



**Global Platform
for
Disaster Risk
Reduction**

**First session
Geneva, Switzerland
5-7 June 2007**

15 May 2007



United Nations
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

**REPORTING ON DISASTER
RISKS AND PROGRESS IN
RISK REDUCTION**

ISDR/GP/2007/2

Session documents are available on the Global Platform website
<http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform>

Reporting on disaster risks and progress in risk reduction

1. Reporting requirements of the Hyogo Framework for Action

Monitoring and reporting on progress is an essential feature of the Hyogo Framework. Responsibility for monitoring and reporting is assigned mainly to States (see para-graph 30), with specific requirements including the preparation of national baseline assessments, periodic summaries and reviews of progress, and reports on risk reduction progress in other policy frameworks (e.g. Millennium Development Goals), as well as contributing to regional assessments. States also agreed to develop procedures for reviewing progress against the Hyogo Framework and to develop or refine indicators for national level use.

Reporting responsibilities are also identified for regional organizations and institutions (paragraph 31), international organizations (paragraph 32) and the ISDR system partners and secretariat (paragraph 33). These include: the development of generic indicators of disaster risk and vulnerability at national and local scales for use by decision-makers; the assembly of statistics on disaster occurrence, impacts and losses, regional risks and long-term changes; the implementation of measures for regular assessment of progress; the collection of data and provision of forecasting on hazards, vulnerabilities and risks and disaster impacts; and the coordination of a process to develop generic, realistic and measurable indicators. The ISDR secretariat is also requested to develop a matrix of roles and initiatives; to identify gaps in implementation; and to prepare periodic reviews of progress, in context of the General Assembly and related processes.

2. Reporting process in 2007

The ISDR secretariat initiated the reporting process with a request issued on 26 January 2007 to the nationally-nominated focal points for the Hyogo Framework (and to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations in Geneva), accompanied by a guidance document “Guidelines for Reporting on Progress on the Implementation of the Hyogo Framework: Measuring Progress in Disaster Risk Reduction”. This document provided background information, explanations of the rationale and benefits of reporting, and guidelines on the format of the report. Similar requests were also made to IATF/DR members, and to the leaders of the ISDR-associated thematic platforms. The requested format comprised three parts, as follows:

Part A: Cover note to identify the reporting organization, its reporting responsibility and the scope of the reporting provided.

Part B: Short overview of around three pages of the main features of progress toward implementing the Hyogo Framework, including the main achievements and the challenges faced, and the good practices and lessons learned. It was proposed that this be structured as follows:

- i. Brief description highlighting national and regional context;
- ii. Summary on impact of initiatives on people and economy: progress towards achieving the Hyogo Framework strategic goals and priority areas;
- iii. Recommendations if any, and updates in terms of planning and project including in changes in policies, rules and regulations.

Part C: Compilation of detailed information on specific initiatives on disaster risk reduction, structured on the five priority areas of the Hyogo Framework. A template was given to support a standard report format for each initiative, covering the initiative’s objectives, main activities, results and achievements made, major challenges and lessons

in implementing the initiative or programme, and lastly, the next steps planned. The document provided an example of a compilation of information.

It is intended that this reporting process should become an annual process in order to underpin a variety of reports to UN system bodies, in particular:

- i. The report on progress to the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (this year to be held over 5-7 June).
- ii. The Secretary-General reports on the ISDR and on other related topics to the General Assembly (usually prepared during July).
- iii. Other reports as required, for example to ECOSOC or by regional organizations.
- iv. Periodic in-depth global assessments of trends in disaster occurrence, disaster risk and progress in disaster risk reduction (see section 4 below).

The reports will be made available on the ISDR secretariat web site.

3. Report to the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, 5-7 June 2007

The timetable for this first period of reporting is very compressed, which has presented difficulties to the reporting agencies in responding to the requests for reporting and to the secretariat in summarising the available information in time for the 2007 Global Platform meeting. A draft report of about 50 pages will be made available in English in the week before the meeting. The feedback and inputs provided during the session will be incorporated into the report, which will be completed by mid July in time for directly informing the preparation of the relevant Secretary-General's reports to the General Assembly.

As of 25 April 2007, 42 states had provided national reports. Additional information is also available from other sources, including from previously collected information that has been already captured in the Matrix of Commitment and Initiatives (see section 6 below), and through enquiries conducted in late 2006 and early 2007 under certain regional projects. Of particular note is the initiation of processes to generate regionally aggregated reports for four regions, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Middle East–North Africa, which will provide a regionally informed foundation to the report to the Global Platform.

The report to the Global Platform will cover the period 2005-2006, with a view to updating on progress since the last major reporting exercise associated with the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, in January 2005. It will cover, firstly, recent trends and patterns in disasters and global disaster risk, mainly culled from recent global and regional reports such as those produced by partners of the Global Risk Identification Programme and by the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, and secondly, the progress being made by countries and organizations to reduce the risks and to implement the Hyogo Framework. Because the information available covers a limited number of countries, the report necessarily will provide only a partial and hence indicative account of the progress being made.

A number of initial points can be identified to date. The first year of the period, 2005, immediately following the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami, saw a succession of major events including the earthquakes in Kashmir and Hurricane Katrina, while the following year was less extreme with relatively few major events. Nevertheless in 2006 there were 426 reported natural disasters that killed more than 23,000 people, affected 143 million others, and were the cause of more than US\$34.6 billion in economic damages. Asia remained the most affected continent, and floods and windstorms continued to be the two major causes of economic impact.¹

¹ <http://www.em-dat.net/documents/CRED%20CRUNCH%208%20-%20March%2020071.pdf>

The evidence from the risk assessments indicates two broad global trends:

- i. The risk of catastrophic disasters in *hotspots*, where people and economic activities are intensively concentrated in areas exposed to large-scale hazard events. Events of this sort are well publicised and often result in significant responses, including moves to implement risk reduction measures in the countries concerned.
- ii. The risk of low-intensity asset loss and livelihood disruption, sometimes over extensive areas, where people and economic activities are exposed to localized hazard events, mainly climate-related. These events generally are not well publicised and typically do not lead to any major changes in policy or behaviour.

It is clear, however, that over 2005 and 2006, many governments and organizations have recognized the need to raise the priority of disaster risk reduction and are directly responding to the expectations and directions of the Hyogo Framework. Evidence of this may be seen in the following items.

- i. Official Hyogo Framework Focal Points have been established by 104 countries and 5 subsidiary territories.
- ii. National platforms for disaster reduction have been initiated in 36 countries.
- iii. Ministerial-level regional agreements and strategies have been agreed, or are being developed in several regions and sub-regions, (Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Islands).
- iv. Specific risk reduction strategies or initiatives have been developed by a number of international agencies, including the UNDP, World Bank, and WMO.
- v. The UN and ISDR partners have strengthened the ISDR system, with the support of governments, to actively and systematically promote and support the implementation of the Hyogo Framework.

4. Global Disaster Assessment Report

The Hyogo Framework calls on the ISDR partners and secretariat to prepare periodic reviews of progress and to identify gaps in implementation. In response, a long-term project, coordinated by the ISDR secretariat, has been established to prepare a major global stocktaking report on trends in disaster occurrence and risks and progress on disaster risk reduction, for release in early 2009. The global disaster assessment report (working title only) aims to be a landmark assessment based on thorough analysis of achievements and gaps, that will provide a foundation for future priorities and policy on disaster risk reduction, as well as an important advocacy tool at all levels.

The report will also provide an important stimulant to the assembly of statistics on disaster occurrence, impacts and losses, regional risks and long-term changes and to the collection of data and provision of forecasting on hazards, vulnerabilities and risks and disaster impacts; the need these activities being specifically identified in the Hyogo Framework.

This report will be developed as an integral part of the ongoing work on reporting by the ISDR system and ISDR secretariat. It will draw on the information routinely provided by Governments and ISDR system partners, and its analyses will progressively inform the ISDR annual reports and other reports. It will also make use of inputs from ISDR partners, regional and sub-regional organizations, consultant studies, and special data analyses. Its quality will be secured by peer reviews, ISDR consultation and guidance processes, and secretariat overview. A senior expert has been seconded from UNDP to lead the production of the report, and the project is also supported by the World Bank partnership with the ISDR secretariat.

5. Guidance on indicators

The Hyogo Framework requested the ISDR system, supported by the ISDR secretariat, to coordinate the development of “generic, realistic and measurable indicators” for disaster risk reduction. It encouraged States to thereafter develop and refine indicators for national use. Indicators, benchmarks and targets are commonly accepted tools to focus and guide development investments, the Millennium Development Goals being an important example. The effective development and application of indicators and benchmarks for disaster risk reduction will require collaborative and concerted effort by academics, practitioners and policymakers, with a strong focus on practicality and effectiveness in the particular national settings.

A guidance paper on indicators has been developed to respond to the Hyogo Framework request noted above, drawing on an online consultation held in 2005 and on consultant drafts and expert inputs, and will be published in mid 2007. The paper includes a proposed draft set of indicators to address the Hyogo Framework’s stated outcome, strategic goals and priorities for action.

It is expected that a number of countries will actively explore the application of the indicators once they are published, with the support of UNDP and other ISDR system partners. The ISDR secretariat will also seek to foster follow-up activities, including workshops, to advance the development and use of indicators in national and international programming and reporting, along with associated practices such as benchmarking.

6. Matrix of commitments and initiatives

The Hyogo Framework calls upon the ISDR secretariat to develop a matrix of commitments and initiatives in support of follow-up to the Framework. Information for the matrix has been gathered principally for international and regional levels, and is structured with the aim to support planning, guidance and reporting on accomplishments and to assist in identifying gaps or overlapping commitments. The format of the matrix is aligned with the Framework’s five priority areas of action. The reporting format referred to in section 2 above has the same common format, to enable reported information to be added to the matrix where relevant.

The matrix currently exists in a spreadsheet format on the ISDR website, together with initial emerging elements of analysis. However, to make the information more readily available and to facilitate its analysis, the ISDR secretariat is now working to convert the information into a structured form that will allow its conversion to a relational database and to make the database available on line via the web. The database is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2007.

7. Future challenges and priorities

Given that States have the primary responsibility for taking measures to reduce disaster risk, and for monitoring and reporting on their progress, the ISDR system and secretariat needs to focus on assisting national efforts towards these ends, in addition to the task of collating information for international purposes. It is desirable to give priority to the countries most in need, in terms of their vulnerability and lack of capacities, and to stimulate efforts toward building practicable and durable capacities for systematic monitoring and reporting, including underpinning data systems and methodologies.

Routine monitoring and reporting require considerable effort and resources over periods of years, particularly by States. Many governments are already concerned about the burden of monitoring and reporting for the numerous international conventions and agreements to which they are party. Current efforts to institute a systematic common reporting process, with an annual cycle of reporting requests and accessible electronic databases of information, will help to simplify and reduce the demands. Nevertheless, further continued study and dialogue will be needed to ensure cost-effectiveness and sustainability of reporting at national, regional and international levels.

Regional and sub-regional organizations are identified in the Hyogo Framework as important elements of monitoring and reporting processes, but to date this role has not been well developed. Systematic dialogue and engagement will be needed to clarify and strengthen the role and operational responsibilities of regional and sub-regional organizations in the reporting processes. Similarly, the supporting role of ISDR system partners remains to be developed.

While it makes sense to start the operational reporting process in a modest way and to develop the capabilities of all parties as experience allows, it is clear that the progress on reporting is less than satisfactory. More concerted efforts are needed to make reporting an intrinsic and effective part of risk reduction policy and practice. Among other things, there appears to have been little progress toward meeting the Hyogo Framework's call for national baseline assessments, periodic summaries and reviews of progress, reports on risk reduction progress in other policy frameworks (e.g. Millennium Development Goals (MDG)), procedures for reviewing progress and to develop or refine indicators at national level, or to undertake regional assessments.

The ISDR secretariat will continue to seek close linkages between the reporting activities and other ISDR system activities, including the development of guidance materials for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework, the development of the matrix of commitments and initiatives, and the building of the ISDR information portal "PreventionWeb". It will also work toward developing more specific guidance, for example on the practical implementation of indicators, on systematic monitoring and reporting methods, and on ensuring disaster risk reduction inputs to other reporting processes, such as for the MDGs and climate change.
