



United Nations
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PRESS RELEASE

UNISDR 2010/17
24 August, 2010

United Nations to release “Natural hazard fact sheets for Kenya” and draft “Training for Trainers” toolkit to strengthen disaster management in Kenya

Nairobi – On 25 to 26 August, the UNISDR Regional Office for Africa will hold a pilot workshop on “Training of Trainers” in the Rift Valley Province to test a toolkit to “train trainers” in disaster risk reduction. After gathering feedback from participants, the toolkit will be published for use throughout Kenya and beyond.

“The outcome of this training will create a super highway for spreading hazard and disaster risk reduction information to local communities, thereby increasing their knowledgebase and consequently their resilience to natural disasters,” said Pedro Basabe, Head of the UNISDR Regional Office for Africa. “It is also projected that the pilot training in Kenya will help the participants to fine tune their own approaches to disaster risk reduction, as they apply the lessons from elsewhere on the continent.”

Expected to attend are 30 Disaster Risk Reduction platform members from the provinces, and five regional participants from Burundi, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Kenya, along with representatives from other governments and the United Nations.

Also available is a factsheet developed by UNISDR – at the request of the Kenya National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction – called “Natural Hazard Factsheets for Kenya,” targeted at disaster risk managers, disaster emergency responders and others in order to mitigate and prepare for disasters more effectively. The factsheets are designed to help practitioners in disaster risk reduction to identify vulnerabilities unique to different parts of the country, depending on the types of natural hazards that each part is most likely to face.

The draft Training of Trainers toolkit teaches practitioners to use the Natural Hazard Factsheet when training actors at the grassroots level on actions to take on disaster risk reduction. Communities will be trained on the various aspects of hazards and how to use local means and resources to adapt, mitigate and cope with these hazards so they do not turn into disasters. District Disaster Management Committees (DDMC) are also likely to find the fact sheets useful in their mitigation, prevention and preparedness.

Recent events in Kenya have shown that the country is increasingly becoming predisposed to both natural and human-made disasters such as floods, droughts, landslides, fire and consequences of climate change. This has continued to threaten both sustainable development and poverty-reduction initiatives. The key drawback in the government's efforts to initiate disaster risk reduction programmes and activities is that the dangers posed by natural and manmade hazards are little understood, and have not been given the needed attention.

Industrialized countries can sustain economic losses resulting from disasters, and loss of life is usually very low because of effective forecasting and warning systems. However, in developing countries, disasters tend to result in heavy loss of life and livelihood, because a majority of people have too little disaster knowledge.

With extreme weather events becoming more intense and frequent, the Kenyan government is recognizing the need to understand and prepare for disasters. Several institutions of higher learning are now running undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses in disaster management. The government has also started to institute various legal and institutions mechanisms for disaster preparedness, response and mitigation.

In addition, community vulnerability to disasters is an important – and often overlooked – dimension of poverty, which can have significant adverse effects on social and economic development. Community training and awareness can contribute to reducing such vulnerability.

Notes to Editors:

The secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) was created in December 1999 with GA resolution 54/219 as a successor arrangement of the secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. In 2001, the General Assembly resolution 56/195 mandated the secretariat to serve as the focal point in the United Nations system for the coordination of disaster reduction and to ensure synergies among the disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system and regional organizations and activities in socio-economic and humanitarian fields.

In 2005 the GA, with resolution 60/195 endorsed the “Hyogo Declaration” and the “Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters” as adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, in January 2005. The Hyogo Framework for Action has tasked the ISDR secretariat with supporting the implementation of the strategic objectives identified therein.

The ISDR secretariat has the lead for the implementation of Subprogramme 3 (Natural Disaster Reduction) of Programme 22 (Humanitarian Assistance) of the UN Strategic Framework. The secretariat's core areas of work include: coordination within the UN system on risk reduction-related issues; support to the Global Platform for Disaster Reduction; partnership development; communications and advocacy; policy development; knowledge management; resource mobilization; regional coordination and support.

Since 2007, the ISDR secretariat has coordinated the organization of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction - a biennial global forum of governments' representatives, NGOs, scientists, and practitioners as well as UN organizations for the sharing of experience among stakeholders and the formulation of strategic guidance and advice for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework.

The ISDR secretariat issues the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risks, supports countries in monitoring the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, and leads global campaigns on disaster risk reduction for safer schools, safer hospitals and safer cities, including a major campaign currently underway to reach out to local authorities and communities and increase cities resilience to disasters over 2010-2011 is: 'Resilient Cities; My City is Getting Ready'.

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