

# UN resilience 'scorecard' to help cities curb disaster losses from climate change, other risk drivers

23 May 2017 – As world leaders and civil society representatives gather today in Cancun, Mexico, for a biennial United Nations forum on preventing and mitigating disaster impacts, the UN today launched an updated plan to increase the number of cities and towns with the capacity to reduce their disaster losses by 2020.

Announcing a major revision to its Disaster Resilience Scorecard, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction ([UNISDR](#)) said the changes bring the mechanism into alignment with the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#), the global plan for reducing disaster losses.

It is a major boost to the goal of having more strategies in place at local level for reducing disaster losses from climate change and other risk drivers. This is a key area of focus this week at the UN's biennial [Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) where the Scorecard was launched today. Plans are in place to have 200 cities using it by the end of the year.

"National governments have the primary responsibility of implementing the Sendai Framework working with many stakeholders, and the Scorecard is a valuable support to this work at the local level," pointed out UNISDR chief Robert Glasser.

UNISDR noted that the revision was undertaken by its private sector partners, American firms AECOM and IBM, with the support of the European Commission and USAID. It follows a pilot project undertaken by 35 cities that are members of the UNISDR Making Cities Resilient Campaign which comprises over 3,500 cities worldwide.

Ms. Kathy Oldham, Head of Civil Contingencies and Resilience Unit, Association of Greater Manchester Authorities, of the United Kingdom, commented that: "using the Disaster Resilience Scorecard gave us the opportunity to broaden and deepen our understanding of resilience, bringing together partners from across the city region in conversations to explore the different issues the Scorecard highlights."

Other cities that participated in the pilot included Yogyakarta, Indonesia; Islamabad, Pakistan; Hong Kong, China; Geneva, Switzerland; Quito, Ecuador; and Kisumu, Kenya.

Losses due to disasters from natural and man-made hazards including floods, storms and the impacts of climate change are mounting and on average cost governments over \$300 billion globally each year.

The Scorecard provides a set of assessments that cover the policy and

planning, engineering, organisational, financial, social and environmental aspects of disaster resilience. Designed to be led by local government authorities, the Scorecard aims to assist in monitoring and reviewing progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

The Scorecard is a free self-assessment tool to be used by cities or local government agencies.

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## Two UN 'blue helmets' killed in attack in northern Mali

23 May 2017 – Two peacekeepers of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali ([MINUSMA](#)) were killed and another injured on Tuesday morning in an ambush in the northern Kidal region.

“A pedestrian patrol of MINUSMA was attacked in an ambush around 6:30 am this morning, five kilometres from Aguelhok,” the Mission announced.

Strongly condemning “this murderous attack,” MINUSMA, chief Mahamat Saleh Annadif, who is also the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Mali, said the Mission immediately deployed a rapid response force at the scene and proceeded to evacuate the wounded and the deceased.

“This attack adds to a wave of violence that, over the past few weeks, has targeted the civilian populations, the Malian Armed Forces and the international forces without distinction. The violence is aimed only at undermining [...] efforts to bring stability and unity to Mali,” Mr. Annadif said.

He went on to reiterate the solidarity and determination of the Mission to support the efforts of the Malian Government, other signatory parties and the people of Mali in the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

“MINUSMA is prepared to make all its contribution to the identification of the perpetrators of this attack so that they are promptly brought to justice,” he said.

Meanwhile, at UN Headquarters in New York, UN Spokesman Stephane Dujarric said [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres extended his condolences to the families of the fallen peacekeepers.

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## [Ethiopia's Tedros Adhanom elected to top UN health post](#)

23 May 2017 – The World Health Assembly, the decision-making body of the United Nations health agency, today elected Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus as the new Director-General of the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)).

“Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was nominated by the Government of Ethiopia, and [will begin](#) his five-year term on 1 July 2017,” WHO said in a statement following the afternoon vote.

Among his previous positions, Dr. Tedros was Ethiopia’s Minister of Foreign Affairs and, prior, Minister of Health.

He also served as Chair of the Global Fund and of the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Partnership Board (RBM), where he secured “record funding” for the two organizations and created the Global Malaria Action Plan, which expanded RBM’s reach beyond Africa to Asia and Latin America, according to the UN agency.

The incoming health chief was chosen from amongst three nominees presented to the World Health Assembly, along with David Nabarro from the UK, and Sania Nishtar from Pakistan, in a process that began before September 2016.

Dr. Tedros will succeed Margaret Chan, who yesterday addressed the World Health Assembly for the final time after serving two consecutive five-year terms.

In her final address as head of the organization, Dr. Chan yesterday urged WHO to “remember the people” behind the facts and figures, and took personal responsibility for the WHO’s delayed response in 2014 to the Ebola outbreak in East Africa.

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## [One year after humanitarian summit, UN stresses reforms to put people ‘at heart’ of decision-making](#)

23 May 2017 – The 2016 [World Humanitarian Summit](#) in Istanbul rallied global actors to save lives and protect the most vulnerable, but with the number of people in need growing, the international community must use resources better and galvanize new partnerships, top United Nations officials said today.

“Humanitarian assistance alone cannot sustainably reduce the needs of [over 130 million of the world’s most vulnerable people](#),” UN [Secretary-General António Guterres](#) said in a statement marking the first anniversary of the Summit.

“We must engage our collective strengths and mobilize new partnerships to prevent and end conflicts, reduce vulnerability to natural hazards and address the root causes of fragility,” he continued. “We must bring humanitarian and development actors to work together closely from the beginning of a crisis to support affected communities.”

“Delivering the [New Way of Working](#) is a critical step to achieve this,” Mr. Guterres said, referring to an agreed-upon concept at the Summit of groups and organizations working based on the comparative advantage towards collective outcomes. It emerged from the [Agenda for Humanity](#), which outlines the changes that are needed to alleviate suffering, reduce risk and lessen vulnerability on a global scale.

“These are some of the driving factors behind my vision on prevention and my commitment to reform the way the United Nations works, in order to put people at the heart of our decision-making,” the UN chief said, stressing that prevention of human suffering is his top priority.

RELATED: [WHS: Humanitarian summit has ‘set new course,’ says Ban, calling for action on commitments](#)

Speaking to *UN News* ahead of the anniversary, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O’Brien, said that given the scale of the needs, the Summit allowed the humanitarian community to refocus on its priorities.

“It becomes less what we give and more how they can then demand rightly what is received to best support them,” Mr. O’Brien said.

He added that “it was really important that we together understood what differences we need to make in order to have a greater impact to relieve the suffering, to save lives, to protect civilians, particularly from harm and conflict, “but above all to give people the chance to hope and a better life as well.”

The Summit was built around [five core actions](#) , part of the Agenda for Humanity and which include respecting the rules of war and leaving no one behind.

As part of the Summit, for example, Governments and organizations endorsed a charter agreeing to improve living conditions for people with disabilities during emergencies.

RELATED: [WHS: New charter for persons with disabilities endorsed at UN humanitarian summit](#)

In addition, Governments, civil society, UN agencies and other partners committed to taking actions which fit within the Agenda.

“If we get all five right, then we will be doing our very, very best in the world,” Mr. O’Brien said.

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## [With funding ‘down to a trickle,’ UN agency renews warning over Burundi refugees](#)

23 May 2017 – The United Nations refugee agency has increased its funding appeal by \$36 million to support Burundians fleeing their homes in what could become the third-largest refugee crisis in Africa.

“Arriving refugees continue to cite [human rights abuses](#), fear of persecution and sexual and gender-based violence as reasons for fleeing,” Babar Baloch, spokesperson for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)), told reporters in Geneva.

Since April 2015, some 410,000 refugees and asylum-seekers have been forced to flee their homes. With no sign of improvement of the political situation, the total refugee population is expected to grow to over half a million by the end of this year, making it potentially the third-biggest refugee situation in Africa, he said.

Currently, Tanzania is hosting the majority of Burundian refugees with some 249,000 already accommodated in three overcrowded camps. Rwanda hosts some 84,000 refugees with another 45,000 in Uganda and some 41,000 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Smaller numbers of Burundian refugees have also fled to Kenya and into Southern African countries such as Zambia, Mozambique, Malawi and South Africa.

UNHCR has revised its funding needs for the Burundi situation to \$250 million from \$214, but it has so far received only two per cent of the required funds.

Urgent funding is needed to upgrade and construct new settlements to decongest the current ones and provide basic services. In DRC, the transit centres are unable to host incoming refugees, forcing them to live in extremely poor conditions, often without shelter.

Education of refugee children is also severely affected with school classes unable to accommodate the number of students. In Tanzania, there is a need to construct over 600 new classrooms, as many children attend classes under trees.

Overcrowded camps further expose refugees – especially women and children to many risks, such as a new cholera outbreak.

UNHCR renewed its call to donors for continuing to support countries hosting Burundian refugees, also repeating its appeal to the neighbouring countries not to return refugees against their will.