



United Nations
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Human Rights and Disaster Risk Reduction

www.unisdr.org/europe

Workshop on human rights in disasters: search and rescue operations in disasters especially for vulnerable people

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The International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (ISDR)



- The ISDR system is a broad network of partners including UN Agencies, NGO's, governments, international financial institutions, universities and technical institutions.
- The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), guided by the internationally agreed Hyogo Framework for Action, aims to build the resilience of communities and nations through building capacities to use proven tools for reducing disaster risk.
- The UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) is the secretariat to the ISDR system. In Europe, UNISDR has been very active in promoting coordinated actions towards DRR in collaboration with partners such as EUR-OPA (Council of Europe), the EC, the National Platforms and HFA Focal Points, the WB and GFDRR and other UN partner agencies.

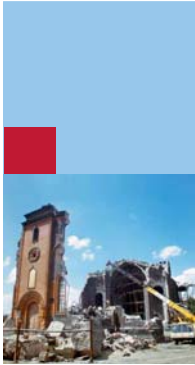
Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015:

Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters

... to substantially reduce disaster losses, in lives, social, economic and environmental assets....

Three strategic goals

- The integration of disaster risk reduction into sustainable development policies and planning.
- The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities to build resilience to hazards.
- The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes.



Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015:

Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters

Five priorities for action

1. **Governance:** ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority with strong institutional basis for implementation
2. **Risk identification:** identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning
3. **Knowledge:** use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels
4. **Reducing the underlying risk factors** in various sectors (environment, health, construction, etc.)
5. **Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response**



*Words Into Action:
A Guide for Implementing the Hyogo Framework*

www.unisdr.org/eng/hfa/docs/Words-into-action/Words-Into-Action.pdf



Europe Region and disasters

Europe countries are exposed to a range of disasters caused by the impact of natural hazards, including earthquakes, floods, forest fires, drought and landslides. The impact of climate change, accompanied by changes in land-use patterns and increased human settlements in areas that are prone to disasters, will certainly increase risk from such weather-related hazards in the coming years.



Disasters and Human Rights



- Recent humanitarian crises caused by disaster situations have raised new challenges, in particular in relation to the protection of the basic human rights of disaster affected populations and victims at times of disasters.
- Whilst the concept of Human Rights protection is widely acknowledged as a crucial element of humanitarian strategies at times of emergency and disaster situations, the longer-term aspects linked to the promotion and definition of a human rights-based approach in disaster prevention and reduction is still limited.

Critical issues in human rights when considering disaster management and reduction



- Critical issues emerged in recent crises included the following:
 - Non-discrimination (of gender, age, ethnicity etc.)
 - Equality
 - Legal protection
 - Right to security
 - Access to health services
 - Shelter and housing
 - Clean water
 - Education
 - Compensation
 - Etc...

Rights and disasters

Every individual has the Right:

1. **For protection and assistance at times of emergencies –**
International humanitarian laws and national legislations do protect affected populations during emergency situations

2. **Right to Development –**
communities living in disaster-prone areas have the right to protect their development efforts and achieve sustainable development – This can be achieved through disaster risk reduction. As such, a specific human rights based approach for disaster risk reduction should be developed

3. **Right to an equal access to Education for all** in particular:
 - a) *Access to school for those living in disaster affected areas*
 - b) *Safe schools and disaster-resilient education infrastructures*
 - c) *To allow all children to learn about disasters and risks to be more aware of surrounding threats and be better prepared at times of disasters*



Human Rights and Disasters

4. A newly emerging challenge: climatic / environmental refugees and displaced populations

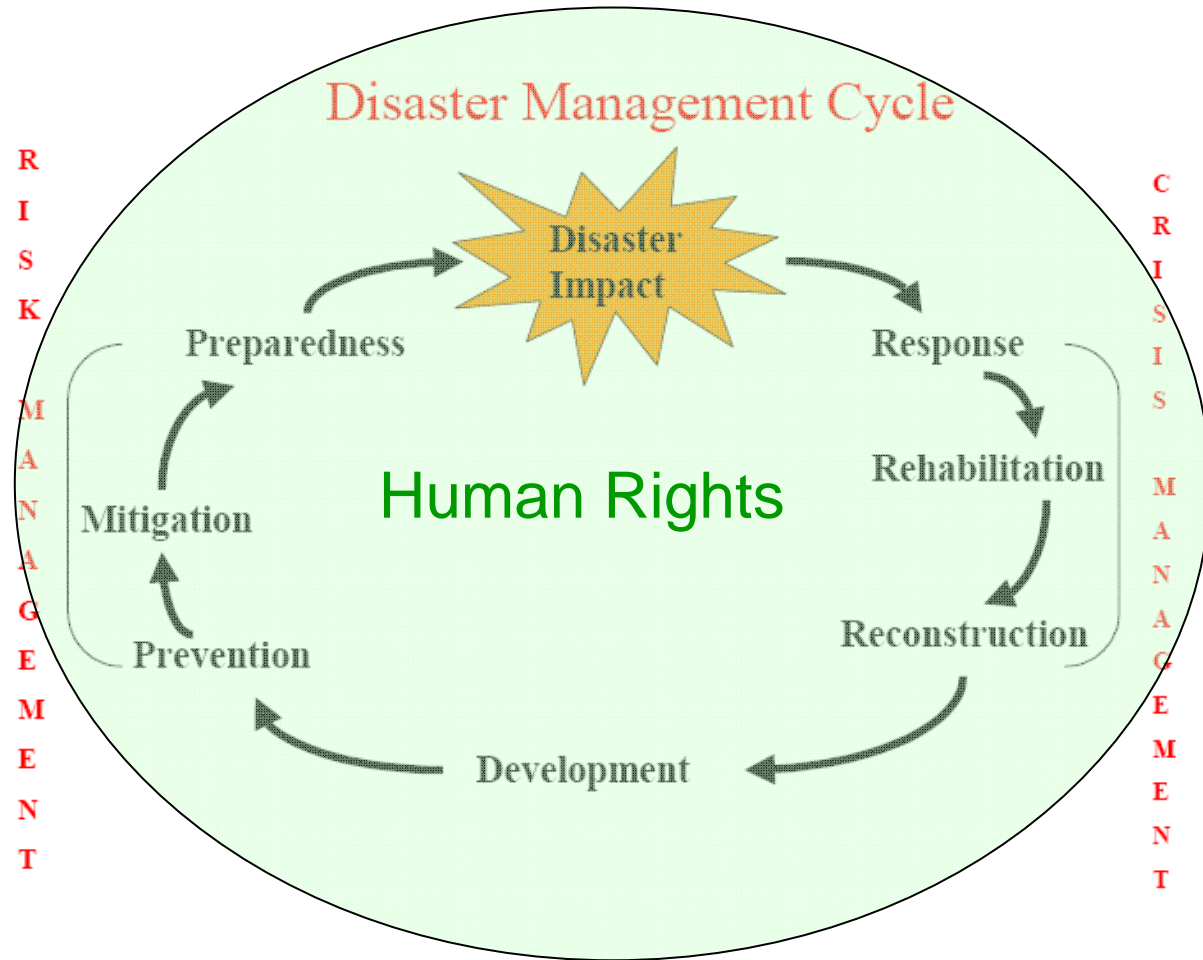
The impact of climate change on increased frequency and intensity of disasters has led to wider movements of populations to safer areas

there is an urgent need to address the protection of « climatic /environmental refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs)'s Human Rights.

- Walter Kalin Report to the Representative of the UN SG on the human rights of the IDPs: "Protection of Internally Displaced persons in Situations of natural Disaster - 5 March 2009



Disaster Management Cycle and Human Rights



What is the current situation?



- The UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), highlighted that national authorities as well as international organizations and NGOs are at loss as to how incorporate Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) into response and, most of all, **prevention**.
- the UN (IASC 2008) recognizes that HRBA shall guide DRM “...including pre-disaster mitigation and preparedness measures” and there are international guidelines which focus on the inclusion of human rights in disasters ([http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/KHII-7EE9KM/\\$file/brookings_HR_mar08.pdf?openelement](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/KHII-7EE9KM/$file/brookings_HR_mar08.pdf?openelement))

What can be done more by the ISDR system?



- Promoting Human Rights, especially the fundamental ones as the non-discriminatory principle, in front-line agencies' mandates as well as in national DRM and DRR policies.
- Do not re-invent the wheel principle: expand existing legislation, codes and guidelines in order to include a human right perspective in DM and DRR measures.
- Including benchmarks, targets and indicators in DRM and DRR (i.e. HFA monitor) elements that can capture the human rights dimension in disaster management programme implementation.

What can be done more at national level?

- National Platform for DRR shall consider HRBA in its disaster management planning. This include mapping institutions and organizations that are **duty bearers** in ensuring human rights in disaster and profiling the **right holders**, in particularly those that are at risk and vulnerable (see critical issues discussed before).
- National Platforms should involve legal Officers and Human Rights specialists to mainstream Human Rights in Disaster Risk Reduction programmes
- National Governments should be encouraged to promote Human Rights Based national Action Plans for Disaster Risk Reduction



Conclusions

- There is urgency to promote the definition of people-centered Human Rights Based Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies.
- Vulnerability analysis in disaster management shall consider human rights issues among their social, economical and cultural criteria.
- Protection activities in pre-disaster, shall “[...] *create and/or consolidate an environment – political, social, cultural, institutional, economic and legal – conducive to full respect for the rights of the individual*” (IASC 2008)
- Request all Agencies to incorporate Human Rights Based Approaches in international DRM and DRR frameworks - as such, influence an enhanced recognition of human rights protection for all vulnerable groups as part of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2010 HFA MTR)
- Promote global efforts enhancing the recognition of specific human rights consideration for Climatic / environmental IDPs / refugees.

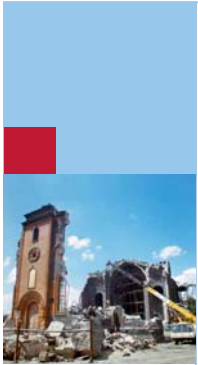


The Universal Declaration of Human Rights – December 10, 1948



Article 3.

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.



Thank you

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