How do we know what is happening?[2]

- Is there a countrywide public-awareness strategy for disaster risk reduction?
- Do curricula of schools and higher-education institutes include disaster risk reduction?
- Are there local educational centres or professional facilities that can host and promote disaster risk-reduction training to encourage expanded ownership?
- Is training provided at accessible locations and convenient times?
- Are both men and women involved as trainers in disaster risk reduction?

ENDNOTES

1 UN/ISDR, 2007: *Words Into Action*. See www.unisdr.org
2 www.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=grKVL2NLE&b=489263
3 Taken from IDS case study www.ids.ac.uk/ids/govern/citizenvoice/pdfs/panchwaves.pdf
4 UN/ISDR, 2007: *Words into Action*. See: www.unisdr.org

christian aid

Community-led policy monitoring for DRR

Implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action at a local level

Ten practice notes for community-led policy monitoring for disaster risk reduction

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Note 7
HFA priority 3: Building a culture of resilience to disaster, through awareness, education and training

The issues highlighted under each of the five aims are not intended to be a comprehensive list, but to provide a starting point for considering what needs to be done to effectively implement the HFA within a specific local or national context.

There are a number of different approaches and tools available to monitor, advocate and ensure commitment to implementing five key areas of the Hyogo Framework for Action. These notes suggest the following steps and the highlighted sections contain reference to the relevant sections of the Christian Aid's policy monitoring toolkit.

Implementing HFA Priority 3 requires sharing information; strengthening networks across disciplines and regions and promoting dialogue; using standard disaster risk reduction terminology; promoting the inclusion of disaster risk reduction in school curricula, formal and informal education; developing training and learning programmes on disaster risk reduction at community level, for local authorities and targeted sectors, ensuring equal access for women and the most vulnerable; strengthening research capacity for multi-risk assessment, socio-economic cost-benefit analysis and risk monitoring; and engaging the media to raise public awareness.[1]

Where are the gaps?

- Lack of information on the international and national policy agreed or signed up to by governments. Therefore, government officials are often unaware of the responsibilities they have to mainstream DRR and implement the HFA.
- Suitable technologies and techniques are not being employed to disseminate existing information to the public.
- Institutions and agencies responsible for mainstreaming DRR are either not sharing information or are resistant to providing information to civil society – indicating a lack of public communications policy.
- Information can sometimes be contradictory, confusing, inaccessible and hard to decipher.
- Local knowledge and solutions are ignored, with the result that communities fail to see the link to their practices.

What are the potential solutions?
The UN/ISDR recommends that governments develop a comprehensive strategy to raise awareness of disaster risk reduction at all levels of society. The integration of disaster risk reduction into the education system and the work of the research community are seen as key to making relevant information available and useful. To achieve this, progress has to be made in the following areas:

- Creation of empowered and knowledgeable local government officials and institutions who understand the importance and value of DRR within the wider HFA.

- Financial and technical resources available at the local level, to raise awareness of DRR in all sectors of society.
- Information relating to DRR, HFA and all development policies, including national plans and procedures, accessible and available for public scrutiny.
- Different techniques employed to disseminate this information in a timely, empowering and effective manner to communities, particularly those that are most vulnerable.
- National and local media aware of DRR concerns and disseminating information to communities.

What can we do?

- Collate existing information, including about national hazards, impacts of disasters on the economy, the Hyogo Framework for Action and other relevant international agreements and government commitments to poverty reduction.
- Produce a citizen's charter which can be used to show local parliamentarians and the general public what has been agreed.

Policy Monitoring Toolkit, see:
Chapter 2: How you can access policy information

- Lobby, raise awareness and educate local parliamentarians – run training sessions, coordinate visits to communities where DRR has been successful, send letters, postcards or emails and hold rallies.
- Translate the HFA into local languages and distribute it in schools and universities.
- Provide government officials and parliamentarians with briefings on DRR and HFA in concise, accessible language.
- Produce or use existing evidence of how recommendations can be implemented. Document practical, cost-effective solutions for sustainable DRR; where possible find evidence of how it affects voters, and breadth of support.

Policy Monitoring Toolkit, see:
Chapter 6: Gathering evidence on policy information

- Try to secure high-profile endorsements from scientists and/or important figures in society.
- Stage public rallies at a local and national level, bringing together different communities.

Policy Monitoring Toolkit, see:
Chapter 3, tool 6: Mapping partners and target audiences

Mobilising for change, India
To raise awareness and demand political action on issues around trade liberalisation and agricultural policies, the Centre for Education and Communication in India planned a whole of week of rallies, protests, fasts and colourful pilgrimages in 20 different states, working with trade unions, women's groups and social movements. Thousands of petitions and postcards were collected and delivered to the government. In Andhra Pradesh, people carried handfuls of grain to the chief minister's office. In Calcutta, rallies were held to demand an end to the privatisation of water. In Punjab, people fasted and protested outside the offices of Monsanto. In Assam, street plays were held to highlight the problems of tea-plantation workers. In Kerala, there was a week-long festival to promote local foods. This culminated in a mass lobby in Delhi. A mass lobby is when a large number of people go to parliament to raise the same concern with their MP at the same time, to achieve a larger impact on MPs.

- Explore communication methods and techniques that have been used in mainstreaming other advocacy issues in your country, to see what works well (for example, human rights, such as the Convention for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, HIV/AIDS-prevention and child labour).
- Meet agencies and officials to outline the importance of public disclosure and encourage them to implement appropriate systems to achieve this.

Policy Monitoring Toolkit, see:
Chapter 3: Identifying stakeholders

- Mobilise local and national media, including newspapers and broadcasting agencies, to spread relevant information, raise awareness of DRR concerns, and write about policy progress or its absence.

Mobilising the media in Indonesia
Frustrated by the lack of decision-makers' response to the needs of the poor, NGOs in Indonesia captured the media's attention at the opening of parliament by presenting each representative with a gift – an ear-bud – to help them clean out their ears so they could hear the poor. The publicity and fun generated by this action raised the public's attention to the issues in an effective way.[2]

Community radio: 'Panchayat Waves' in Karnataka[2]
Research revealed that a main barrier preventing people from participating in local politics was the lack of information about Panchayati Raj institutions available to villagers, as well as many elected representatives. Women in particular said their household chores kept them from attending village meetings. 'Panchayat Waves' was set up in response to this need, and is now a popular radio programme that raises awareness about local governance. Radio is an accessible medium – cheap, uses existing infrastructure and breaks the barrier of literacy. Key factors in its success were that: the coordinators were able to find an inspiring and able radio station manager to facilitate the making of – and publicity for – the programme. They assured a listener base by airing the programme during an already established popular weekly programme, and it dealt with issues of interest to villagers' everyday lives, with a drama format that was entertaining and made connection between governance and people's lives.