

**++ Embargoed until Wed., Sept. 15, 2021, 10.00 am (UTC+2) ++**

## Press release

# WorldRiskReport 2021: Social protection crucial for disaster risk reduction

**Berlin, September 15, 2021** – Focusing on social protection, the new WorldRiskReport is released today and presented by Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft and the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV) of the Ruhr University Bochum. The Covid-19 pandemic, wildfires, and floods have recently made clear how crucial social protection against existential risks is.

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Social protection systems help mitigate the consequences of extreme natural events and make societies more resilient to crises. In addition to formal, often state-run, protection systems, informal protection systems make an important contribution. Peter Mucke, project leader of the WorldRiskReport and managing director of Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft, emphasizes: "From health and accident insurance to neighborly assistance – the available social protection mechanisms are diverse. We often only realize how important protection measures are when crises threaten to have dramatic consequences. So far, however, only a minority of the world's population has access to social protection systems, this urgently needs to change." Beyond direct protection against disasters, social protection systems have a positive impact on other social challenges. "Social protection and the fight against hunger, poverty, social inequality, and climate change belong together. The future German government must focus more on social protection and take an international lead if it wants to be taken seriously in times of pandemics and increasing weather extremes," says Peter Mucke.

A central component of the WorldRiskReport is the WorldRiskIndex, which has been calculated by the IFHV since 2018. The index indicates the risk of an extreme natural event leading to a disaster for 181 countries. The tropical island state of Vanuatu has the highest disaster risk, followed by the Solomon Islands and Tonga. "The consequences of climate change pose a huge threat to island states. In addition to increasing weather extremes, rising sea levels are driving up their risk," says Dr. Katrin Radtke, scientific leader of the report. A total of ten island states are represented among the 15 countries with the highest disaster risk. Germany ranks 161st with a very low disaster risk. The calculation of the WorldRiskIndex includes exposure to extreme natural events and societal vulnerability. The WorldRiskIndex considers earthquakes, cyclones, droughts, floods, and sea-level rise as

extreme natural events. Nearly 99 percent of the world's population is included in the analysis of countries. This year, in addition to the WorldRiskIndex, the report includes an index on the state of social protection for high-risk countries. Dr. Katrin Radtke explains: "In West Africa in particular, there are major deficits in social protection and a great need for action. People with special protection needs, such as children, the elderly, or people with disabilities, rarely have access to state support. This also makes them particularly vulnerable to extreme natural events."

### Notes to editors:

- The full report will be available to download at the end of the news embargo at [www.WorldRiskReport.org](http://www.WorldRiskReport.org)
- Infographics, maps, and other images are available on demand.
- The results will be presented at a press conference (in German) on Sept. 15, 2021, at 10 am (UTC+2) at Tagungszentrum Katholische Akademie, Hotel Aquino, Hannoversche Straße 5b, 10115 Berlin. The press conference will be broadcasted via a livestream on [www.WeltRisikoBericht.de](http://www.WeltRisikoBericht.de). Registration and further information can be found [here](#).
- The authors of the report are available for interviews in person or via telephone.

For more information visit:

[www.entwicklung-hilft.de](http://www.entwicklung-hilft.de) | [www.ifhv.de](http://www.ifhv.de)

Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft is formed by the aid organizations Brot für die Welt, Christoffel-Bindenmission, DAHW, Kindernothilfe, medico international, Misereor, Plan International, terre des hommes, Welthungerhilfe, and the associated members German Doctors and Oxfam. In contexts of crisis and disasters the member organizations provide short-term relief as well as long-term support in order to overcome poverty and prevent new crises.

The Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV) of Ruhr University Bochum is one of the leading institutions in Europe for research and teaching on humanitarian crises. Coming from a long tradition in scientific analysis of international humanitarian law and human rights, the Institute today combines interdisciplinary research in the fields of law, social science, geoscience, and public health.