

MEDIA RELEASE

Innovative, Accessible, Actionable Early Warning Solutions highlighted at Reliance Foundation–UN India Disaster Management convening in Gujarat

- *This is the second in a series of convenings by Reliance Foundation and United Nations India, to share best practices, for India's future readiness in Disaster Risk Management*
- *Stakeholders from multiple Indian states and countries in the Global South came together*
- *Localised, sector-based Early Warning Systems, lessons and best practices from Gujarat discussed*
- *Learnings from India and the Global South on Anticipatory Action and the need to reach last-mile populations, focus of discussions*

Bhuj, March 26, 2025: Experts called for bold and transformative actions for **future readiness** in Disaster Risk Management systems at the Reliance Foundation and the United Nations India convening here on Tuesday. The event 'Early Warning and Early Action – A Multi-Hazard, Multi-Stakeholders Approach: Experiences, Learning & Sharing' fostered crucial discussions and knowledge sharing to enhance disaster risk management in India.

Reliance Foundation and the UN in India have partnered to foster regional learning and innovative solutions in disaster risk reduction. As part of this partnership, a series of convenings are being held to enhance Early Warning Systems and Early Action with multi-hazard, localised, and sector-based approaches, emphasising the translation of warnings into effective life-saving actions.

The second in the series of convenings, was held at the Smritivan Earthquake Museum in Bhuj. The city that has demonstrated remarkable resilience through devastating earthquakes and cyclones, provided a relevant setting for the discussions.

In her keynote address, **Dr Jayanti S Ravi, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Gujarat**, emphasised the need for bold steps for the sake of the current generation and generations to come. "Kutch has faced multitude disasters from devastating earthquakes and cyclones to floods. Something very special about the culture of the state is its resilience as Kutchis are very resourceful. As we discuss mutual learnings, we also celebrate and take away special attributes of the people that we learn from. Even as these convenings enrich our own library of learnings, inspired by the vision of the Hon Prime Minister, we want this venue, Smritivan, to go further, to becoming a multi-hazard preparation, planning and training centre for social and behaviour change. This is the vision that we can collectively work towards, as part of 'Smritivan 2'," she said.

Mr Anupam Anand, IAS, CEO, Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority, mentioned the context of the Sendai framework and the PM's 10-point agenda for DRR reflecting on how Gujarat had made significant strides, with multi-departmental coordination integrated into state-level plans at the state, district and taluka level. In the case of Cyclone Biparjoy, for example, departments collaborated effectively to ensure zero casualty and economic loss.

The **UN Resident Co-ordinator in India, Mr Shombi Sharp** said, "Over 1.2 billion people could be displaced globally by 2050 due to extreme weather and natural disasters. Disaster risk, however, is not just about nature; it is about preparedness, speed and effectiveness of early warning and early action. The convening, part of the broader partnership between the UN in India and the Reliance Foundation, seeks to help strengthen multi-hazard, multi-stakeholder approaches for anticipatory

action in our new reality of climate change. It is apt that this conversation is happening in Gujarat, a state where the UN has been a steadfast partner and that faces numerous natural hazards, but has also demonstrated excellence in preparedness and response. Through these convenings, we hope for a much stronger focus, sharing from India's experiences and best practices with countries in the global South and learning from experiences abroad. Together we can ensure that every life, every livelihood and every future is protected. Saath hai, to sambhav hai."

Mr Sudarshan Suchi, Chief Development Officer at Reliance Foundation, said, "At Reliance Foundation, we understand that building true disaster resilience requires a collective effort. Through this series of convenings, we underscore our commitment to collaboration across sectors. We aim to create a platform for sharing vital knowledge and innovative solutions by harnessing the power of technology and data, so we can empower vulnerable communities to withstand future challenges. From the Bhuj earthquake to Biparjoy, Reliance has been with the state of Gujarat at every turn. From innovation to community engagement, from swift action to strong partnerships, all our actions are guided by Reliance's overarching 'We Care' philosophy."

Key dignitaries and speakers included Mr Anand Babulal Patel, IAS., District Collector, Kutch and Lt. Col. Sanjeev Kumar Shahi, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). Representatives from the Government of Gujarat, NDMA, GSDMA, GIDM, UN agencies, civil society organisations shared learnings and solutions. A field visit to Rapargarh and Jakhau the previous day, and a curated walk through the Smritivan Museum during the event, emphasised importance of early localised action.

Impact-based early warning system technology, lessons from the Global South, anticipatory action strategies and slow-onset disasters like drought and protection of livestock were discussed. Participants emphasised the need to invest in community response capacity and disability inclusion.

The previous convening in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, in November 2024, had highlighted the state response and focus on livelihoods and gender. The Bhuj convening went another step forward to call for multi-sectoral coordination and a deeper understanding of technology.

The 'Early Warning to Early Action' convening series will document best practices, identify innovations, and aim for impactful policy-level outcomes to save lives and livelihoods. The Bhuj convening concluded with a call to step up momentum for early warning solutions to enhance disaster preparedness in India to ensure that no one is left behind.

About Reliance Foundation:

Reliance Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Reliance Industries Limited, aims to play a catalytic role in addressing India's development challenges through innovative and sustainable solutions. Led by Smt. Nita M Ambani, Founder and Chairperson, Reliance Foundation is relentlessly working for the overall well-being and enhanced quality of life for all, focusing on rural transformation, education, health, sports for development, disaster management, women empowerment, urban renewal and arts, culture and heritage, and has touched the lives of over 81 million people across India, in over 91,500 villages and urban locations. More on www.reliancefoundation.org.

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