



# 01 Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action in Sub-Saharan Africa



## Status Report on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa Executive Summary

### Context

1. Disasters in Sub-Saharan Africa are increasing in frequency and impact. In 2008, 96 recorded disasters – including 9 droughts and 44 flood events – affected 16.3 million people across Sub-Saharan Africa and caused nearly US\$ 1 billion in economic losses<sup>1</sup>. On average, almost two disasters of significant proportions have been recorded every week in the region since 2000<sup>2</sup>. Few of these ever hit the global headlines but they silently and persistently erode the capacities of Africans to survive or prosper.
2. Climatological and hydrological hazards dominate the disaster profile of Sub-Saharan Africa, affecting, on average, around 12.5 million people per year. In 2008, droughts caused the highest human and socio-economic impact in terms of the number of people affected: nine droughts affected 14.5 million people across the region. In 2007, over five million people were affected by floods and other hydrological hazards, almost double the annual average since 2000.<sup>3</sup>
3. In Sub-Saharan Africa, multiple and inter-dependent forms of vulnerability have the potential to transform even minor hazard events into human disasters. Around 400 million people in the region live below the poverty line<sup>4</sup>, and 200 million are considered to be under-nourished<sup>5</sup>. Income poverty and food insecurity play a major role in land degradation, as the poor and hungry are forced to over-exploit natural resources to meet their immediate needs for survival. Furthermore, poor health status, and in particular the high prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS in parts of the region, significantly increases underlying vulnerability to natural hazards.

<sup>1</sup> EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database – [www.emdat.be](http://www.emdat.be) – Université Catholique de Louvain – Brussels – Belgium

<sup>2</sup> For a disaster to be entered into the CRED database, at least one of the following criteria must be fulfilled: 10 or more people reported killed; 100 or more people reported affected; declaration of a state of emergency; call for international assistance

<sup>3</sup> Scheuren, J-M., Le Polain de Waroux, O., Below, R., Guha-Sapire, D and Ponserre, S. *Annual Disaster Statistical Review, The Numbers and Trends 2007*, CRED, Presses Universitaires de Louvain, 2008

<sup>4</sup> Chen, S. and Ravallion, M. *The developing world is poorer than we thought, but no less successful in the fight against poverty*, World Bank, 2008

<sup>5</sup> Kidane, W. Maetz, M. and Dardel, P., *Food security and agricultural development in Sub-Saharan Africa: Building a case for more public support*, FAO, Rome, 2006

4. Both vulnerability and hazard occurrence are subject to dynamic global forces that are creating new patterns of disaster risk in the region.
5. Africa currently has the highest rate of urbanisation in the world. Almost 40% of Africans now live in cities or urban environments, and, if current trends continue, half of Africa's population will be urban by 2050.<sup>6</sup> Rapid, unplanned urbanisation, including the alarming rate of growth of urban slums, is creating dangerous patterns of risk accumulation and exposing an increasingly large proportion of the population to floods, landslides, epidemics and other hazards.
6. Global climate change will significantly affect the frequency and intensity of hazard occurrence in Sub-Saharan Africa. It will also exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and create new ones, as decreases in water availability, agricultural yields and suitable land for pasture will threaten the viability of traditional livelihoods. For the inhabitants of coastal cities, climate change poses a real threat. Half of Africa's 37 cities with populations above one million are within low elevation coastal zones and therefore vulnerable to sea level rise, coastal erosion, storms and flooding.

### **Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction**

7. Based on progress reports by regional and sub-regional institutions, HFA reports submitted by 24 countries<sup>7</sup> in Sub-Saharan Africa (14 of which reported for the first time), and an initial mapping of international partners of the ISDR system, a Status Report on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa was produced in May 2009. The following sections summarise the conclusions and recommendations of the report:
8. **At the regional level**, Member States of the African Union first demonstrated their commitment to disaster risk reduction by adopting the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction at the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Africa Ministerial Conference on the Environment in 2004. The Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Africa Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2005-2010) was subsequently formulated and adopted at the First African Ministerial Conference on disaster risk reduction in Addis Ababa in 2005. A substantive revision was discussed and agreed upon at the Second Africa Regional Platform in Nairobi in May 2009, to better reflect current challenges and gaps, extend the timeframe to 2015 and align it with the Hyogo Framework for Action. The Platform also agreed on strengthened regional, sub-regional and national mechanisms to accelerate implementation of the Programme.
9. **At the sub-regional level**, several Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have also engaged with DRR issues. The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have established disaster risk reduction strategies based on the priorities for action of the Hyogo Framework for Action and the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction. Recent achievements include the formulation of a disaster risk reduction policy by ECOWAS, and a three-year grant by the European Union to ECCAS to implement a disaster risk reduction programme. There have also been recent initiatives for South-South cooperation to build on successful experiences from within the Sub-Saharan African region.

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<sup>6</sup> UN-Habitat State of the World's Cities 2008/09

<sup>7</sup> These countries were: Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Comoros, Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo and Zimbabwe

10. In relation to the Regional Economic Communities, specialised sub-regional institutions, such as the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC), the Southern African Development Community's Drought Monitoring Centre (SADC DMC), the AGRHYMET<sup>8</sup> Regional Centre (ARC) and the African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development (ACMAD) are responding to a major global and regional challenge through enhanced services for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. *However, momentum for investment in disaster risk reduction at the regional and sub-regional level must now be sustained to:*
- *Fully mainstream disaster risk reduction objectives into regional and sub-regional development policies.*
  - *Secure and allocate funding for full implementation of disaster risk reduction plans and programmes.*
  - *Address emerging challenges by forging political, administrative and operational synergies between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation frameworks and processes.*
  - *Develop a regional and sub-regional network for knowledge management (including traditional knowledge) and development of capacities for disaster risk reduction, to meet Africa's expanding need for regionally-tailored expertise.*
11. **At the national level**, governments in Sub-Saharan Africa have moved forward with the implementation of the HFA priorities for action and the related regional objectives.
12. Across the region, there is a positive trend in the establishment or reform of **institutional, legislative and policy frameworks** for disaster risk reduction; although in some cases the lead institution for disaster risk reduction does not yet bear sufficient influence upon all relevant sectors of government.
13. Decentralised models of governance and administration are in place in most countries of the region, thus providing a potentially effective structure for multi-level disaster risk reduction, but the majority of countries still lack resources and capacity to engage with communities at risk and implement local initiatives.
14. A national platform or a similar multi-sectoral coordination mechanism for DRR has been established in 25 countries, of which four<sup>9</sup> were launched since 2007. A process of establishing national platforms has started in three additional countries, namely Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia and Namibia. However, participation in some national platforms is limited to governmental actors, with insufficient involvement of representatives of civil society organisations, UN agencies, media and the private sector.
15. In terms of **risk identification and assessment**, there is increased capacity in some countries of the region to carry out comprehensive, multi-hazard risk assessments and operate effective early warning systems. Progress in these countries is due, in part, to strong linkages with regional specialized institutions for climate risk management and effective utilization of their resources and services. However, in the majority of Sub-Saharan African countries, hazard mapping is incomplete, there is limited data on vulnerability, and national institutions do not yet take full advantage of the resources and services for climate risk management offered by their sub-regional counterparts. These gaps hinder the development of risk reduction programmes and limit the function and scope of early warning systems.

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<sup>8</sup> Agronmeteorology and Operational Hydrology and Their Applications

<sup>9</sup> In Cape Verde, Guinea, Lesotho and Togo

16. **Public awareness and knowledge management** strategies for disaster risk reduction, based on a variety of modern and traditional media to communicate information, are in place in most countries of the region, although some of these do not reach remote or rural populations or those without access to radio, television and electronic media. To date, few initiatives integrate information about the impact of climate change, and how this affects disaster risk.
17. With respect to public **education**, a number of countries have already integrated disaster risk reduction into their educational curricula, and others have clear plans to do so. However, a significant proportion of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have not yet started this process. Furthermore, there is little reported activity in the region in terms of academic research into disaster risk assessment methodologies and cost-benefit analysis of disaster risk reduction.
18. Greater recognition of the relationship between poverty and vulnerability to natural hazards has resulted in the incorporation of disaster risk reduction objectives into an increasing number of sectoral development policies and plans to address **underlying risk factors** in Sub-Saharan Africa. Strategies to implement such policies are included in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) and United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) of some countries of the region. At the same time, disaster risk reduction has been acknowledged as an element of adaptation to global climate change, and is incorporated into the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) of several countries in the region.
19. However, most governments are not yet implementing effective programmes to reduce the underlying risk factors of disasters, due to financial constraints or limited technical and operational capacity. Furthermore, development strategies in many countries are not keeping pace with physical and demographic growth in informal, unplanned urban settlements where multiple risk factors are present.
20. Although policies and plans exist in some countries to protect key industries from disasters, the economic and productive sectors appear to be relatively disconnected from national disaster risk reduction efforts.
21. Urgent and concerted action is required to tackle the underlying causes of vulnerability to disasters.
22. In terms of **preparedness for effective response and recovery**, institutional capacities have been strengthened in most countries due to emergency planning exercises, contingency funding mechanisms and improved information management systems. However, in most countries, emergency preparedness could be significantly improved through the participation of a broader stakeholder base in planning and evaluating responses.
23. *In order to accelerate progress towards implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and the Africa Regional Strategy, governments should now focus on:*
  - *Translating disaster risk reduction legislation and policies into adequately-resourced programmes in all key development sectors.*
  - *Consolidating the vertical and horizontal coordination capacities of the institutions responsible for disaster risk reduction.*
  - *Promoting multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder participation in national platforms, and empowering them to influence disaster risk reduction policy development, programme design and resource allocation.*
  - *Developing national institutions to carry out risk assessments, based on the identification and assessment of hazards, vulnerabilities and capacities.*

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- *Developing national systems to collect, compile and analyse data, and to provide information to multiple sectors.*
  - *Working with civil society organisations to ensure the participation of local communities in processes to identify and assess risks.*
  - *Increasing the coverage of public awareness strategies to ensure that they reach remote areas and populations most at risk.*
  - *Integrating information about the impact of climate change into public awareness strategies.*
  - *Providing incentives to the education sector to incorporate disaster risk reduction into relevant curricula.*
  - *Involving all stakeholder groups, including vulnerable communities, in disaster preparedness planning.*
24. **Regarding international cooperation**, there is substantial activity and investment in disaster risk reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa by a range of United Nations agencies and programmes, development banks, donors and non-governmental organisations. Many of these key stakeholders have developed useful tools and guidelines and are scaling up their own capacities to complement efforts of national governments. However, the current lack of knowledge of each other's objectives and resources results in missed opportunities and disconnected initiatives. To address this:
- *Agencies and programmes of the UN system should improve internal coordination to provide strategic support to governments and facilitate a holistic approach to disaster risk reduction.*
  - *Governments and non-governmental organisations should ensure due representation of major development sectors and civil society in National Platforms, and use them to improve multi-stakeholder coordination.*
25. The Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) of the World Bank, and the Directorate General of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (DG ECHO) – continue to demonstrate commitment to disaster risk reduction programming in Sub-Saharan Africa through funding for mainstreaming and specific projects. Many other donors are also increasing funding for disaster risk reduction initiatives, in partnership with a range of governmental, non-governmental and civil society organisations. *International financial institutions and donors should now focus on:*
- *Increasing the availability of funding for integration of disaster risk reduction objectives within poverty-reduction, sustainable development and climate change adaptation programmes.*
  - *Disbursing available funding for National Adaptation Programmes of Action, and investing in disaster risk reduction as a major element of climate change adaptation.*
  - *Funding innovative, pilot projects to address disaster risk in urban contexts.*
26. By effectively addressing the above-mentioned issues at regional, sub-regional and national levels, all relevant stakeholders should now accelerate implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy and the Programme of Action for Disaster Risk Reduction, in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action.
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