

Programme 1.5.2019 – 31.12.2025

“Building Bridges”



Tankua Ber suspension bridge in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia (© Helvetas – Simon Opladen)

Annual Report of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform
Reporting period: 01.05.2022-30.04.2023

Website Version

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List of Abbreviations

CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
COP	27 Sharm el-Sheikh Climate Change Conference
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
PEDRR	Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
SDC DRR NW	SDC DRR Network
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SFDRR	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
SHA	Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit of SDC
SRC	Swiss Red Cross
WMO	World Meteorological Organisation
YPO	Yearly Plan of Operation

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report refers to the project contribution “Support to the Swiss NGO DRR Platform”, which originally spanned over four years, but was extended in 2022 to cover now the period from 1.5.2019 to 31.12.2025.

The report provides an overview of the achievements during the fourth programme year, from 1.5.2022-30.4.2023 and an outlook to the fifth programme year.

1.2 Thematic context

After a crisis is before a crisis: The weakening of the impact of the Covid-19 crisis was felt in early 2022, with Omicron variants spreading around the world, being more transmissible, but with less negative impact on people. But before the post-covid world was becoming a reality in more and more states in the world, Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24. The invasion displaced more than 200'000 people per day in the initial days of war and more than 15 million people to this day. Fighting is still ongoing, creating a large humanitarian crisis, but also influencing the global energy supplies, and with it, creating the next global crisis after Covid-19, one of increasing cost of living.

It was also a year of showing what our future could look like under the effects of human-made climate change: record breaking heat waves everywhere led to droughts which impacted over 90 million people in African Countries and induced famines in Uganda. In Europe the worst drought in 500 years was reported. More than a third of Pakistan was flooded from June to August, destroying more than a million homes. Such extreme weather events will only increase in frequency with every degree of additional warming.

Still, at COP 27 no breakthrough in cutting emissions was reached, but in contrary, global emissions from fossil fuels are predicted to overtake pre-COVID-19 levels. The world reached a human population of over 8 billion in 2022 and over half of them live in contexts highly vulnerable to climate change. The additional risks of climate change will more and more overlap with other risks and strike these most vulnerable the hardest. Nevertheless, the necessary financial volumes for global mitigation and adaptation are not nearly enough, and the window to achieve a +1.5° world is closing rapidly. The establishment of a Loss & Damage fund for countries which are not historical emitters, but most heavily impacted by climate change at the conference highlights that impacts of climate change are a reality today and certain damages cannot be avoided.

Globally, the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance has reached over 320 million in 2022, up from around 250 million the year before. 185 million people were affected by natural hazards and disasters and over 100 million people have been displaced from their homes. The world goes from crisis to crisis, with additional risks coming from climate change and variability and conflicts interacting with each other, emphasizing the increasingly systemic nature of risk. This only highlights the important work in Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction the Swiss NGO DRR Platform is promoting, which is needed to help to manage these risks.

2. Progress

The current programme of the Platform, running from 2019 – 2023, 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 required a substantial adjustment to the programme and its way of working. Institutional restructuring, fluctuations in human resources, and the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic were felt throughout the first three years of the current programme phase. While the Platform has found a working mode to bring most mandates forward, many activities were delayed, and some faced substantial deviations in depth of implementation or resources committed. Based on an internal review of the implementation progress, the Platform submitted a **request for a no-cost extension** from 30.04.2023 to 31.12.2025 that was approved by SDC in July 2022.

The fourth programme year also witnessed a couple of **highlights** for the Platform: The annual event on DRR and CCA mainstreaming attracted representatives from 13 different platform member organisations and many more participants who benefited from lively exchanges based on a wide range of case studies. The Learning Journey on Hazard and Risk Assessment, which started in March 2023, is the first of its kind in terms of the comprehensive content and longer duration offered by the Platform, targeting participants in programme countries as well as at the Swiss headquarters. The webinar on bioindicators highlighted examples on how to measure the ecosystem services of nature-based solutions, while the webinar on climate projections emphasized the importance of incorporating longer timespans in our projects and provided approaches how to do so. The 7th Global Platform for DRR, organised for the first time in a hybrid format, was characterised by some lively and interactive formats for learning and a comprehensive stakeholder engagement of the Swiss delegation.

In general, the Platform has progressed its work in activity lines 1, 3 and 4. For activity lines 2 and 6, mandates are being adjusted. Activity line 5 was cancelled because of lack of demand from Platform member organisations. The following sections describe progress in the reporting period in more detail.

2.1 DRR and CCA Mainstreaming

From 7-9 December 2022, the Platform organised and hosted its annual event on **Integrating uncertainty – risk-informed and climate-resilient programming in international cooperation**, virtually and on the last day in a hybrid mode, at the Welle7 in Bern. The event brought together experts and development and humanitarian aid practitioners from SDC, the Swiss NGO community and their partner organisations as well as academia. The programme started with a focus on DRR and CCA along the project cycle, looking at the at the most common risk screening and climate-proofing approaches and tools, and how they are applied in case studies. It then opened the scope to a broader context, learning from the mainstreaming experience from experts in gender and conflict sensitive programme management. It also dealt with the institutional level, discussing what needed to be in place to create an enabling environment for programming. The programme opened with a keynote address by Marcus Oxley, Director Resilience Solutions Associates and former Executive Director of GNDR, and comprised a broad range of inputs, including from SDC, Helvetas, Swiss Red Cross, IFRC, GNDR, Caritas, Medair, WorldVision and IMPACT Initiatives. Altogether, between 30 and 50 persons participated at the different sessions offered during the three days. Participants overall satisfaction with the event was high to very

high. The event was also a success in that it pulled in representatives from 13 platform member organisations.

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 Platform has reworked the structure and design and is currently working on two modules of 20-30 minutes each. At the time of report writing, the first module was being animated and illustrated and the second module being written. The final version is to be expected in English in June 2023 with French and Spanish to be following in the course of the year. The webinar will be made publicly available via the [YouTube Channel](#) of the Platform.

The work on **DRR and CCA mainstreaming guidelines for specific sectors** was initiated with a needs assessment among the Platform member organisations, but not taken up because it did not reach the minimum quorum of organisations interested in either contributing to the mandate or using the guidelines in their work. Based on discussions with SDC, it was decided to adjust the mandate into a joint project with SDC on guidelines/thematic briefs that are relevant for both organisations.

The **Learning Journey on Hazard and Risk Assessment** is the first attempt of the Platform to offer a comprehensive und multi-year modular training. The Learning Journey aims at enhancing the capacity of practitioners on how to independently conduct a hazard and risk assessment, including how to retrieve airborne data, and determine the cost-benefit ratio of a DRR measure. It is geared towards staff working in the field of DRR in programme countries as well as in headquarters (in Switzerland and elsewhere). The modules are structured in 3 packages, run over 2 years and combine webinar series with a field-day to put the theory into practice. More information can be retrieved from the [training concept](#). The first three webinar modules, introduction to hazard assessment, acquisition of satellite-based data and hazard assessment flood, took place in March and April, with over 30 (introduction) and 15 participants (other two), and high satisfaction rates.

The Platform was contracted by ETHZ for the preparation and co-conduction of one session for the **NADEL DRR course** which was held in May 2022. The session focused on DRR approaches and tools and introduced participants to the DRR staircase model, illustrated with lots of practical examples. This was then followed by a group work and a discussion with the participants. The course was attended by 18 people from 16 different organisations. The module was not evaluated specifically, but the NADEL course evaluation showed a very high satisfaction with the overall content and the presenters of the different modules.

2.2 Nexus humanitarian aid – development cooperation

During the Member Assembly of the Platform in December 2022, members reconfirmed their interest in the activity line, particularly in the exploration of the **triple nexus**. It was therefore decided to modify the planned nexus operational guide towards an exchange and brief guidance on the operationalisation of the triple nexus, using examples from practitioners of the Platform member organisations.

The topic of **anticipatory humanitarian action** has gained traction and showcases strong overlaps with disaster preparedness initiatives. In April, the members of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform based in Ethiopia (i.e., Swiss Red Cross, Caritas Switzerland, Helvetas, HEKS/EPER) came together in Addis Ababa for a learning event on anticipatory action. In total, 25 participants

from five African countries (Congo, Uganda, Senegal, Niger besides Ethiopia) joined the event. The keynote was provided by a climate specialist of the Red Cross Climate Center. The main discussion points were the role of NGOs in impact-based forecasting and warnings, regarding data collection, coordination between actors or information dissemination.

2.3 Nature-based solutions

The fourth program year focused on the **Valuation Mandate**. Showing the social, ecological and economical value of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) is crucial to advocate for their increased uptake. Capacity building focused on the ecological side, with a webinar on bioindicators in August 2022, highlighting the measurement of ecosystem services of NbS. Additionally, the recording of the webinar and the corresponding documentation were made available to the public on the website of the Swiss NGO DRR Platform. Helvetas developed a case-study of its watershed project in Tajikistan, in cooperation with the GIZ EbA Support Facility. The study concentrates mainly on the economical side and shows step-by-step how an economical valuation of NbS is possible (cost-benefit). For the specific project in Tajikistan, it could be shown that the applied NbS has a positive cost-effectiveness on its own, even without giving monetary value to its social and ecological benefits. This experience will feed into the finalisation of the mapping of valuation tools and the development of a valuation guideline in the fifth year.

An internal highlight was the **Mapping of NbS Projects** of the member organisations. The aim was to get a clearer overview of existing approaches and to identify specific needs for further activities. The most commonly implemented NbS elements by participating members were on governance level, engaging in biodiversity and in geospatial monitoring and measures to enhance ecosystem integrity/connectivity. Further interest was especially detected in better NbS monitoring, making the benefits of NbS more visible through cost effectiveness and long-term financing options and implementing measures which enhance ecosystem integrity and connectivity. These results will directly feed into activity line activities. Additionally, exchanges with the School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences (HAFL) and other scientific partners on a collaboration advanced during the reporting period and a concrete pre-project is expected for the following year. The collaboration of academia and the platform shall lead in a study on effectiveness and sustainability of NbS in the sector of Eco-DRR in projects of member organisations.

25 participants from different UN organisations and mostly Geneva based NGOs including the Platform discussed the potential of applying NbS and the IUCN Global Standard in diverse humanitarian contexts at a **Workshop on NbS in Humanitarian Contexts** organised by IUCN and IFRC. The participants agreed on the importance of integrating NbS or at least NbS thinking into humanitarian work. The discussion results recognise little scope for NbS during the immediate emergency relief phase, beyond the general do no harm approach. Early recovery phases and protracted crises however were offering much more potential for NbS integration, as illustrated by several case studies. Participants were also introduced to the [Sphere Unpacked Guide NbS for Climate Resilience in Humanitarian Action](#) that was to be launched in the subsequent week. They furthermore developed a road map for next steps for scaling and advancing NbS in humanitarian contexts.

2.4 Climate change – fit for purpose

The Platform has made significant progress on all mandates of the activity line.

In August 2022, the [Factsheet Climate Projections in Project Design](#) was launched, coordinated by zoï environment network, and disseminated during a webinar. The publication serves as concise and hands-on guidance on how and when to use climate projections in development projects across sectors. The document is complemented by a reference list of [further web-based resources](#) for member organisations that want to learn more about the topic.

Between May 2022 and April 2023, the working group on the **Climate Change and Migration Nexus** conducted the remaining case studies in Ethiopia and Honduras and started the write-up of the case studies as well as the umbrella publication with key messages. The publication is to be expected in summer 2023 and will contribute to shed light on personal stories across the globe in climate change and migration hotspots of the Global South.

With regard to the **Weather, Water and Climate Services** mandate, case studies in Tajikistan, Mali, Madagascar, Honduras and Nicaragua were conducted by five member organisations and reviewed by two external consultants associated with WMO/MeteoSwiss/SHA. Results of this review process were shared with interested colleagues from member organisations during three virtual meetings. The findings and recommendations of the consultants will feed into a publication in 2023 (format yet to be defined), potentially regional (virtual) learning events towards the end of the year, which are going to contribute to the next annual event, planned to be conducted in the first quarter of 2024.

Since the successful practitioners' exchange on reducing emissions and strategies formulated towards net zero back in 2019, many member organisations have advanced their internal strategies, formulated concrete targets and taken hands-on steps for reducing emissions in head and country offices. It was thus time for a renewed exchange in August 2022, titled "**Sustainability commitments in the NGO sector**" which this time was held virtually.

In 2022, no **Climate Finance** webinar was held; the next one is planned for the third quarter of 2023.

With regard to the further dissemination of the **Facing Climate Change stories**, the videos have been used to illustrate the importance of climate justice and advocacy work during a screening at the exhibition Global Happiness by Helvetas in March 2023. Over 50 people attended this screening and the panel discussion.

2.5 Leaving no one behind

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 this activity line had been completed. During the reporting period, discussions on further activities were ongoing and gained momentum with Handicap International and the UNICEF (Committee CH and LIE) joining the Platform in December 2022. Currently, the planning of activities for the remaining programme phase is in its final steps. Implementation will re-start in 2023.

2.6 Advocacy and policy dialogue

Swiss Consultative and Working Group on DRR

The operational year of the DRR Platform kickstarted with final preparations for the **Global DRR Platform** in Indonesia in May 2022. The Platform was represented in-person and virtually by a total of three participants, joining the sessions, making contributions, and shaping the Swiss positioning towards DRR around the following focal topics: The continued importance of prevention and risk-informed development, an all-of-society approach to DRR as well as the Swiss multilateral engagement in early warning and early action. The comprehensive stakeholder engagement of the Swiss delegation certainly was a highlight as were some lively and interactive formats for learning at the conference, with Indonesia being a very committed host to integrated risk management beyond natural hazards. Still, the conference was overshadowed by the slow progress towards the achievement of the Sendai Framework, which was confirmed in early 2023, when UNDRR published the summary report of all voluntary national mid-term reviews.

After the GPDRR, the consultative and working groups shaped the Swiss contribution to the voluntary mid-term review of the Sendai Framework, which culminated in a global report in January 2023. The Platform contributed by highlighting the importance of prevention and an inclusive approach to DRR to effectively contribute to managing risks for everyone and leaving no one behind. The Platform further contributed to the preparation of a Swiss positioning and provided relevant comments on the Political Declaration on the Sendai Mid-term-review, which was prepared to inform the High-Level Meeting (HLM) for the Sendai Framework Mid-term-review, to be held in May 2023 in New York.

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 and in preparation of the upcoming HLM. During the GPDRR, GNDR was very active and represented civil society at various opportunities. The Platform took part in several exchanges and gatherings and strengthened its ties with the Global Network.

PEDRR

The Swiss NGO DRR platform continued to represent NGOs in the PEDRR network. The focus of meetings was mainly around the organisation of input and events for the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework and the Bonn Climate Conference. Participation in the network remains an important part of staying involved in high level policy discussions and making sure NGOs have a voice there.

Swiss Climate Community

The Swiss NGO DRR platform is present in the Climate Working Group of Alliance Sud. The Working Group has finally taken up its work again after a long intermittance due to a prolonged vacancy at Alliance Sud. It is working on Climate Finance in the context of the UNFCCC framework, including on Adaptation and Loss and Damage. Currently, the focus lies on providing ideas for additional financing sources to the relevant actors with the objective to strengthen Swiss climate finance without altering the budget on actual development cooperation. The Swiss NGO DRR platform is further also a member of the Swiss Climate Alliance (Klima Allianz) and more specifically of its Working Group on Climate Justice. A position paper was established and is

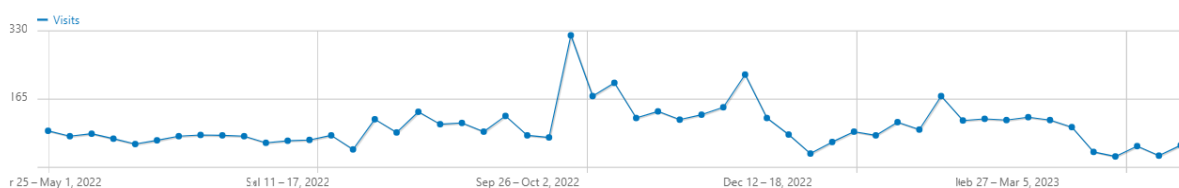
currently being published on the topic to sensitise actors in Switzerland on how climate change is affecting already vulnerable communities in the South.

At its member assembly in December, the Platform organised an exchange on **Climate Advocacy** with representatives from Alliance Sud and the Swiss Climate Alliance. This was a good opportunity to learn more about the policies and actual work of the invited organisations as well as to share experiences from the COP27 that had just taken place. The participants also discussed how to convince more people with a conservative political stance on the urgency of climate protection by looking for win-win situations, how to find a good communication balance between legal and illegal action and how to better link the Platform’s work with that of the Swiss Climate Community.

2.7 Visibility

Website Visits, Views, Downloads	Pre-Previous Period (2020-21)	Previous Period (2021-22)	Reporting Period (2022-23)	Δ (compared to year before)
Visits	4'493	5'244	5'126	-2.30%
Page views	5'887	6'682	6'566	-1.77%
Downloads e-learning	290	311	308	-0.97%
Module 0 (Intro)	76	85	103	
Module 1	65	85	75	
Module 2	48	62	61	
Module 3	47	42	39	
Module 4	54	37	30	

Visits over Time



Visitor Map



Country (1-5 of 140)

	Switzerland	1,618
	United States	841
	Netherlands	142
	United Kingdom	131
	Bangladesh	124

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 2022, 2 more organisations joined the Platform, Handicap International and UNICEF Committee Switzerland and Liechtenstein, and one organisation left, Drones for Earth. In April 2023, the Platform counted 20 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 <i>(was dissolved in 2015)</i>	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 <i>(no more focus on DRR)</i>	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
	Drones for Earth	2020-2022
19	Handicap International	2022
20	UNICEF Committee CH and LIE	2022



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. With the withdrawal of HEKS at the start of the fourth programme year, the **Core Group** now includes SRC, Helvetas and Caritas Switzerland. The Core Group carries out the ongoing operational tasks as well as quality assurance and held monthly meetings throughout the reporting period. 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 on 13 June 2023.

Platform Working Groups

To implement the programme, working groups were established for the five activity lines and sub mandates. The working groups consist between 3 (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 (8.7.2022 and 27.4.2023), coordinated upcoming activities and discussed further collaboration opportunities. SDC contributed to the 2022 annual event of the Platform "Integrating uncertainty – risk-informed and climate-resilient programming in international cooperation".

4. Resources

The total expenditure for the reporting period (1.5.2022-30.4.2023) amounted to CHF 447'521 of which CHF 239'666 (53.6%) consists as Platform contribution and CHF 207'855 (46.4%) requested as SDC contribution.

5. Outlook

Milestones of the fifth programme year:

- **Activity line 1 – DRR and CCA mainstreaming:** The Learning Journey Hazard and Risk Assessment will continue in 2023 with the 2 remaining webinars and a field-day on hazard assessment and in 2024 with the 3 webinar modules on risk assessment, cost benefit analysis and working with GIS. The work on DRR and CCA mainstreaming guidelines for specific sectors will be taken up under a modified frame, in collaboration with SDC, opting for thematic (sector) briefs aiming at adding value to the generic mainstreaming instruments. The webinar DRR and CCA basics will be finalised, remodelled into a short two-part course with a voiceover, to serve as an introduction into DRR and CCA mainstreaming to new staff.
- **Activity line 2 – LRRD / Nexus humanitarian aid – development cooperation:** Based on the demand from member organisations, a mandate will be drafted towards a joint understanding and possible operationalization of the triple nexus with a focus on the role of DRR. Further topics worth exploring (according to the MA II/22) are a collection of suitable information sources to increase preparedness and strengthen risk monitoring, as well as a hands-on exchange on the practice of Early Warning Systems from the perspective on NGOs.
- **Activity line 3 – Nature-based solutions:** The groundwork done in the fourth year shall lead to two documents: first a valuation tool mapping aimed at project staff will help practitioners to select the right tools and methodologies for valuation of NbS, especially regarding non-monetary valuation. Second, a detailed guidance for economic valuation will build on the finalized case study and prepare practitioners in a hands-on way to advocate for NbS. Both documents will be accompanied by learning events, where the corresponding knowledge is shared and hands-on trainings in case studies is conducted.
- **Activity line 4 – Climate Change – Fit for purpose:** The publication on the climate change migration nexus is expected in June 2023, followed by a webinar to promote the findings. Further, a practical overview on Weather, Water, Climate Services is foreseen, linked to practical regional exchanges and the annual event, planned in the first quarter in 2024.
- **Activity line 6 – LNOB:** The activity line will (re) kick-off with an interactive “iDRR” learning journey, including self-directed online exercises, peer exchanges and webinars, featuring the dissemination and testing of the iDRR Hands-on Tool, and starting at the end of 2023 / beginning of 2024.

The budget for the fifth programme year amounts to CHF 478'528 of which CHF 271'141 consists as Platform contribution and CHF 207'387 (43.3%) is requested as SDC contribution.