

UNOPS and climate change

UNOPS mandate is to serve as a central resource for the United Nations system in procurement and contracts management, as well as in civil works and physical infrastructure development. This requires UNOPS to have an applied understanding of the nexus between climate change¹, climate variability and development. On behalf of its partners, UNOPS helps implement climate-resilient development and adaptation solutions that are consistent with national priorities and emission targets.

UNOPS on Mitigation

UNOPS seeks to improve resource efficiency in its projects by reducing energy and water use, prioritizing the usage of sustainable, renewable and low-impact resources wherever possible and respecting the local context.

This could be through the use of renewable energy, natural cooling and heating designs, which are routinely incorporated into the design process to reduce harmful emissions. Special attention is paid to synergies between adaptation and mitigation measures, ensuring that infrastructure is both low carbon and climate-resilient.

UNOPS on development and adaptation

In 2014, UNOPS established its Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience (DRR4R) Programme, to ensure that all of its global initiatives and activities are resilient to the shocks and stresses associated with climate-induced and natural hazards. This means making sure that design and implementation processes associated with UNOPS projects and services are risk-informed. This is achieved by gathering information about the risks of each project. In this regard, UNOPS recognizes that climate change variability represents just one aspect of the wider risk context.

Resilience represents an entirely new development paradigm. To achieve resilience, it is essential to adopt risk-informed processes to guide adaptation, as well as development planning and project designs that contribute more significantly to the Sustainable Development Goals. This involves:

- (1) the analysis of climate change (CC) variables and their direct and indirect impacts on sectors and natural hazards;
- (2) the identification of the total risk context (climatic and non-climatic) pertaining to existing, future and external risk variables, in addition to residual risk issues;
- (3) the building of capacity and technology to identify sector and cross-sector impacts;
- (4) the formulation of base-line information upon which resilient adaptation and development projects are framed and delivered.

¹ Climate change consists of two elements (source Ian Rector, UNOPS):[either remove or reference a scientific source]

- **Global warming** which is driven through the release of greenhouse gas emissions and is reduced through specific mitigation actions;
- **Climate variability** which is driven by global warming and relates primarily to rainfall, temperature, sea level rise, sea surface temperatures and coral bleaching, among other area specific impacts. Climate variability can introduce new risks or change existing risks either directly or indirectly through altering the nature of hazards (i.e. cyclones, floods and drought). Climate variability can be addressed through either development and/or adaptation strategies.

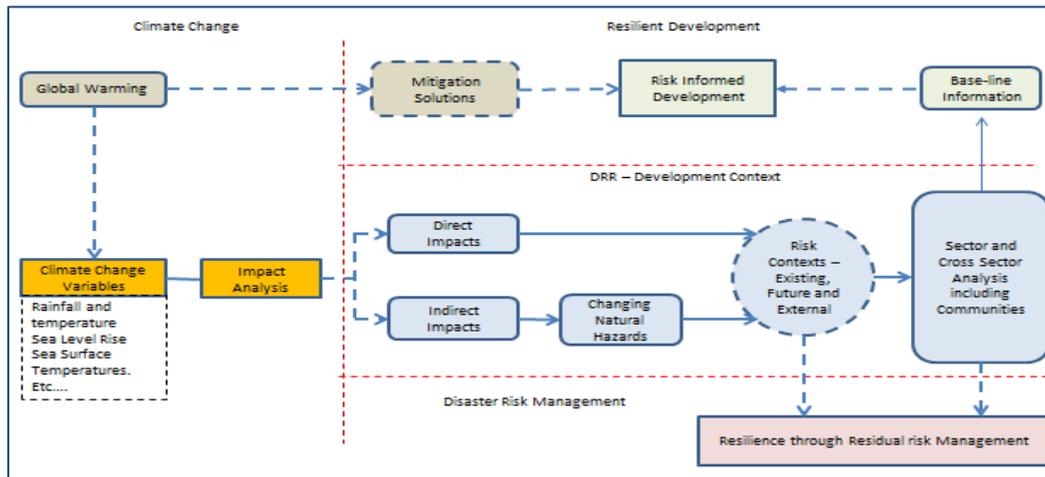


Figure 1: UNOPS - Interaction of CC, DRR, Resilience, Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and development

Achieving Resilience

Resilience efforts are structured in the conceptual graphic below (Figure 2). This process addresses the issue of resilience holistically by:

- (1) providing pathways² for proactive resilience in future development;
- (2) guiding reflections on what has happened in the past and correcting resilience deficiencies retrospectively;
- (3) providing a “feedback” mechanism through failure analysis to learn lessons where risks have not been properly managed or identified to ensure that the same mistakes are not repeated;
- (4) achieving resilience through effective residual risk management strategies associated with effective early warning, preparedness, response and recovery.

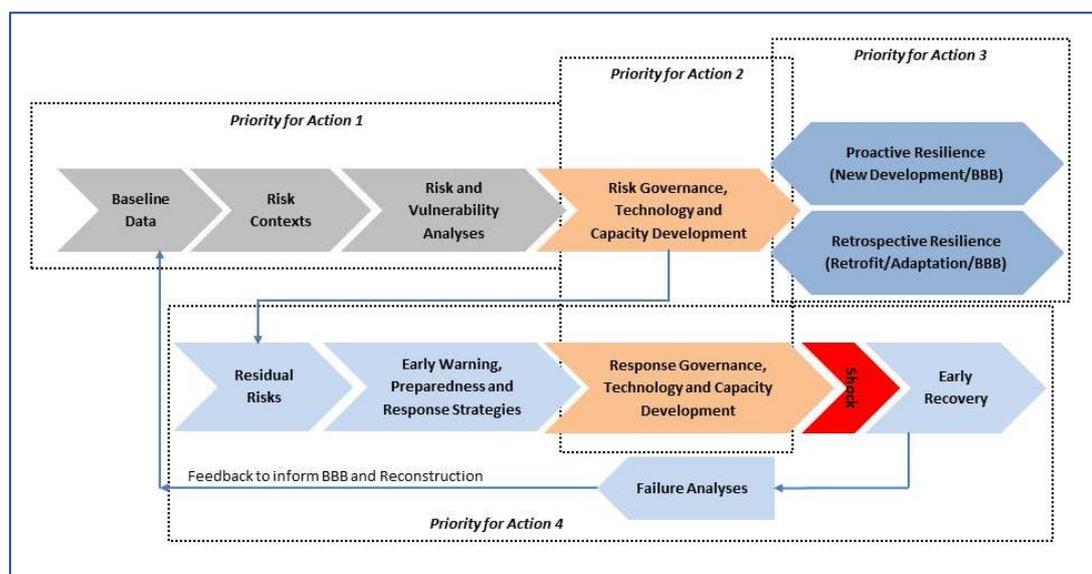


Figure 2: UNOPS Resilience Pathways incorporating the Sendai Framework Priorities

² Proactive, Retrospective and Reactive resilience streams taken from the UNOPS DRR4R Technical