



United Nations
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The ISDR urges every country to implement the Hyogo Framework for action to reduce climate-related risks **Disaster risk reduction is not an option; it is an urgent priority**

As hundreds of people have lost their lives and millions have lost their livelihoods this monsoon season in Asia, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat is urging governments to speed up their implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action. The Framework's guidance helps to reduce current risks and to prepare for the worsening future under a changed climate.

The Hyogo Framework for Action was endorsed in Kobe, Japan, by 168 governments shortly after the tsunami in the Indian Ocean and offers a number of concrete measures to make communities and nations more resilient to any type of disaster, including weather-related disasters such as storms, floods, droughts, heat and cold waves.

"The problem today is that around the world vulnerability to disasters continues to increase—a situation that will worsen with climate change. So we need to take action now to reduce the risks of devastating impacts on people and their livelihoods" said Salvano Briceño, Director of the ISDR secretariat.

The recent IPCC reports are clear and unequivocal about the causes of climate change and what the future holds if we don't take action. "Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is essential for cutting future disaster risks. But an immediate task is also to prepare for more extreme weather conditions - through disaster risk reduction programmes that include strengthening public risk awareness, early warning systems and community-based disaster preparedness."

As a result of climate change, many millions more people are likely to be flooded every year by the 2080s. The number affected will be largest in the mega-deltas of Asia and Africa and the Small Islands States, struck by the double threat of sea level rise and river flooding.

The Hyogo Framework recommends in its five priorities to establish laws and policies for flood and water management, for instance; enforce zoning regulations to avoid building houses on low-lying areas and to protect forests and wetlands that absorb and purify water,

as well as to build hospitals, schools, water and electricity facilities in safe places and to strengthen preparedness plans for when disaster strikes.

The situation could not be clearer. Floods accounted for 84 percent of all disaster deaths between 2000 and 2005 and amounted to 65 percent of all disaster losses causing \$466 billion losses over the decade 1992-2001. The flooding in the United Kingdom alone this year is estimated to cost about \$12 billion. “Modest investment would go a long way to not only avoid heavy losses and protect livelihoods, but also to give citizens peace of mind when it begins to rain”, said Mr Briceño.