swiss NGOs and provide a Platform for learning and exchange – built on these ideas the Swiss NGO DRR Platform was formed in September 2011. 10 years from then, the Platform took the opportunity to showcase its achievements during a 10-year anniversary celebration on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, for which the Platform produced a [video](#) and an [infographic](#) (online scroll) that are both displayed on the website. The event gathered around 30 persons in Bern and some former colleagues via zoom and was also very welcomed as possibility for informal exchange.

**Learning Event on “genetically modified organisms in agriculture”:** had been prepared at the request of several member organisations, planned a first time for early January 2020 and postponed due to low registration numbers. The event was rescheduled – after the Covid-19 pandemic – for 11 October 2021 as a F2F event, but had to be definitely cancelled because of not reaching the participation quorum.

### Collaboration and exchange with further actors

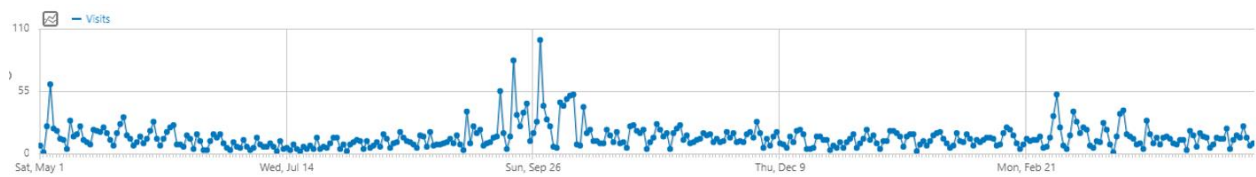
**CelsiusPro:** is a Swiss Insurtech company founded in 2008 that specializes in industrializing index insurance solutions to mitigate the effects of adverse weather, climate change and natural catastrophes. The company is interested in collaboration with NGOs and approached the Platform. A follow-up of the first contact is yet to be organised.

**Flood Resilience Alliance:** the Core Group met with Michael Szoenyi from Zurich, and project manager of the Flood Resilience Alliance (FRA). Michael presented the FRA and 2 resilience measurement tools that have gained relevance over the past years: the Flood Resilience Measurement for Communities (FMRC), a robust measurement tool with a focus on quantitative approach, and the Post-Event Review Capability (PERC), a flexible and widely applicable method to analyse the root causes of why events become disasters.

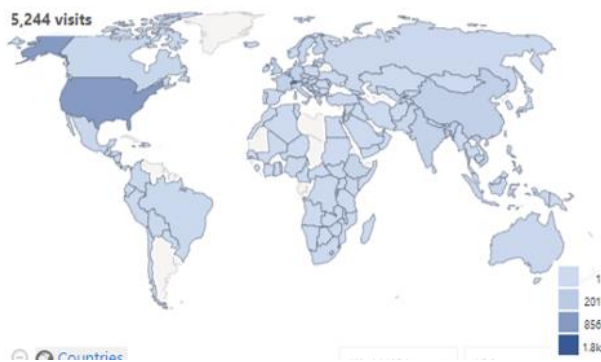
## 2.9 Visibility

Website Visits, Views, Downloads	Previous Period	Reporting Period	Δ
Visits	4'493	5'244	+16.7%
Page views	5'887	6'682	+13.5%
Downloads e-learning	290	311	+7.2%
Module 0 (Intro)	76	85	
Module 1	65	85	
Module 2	48	62	
Module 3	47	42	
Module 4	54	37	

## Visits over Time



## Visitor Map



## Country (1-5 of 140)

	Switzerland	1,807
	United States	856
	Bangladesh	201
	Netherlands	150
	China	127

### 3. Organisation

#### 3.1 Member organisations

The Swiss NGO DRR Platform was founded in 2011 by seven Swiss based NGOs. Since then, new member organisations joined the Platform almost each year. In the past programme year, however, this was not the case. With the start of 2022, HEKS/EPER merged with Bread for All. In April 2022, the Platform counted 19 member organisations.

No.	Organisation	Membership
1	Caritas Switzerland	2011
2	HEKS / EPER	2011
3	Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation	2011
4	Medair	2011
5	Solidar Suisse	2011
6	Swiss Red Cross	2011
7	Terre des hommes (Lausanne)	2011
8	World Vision Switzerland	2012
	Proact Network (was dissolved in 2015)	2012-2015
	Global Risk Forum Davos (GRF)	2012-2020
	Bread for All (merger with HEKS)	2013-2021
9	Tearfund Switzerland	2013
10	Christoffel Blinden Mission	2014
11	Save the Children Switzerland	2014
12	Innovabridge	2015
13	ADRA	2015
	Plan International (no more focus on DRR)	2015-2016
14	Zoï Environment Network	2016
15	Vivamos mejor	2017
16	Foundation for sustainable development in mountain regions	2019
17	Solidarmed	2019
18	Swissaid	2020
19	Drones for Earth	2020



## 3.2 Structure and steering mechanisms

### Permanent Platform Bodies

The Platform holds regular **Member Assemblies**, where all Platform member organisations are invited to select and develop internal mandates, to get organized in designated working groups and for a mutual update on the Platform's progress and context.

The **Steering Committee**, consisting of SRC, Helvetas, and Caritas Switzerland, is responsible for ensuring that mission and regulations are followed and approves the mandates. The Steering Committee held two virtual joint monitoring meetings in 2021-22 with the Core Group. The **Core Group**, which includes SRC, Helvetas, Caritas Switzerland and HEKS/EPER, carries out the ongoing operational tasks as well as quality assurance. The Core Group held monthly meetings throughout the reporting period and a retreat on 1 February 2022, where it reflected on the status of implementation, discussed possible adjustments to the Platform setup and thematic priorities, and planned concrete steps for implementation. The **Secretariat** is held by the SRC. An internal Financial **Review Commission** (consisting of Terre des hommes and Medair) is a further permanent body of the Platform. It reviewed and approved the financial report at its meeting from 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

### Platform Working Groups

To implement the programme, working groups were established for the six activity lines and sub mandates. The working groups consist between 3 (activity line working at scale), to 4 (DRR and CCA Mainstreaming, Nexus, Leaving no one behind), to 6 (climate change) and on to 8 (nature-based solutions) contributing member organisations. Sub working groups with an average of 3 member organisations are responsible for the implementation of each Platform event or product.

### Collaboration with SDC

SDC is closely involved in the planning, monitoring and steering, and reporting activities of the Platform. SDC and the Core Group of the Platform held two exchange meetings during the reporting period (21.06.2021 and 2.11.2021), coordinated upcoming activities and discussed further collaboration opportunities. The two organisations jointly organised the two-day Learning Event "Same Disaster – different Effects – different Strategies" (see above, section 2.6).

## 4. Resources

The total expenditure for the reporting period (01.05.2021-30.04.2022) amounted to CHF 374'387 of which CHF 217'118 (58%) consists as Platform contribution and CHF 157'269 (42%) requested as SDC contribution.

## 5. Outlook

**Milestones** of the fourth programme year:

- **Activity line 1 – DRR and CCA mainstreaming:** The F2F event 2022 on ‘Good programming in uncertainty, risk-informed and climate-resilient programming’ is planned for 7.-9. December 2022 at the SBB Centre Löwenberg. In parallel, the work on DRR and CCA mainstreaming guidelines for specific sectors per needs assessment among the Platform member organisations will be initiated. In May, The Swiss NGO DRR Platform will be supporting ETHZ Nadel during the first course day of their DRR Course on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022. The webinar DRR and CCA basics will be remodelled into a short two part course with a voiceover, which will serve as an introduction into DRR and CCA mainstreaming to new staff joining member organisations ready to use at any given moment or place.
- **Activity line 2 – LRRD / Nexus humanitarian aid – development cooperation:** Based on the demand from member organisations, this activity line will explore how to link the transversal topics of DRR-mainstreaming and conflict-sensitive programme management. Also, a collection of good practices of how to operationalize the nexus is planned.
- **Activity line 3 – Nature-based solutions:** The elaboration of an EbA valuation case study within the framework of a watershed project in collaboration with the GIZ EbA support facility will be continued and finalized. A mapping of different valuation approaches and tools in the area of NbS will be conducted. The case study and the mapping exercise will set the basis for the development of a hands-on valuation guidance for NbS. Further explorations on a potentially joint collaboration with HAFL on forest valuation will be held. A webinar on participatory and modelling/remote sensing methods on bio-physical indicators is planned for early summer.
- **Activity line 4 – Climate Change – Fit for purpose:** the webinar series on the IPCC AR6 reports and one on climate finance are established events and will be continued with one event each in the fourth programme year. A follow-up exchange amongst Swiss NGOs Moreover is planned on advancements on reducing the organisational CO2 Footprint (walk the talk). Regarding climate projections, a briefing note for practitioners is elaborated and two webinars are planned in Q2 and Q3 of 2022. The Climate and Migration working group plans to further advance in data collection for the case studies and to compile the data in a publication. Furthermore, the work on Weather, Water Climate Services will be resumed and brought up to speed. Helvetas will take over the overall responsibility for AL 4 from HEKS/EPER from May 2022.
- **Activity line 5 – Working at scale:** will be dropped for the remaining programme phase.
- **Activity line 6 – LNOB:** with the implementation of the webinar on LNOB DRR interlinkages and the 2-day learning event on Gender dimensions of DRM in 2021, all planned activities under the AL6 LNOB are completed. Discussions on further activities in this Activity Line are ongoing. Possibilities are amongst others the testing of CBMs i-DRR APP, webinar on Gender Dimensions of DRM. LNOB and inclusion will remain important concerns of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform and will be integrated in all other activity lines.

The budget for the fourth programme year amounts to CHF 644'640 of which CHF 347'910 consists as Platform contribution and CHF 296'730 (46%) is requested as SDC contribution.