

A light blue world map is centered in the upper half of the page, showing the continents of North America, South America, Europe, and Africa. The map is semi-transparent and serves as a background for the title.

Annex 3

United Nations system: An outline of activities dedicated to disaster risk reduction



United Nations system: An outline of activities dedicated to disaster risk reduction

The United Nations (UN) system is a mosaic that reflects the complexity of activities necessary to fulfil the objectives and principles of the UN Charter. It is composed of principal bodies and operational programmes as well as a number of specialized agencies and other autonomous entities carrying out specific mandates.

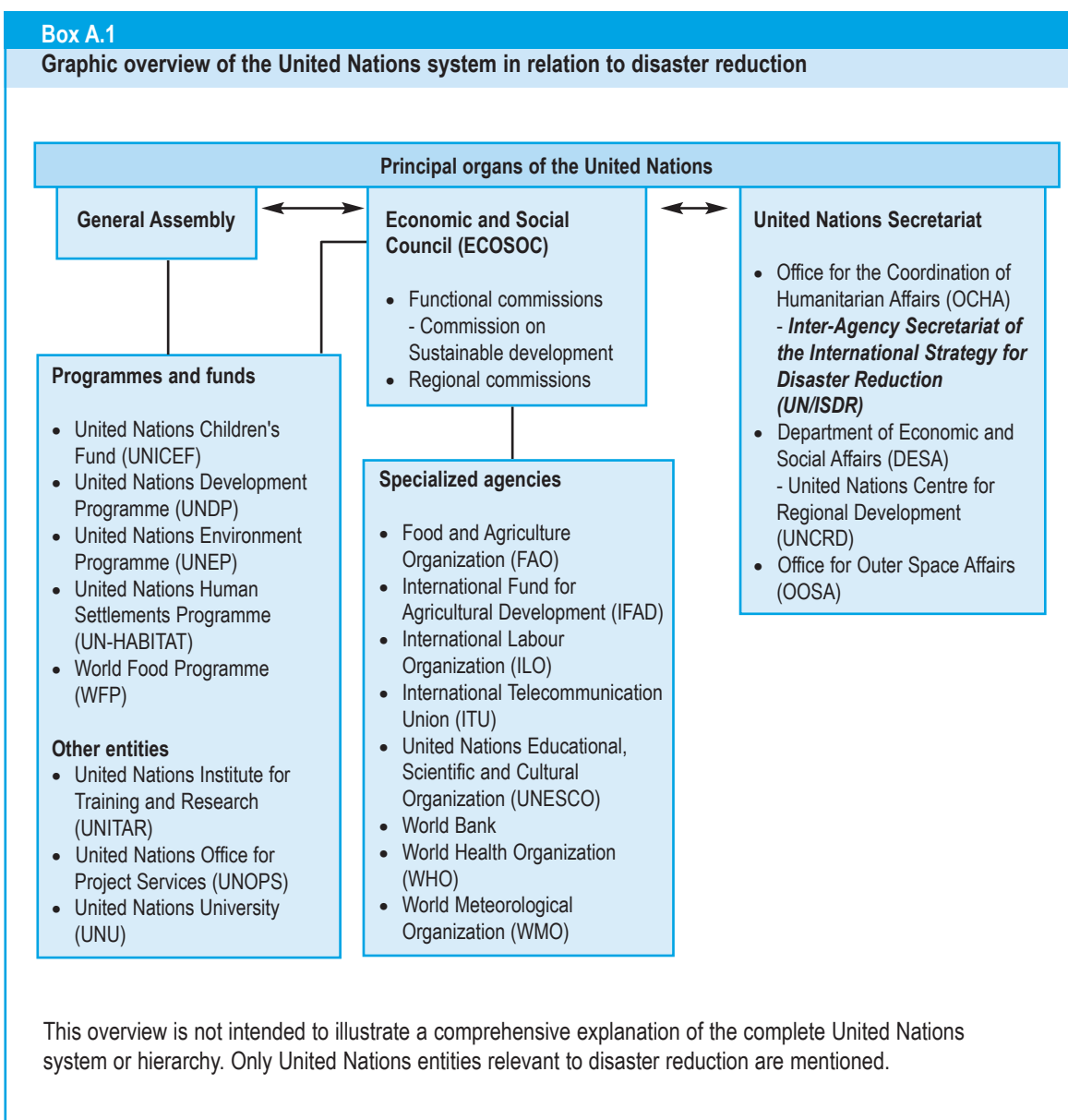
Reducing the impacts of natural disasters is work that cuts across numerous competencies of the UN so it has become relevant to a growing number of departments, programmes and agencies. Moreover, the recognition of disaster reduction as a building block of sustainable development has turned disaster reduction into a core function of the UN family.

This was a fundamental point when the international community decided to establish the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction under the auspices of the UN when the IDNDR ended in December 1999. The need for a coordinated approach to disaster risk reduction by the UN system has gained impetus as more countries recognize their increased vulnerability and experience more conspicuous damage each year.

A number of UN system entities carry out active programmes in support of disaster reduction and many of them have strengthened their disaster reduction capacity in their respective areas of competency during recent years. All work with regional, national or local authorities and in many cases with civil society organizations and groups.

This section outlines the various interests and activities within the UN system related to disaster risk reduction. It is a general overview, intentionally limited to programmes and initiatives pertaining to the prior identification and management of disaster risks. Therefore, it does not include emergency relief activities.

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General Assembly

While the decisions taken by countries in the General Assembly and expressed in resolutions have no legally binding force for individual states, they carry the moral authority of the world community. They are, importantly, expressions of political will of the governments sitting in the Assembly.

The Assembly is also the sounding board of world opinion on issues such as human rights, peace and security and many global issues of universal relevance. In 1971, the General Assembly acted on the universal need to counter the impact of disasters when it adopted a resolution to create the Office of the UN Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) for the improved coordination of

“assistance in cases of natural disaster and other disaster situations”, including disaster mitigation.

In 1991, the Assembly endorsed the establishment of a Disaster Management Training Programme (DMTP) launched a year earlier by UNDP and UNDRO (resolution 46/182), aimed at upgrading professional skills in disaster management through inter-agency training programmes under the joint management of both entities. Following UN reform in the 1990s, the DMTP was fully divested to UNDP in March 1998 and now sits within the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery.

The Assembly recognized the further need to focus on disaster reduction as an activity in itself in 1987 and then launched the IDNDR in 1989.



The subject was explicitly recognized as an international strategy by the creation of the ISDR in 2000. Resolutions were also passed on the need for cooperation on early warning capacities of the UN system with regard to natural disasters from 1994, as well as to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon from 1997.

Each year when disaster reduction is considered by the General Assembly under the Second Committee, the UN Secretary-General presents ISDR under the agenda item 'Environment and Sustainable Development'.

<<http://www.un.org/ga>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 11, 12, 20, 194, 215, 256, 358, 388*

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

The Economic and Social Council has long recognized that the promotion of economic growth and sustainable development cannot be achieved without adequate measures to prevent and reduce the impact of natural disasters. It has also consistently encouraged a coordinated approach to disaster reduction within and outside the UN system. Decisions and resolutions of the Council include recommendations to the General Assembly supporting the good functioning of ISDR as well as on important related issues such as early warning and El Niño.

The work of the Council is carried out by nine functional commissions and five regional commissions. Two commissions are particularly relevant to disaster reduction, the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Commission on the Status of Women.

<<http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/desc.htm>>

United Nations Secretariat

The UN Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General of the UN, services the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council among other organs. It administers a number of departments, offices and programmes and oversees the policies established by them.

Within the UN Secretariat, OCHA, DESA and the regional economic and social commissions deal with certain aspects of disaster reduction that are

relevant to their respective mandates. However, the ISDR Secretariat is the only entity of the UN Secretariat entirely dedicated to the subject, and is placed under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. Comprehensive information on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) Secretariat can be found in Chapter 1.

<<http://www.unisdr.org>>

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

OCHA is led by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs/Emergency Relief Coordinator and located in New York and Geneva. OCHA aims to alleviate human suffering by facilitating international coordination for the effective and efficient delivery of assistance to victims of disasters and complex emergencies (OCHA replaced the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in 1998, which evolved from the former UNDRO).

While concentrating on the coordination of emergency response, OCHA assists operational humanitarian agencies in developing common policies to improve planning, preparedness and response to natural disasters, particularly for protracted disasters such as drought. It also promotes preparedness and prevention efforts to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters.

In this respect, the Response Coordination Branch and the Emergency Services Branch of OCHA collaborate closely with UNDP and other relevant UN programmes and external agencies on activities such as improving links with national authorities, implementing lessons learned and organizing seminars to discuss coordination mechanisms.

Desk officers based in Geneva monitor weather conditions, earthquake bulletins and news services in every part of the world for potential natural disasters as well as environmental and technological emergencies. Working with the UN resident coordinators, the UN country teams and through its regional disaster response advisers, OCHA maintains close contacts with countries prone to natural disasters both before and during crises.

OCHA's Regional Disaster Response Advisers provide technical, strategic and training assistance to

governments, UN agencies and regional organizations in order to improve natural disaster planning, response and post-emergency reconstruction efforts.

At Headquarters level, OCHA, UNDP and the ISDR Secretariat share information and engage in common plans and activities related to disaster reduction. <http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/>
→ *Volume 1, p. 98, 152, 159, 160, 167, 174, 176, 196, 345, 346*

ReliefWeb

ReliefWeb is OCHA's online information portal on humanitarian emergencies, including tools and documentation useful for disaster prevention such as situation reports, maps and financial tracking, searchable archives of over 150,000 documents and 15,000 links to country-specific background information. <www.reliefweb.int>
→ *Volume 1, p. 49, 196, 205, 220, 221, 346*

Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)

DESA is led by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and is located in New York.

DESA's multidimensional programme promotes broad-based sustainable development through an integrated approach to economic, social, environmental, demographic and gender-related aspects of development.

The functions of DESA include coordination and policy advisory services supplemented by research and training. DESA activities are guided by the programmes and platforms of action adopted by major UN conferences, as well as the Economic and Social Council.
<<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev>>

Several divisions of DESA are concerned with disaster reduction, particularly the Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) with its Water, Natural Resources and Small Islands Branch and the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW).

The mission of DSD is to facilitate the implementation of Agenda 21, the Rio

Declaration on Environment and Development, the commonly referred Forest Principles, the Global Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

The division provides supporting technical services to the Economic and Social Council Commission on Sustainable Development and served as the Secretariat for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The Commission was created in December 1992 and has 53 members who follow up on Earth Summit decisions. DESA carries out multi-year work programmes on sustainable development indicators, with a likely expansion to include disaster reduction indicators.
<<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/dsd.htm>>
→ *Volume 1, p. 256, (annex 4, 103, 106)*

The mission of DAW is to promote and support the inclusion of gender perspectives into the work of intergovernmental bodies, policies and programmes of the UN Secretariat and the UN system at all levels. The division also supports the Economic and Social Council functional commission, Commission on the Status of Women. The Commission is composed of 45 members elected by the Economic and Social Council for a period of four years.
<<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw>>

United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD)

UNCRD was created in 1971. Through its head office in Nagoya, Japan it supports training and research in regional development as well as information dissemination. The Centre reports to DESA.

Regional offices in Nairobi, Kenya (for Africa) and Bogotá, Colombia (Latin America and the Caribbean) conduct a range of activities including training and research, advisory services and information exchange related to local and regional development. In particular, the UNCRD Disaster Management Planning Hyogo Office (Kobe) has developed community-based projects for disaster management planning and disaster management capacity-building introducing best practices case studies in developing countries.
<<http://www.uncrd.or.jp>>
→ *Volume 1, p. 159, 185, 186, 249, 332*





United Nations regional economic commissions

The regional economic commissions were founded by the Economic and Social Council for the purposes of promoting greater economic cooperation within and between regions and for generally contributing to the economic and social development of a region. They also work to coordinate actions directed towards these objectives and to reinforce productive economic relationships among countries.

There are five commissions: the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP); the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE); the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). The secretariats of these regional commissions are part of the UN Secretariat and perform similar functions including disaster reduction activities with particular attention given to the needs and priorities of the region.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

Headed by the Executive Secretary at the level of Under-Secretary-General of the UN, ESCAP is located in Bangkok, Thailand. Comprising 52 members and associate members, ESCAP promotes capacity-building in developing countries and contributes to the inclusion of disaster reduction into sustainable development with particular focus given to water-related disasters and especially floods.

Activities include the organization of seminars and training courses for flood management and control, and maintaining a regional overview of experiences in water-related disaster management in Asia. ESCAP also manages a regional project for strengthening capacities in participatory planning and management for flood mitigation and preparedness in large river basins.

ESCAP conducted a regional survey in cooperation with WMO, which has contributed to the strengthening of regional cooperation in flood

forecasting, tropical cyclones and disaster reduction. Similarly, the Commission has provided advisory services to the Secretariat of the Mekong River Commission on the formulation of the regional strategy for flood management and mitigation.

In 2002, ESCAP prepared *Guidelines on Participatory Planning and Management for Flood Mitigation and Preparedness* to promote community participation in water-related disaster reduction. These Guidelines have since been disseminated to developing countries in the region.

ESCAP has commenced implementation of a project to build capacity in disaster management in Asia and the Pacific. With support from France, the project focuses on enabling countries to organize their own resources in a manner that will use space technology for natural disaster reduction, in particular for floods and drought. This includes their ability to receive efficient support from regional/international space-based initiatives. China, India, and the European Space Agency will provide additional support to ESCAP in this field.

The immediate objectives of the project are to promote the operational use of space technology applications for providing timely information and supporting informed decision-making to reduce damage from natural hazards and to establish regional cooperative mechanisms for strengthening national disaster management capabilities.

<<http://www.unescap.org>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 287*

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

ECLAC is based in Santiago, Chile with subregional headquarters in Mexico City, Mexico and Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. It also maintains country offices in Bogotá, Colombia; Brasília, Brazil; Buenos Aires, Argentina; and Montevideo, Uruguay as well as a liaison office in Washington, D.C, USA.

With 41 member states and seven associate members, the Commission plays an active role in disaster reduction, concentrating especially on the socio-economic impact of natural and other related hazards.

In this respect, ECLAC organized a series of inter-agency assessment studies on the macroeconomic impact of natural disasters in the region since the 1972 earthquake in Managua, Nicaragua. They include 1997-1998 El Niño events, 1998 hurricanes Georges and Mitch, 1999 floods in Venezuela and earthquake in Colombia, 2000 hurricane Keith, the 2001 earthquake in El Salvador and the severe drought that affected Central America.

Over the years, ECLAC has developed a useful methodology to assess the impact of disasters on development. It includes an environmental impact analysis, a gender perspective and a comprehensive analysis of the macroeconomic impact of disasters and takes account of their effect on reconstruction plans. This methodology is being disseminated and training is provided in its use with the support of organizations such as the Inter-American Development Bank, PAHO and the World Bank

ECLAC promotes the development of vulnerability and risk indicators to measure the economic, social and environmental impacts of extreme natural phenomena. In addition to these activities, the Commission has implemented training programmes for small island developing states vulnerable to hurricanes through its regional office for the Caribbean.

<<http://www.eclac.cl>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 30, 72, 144, 145, 201, 347, 348*

Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

ECE is based in Geneva from where it promotes and coordinates disaster reduction among its 55 member countries. It works mainly through environmental conventions, the development of guidelines and recommendations, and in capacity-building activities. Moreover, extensive environmental monitoring activities provide data that can be applied to risk assessment for global disasters that might affect the ECE region. It plays a crucial role in such environmental agreements as the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and the Convention of the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

In the framework of water-related disasters prevention, ECE has prepared, together with the IDNDR, WMO and WHO's Regional Office for Europe strategic guidelines on sustainable flood prevention and good practices for flood prevention and protection. These have been an important to foster transboundary cooperation, coordination of sectoral policies, land use and structural measures, early warning and forecast systems, exchange of information, public awareness, education and training. These guidelines resulted from a seminar on flood prevention and protection held in 1999 and their use will be evaluated at a meeting in Germany in 2004.

Furthermore, ECE makes a significant contribution to the ISDR through its team of specialists on forest fires, which works with the Global Fire Monitoring Centre (GFMC) based in Freiburg, Germany. In partnership with many other national and multilateral agencies, the team and the GFMC collect and disseminate information, share experiences, and provide technical assistance and advice on request. The GFMC website provides real time information on major wildland fires. The International Forest Fire News, published twice a year by ECE, is the leading forum for exchange of information among the community of wildland fire experts.

<<http://www.unece.org>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 214*

Office for Outer Space Affairs (OOSA)

The Office for Outer Space Affairs was created in 1992 within the Department for Political Affairs but its activities as a unit of the Department of Security Council Affairs go back to 1962. In 1993, the Office was relocated to the UN Office at Vienna when it was already in charge of acting as the secretariat of the UN Committee for the Peaceful Use of Outer Space (COPUOS).

The Office implements the decisions of the General Assembly and of COPUOS, with the dual objectives of supporting the intergovernmental discussions in the Committee as well as the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Legal Subcommittee. It further assists developing countries in using space technology for development. It follows legal, scientific and technical developments relating to space activities, technology and applications in order to provide technical information and advice to countries, international organizations and other UN offices.





Space technologies can play important roles in the reduction of disasters. Their use can be particularly useful in risk assessment, mitigation and preparedness aspects of disaster risk management. Space technologies are also vital to the early warning of hazards and the management of crisis situations. In order to incorporate the routine use of space technology in developing countries there is a need to increase awareness, build national capacity and also develop solutions that are appropriate to their needs.

Within the framework of its Programme on Space Applications, OOSA is focusing on the definition and successful transfer of such solutions. It has conducted a series of regional workshops on the use of space technology for disaster management, in collaboration with the ISDR Secretariat. These workshops defined regional action plans and the implementation of pilot projects that incorporate and refine the use of space technology for disaster risk management.

In 2001, OOSA convened an action team for disaster management. Composed under the leadership of Canada, China and France, the team's directive is to implement an integrated, global system to manage natural disaster mitigation, relief and prevention efforts through Earth observation, communications and other space-related services, making maximum use of existing capabilities and filling gaps in world-wide satellite coverage. Its membership currently consists of 40 states and 15 international organizations and entities, including the ISDR Secretariat.

OOSA's action team conducted five regional workshops on disaster management and prevention, paving the way to the implementation of the recommendations of the Third UN Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE-III). The first workshop was held in 2001 in La Serena, Chile for the benefit of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The second workshop was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in July 2001 for African countries. Another was held in Bangkok, Thailand in November 2002 to address the interests of Asia and the Pacific. In May 2003 a workshop was conducted near Brasov, Romania for Europe. The final workshop targeted at Middle Eastern countries will be held in Iran in May 2004.
<<http://www.oosa.unvienna.org>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 222*

Inter-agency mechanisms and common initiatives within the United Nations system

The inter-agency UN platforms and tools mentioned below, while each having their own mandates, complement add to the promotion and efficient implementation of disaster reduction activities by virtue of their coordination functions.

Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR)

The Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction is the only platform within the UN system entirely dedicated to the disaster reduction coordination and policy setting of disaster reduction. Comprehensive information on the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction can be found in the section on ISDR in chapter one.

Current members include:

African Union secretariat (AU)
Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)
Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC)
Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters - Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium (CRED)
Council of Europe (CoE)
Drought Monitoring Centre - Nairobi (DMCN)
European Commission: Directorate-General Joint Research Centre (EC/JRC)
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Global Fire Monitoring Centre
Iberoamerican Association of Civil Defence and Civil Protection
Interstate CIS Council
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
Munich Reinsurance
New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) secretariat,
Organization of American States: Inter-American Committee for Natural Disaster Reduction (OAS-IACNDR)
South Pacific Applied Geosciences Commission (SOPAC)
UN Programme for Human Settlements (UN-HABITAT)

UN Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) - Hyogo office
 UN Development Programme (UNDP)
 UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
 UN Environment Programme (UNEP)
 UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
 UN University (UNU)
 World Bank (WB)
 World Food Programme (WFP)
 World Health Organization (WHO)
 World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
 <<http://www.unisdr.org>>
 → *Volume 1, p. 11, 49, 167, (annex 4, 95)*

Disaster Management Training Programme (DMTP)

Under the joint administration of UNDP and OCHA, DMTP is an inter-agency programme which supports capacity-building activities in the field of crisis and disaster management. It maintains a primary focus of clarifying the role and functions of UN Disaster Management Teams (DMT) and of strengthening their performance capacities.

DMT are established in countries where the UN system works to promote coherence, coordination and information exchange among agencies in disaster-related matters and between the UN system and the host government. All UN agencies with field presence are encouraged to participate in DMT. UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, WHO, PAHO, FAO and UNESCO are the most commonly represented agencies in the teams.

While the spirit of DMT is to promote medium and long-term disaster reduction concerns in development planning, the teams are more active in the aftermath of disasters and serve as coordinators to provide assistance for relief and recovery.

Membership:

UN organizations
 FAO, IBRD, ILO, IOM, OCHA, ISDR, OHCHR, UNCHS, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNITAR, UNOPS, UNSC, UNV, WFP, WHO, WMO.

Non-UN organizations
 International Committee of the Red Cross, International Council of Voluntary Agencies, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, National Refugee Commission, Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response.
 <<http://www.undmtp.org>>
 → *Volume 1, p. 146, 246*

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)

Hosted by OCHA and chaired by the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs/Emergency Relief Coordinator, IASC brings together a wide range of UN and non-UN humanitarian partners to facilitate inter-agency decision-making on the response to complex emergencies and natural disasters. This includes agencies, NGOs, and international organizations such as the International Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. The IASC working group comprises a series of task forces, including one on natural disasters.

UN System Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB)

Formerly known as the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), CEB, is chaired by the Secretary-General of the UN. It is the forum that brings together the executive heads of all UN organizations to further coordination and cooperation on the whole range of substantive and management issues facing the UN system.

The previous ACC and the current CEB subsequently have included disaster reduction in their agendas and have issued statements on the importance of inter-agency coordination in this field. CEB is regularly updated on the activities of ISDR through summary reports of the meetings of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction. Several members of CEB are permanent members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction. This provides a unique opportunity for ensuring coordination among agencies and organizations active in disaster reduction, humanitarian assistance and related development and environmental issues.





Membership:

UN Secretariat, ILO, FAO, UNESCO, ICAO, WHO, World Bank, IMF, UPU, ITU, WMO, IMO, WIPO, IFAD, UNIDO, WTO (World Tourism Organization), IAEA, WTO (World Trade Organization), UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNHCR, UNRWA, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, UNDCP, UN-HABITAT.
<<http://www.ceb.unsystem.org>>

United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)

UNDAF is a key component of the UN Secretary-General's reform proposals adopted in 1997. It aims to promote common objectives, time frames as well as improved collaboration between UN programmes and funds. UNDAF is a UN instrument to respond strategically to country development challenges and to the UN global agenda. UNDAF is intended to strengthen the capacity of governments to implement their development programmes and strengthen their relations with the UN system. UNDAF executes Common Country Assessments (CCA) which are carried out by the agencies and host country authorities. CCA are useful tools for the incorporation of disaster risk assessments and reduction measures into inter-agency assessment and action undertaken within countries.

<<http://www.dgo.org>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 256*

United Nations Development Group (UNDG)

Chaired by the UNDP Administrator, UNDG provides a framework for greater coherence and cooperation in UN development operations. This enables UNDG members to maximize their comparative advantages and build on and support the work of other group members at the country level. As most of the UNDG members carry out activities related to disaster reduction, this group represents an opportunity to integrate disaster reduction into other areas of concern, in particular sustainable development.

The DevLink web site, managed by UNDG, provides key documents, examples of good practice, training materials, sources of additional information and links to relevant UN and non-UN sites. This information reflects areas of

UNDG activity and supports the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the Secretary-General's reform programme.

Membership:

DESA, UNDCP, UN-HABITAT, UNOPS, UNIFEM, UNAIDS, UNCTAD, WHO, IFAD, UNESCO, FAO, OHCHR, the regional economic commissions, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

The Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General and the UN Fund for International Partnerships participate in UNDG as observers.
<<http://www.undg.org>>

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United Nations agencies and programmes

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

The mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is to improve agricultural productivity and raise the level of nutrition and standard of living of rural populations. In 2000, as part of its strategic framework, FAO pledged to help achieve food security for present and future generations in the next 15 years.

Based in Rome, Italy, FAO has five regional, five other subregional offices and 80 country offices. They work with member countries and other development partners to coordinate activities including those involved with disaster management. FAO is a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and participates in its working groups.

The World Food Summit of 1996 mandated FAO, among others, to assist member countries develop national food security and vulnerability information and the use of mapping systems with a view to halving malnutrition by 2015, and overall in reducing food insecurity and rural poverty.

A key component of FAO's strategy is to strengthen the capacity of communities and local institutions in preparing for natural hazards and addressing food emergencies or crisis situations.

In order to reduce disruption of agricultural and food systems, this strategic objective focuses on:

- strengthening disaster preparedness and mitigation against the impact of emergencies that affect food security and the productive capacities of rural populations;
- forecasting and providing early warning of adverse conditions in the food and agricultural sectors and of impending food emergencies;
- strengthening programmes for agricultural relief and rehabilitation and facilitating the transition from emergency relief to reconstruction and development in food and agriculture; and
- strengthening local capacities and coping mechanisms by guiding the choice of agricultural practices, technologies and support services to reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience.

The FAO Emergency Coordination Group is the organizational mechanism for the overall coordination of emergency and disaster reduction issues. Chaired by the Assistant Director-General of the Department of Technical Cooperation, an interdisciplinary process has been established within FAO to strengthen its capacity to address disaster preparedness, mitigation, relief and rehabilitation together with member countries and partners in a more integrated way. This includes:

- preparation of a disaster management database;
- development of a guide for emergency needs assessment and guidance on management of food and agricultural emergencies; and
- development of strategies and capacity-building for drought mitigation.

The FAO World Agricultural Information Centre maintains a website of disaster reduction information and has mobilized international support through its Global Information and Early Warning System. This system monitors food supplies and demand around the world, provides policy makers and analysts with current information on crop prospects and gives early warning on imminent food crises.

FAO has upgraded its capability to provide an operational service on environmental information through an advanced real-time environmental monitoring information system using satellite data. Moreover, the FAO environment and natural

resources service of the sustainable development department integrates remote sensing and geographic information systems for sustainable development planning, including disaster impact assessments and mapping risk and conditions of vulnerability.

FAO assists countries in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices and land-use systems. The FAO land and water development division plays an important role in reversing degradation and reducing vulnerability to hazards. It does this by promoting the development of resilient agro-ecosystems and the sound use of land and water resources.

A special programme for food security assists low-income food-deficient countries improve food security at national and household levels, through rapid increases in food production. It does this by reducing annual variability in production and by improving people's access to food.

<<http://www.fao.org>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 53, 58, 71, 150, 152, 154, 196, 228, 305, 370, 375*

International Labour Organization (ILO)

ILO is the UN agency specialized in matters related to labour and promotes social justice and internationally-recognized human and labour rights. ILO is based in Geneva, Switzerland.

In 1999, ILO established a special in-focus programme on crisis response and reconstruction to concentrate on various types of crises including natural disasters. The programme implements the ILO “decent work” approach which emphasizes employment as a method of crisis prevention. Activities of the programme related to disaster reduction include:

- developing ILO knowledge in crisis situations. Links are strengthened with ILO technical units and field offices, external research institutions and crisis practitioners worldwide;
- developing tools and guidelines to answer the needs of individual crisis situations;
- providing technical assistance and direct interventions in emergencies for rapid needs assessment, programme development and implementation;





- building capacity to respond effectively to crises including the wide dissemination of information, training programmes and advisory services;
- advocating activities to promote national, regional and international recognition of the importance of employment in crisis situations and the contribution of employment in effective crisis management planning; and
- mobilizing resources for timely interventions.

<<http://www.ilo.org>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 167, 233, 364, 365*

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

ITU is the international organization for governments and the private sector to coordinate global telecommunication networks and services. Based in Geneva, Switzerland, ITU is a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction.

Following the Yokohama Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction in 1994, the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in Kyoto, emphasized the importance of telecommunications for disaster mitigation and disaster relief operations.

Later, in 1998, the Intergovernmental Conference on Emergency Telecommunications adopted the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations. It raised concerns about the impact of disasters on communication facilities and information flows. In response, ITU is working on the development of global standards to support an emergency telecommunications service.

Many dimensions need to be addressed in achieving an effective solution for emergency telecommunications including technical specifications, user requirements, and operational, policy, legal and regulatory concerns. Cooperation and liaison among the many interest groups are essential to ensure consistency and completeness in providing an effective emergency telecommunications capability. ITU is therefore engaging in the following activities:

- study of the impact of disaster events on telecommunications;

- identification of requirements and applications of emergency telecommunication users; and
- identification of types and modes of telecommunications for emergencies.

ITU member countries recognize the importance of telecommunication resources for early warning services, disaster mitigation and relief operations. Significant work in these areas is carried out in each of the three ITU sectors: development, radiocommunication, and telecommunication standardization.

Resolutions at numerous ITU conferences over the past decade have mandated a variety of pertinent activities. These include telecommunication resources for disaster mitigation and relief operations (World Radiocommunication Conference, Istanbul, 2000), telecommunication resources in the service of humanitarian assistance and the consideration of disaster telecommunication needs in telecommunication development activities (World Telecommunication Development Conference, Istanbul, 2002). These activities culminated in a resolution of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (Marrakesh, 2002) on telecommunications in the service of humanitarian assistance.

Additional initiatives include ITU's efforts to provide practical means for disaster mitigation through the forging of partnerships with other entities to provide communication services for disaster and risk management. ITU recently entered into a co-financing arrangement in which a private sector company has provided financing for the procurement of satellite terminals and ITU provided financing for airtime. The equipment will be used for disaster mitigation and relief activities.

Ongoing work includes the drafting and subsequent publication of a revised version of the ITU Handbook on Disaster Communications. Disaster telecommunication training seminars are being conducted in several regions. Recommendations are being framed for international standards that describe telecommunication capabilities that will facilitate the use of public telecommunication services and systems by authorities for communications during emergency, disaster relief and mitigation operations. Other studies and recommendations relating to disaster relief are being considered in the framework of public protection and disaster relief and to encourage the

development of robust, flexible and independent amateur service and amateur-satellite service networks capable of providing communications during disasters and relief operations.

<<http://www.itu.int>>

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

The UNICEF mandate is to protect and improve the well-being of the most vulnerable groups, children and women, anywhere in the world. By definition, this includes aspects of disaster preparedness and prevention. By supporting the empowerment of communities at the local level and capacity-building at the national level, UNICEF programmes are designed to mitigate the negative effects of hazards and to enhance abilities to deal with disasters. Policy and procedural guidelines for UNICEF staff in emergencies include both emergency response and preparedness and prevention activities.

UNICEF is based in New York with regional and country offices in 158 countries around the world. The foundation of UNICEF action lies in its long-term country programme approach and its development orientation. Recognizing the central importance of building capacities and self-reliance for effective and sustainable assistance and reducing the vulnerability of children to future disasters, UNICEF aims to enhance rather than supply locally available resources and mechanisms. The maximum involvement of individuals, communities and local and national institutions is stressed at all levels of UNICEF development and emergency action.

Following the recommendation of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World to include disaster reduction into national development plans, UNICEF programme and policy guidance incorporate disaster reduction elements into country programmes in disaster-prone countries. Vulnerability and capacity assessments in relation to natural hazards are being introduced as integral to the situation analysis process at the country level.

UNICEF cooperates with UNDP as part of UN country teams in support of disaster preparedness activities in national development plans. UNICEF is playing an important role in tackling

both analysis and capacity-building nationally and in the empowerment of communities. Selected programmes in disaster-prone countries enhance abilities to mitigate the effects of hazards and to respond to the immediate needs associated with disasters. For example, a major thrust of UNICEF assistance in a number of countries is the development and institutionalization of local capacities for disaster preparedness and management.

In order to ensure adequate levels of preparedness for effective response in emergencies, UNICEF country and regional offices carry out national risk monitoring and preparedness planning as part of their programming. This includes annual risk assessments identifying all types of risks from natural hazards to economic distress and civil conflicts.

In addition to viewing support to sustainable development as the key element for disaster reduction, UNICEF country offices are involved in activities geared towards improving awareness of natural hazards and related disaster risks. These activities include development of education and awareness materials and campaigns for children and adults. UNICEF collaborates closely with the ISDR Secretariat office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Costa Rica. They have jointly developed educational and awareness materials available on the web sites of both organizations.

<<http://www.unicef.org>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 144, 228, 245, 292*

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The overarching mission of UNDP is to help its programme countries build national capacity to achieve sustainable human development. UNDP is giving top priority to the elimination of poverty and building equity by providing development advice, advocacy and grant support. As the primary substantive UN programme promoting and supporting the implementation of risk and vulnerability reduction in developing countries, UNDP is involved in a range of activities which contribute to disaster and risk management.

With headquarters in New York and operational functions in Geneva, UNDP provides most of its services through its 132 country offices, supported





by regional bureaux, specialized programmes and trust funds. In each country where it works the UNDP resident representative generally also serves as the resident coordinator for the UN system as a whole.

In 1997, a General Assembly decision transferred the responsibilities of the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator for operational activities for natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness from OCHA to UNDP. OCHA retained its coordination function for international relief operations.

UNDP's *Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR)* was formerly known as the Emergency Response Division. It is the in-house mechanism set up to provide a quicker and more effective response in countries in special development situations through the provision of services.

BCPR's *Disaster Reduction Unit (DRU)* works to achieve a sustainable reduction in disaster risk and sustainable recovery from disaster in programme countries, by strengthening national and regional capacities. This involves ensuring that disaster risk considerations are factored into new development, that disaster impact is mitigated and development gains protected and also that risk reduction is factored into rapid disaster recovery. Accordingly, UNDP has been a key player in the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. In the past year UNDP's activities in disaster reduction and recovery spanned over 50 programme countries.

DRU activities include:

- disaster reduction strategies and capacity building programmes;
- sustainable recovery frameworks and programming;
- sub-regional knowledge networks;
- human resource development through programmes such as DMTP and development of UNDP staff capacities; and
- policy and advocacy through participation in the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and chair of the ISDR working group on risk, vulnerability and impact assessment; in addition to the production of the 2004 report *Reducing Disaster Risk: A challenge for development*.

The *UNDP Drylands Development Centre*, formerly the Office to Combat Desertification and Drought, moved to Nairobi in early 2002. The Centre is responsible for promoting sound dryland management and development as well as drought preparedness and mitigation as part of sustainable human development. It also has been an advocate of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and provides technical and catalytic financial support to affected countries for the implementation of the Convention.

< <http://www.undp.org/drylands/> >

Capacity 21 is a trust fund launched by UNDP after the Earth Summit of 1992. It works with countries to build skills and a knowledge base to implement the principles of sustainable development as outlined in Agenda 21. Capacity 21 promotes a partnership for increased coping capacity to deal with natural disasters in small island developing states in the framework of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Barbados Plan of Action.

<<http://www.undp.org/capacity21>>

In seeking to fill its mandated responsibilities within the ISDR, UNDP has put a number of key initiatives in place in order to improve coherence in UNDP global and regional mechanism in support to country offices and ensure complementarity and coordination at the national level, through the UN Resident Coordinator. UNDP has boosted its capacity to deliver assistance to countries worldwide in disaster reduction by out-posting four disaster reduction regional advisors supported by programme specialists based at the DRU headquarters in Geneva.

Following the General Assembly's request for UNDP to increase the capacity of regional organisations to respond to natural disasters, UNDP works closely with a number of organisations such as CEPREDENAC in Central America, CDERA in the Caribbean, CAPRADE in Andean countries, SADC in Southern Africa and the Stability Pact in South-Eastern Europe. UNDP and other partners have supported CDERA in the development and implementation of a comprehensive disaster management strategy, which has been endorsed and adopted by its 16 member countries. In 2002, an expert group



meeting on the roles of regional organisations and networks in strengthening capacities for disaster reduction was convened, with representatives from 11 organizations participating. Finally, UNDP is currently supporting the development of subregional knowledge networking initiatives in the Caribbean such as the Caribbean Risk Management Initiative which is focused on linking climate change adaptation and disaster reduction, other subregional networks have been developed in Central America and Central and South-West Asia.

UNDP has achieved results in disaster reduction in over 30 countries worldwide, including early warning systems, strengthening of national disaster offices, risk mapping, and supporting legislative systems among other activities. In some cases, risk reduction strategies and platforms have been created (e.g. Madagascar, Haiti, Albania). In others, national networks have facilitated a process to learn lessons from recent disasters, as for example, in India. The creation of large stakeholder platforms and a highly participatory process have been encouraged in most of these programmes.

Additionally, UNDP has proceeded to mainstream disaster reduction in its own and wider UN national cooperation frameworks, such as Country Cooperation Frameworks and the UN Development Assistance Framework (e.g. Algeria, Madagascar, India, El Salvador). A Crisis and Prevention Network –including more than 400 UNDP staff of which 70 per cent reside at UNDP country offices – is also building a culture of prevention and stimulating considerable exchange of knowledge within the organization. Some UNDP offices are currently mainstreaming disaster reduction into development policies. In order to mainstream disaster reduction into post-disaster recovery, UNDP has supported sustainable recovery frameworks and programming in 12 countries, following crises in Afghanistan, Bolivia, Cuba, India, and Southern Africa, among others. Joint recovery missions and other planning missions have been fielded together with OCHA to the Goma volcano in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for the Golestan floods in Iran and to Mauritania.

In terms of improving participation at the local level, UNDP has been actively involved in

developing local risk reduction planning. It continues to create platforms for integrating local level risk management into development planning and training within local committees. Five years after hurricanes Mitch and Georges, UNDP has supported the creation and training of 150 local risk reduction committees in the hurricane-affected countries of Central America such as Honduras and Nicaragua by improving their local planning in disaster prevention and preparedness. UNDP has engaged in similar local activities in other countries, such as Albania, Madagascar, Malawi and Viet Nam where more than 100 local committees have benefited from this support. These efforts represent a major contribution to the objectives of the ISDR in enabling communities to become more resilient to the effects of hazards.

<<http://www.undp.org/erd/disred/index.htm>>
→ *Volume 1, p. 12, 27, 28, 30, 32, 51, 60, 61, 71, 72, 77, 82, 83, 87, 88, 92, 94, 96, 98, 119, 144, 145, 146, 147, 150, 160, 163, 164, 176, 196, 197, 199, 213, 243, 246, 254, 256, 267, 293, 348, 362, 370, 387, 392, 396, (annex 4, 99)*

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

The main objective of UNESCO is to contribute to peace and security in the world by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication in order to further universal respect for justice, the rule of law and human rights and fundamental freedoms.

UNESCO is based in Paris, France, and has 73 field offices around the world. It is a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and has a sound record of active involvement in disaster reduction since the IDNDR programme. It promotes activities to develop a better scientific understanding of disasters and the mitigation of their effects in a variety of areas ranging from research to space applications.

UNESCO also produces educational material to develop awareness and provide information to the general public. It provides technical advice on the construction of hazard-resistant schools and for the protection of cultural heritage.



UNESCO programmes on natural and social sciences provide scientific and technical benefits for disaster reduction. These include among others, the following international programmes: the International Geological Correlation Programme, the International Hydrological Programme, the Man and Biosphere Programme, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, UN World Water Assessment Programme and the Management of Social Transformations Programme. UNESCO's strategy for 2002-2007 and current budget include provisions for programmes related to natural disaster reduction.

The GOOS hosted in the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission continued to coordinate the systematic observation of the world's oceans. This framework encompasses all ocean observing satellites which measure ocean surface temperatures, winds, waves and currents. One of the elements of GOOS is the El Niño Southern Oscillation forecasting system for the timing, extent and magnitude of El Niño and La Niña events in the tropical Pacific Ocean. This system provided several months advanced warning of the 2002-2003 El Niño. It also produced high resolution maps and forecasts relating to numerous ocean and associated weather and climate conditions, including alerts for hurricanes, typhoons, and storm surges.

UNESCO has enhanced many of its scientific and educational programmes that have proven experience in the study, understanding and mitigation of extreme natural phenomena such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, floods and storms. It has been worked to safeguard and when necessary rehabilitate educational and cultural institutions in disaster-prone countries. In reviewing the draft programme and budget for 2004-2005, the Executive Board of UNESCO endorsed a main line of action devoted to enhancing disaster prevention and preparedness as a follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

The follow-up to WSSD is providing UNESCO with an opportunity to capitalize on its previous achievements in disaster mitigation. The enhancement of national and regional capacities in natural disaster reduction has been pursued through cooperative projects in the

Middle East, South-East Asia and Latin America. UNESCO has provided assistance for enhancing disaster preparedness plans for urban areas in several countries of Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia, in collaboration with the ISDR Secretariat. It also proposed to associate this initiative with the ICLEI-led partnership on Resilient Communities to provide advice and help build the capacity of decision makers. Another project coordinated by UNESCO concentrated on reducing earthquake losses in the Eastern Mediterranean through seismic monitoring and the improved exchange of technical data.

During the International Year of Mountains (2002) UNESCO advocated disaster reduction during the culminating event, the Global Mountains Summit in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, promoting partnerships with FAO and other partners to promote sciences and to enhance related abilities pertinent to the preservation of mountains. UNESCO also co-organized a seminar in Chambéry, France on reducing losses and preserving cultural and natural heritage in mountain cities

UNESCO has also invested efforts in compiling materials on information, education and public awareness on disasters, including the development and promotion of educational structures able to withstand disaster forces, offering practical advice on how to build disaster-resilient schools.

<<http://www.unesco.org>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 53, 65, 94, 95, 140, 146, 167, 174, 238, 250, 256, 271, 318, 332, 368, 370, 374, 396, (annex 4, 101)*

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

UNEP is the leading global environmental authority and promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the UN. UNEP is based in Nairobi, Kenya, and counts several regional and thematic offices and programmes around the world.

The UNEP Governing Council identified increasing environmental emergencies as one of the environmental threats that needed to be addressed. It emphasized the important role the

organization plays globally in the areas of emergency prevention, preparedness, assessment, mitigation and response.

UNEP has developed a strategic framework in Nairobi through its Disaster Management branch, in the Division for Environment Policy Implementation. This formulation serves as the basis for the development and implementation of programmes on disaster reduction at all levels.

UNEP has carried out a number of activities aimed at reducing the impact of disasters to further the objectives of ISDR. It is a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and chaired the ISDR working group on early warning. It also has a joint unit with OCHA in Geneva to assist countries in responding to a variety of environmental emergencies.

In line with its role in environmental monitoring, assessment and early warning, the UNEP Division for Early Warning and Assessment has launched a Global Environment Outlook (GEO) report. This series contains baseline information on emerging environmental issues and threats, as well as policies being implemented at the global and regional levels.

UNEP's Global Resource Information Database (GRID) is composed of a global network of environmental information centres. It aims to facilitate access and provide environmental data and information for decision-making and the determination of policies. It underpins the UNEP review of the state of the world's environment and provides early warning on environmental hazards.

The UNEP.net partnership, a global information network, offers remote access databases from different institutions enabling the development of comprehensive and local solutions. Often these rely on best practices from various regions and countries of the world.

The UNEP programme Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at a Local Level (APELL) is based at the Industry and Environment Office in Paris. It serves as a tool for disaster prevention and preparedness and raises public awareness of the need to reduce environmental emergencies and damage. It seeks to minimize the occurrence and harmful effects of

technological accidents and emergencies, particularly in developing countries, resulting from human activity or as the consequence of natural disasters.

<<http://www.unep.org>>

<<http://www.unep.org/dewa>>

<<http://www.uneptie.org/pc/apell/disasters/disasters.html>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 30, 57, 66, 150, 152, 176, 197, 212, 216, 217, 232, 233, 243, 254, 256, 309, 310, 370, 372, 375, 396, (annex 4, 99, 100)*



United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)

UN-HABITAT has the unique mandate in the UN system of promoting the development of sustainable human settlements in an increasingly urbanized world. It contributes to disaster reduction at local, regional and national levels within this context. UN-HABITAT signed a memorandum of understanding with the ISDR Secretariat in May 2003 reaffirming UN-HABITAT's renewed commitment to deploy its expertise, networks and resources to achieve the objectives and goals of ISDR, especially in the sector of risk and human settlements.

UN-HABITAT promotes the development of socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements, good urban governance and the achievement of adequate shelter for all. It is based in Nairobi, Kenya, and has three regional offices located in Brazil, Japan and Kenya as well as several liaison and information offices worldwide. The Programme has been a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction since 2002.

The establishment of ISDR coincided with the restructuring of UN-HABITAT. A key component of this process was the consolidation of the risk and disaster management programme in the newly established Disaster, Post-Conflict and Safety Section (DPCSS). DPCSS caters for the increasing demands from countries for technical support, policy tools and field operational capacity in disaster prevention, mitigation and rehabilitation of human settlements and issues related to urban safety.

The risk and disaster management programme was established to strengthen UN-HABITAT's



abilities to deliver technical cooperation and capacity-building services. The focus is on direct country support with the objective of helping human settlements reduce their vulnerability and manage the effects of disasters and conflict better.

It provides support to national governments, local authorities and communities in close cooperation with technical cooperation units and other specialized programmes. Specific programme activities deliver direct support to national and local partners through:

- technical advisory missions responding to requests by governments and external support agencies;
- execution of assessments in disaster-prone countries and post-conflict situations;
- identification, design, technical support and follow-up of operational projects in response to country requests;
- participation in donor consultations for the provision of external support to disaster-affected countries; and
- assessment of global and regional expressions of need related to hazardous conditions or disaster risks and human settlements management, including the design and implementation of global and regional projects.

UN-HABITAT disaster-related activities focus on the physical and management aspects of shelter, infrastructure and public service, with priority given to local activities. Emphasis is given to the development of training and technical support programmes to increase the capacities of local authorities and communities for improving disaster risk management and human settlements in the context of good local governance.

UN-HABITAT is an active partner of ISDR, especially in the areas of land and urban management, impact assessment and capacity-building. Organizational commitments such as the global campaigns on urban governance and for secure tenure constitute important opportunities to promote disaster reduction in urban areas and to strengthen collaboration with local authorities.

In September 2002 UN-HABITAT and the ISDR organized a productive regional meeting in Cuba on local management and disaster reduction in the wider Caribbean region, involving local authorities, organizations and agencies related to disaster reduction issues in eight Central American-Caribbean countries. The goal was to initiate the process of developing disaster mitigation and management capacity for local governments at municipal level. The objective is being achieved through a process of dialogue and the exchange of tools and experience in disaster reduction. Participants agreed on the need to take urgent action to strengthen the capacity of local and urban authorities in the subregion to reduce their vulnerability to disasters.

<<http://www.unhabitat.org>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 60, 72, 120, 136, 186, 226, 256, 316, (annex 4, 104)*

United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

UNITAR is an autonomous body within the UN with a mandate to enhance the effectiveness of the UN through training and research activities. Its headquarters are located in Geneva, Switzerland, where a majority of the UNITAR training and capacity-building programmes are organized. It also has a liaison office in New York.

UNITAR provides training and project services for policy and institutional development. These activities address risk issues in the areas of chemical and waste management, climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, environmental law, environmental negotiations, national reconstruction, the use of information systems and the involvement of local authorities.

UNITAR conducted a programme in disaster risk reduction collaboration with several UN organizations, local authorities, NGOs, universities and the private sector. This consisted of launching an international training centre for local actors (CIFEL) in Divonne-les-Bains, France. It provided a service structure, an international meeting location and an exchange of experiences open to all actors involved with sustainable development and international cooperation at the local level.

Recognizing the utility of geographic information systems and other modern information and communication technologies for advancing disaster reduction, UNITAR has been organizing training sessions in these fields since 1986. It has also conducted several training activities related to disaster reduction, including training sessions for African civil servants working in the field of land degradation, and workshops for local authorities in Crimea and Lebanon. Additional workshops have been organized for national decision makers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and countries of the Southern Caucasus on the use of information systems for disaster reduction.
<<http://www.unitar.org>>

United Nations University (UNU)

The overall mission of the United Nations University (UNU) is to contribute to efforts to resolve the pressing global problems that are the concern of the UN member states through research and capacity-building. Based in Tokyo, Japan, UNU comprises 13 research and training centres and programmes around the world. Its partners include over 30 UN organizations and more than 100 research institutions globally. UNU is a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and participates in the work of the working group on climate and disasters.

With regard to disaster reduction, UNU has activities that support the goals of ISDR. A UNU initiative has been designed to highlight, produce and disseminate methodologies for the analysis of urban social vulnerability. Activities have been carried out in partnership with the University of Tokyo's International Center for Disaster Mitigation-Engineering to improve disaster-related technologies. The enhanced preparedness for climate-related disasters has always been a high priority area for the University.

Many initiatives developed over the years to address these important global issues have made significant contributions in linking the scientific community and the UN system. One particular example is the study of the El Niño phenomenon. A joint project was carried out by

UNU, the ISDR Secretariat, UNEP, WMO and the US National Center for Atmospheric Research. This activity, which included the work of multidisciplinary teams in 16 countries, led to findings that have been crucial to improving preparedness for future occurrences of El Niño, and other climate-related hazards.

As a follow-up to the El Niño project, UNU has developed a new climate affairs programme which will encompass a broad spectrum of issues ranging from ethics and policy formulation to the impact of climatic phenomena. An important contribution of this initiative is the development of a multidisciplinary programme to build capacities in matters of climate and which will facilitate means to meet disaster reduction challenges.

Together with universities in Geneva and Lausanne, Switzerland, UNU provides postgraduate fellowships for students from developing countries to study geological risk management.

<<http://www.unu.edu>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 246, 250*

The World Bank Group

The World Bank Group is one of the world's largest sources of development assistance working in more than 100 developing countries. Based in Washington DC, the World Bank Group consists of five closely associated institutions, owned by 184 member countries that carry ultimate decision-making power: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Development Association, International Finance Corporation, Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency and International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes. Each institution plays a distinct role towards the Bank's overarching vision to fight poverty.

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA) provide low-interest loans, interest-free credit, and grants to developing countries. IBRD provides loans and development assistance to middle-income countries and creditworthy poorer countries. Although not a profit-maximizing organization, the World Bank has earned a net income every year since 1948, which is used to fund developmental activities. IDA





helps the world's poorest countries reduce poverty by providing "credits" which are loans at zero interest with a 10-year grace period and maturities of 35 to 40 years.

The World Bank considers disaster reduction as an element in the fight against poverty, linked to environmental management. In order to advance the goal of reducing the impact of disasters, the World Bank updated its strategies and procedures to promote ways to integrate disaster prevention and mitigation into its development work.

Through its Hazard Management Unit (HMU), the Bank is a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction. The Unit was originally established in July 1998 as the Disaster Management Facility to promote disaster risk management as a priority issue for poverty reduction. HMU has worked to promote the integration of risk analysis into project design and to include effective prevention and mitigation measures into the Bank's country assistance strategies. Staff have been trained to design safer investments empowering communities to reduce their vulnerability to hazards. Furthermore, disaster risk management is being integrated into the Bank's development efforts.

Reconstruction projects, such as those carried out in the aftermath of the Izmit earthquake in Turkey, Hurricane Mitch in Central America and the January 2001 earthquake in Gujarat, India, have been designed to go beyond simply rebuilding and to focus on reconstruction measures that strengthen resilience to future disasters.

Along the same lines, pilot efforts promoted by the HMU are gradually being incorporated into Bank operations. A good example of this approach is in Mexico where, following a case study that evaluated the capacity of the country to manage disaster risk, the government requested the Bank to prepare a project to reduce future disaster losses.

ProVention Consortium

The Bank works closely with partners through the ProVention Consortium, which it initiated in 2000. This Consortium encourages productive institutional relationships that can combine efforts to generate evidence of the economic and financial

impact of disasters on long-term development. It seeks to develop methodologies and standards for conducting damage and needs assessments following a disaster, to strengthen community resilience, and to identify innovations in risk transfer and financing. The Consortium is currently hosted by IFRC in Geneva, Switzerland.

<<http://www.worldbank.org>>

<<http://www.proventionconsortium.org>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 27, 30, 61, 84, 92, 95, 120, 145, 146, 147, 196, 197, 223, 224, 225, 243, 254, 256, 259, 260, 261, 305, 309, 312, 329, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 354, 357, 396*

World Food Programme (WFP)

WFP is mandated by the UN to combat global hunger. Based in Rome, Italy, the Programme has 85 country offices and eight regional offices to assist populations in need. As the food-aid arm of the UN, WFP meets emergency needs, provides the necessary logistics to deliver food and supports economic and social development by promoting policies, strategies and operations for the benefit of the poor and hungry. WFP has been a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction since its inception in 2000.

In 1999, the WFP key strategy document, *Enabling Development*, identified disaster mitigation as one of five priority areas of action, expressing a focus on reduction of the impact of natural hazards on food security for vulnerable populations. A steering committee for disaster mitigation was established to assist country and regional offices to integrate disaster mitigation activities into their development programmes.

WFP's dual mandates for development and emergencies result in development activities designed to facilitate any necessary emergency responses related to food security. Guidelines on disaster mitigation have been prepared and tested in pilot projects in selected country offices.

The formalization of the WFP role in disaster mitigation is reflected in a new generation of programming documents. In 2000, nine of the 11 country strategy outlines and country programmes approved by the executive board included disaster mitigation activities. For example, WFP is supporting water harvesting in Sudan to decrease

the impact of drought on rural livelihoods. In Tanzania, WFP's country programme is using food-for-work activities to create assets such as grain stores and access roads in order to improve long-term food security and decrease the vulnerability of households to drought.

The WFP emphasis on early warning and contingency planning includes collaboration with a framework team based in New York and a vulnerability and analysis mapping unit. The Office of the Humanitarian Adviser is responsible for coordinating the overall contingency planning process, while an augmented logistics intervention team for emergencies collates specific logistics-based contingency planning information such as operational capacity assessments.

<<http://www.wfp.org>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 71, 103, 146, 152, 227, 290*

World Health Organization (WHO)

WHO is the UN specialized agency responsible for health. It is a decentralized organization with six regional offices in Africa, the Americas, the Eastern Mediterranean region, Europe, South-East Asia and the Western Pacific, and about 150 country offices worldwide. Its headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland.

The purpose of a WHO presence within countries is to assist them to achieve sustainable national health policy goals. WHO works to draw on the experience of individual countries to build public health knowledge that benefits the rest of the world. WHO has been a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction since 2002.

WHO works at country, regional and global levels for disaster mitigation, emergency preparedness and response, as well as advocating for health and humanitarian action. WHO aims to achieve a reduction of avoidable death and illness that result from any type of hazard or disaster risks and to ensure that member states and the international community are equipped to mitigate health consequences and to prevent disasters.

WHO provides preparedness and response training to government ministries of health. It also assists governments in the development of health emergency contingency plans. WHO distributes

guidelines on applying best public health practices in preparing for and assessing the impact of disasters.

WHO's early health assessment and health intelligence web site provides situational information including baseline statistics, health situation reports and epidemiological surveillance data.

WHO collaborates with academic centres around the world, working in the field of disaster reduction. These include the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters at the University of Louvain in Belgium; the School of Public Health at the University of Antioquia in Colombia; and the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Chile.

The WHO Regional Office for the Americas, the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), is the most active WHO office in the area of disaster reduction. PAHO has been active in reducing the impact of disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean since the mid-1970s and was an important contributor to IDNDR. The PAHO disaster preparedness programme has subregional offices in Barbados, Costa Rica and Ecuador.

PAHO helps to strengthen institutions by supporting the creation and enhancement of disaster programmes in the ministries of health in all countries of the region. Today, national disaster programmes are playing increasing leadership and advisory roles to the highest-level health authorities, often managing substantial resources to promote disaster mitigation and respond to real post-disaster needs.

PAHO also promotes coordination with other sectors involved in disaster reduction and organizes workshops for disaster reduction professionals. It encourages universities throughout the region to incorporate disaster management in their curricula.

The preparation and distribution of training materials has been central to PAHO programmes and for more than 20 years this effort has produced a considerable body of technical material. Materials are distributed free of charge to institutions dealing with disaster mitigation and are also available on the Internet for worldwide access. PAHO works at the highest political levels in member countries to ensure that disaster mitigation becomes an integral part of national disaster reduction programmes. Special programmes to develop technical guidelines and





political support for vulnerability assessments and disaster mitigation for water systems and health services have been developed over the past decade.

PAHO and the ISDR Secretariat have agreed on a number of measures to strengthen cooperation in priority areas for the region. These measures include publishing studies, conducting joint exercises and strengthening the Regional Disaster Information Centre (CRID). CRID is a regional consortium which includes PAHO, the ISDR Secretariat, the Coordinating Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America, Costa Rica's National Risk Prevention and Emergency Response Commission, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and Doctors without Borders.

PAHO/WHO has provided strong support to sub-regional organizations such as CDERA in the Caribbean, CEPREDENAC in Central America and CAPRADE in the Andean Region. WHO's regional offices and IFRC signed several agreements to collaborate in disaster preparedness. WHO, WFP, OCHA, UNICEF and UNHCR adopted the humanitarian supplies inventory and control system based on SUMA. The importance of this system is increasingly recognized by several countries over the world that have requested and translated it into their own languages.

PAHO is working with the ISDR Secretariat to increase access to disaster information and promote greater exchange among countries and organizations in the region with the support of CRID and other disaster information networks, including the Caribbean Disaster Information Network.

WHO has made considerable progress in mainstreaming disaster management in recent years. WHO's offices in disaster-prone countries in the Americas integrated disaster preparedness into their work, assigning specific budgets for activities and full time disaster risk management professionals. Disaster mitigation and preparedness are together designated as one of the 11 essential public health functions. Several activities are focused to reduce vulnerable health facilities and potable water systems. Several publications on mitigation have been updated and widely distributed. A guide on hospital mitigation was developed through a joint effort between PAHO/WHO, the World Bank and the WHO collaborating centre based in Chile.

PAHO/WHO represents the Inter-American system as a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction. The ISDR and PAHO/WHO share a joint office in Costa Rica and work in a very close relationship for disaster mitigation in the Americas. PAHO/WHO leads a working group and participates in the elaboration of the Inter-American Strategic Plan for risk management and disaster response endorsed by the Organization of American States member countries.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) finished the manual for socio-economic impact assessment, whose chapters on health and potable water were reviewed in depth by PAHO/WHO. The recent creation of the CIIFEN (International Research Centre on El Niño) in Ecuador has been a key step toward international joint observation and research on the effects of and successful measures for extreme water related events. PAHO/WHO is a stakeholder of this crucial initiative.

<<http://www.who.int/disasters>>

<<http://www.paho.org/disasters>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 55, 156, 167, 195, 213, 242, 245, 256, 272, 374, 375*

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

Based in Geneva, Switzerland, WMO coordinates global scientific activity to allow increasingly prompt and accurate weather information and other services for public, private and commercial use. WMO activities contribute to the safety of life and property, the socio-economic development of nations and the protection of the environment.

WMO participated in the implementation of IDNDR and is now a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, working closely with the working groups on climate and disaster reduction (for which it has lead responsibility), on early warning and on vulnerability and risk assessment. The WMO constituent bodies, including its governing Congress and the Executive Council, provide guidance on the policy, scientific and technical aspects of the implementation of ISDR objectives at regional and global levels.

As nearly three-quarters of all natural disasters are related to weather and climate, WMO has a number of scientific and technical programmes related to the mitigation of natural hazards supported by the participation of national meteorological and hydrological services and a

number of regional specialized meteorological centres worldwide.

The WMO World Weather Watch programme coordinates the preparation and distribution of weather, climate and hydrological data, analyses and forecast products to all nations.

The WMO Tropical Cyclone Programme promotes the establishment of national and regionally coordinated systems to ensure effective preparedness so that the loss of life and damage caused by tropical cyclones and associated phenomena are reduced to a minimum.

The WMO Public Weather Services programme supports national meteorological and hydrological services in disaster reduction planning by providing routine forecasts and information to enhance the social and economic well-being of nations.

The World Climate Programme provides an authoritative international scientific voice on climate, climate variations and climate change. It has provided advanced climate database management systems to many countries, with applications in several areas of disaster mitigation, especially drought.

The WMO World Weather Research Programme aims to develop improved and cost-effective techniques for forecasting high-impact weather and promote their applications among countries.

The Hydrology and Water Resources Programme assists the national hydrological services of member countries to assess risk and forecast water-related hazards, in particular major floods and droughts.

WMO continues to assist its members in the development of techniques to assess and combat drought, desertification and other extreme events through its agricultural meteorology programme. Through its leadership of the ISDR working group on climate and disaster reduction, WMO contributes to the review of sectoral systems within and outside the UN that monitors climate sensitive emergencies. The monitoring and prediction of climate-related natural disasters associated with the El Niño and La Niña phenomena are of particular interest.

Regular El Niño monitoring and dissemination of related outlooks are tangible results of WMO activities. Other projects are being pursued to establish a climate alert system and linking climate and disaster databases on floods. A drought

preparedness and mitigation programme to promote the use of climate information at individual farmer's level of decision-making is being implemented in collaboration with NOAA and other national and regional partners.

The establishment of the International Research Centre for El Niño (CIIFEN) in collaboration with the government of Ecuador and WMO is a response to the UN General Assembly resolution 52/200 on international co-operation to reduce the impacts of El Niño phenomenon.

A memorandum of understanding has been signed between WMO and the International Consortium on Landslides addressing issues of common interest. This joint expression gives particular regard to the promotion of sciences pertaining to the safety of human life and property, protection of the environment, sustainable economic and social development, and associated education and training.

Another WMO project addresses natural disaster reduction in coastal lowlands by responding to the requests of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. This commitment was subsequently approved by the Fourteenth World Meteorological Congress in May 2003.

In order to ensure integration and synergy of relevant activities being carried out under the various WMO programmes in the area of disaster prevention and mitigation, the Fourteenth World Meteorological Congress established a new crosscutting major programme on natural disaster prevention and mitigation, geared to ensure that WMO's programme activities and results are fully reflected in WMO's participation and support to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. This overarching programme will also provide the basis for effective coordination of the pertinent WMO activities with related activities of international, regional and national organizations involved.

Several new initiatives from the different major WMO programmes have been planned and included in the Sixth WMO long-term plan (2004-2011), which likewise responds to the different recommendations and principles for disaster reduction related to sustainable development in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

<<http://www.wmo.ch>>

→ *Volume 1, p. 2, 46, 49, 53, 65, 145, 150, 152, 154, 176, 196, 213, 214, 215, 369, 370, 371, 372, 374, 379, 383, (annex 4, 100)*





Living with Risk:
A global review of disaster reduction initiatives