

Poverty Alleviation and Disaster Risk Reduction



Poverty Reduction & Disaster Risk Reduction



**UN/ISDR Africa Educational Series,
Volume 2, Issue 5, December 2004**

This Booklet is produced by
UNDP/BCPR & UN/ISDR Africa

In partnership with
Umvoto Africa [Pty] Ltd
CapeTown, South Africa
www.umnvoto.com

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FOREWORD

Poverty is declining in the rest of the world, but it is on the rise in Africa. Yet, increased poverty means increased disaster risk.

Because the poor have few options regarding where to live and how to survive, they are the most exposed and most vulnerable to disasters. In addition, funds destined to poverty reduction are generally diverted to disaster response.

Meanwhile, increased disaster risk in turn may lead to disasters and disasters create greater poverty.

In fact, poverty has been identified as the major risk factor and cause of vulnerability to disasters in Africa. Hence the need to factor disaster risk reduction into poverty reduction.

Some African governments and regional and international organizations now acknowledge the close links between poverty reduction and disaster risk reduction.

But communities have an important role to play. Knowledge and experience fashioned by adversity can be found in every community, but seldom are they called upon or fully utilized. And for poverty reduction to be effective, it must be owned by communities – and led by community leaders.

The present booklet, entitled *Poverty Reduction and Disaster Risk Reduction*, is precisely intended for community leaders in Africa. It describes the causes and consequences of poverty in Africa and the links between poverty alleviation and disaster risk reduction.

Better still, it explains what the community leader can do to reduce both poverty and disaster risks in his/her community.



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. SETTING THE SCENE



Some have so little

“I am often asked what is the most serious form of human rights violations in the world today, and my reply is consistent: extreme poverty.”

(Mary Robinson, 2003)

The African continent has entered the new millennium with many communities still living in poverty. Per capita incomes are declining and levels of hunger are increasing. Environmental degradation is widespread and a strong relationship exists between the state of the environment and poverty. The situation is exacerbated by natural and other disasters. In Africa, these have increased over the past decade (IFRC Disaster Database, 2002).

Disasters lead to social, economic and environmental losses. It is often the cumulative impact of frequent but small and unspectacular disasters that cause the most losses, particularly for the poor. This group has little to no financial or physical resilience. They do not recover easily from the small losses and seldom recover from the cumulative losses.

The social impacts of disasters include the loss of life, injury, disease outbreaks, disruption of social services and malnourishment. Economic losses include the loss of livelihood, capital (e.g. homes and livestock), infrastructure and communications, and the interruption of development programmes. The environmental losses are often the most significant, as the poor generally depend on a healthy environment for their livelihoods.

Disasters occur where communities face hazards with poor coping capacity, making them particularly vulnerable. In such circumstances, hazards can cause widespread injury and death, extensive loss of property and destruction of the environment. Hazards can be hydro-meteorological, geophysical, biological or man-made. Major hydro-meteorological and geological hazards include floods, droughts, wildfires, storms, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and landslides. Biological hazards arise from epidemics (e.g. HIV/AIDS) or from other biological sources such as pest swarms. Man-made hazards can be either technological (such as explosions, chemical and radioactive contamination and infrastructure failure) or conflict-based.

Due to human activities, the frequency, extent and severity of hydro-meteorological hazards are increasing and climatologists predict further increases due to global climate change. This will most significantly impact the poorer communities who are dependent on subsistence farming and cash crops for their livelihoods.

The poor are also usually the most vulnerable to disasters and have the lowest capacity to recover from them. More indirectly, they are affected by the cost of emergency response because funds are diverted from poverty reduction and development initiatives to disaster response programmes. Poverty reduction strategies should therefore reduce both the level of poverty and disaster risks in a community.

Injustice and discrimination in society are often the main reasons for poverty. A human rights-based approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the root causes and consequences of poverty. In addressing human rights within a community, a leader will go beyond increasing income and economic growth, they will expand people's choices and enhance their freedom because "what begins as a failure to uphold the dignity of one life all too often ends as a calamity for entire nations" (Kofi Annan).

1.2. POVERTY IN AFRICA



The result of 1980s famine in Ethiopia

While poverty in the rest of the world is declining, it is on the rise in Africa. There are major regional differences in poverty, with the most marked differences between Northern Africa and sub-Saharan Africa.

There are a number of ways to define and measure poverty, for example by using the per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of a country, how much any one person earns on average in dollars (per capita income) or the number of dependents per wage earner.

Social indicators reflect the impact of poverty on a society or community. These include levels

of hunger and access to social services such as health services and education (particularly for girl children and women). Led by the UNDP, the definitions of poverty are being amended to include a human-rights-based vision that highlights the multiple causes and impacts of poverty (UNDP, 2003). These measures are the Human Development Index, the Gender-related Development Index and the Human Poverty Index.

To prevent further increases in the number of poor, Africa must increase its GDP by at least 5% (World Bank, 2000). The annual growth of per capita GDP in sub-Saharan Africa is negative and incomes have fallen.

Nonetheless, there are grounds for optimism as 34 of the 46 African countries have recorded increased per capita incomes and 18 countries have grown at rates above the threshold for reducing poverty (Madavo and Sarbib, 1998). These positive growth rates signal economic recovery, making poverty reduction achievable and poverty eradication possible.

Did you know ?

- Africa has a per capita GDP of \$749, compared to a global average of \$5,403.
- Approximately half of Africa's population lives in extreme poverty, defined as a per capita income of less than \$1 per day.
- In Africa's poorest countries, up to 80% of the population lives below the extreme poverty line (World Bank, 2001b).
- The depth of poverty (how far incomes fall below the poverty line) is greater in sub-Saharan Africa than anywhere else in the world (World Bank, 1996).
- According to the World Food Programme, 40 million Africans faced starvation and 200 million lived in hunger in 2003 (World Bank, 2001b).
- The availability of social services in most sub-Saharan countries is the lowest in the world, with the average school enrolment rate at 67%.
- Health services are also falling behind demand, reflected in high infant mortality rates (World Bank, 1996).



Botswana's Economic Achievements

Botswana's economy has moved from being one of the poorest to being among the fastest growing economies in the world, with an annual GDP growth rate of 6.1%. Using its natural resources (diamond, copper, nickel, cattle and wildlife), Botswana has grown a diverse economy based on tourism and the export of diamond, copper-nickel, beef and soda ash. Tourism, the second largest foreign exchange earner after diamond, is growing at 10% a year and earning over \$240m annually.

The key to Botswana's transformation has been political stability, sound management of the country's resources, timely changes to economic policies and increased foreign aid.

However, Botswana's economic growth is threatened by another disaster closely linked to poverty: HIV/AIDS. Botswana has the highest prevalence of HIV in the world. According to the "*Botswana Human Development Report 2000*", HIV and AIDS in Botswana are "wiping out decades of impressive achievements in human development, causing untold human suffering, deepening poverty, social dislocation and economic hardship". A study of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the economy projects that by 2021, the country's GDP would be as much as 38 per cent less than what it would have been without HIV and AIDS.

1.3. DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The traditional focus of disaster management strategies has been the delivery of relief after a disaster. Even though disaster relief is an important issue, this approach alone does not proactively address the need to reduce the human and environmental impacts of future disasters. There is growing realisation that countries and communities need to place more emphasis on a holistic approach to disaster risk reduction - an approach that involves risk assessment, risk reduction, early warning and disaster preparedness – if the social, economic and environmental costs of disasters are to be effectively reduced.

Disaster reduction policies and measures need to be implemented, with a two-fold aim: to enable societies to be resilient to natural hazards while

ensuring that development efforts do not increase vulnerability to these hazards.” (UN/ISDR 2002)

Disaster risk can be calculated as the interaction between the probability of a *hazard* occurring and the *vulnerability* of a community to the hazard, together with the *capacity* of the community to cope with and recover from a disaster.

Calculating Disaster Risk

The elements that formulate disaster risk for a community are expressed in the following risk equation:

$$\text{Risk} = \text{Hazard} \times \text{Vulnerability} / \text{Capacity}$$

Risk: The probability of a disaster occurring.

Hazard: A potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity which may lead to a disaster.

Vulnerability: A set of conditions and processes (physical, social, economic and environmental) that increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards.

Capacity: A combination of all the strengths and resources available within a community that can reduce the level of risk or the effects of a disaster.

The basic approaches to disaster risk reduction (DRR) are as follows:

- Understand the hazard (where and when and why it is likely to occur);
- Know which areas and communities are most vulnerable to hazards, and what capacities and capabilities are available to cope with disasters;
- Develop knowledge and information resources to enable the risks to be identified and potential impacts to be adequately assessed;
- Ensure political commitment to disaster risk reduction, at various levels, through policy development, legislation, organisational development and promoting community action;

- Increase education and raise awareness of the risks and motivate for changes in collective behaviour to reduce risks;
- Understand and take action to mitigate or relieve the socio-economic conditions that create or increase the vulnerability of a community;
- Implement environmental management, physical and technical measures to reduce risks to communities;
- Increase the coping capacity of communities through better communications, improved resources, etc;
- Have a disaster preparedness plan in place. This plan should cover both emergency management and recovery from the disaster;
- Develop hazard monitoring systems and early warning indicators.

DRR must be a priority of poverty reduction and development initiatives. The primary mission of the UNDP is to assist developing countries in poverty reduction. Through a variety of initiatives and structures (see Appendix A), the UNDP directly supports the preparation of Poverty Reduction Strategies and so supports DRR. The manner of support includes:



Starving people wait for food near in Northern Ethiopia

- capacity development for benchmarking and monitoring poverty;
- capacity development for implementing participatory processes;
- policy advice and technical assistance on pro-poor policy reforms;
- piloting and innovation for poverty reduction.

Poverty reduction lessens vulnerability and increases the coping capacities of communities and countries. An effective approach for community leaders to implement DRR activities is, among others, to ensure:

- participation and transparency in decision-making;
- promotion of gender concerns and needs;
- empowerment;and
- accountability.

These values are the cornerstones of good governance and the responsibility of every community leader.

Did you know?

The international community has put forward a set of targets for global sustainable development and poverty reduction known as the **Millennium Development Goals** (MDGs).

The core target of the MDGs is to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people living in hunger and on less than \$1 per day. A key objective is the intensification of efforts to reduce the effects of natural and man-made hazards. The goals are a framework for integrating DRR into pro-poor development that adequately supports and prioritises human concerns as well as protects the environmental and social resources of poor communities.

Each country will have a MDG target suited to its own circumstance and means, but the highest priority for most of Africa is food security, basic primary education and health.

(See Appendix A for full MDGs)

2. THE CAUSES & CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY

The causes of poverty are many, complex and interactive. They are divided into four broad categories:

- Economic;
- Situational;
- Social;
- Political.

The causes and consequences of poverty interact and reinforce one another and, if not interrupted, can escalate into a downwards spiral. This can make it difficult for the poor to improve their situation without intervention to reverse the negative feedback loops.

2.1. THE ECONOMIC CAUSES OF POVERTY

Poor economic performance is strongly related to poverty. The effects of a poor economy trickle down to all levels of society, from government to communities and individuals. Governments with low budgets have low expenditure on infrastructure and social services. Consequently, communities and individuals suffer from a lack of education and health services and from unemployment. This in turn results in low taxes and feeds back to low government budgets.

Poor economic performance can result from low economic growth and debt burden and from dependence on natural resources.

2.1.1. *Low Economic Growth*

World trade has been booming and Africa has received record inflows of aid since the 1970s. Despite this, there has been a steady decline in African economic performance (World Bank, 2001b).

African countries started gaining independence over 40 years ago. However, the economic growth of most African countries has been hampered by shortages of development capital and skills, and weak economic structures.

Did you know?

Democratic Republic of Congo

The former president of Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), Mobutu Sese Seko, is an example of elitist governance. He plundered his countries resources so effectively that at his death, his personal wealth was estimated to be between \$5 billion and \$10 billion, while his countries national debt stood at \$14 billion.

Snyder (2004)

Countries with a high inequality of income will have to grow, on average, twice as fast as low-inequality countries to reach the MDG target of halving extreme poverty by 2015.

(UNDP, 2002)



"A young girl balances a plate full of Kariba breams while fishing in lake Kariba, Zimbabwe."

Even where there is an overall increase in economic development within a country, unequal distribution means that poor households do not share in the economic growth. The poor become poorer and the rich richer, which translates into a large gap in the vulnerability of poor and well-off people to disasters and a gap in their coping capacities. Communities have a better chance of realising poverty reduction and DRR if the incomes of the poor grow faster than the average income because high inequality is an obstacle to sustained growth. Economic growth within a community must improve the absolute condition of the poor and be equitable enough to improve their relative position. (UNDP, 2002)

The Gini Coefficient

The Gini coefficient measures income inequality as a value between 0 and 1, where 0 is perfect equality with all households earning the same income and 1 is absolute inequality, where one household gets all the income and the rest get nothing.



"CARE staff members hand out blankets and cooking pots to families who lost their homes in a volcanic eruption in the Democratic Republic of Congo."

What can you do ?

Community leaders can develop a Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and a team that could:

- coordinating self-help and empowerment projects;
- coordinate self-help and empowerment projects;
- coordinate projects to improve agricultural productivity;
- set up communication networks between the community, NGOs, government organisations and outside agencies;
- actively promote entrepreneurs;
- source funding to create an Information Communication technology (ICT) centre;
- promote skills development and job creation for low-skilled workers;
- increase the wages of the low and unskilled workers more than that of the higher-skilled workers until the Gini Index in your community is acceptable;
- create a forum for women to contribute to decision making;
- actively combat HIV/AIDS;
- ensure that all children in your community can and do go to primary school;
- create a supportive environment in which the poor and women can participate in decision making and are supported to acquire literacy and work-related skills;
- commit to good governance practices (accountability, transparency, integrity);
- promote good governance amongst other organisations and authorities in your community;
- prepare annual reports on the results of your efforts.

2.1.2. Debt Burden

At a national, community and individual level, debt means fewer resources to improve circumstances. Debt limits or eliminates negotiating powers to realise fair exchange and reduces choices and options.

At a national level, debt is one of the major barriers to economic growth and development in Africa. Debt discourages investors who are anxious about high taxes, high inflation rates and an unstable currency. In short, debt is a poverty trap.

Did you know?

Sub Saharan Africa contains 34 of the 41 most heavily indebted poor countries in the world. National Debt is a major cause of poverty in this region, where more money is spent on interest repayments than on health and education.

In Zambia, more than 80% of the population lives below the \$1 per day poverty line and the country has one of the world's highest HIV infection rates, yet debt servicing is the biggest item on the government agenda. In 1999, Zambia spent 10% of its GDP (\$136 million) to service its debt to foreign creditors, leaving little money for schools and books. Spending on education in Zambia is today less than half of what was spent in the 1980s.

Similarly, Tanzania spent three times as much on debt servicing than on education. Over the past 10 years, Tanzania's education budget has shrunk by more than two-thirds.

Gordon & Gordon (2000)

Logie & Rowson (2004)

In any community, micro-lenders hold both the economically-active and the dependent poor in a debt and poverty trap. As micro-lenders are often the only source of credit to the poor, this business is booming in Africa. There is little control over the micro-lending business and many illegal operations are carried out. For example, borrowers sign over access to their bank accounts, allowing deductions from their salaries. Some micro-lenders take possession of ATM cards and ID books. There is also little or no restriction on the interest rates charged. Some micro-

lenders charge interest of over 20% per month. Not only are very high interest rates charged, but the interest is compounded monthly. This is known as cumulative interest.

People are often forced to take out new loans to pay off interest. In the small rural town of Prince Albert in South Africa, people recently lost their houses because of debts that started out as small loans to buy fruit and vegetables.

Did you know?

“Cumulative interest is the least understood of any arithmetic”.

Albert Einstein

Cumulative interest is the total amount charged as interest on a loan. Interest is charged on the original loan plus on the interest accrued. If interest is charged monthly, cumulative interest will increase rapidly.

For example, if you borrow \$100 on the 1st of January, at an interest rate of 20% per month and can only repay the loan at the end of the year:

Each month, you will owe:

Feb 1st $\$100 + \$20 = \$120$

March 1st $\$120 + \$24 = \$144$

April 1st $\$144 + \$29 = \$173 \dots$

By Jan 1st the following year, you will owe \$891 because of a cumulative interest of \$791.

Cumulative Interest Trap

The two examples below show the effects of cumulative interest. In both cases, it is assumed that a person borrows \$100 at an interest rate of 20% per month. In the first example, the borrower is able to repay only \$20 per month. In the second example, the borrower is able to pay back a slightly higher amount of \$25 per month.

EXAMPLE 1: REPAYMENTS SAME AS MONTHLY INTEREST

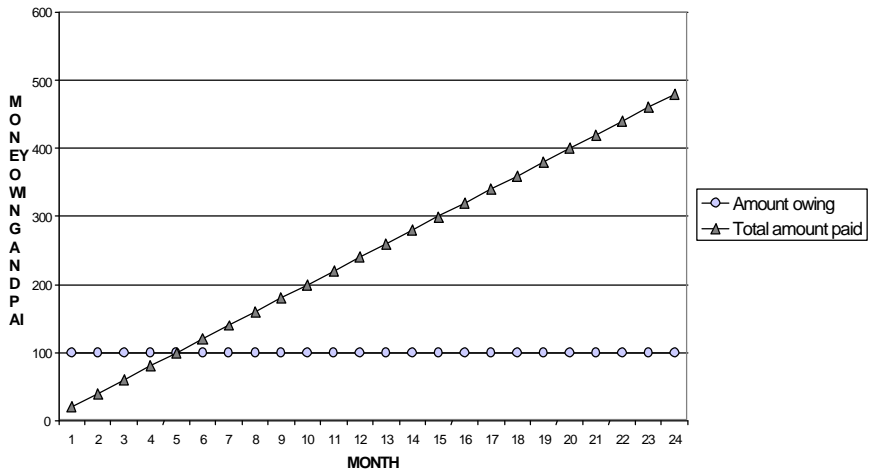
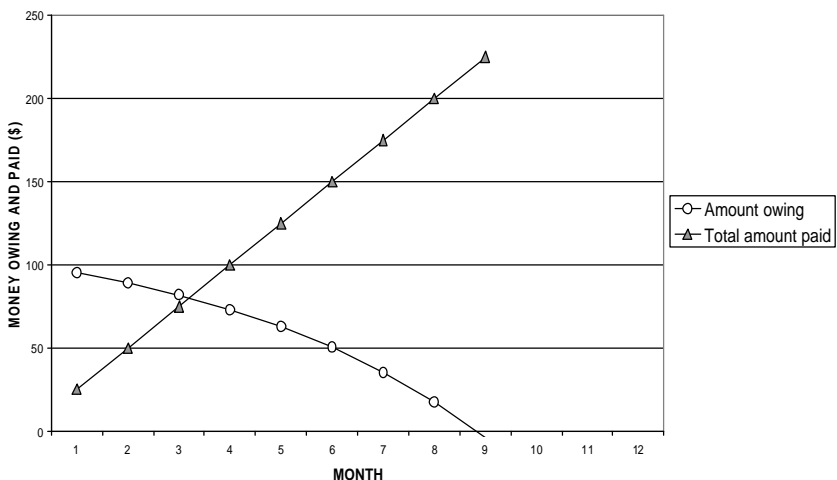


Figure 1: The borrower pays back \$20 per month, which is equal to the interest on the loan. After 24 months, the borrower has repaid a total of \$480 but still owes the original \$100.

Figure 2: The borrower pays back \$25 per month, which is more than the monthly interest on the loan. The loan is paid off in 9 months, but the borrower has repaid \$225 (more than twice the amount of the initial loan).

EXAMPLE 2: REPAYMENTS MORE THAN MONTHLY INTEREST



What can you do?

Educate your community about credit, loans and debt.

Credit? *If you can't pay cash, don't buy it.* It may be tempting to purchase on credit, but you may end up paying more than 10 times the price shown on the item.

Loans? Manage your finances to avoid debt. Each month, prioritise paying off your debts and repay more than the interest owed on the loan. If you have a financial emergency that you cannot solve in any other way, be sure that the microp-lender you approach meets the following requirements:

- gives you detailed information about the amount to be paid, the interest charged and a monthly instalment and repayment period before you are asked to sign anything.
- does not ask you to sign blank contracts or hand over ATM cards or your ID document.
- will cancel the loan if you change your mind within three days of signing the contract.
- preferably displays a registration certificate.

Bank? Start a community bank.

2.1.3. *Natural Resource-based Economies*

Africa has a natural resource-based economy. It has exceptionally low involvement in world trade (less than 2% since the 1960s) and is trapped into poor terms of trade based on resource extraction (World Bank, 2000). The continent has thus remained an exporter of raw materials to industrialised countries. This situation is made worse by the environmental degradation and poverty prevalent throughout the continent.

The impact of a natural resource-based economy is experienced at community level. Most communities in Africa are dependent on rainfall to grow their food and cash crops. This dependence is a matter of great concern with the onset of climate change and the predicted increases in

the erratic nature of climatic variables. Traditional practices will have to be adapted to reduce these risks.

What can you do?

Rainfall Harvesting. Use your rooftop as a catchment area to collect rainwater that is then channelled down gutters into a storage tank. The water can be used for washing and for food gardens, reducing your household's dependence on rainfall and increasing food security. Rainfall harvesting reduces disaster risk in drought-prone areas.

Grey-water Usage. Grey-water is water that has been used for washing (e.g. clothes, dishes, feet). Save and re-use this grey-water on food gardens. This reduces the amount of water used in the household and increases food security. Remember to apply fresh water to your garden once a week to wash away the soap.

Mulching. Cover your soil with a layer of organic material (e.g. straw, grass, leaves, wood chips) or with newspaper or even stones. This layer of "mulch" will reduce evaporation, control weeds, enrich the soil and moderate soil temperatures.



Water harvesting reduces reliance on rainfall and thus the risk of a drought related disaster.

2.2. SITUATIONAL CAUSES OF POVERTY

The area where you live poses both opportunities and constraints or hazards. To uplift a community, all aspects of a location must be considered. The opportunities must be realised in order to reduce disaster risks.

2.2.1. Location

Those in remote areas are often disconnected from employment opportunities and from government initiatives designed to promote economic growth and reduce poverty. These initiatives do not filter to these areas, except after a long time. This often results in migration to urban areas where life does not necessarily improve.

Remoteness may also prevent access to infrastructure and services, posing constraints on disaster management. It is therefore essential that people in remote areas use their local knowledge to identify and heed early warning signs of disasters.



"Drought stricken landscape in the communal areas of the Zambezi Valley".

2.2.2. Environmental Degradation

Deforestation, soil degradation, atmospheric pollution, the depletion of freshwater resources and degradation of coastal ecosystems reduce productivity and lock populations into downward spiralling cycles of poverty. The poor, out of immediate necessity, pursue unsustainable resource management practices in increasingly fragile environments.

Environmental degradation also increases the frequency and intensity of hazards and thus the probability of a disaster occurring as well as the intensity of disasters. This impacts the poor who are most vulnerable to disasters.

Did you know?

Africa's rate of deforestation is the highest in the world. This is largely due to poor regulations and unsustainable economic development strategies. Forests have been cleared for agriculture, fuel wood and commercial craft production.

Unsustainable forest clearance has negative impacts on the wellbeing of subsistence communities that rely on forests for natural resources. The communities are forced to harvest the degraded forests more intensely and expand into new areas in order to maintain a subsistence livelihood. The very resource on which they subsist becomes increasingly fragile and less productive, so do their personal and communal economic circumstances.

Deforestation has further negative economic impacts through the loss of future exports and tourism revenue and causes hazards, for example soil erosion, that increase the risk of disasters like floods and landslides.

Where governments have given logging rights to private foreign companies, the situation of local communities is worst because the large foreign international companies have little reason to take a long-term view of their investment.

Global Environmental Outlook (GEO 2003)

Globalisation processes have intensified competition between countries seeking to attract global investment. In many countries, this has compromised efforts towards sustainable development. The pressure to establish attractive conditions for investment has meant that some governments are lax on environmental regulations, while others enter into global markets by increasing resource extraction. These countries often do not have the funds to investigate alternative forms of resource use.

Environmental degradation extends beyond the degradation of the natural environment and includes a decline in agricultural resources. Poor agricultural practices may cause poverty in rural subsistence farmers who, in an attempt to maintain subsistence, overgraze and over-farm the land. This in turn leads to poor soil quality, erosion and reduced productivity, which increases poverty and pressure on the land.

What can you do?

- Understand how your community interacts with and depends upon its environment;
- Prioritise environmental protection over unsustainable investments that provide benefit in the short-term while compromising future livelihoods;
- Enforce strict environmental regulations;
- Involve NGOs and local community organisations in monitoring of the relationship between poverty and the state of the environment.

2.3. SOCIAL CAUSES OF POVERTY

Inadequate social services lead to lack of education, ill health and an inability to realise the opportunities provided by a location. Poor social services also increase dependence on natural resources and necessitate large family sizes. This increased pressure on the environment leads to a downward spiral of poverty.

2.3.1. Overpopulation and Resource Management

Poor families are generally large. There are a number of reasons for this. In societies where there are few avenues for saving, children are an investment for old age. In subsistence communities dependent on natural resources, large numbers of children help to extract resources. Children provide labour for simple tasks such as wood and water collection and livestock herding.

The usefulness of these extra hands increases with declining resources, causing a negative feedback between overpopulation, resource degradation and poverty. For example, where there is deforestation, increasing labour is required to collect wood. Families have many children to aid wood collection. This creates more mouths to feed, increases pressure on diminishing forest resources and increases poverty because of declining returns from the land.



Africa's rate of deforestation is the highest in the world

2.3.2. Inadequate Social Services

Inadequate access to social services such as fresh water, sanitation, markets as well as credit facilities, social welfare and grants causes and also maintains poverty.

Poor water supply and sanitation, for example, lead to high rates of water-related diseases such as cholera, diarrhoea and dysentery. About 3 million people in Africa die annually of water-related diseases (GEO, 2002), while others live with reduced household earnings and increased health expenditure.

The Transformation of Ntuthukoville

An impoverished settlement in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, has become a model of community self-help. Ten years ago, Ntuthukoville contained a handful of people living under makeshift plastic shelters who were constantly evicted by the Council. Today, through a community-based maintenance programme, roads, water and sewerage have been installed, buildings improved and families have title deeds to their small pieces of land. A walk through the transformed settlement reveals clean roads and well cared for gardens.

A local resident, Gretta Maphumulo, with support from the Built Environment Support Group, led the process of transforming this informal settlement into a legitimate part of the city. Maphumulo, who faced many hardships and supported herself and her three children through sewing, said:

“Yes, it's hard to be in a leadership role, but if your community is using the railway line as a toilet you have to work hard to improve things.” A partnership was set up between the Development Trust and the local municipality for residents to service their own neighbourhood, providing them with permanent employment and developing skills. Today, residents can be found cleaning the roads, unblocking storm-water drains, cutting the grass along the roadside verges, doing door-to-door refuse removal, building the car-tyre retaining walls, watering the indigenous trees they have planted on public land, and managing community facilities.

Without access to credit, the economically-active poor, who are prone to transitory poverty (particularly in response to disasters), are forced into permanent poverty. Inadequate social assistance and grants can lead the dependent poor (particularly the elderly and child-headed households) into destitution. Both groups may turn to micro-lenders for credit assistance, acquiring debt that they cannot service (see Section 2.1.2). Self-help is a way out of debt and poverty.

What can you do?

- Engender a culture that takes notice of the impact of decisions and activities on women and children;
- Support the interaction between the women in your community and local NGOs (e.g. United Nations Development Fund for Women, UNIFEM);
- Facilitate leadership and skills training for women that enable them to understand and influence decision making;
- Support women's rights to land ownership and access to local community-organised credit facilities;
- Involve the women in water and sanitation development decisions;
- Initiate and support a self -help group for women and children burdened with the care of HIV/AIDs sufferers;
- Initiate and support a HIV/AIDs awareness and prevention programme focusing on women and children, particularly the poor;
- Initiate and support projects that promote women's capacity to use Information Communication Technology (ICT) in business;
- Involve women in DRR activities since it is women who largely bear the brunt of the physical and psychological suffering during and after a crisis.

2.3.3. Lack of Education

Africa is the only part of the world in which the number of children out of school is increasing. In Niger, for example, less than one-quarter of children attend primary school and less than 20% of these are girls.

The low levels of school attendance are often the result of poor families relying on children for labour. These families cannot afford the luxury of sending their children to school, even when schooling is free.

Education is essential for development. Hand in hand with economic development, it creates a better standard of living and reduces poverty. Education and empowerment of women also reduce overpopulation and poverty. Educated women who are income earners are empowered within the household and within the community, allowing them to make decisions, for example, regarding childbirth. By educating our girl children and empowering our women, we will realise the strength of the African saying: “Strike the woman and you strike the rock”.



Kids learn on computers in Kenya

2.3.4. HIV/AIDS

The AIDS epidemic in Africa is varied, both between and within sub-regions. East Africa shows several examples of gradual, modest declines in HIV prevalence among women. In West and Central Africa, there is little evidence of changes in prevalence levels, which have stayed steady at 5% or lower (with the exceptions of Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire, where HIV levels have reached and remained at roughly 10%).

Did you know?

- An estimated 11.4 million people are living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Sub-Saharan Africa has just over 10% of the world's population, but is home to more than 60% of all people living with HIV.

In Southern Africa, the situation is less positive. Each country in this region has an HIV prevalence of at least 10%, and in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, prevalence rates exceed 30%. The exception is Angola where the epidemic's progression was slowed during the country's long civil war.

AIDS has initiated a downward spiral of poverty at the household and macroeconomic levels. The virus mainly impacts the 25-40 year-old age group which forms the backbone of the workforce. Thus, spending is not only increased on health care and funerals, but family incomes are reduced or removed. This makes AIDS victims and their families vulnerable to poverty and disasters. The epidemic also drains national funds through increased spending on disability grants and health care services.

Women are more susceptible to infection than men and in most countries, more women are being infected with HIV and they are infected at earlier ages than men. The differences in infection levels between women and men are most pronounced among young people (aged 15 to 24 years).

Recent studies show that there are on average 36 young women living with HIV for every 10 young men in sub-Saharan Africa.

AIDS has left many orphaned children who are forced to head households or become a social burden for their relatives, the community and government. These orphans often become destitute street children at the worst and at the least their education is stopped or interrupted.

What can you do?

- Encourage your community to prevent infection and spreading of the epidemic by applying the “ABC” prevention approach:
 - A**bstinence;
 - B**eing faithful;
 - C**ondom use.
- Set an example by being HIV tested;
- Establish groups within your community to offer support and care to AIDS victims, particularly to those left behind, such as AIDS orphans and the elderly.

2.4. POLITICAL CAUSES OF POVERTY

“Poverty reduction is a political challenge. It touches on critical but sensitive issues involving rights and entitlements. It is likely that pro-poor policies will meet opposition.” (UNDP, 2002)

In the past two decades, 28 of sub-Saharan Africa’s 46 countries have been involved in conflict (World Bank, 2001b). The conflict can be a result of national and regional boundaries that transect ethnic divisions or are a consequence of poverty and dependence on a natural resource-based economy.

Political instability and conflict undermine economic performance and the livelihoods of people living within and surrounding the areas of conflict. Conflict discourages private investment, making it difficult to attract

foreign investment. High levels of defence spending burden the economy and divert funds from poverty reduction programmes, education and food production. Although Africa's main enemy is poverty, most African countries spend a large portion of their budget on military expenses.

"If we are serious about fighting ignorance, disease and poverty, we must be as diligent about finding the resources to fund the educational, health and social well-being of our children as we are about finding resources to defend our nations in other ways".

Nelson Mandela, April 2002

The impact of conflict often reaches beyond the borders of the war-torn country, causing a domino effect in neighbouring countries. Refugees fleeing from war torn areas flood into neighbouring countries where they live in poverty and face long periods without access to basic resources. Malnourishment and infant mortality are high in these marginalized sectors of the community and tensions with local communities in the host country can run high.



People fleeing fighting in Monrovia

3. POVERTY REDUCTION AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Everybody is exposed to natural hazards and hence to disaster risks. The level of exposure and the ability to cope with disaster is, however, varied. Poverty is a major factor increasing disaster risk by increasing a community's vulnerability to disasters and reducing its coping capacity. Poverty and disaster form a negative feedback cycle. If a disaster strikes, the level of poverty in the community increases, leading to increased disaster risk.

DRR should be factored into poverty reduction policies, strategies and initiatives at all levels. Poverty-stricken communities are far more vulnerable to disasters, and disasters in turn create even greater poverty. Therefore, by factoring DRR in poverty reduction, poor communities can receive greater protection, the negative spiral of poverty can be broken and poverty reduction efforts are made more sustainable.

3.1. POVERTY AND COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

A community's vulnerability to disasters reflects an interaction of physical, social, economic and environmental factors. Poverty significantly affects each of these factors and hence increases the vulnerability of communities to disasters.

3.1.1. *Physical Factors*

A community's location impacts its vulnerability to disasters, for example if its members live on a floodplain or near a volcano. The poorest sectors of the community are often physically marginalized and settle on land that is unstable or has a close proximity to hazards, increasing their vulnerability to disasters.

Physical aspects of vulnerability include the susceptibility of the built environment, for example the design of and materials used for infrastructure. Poor communities are often forced to use inadequate materials and physical structures, which further increases their vulnerability to disasters.

Did you know?

Informal settlements in urban areas are centres of vulnerability. Due to poverty and land pressure, urban communities often have no choice but to build their settlements in unsuitable areas such as along riverbeds, on very steep slopes or close to unmanaged waste sites and industrial areas. Due to unstable ground conditions and poor building materials, these communities are vulnerable to collapsing homes and health risks, particularly during the rainy season.

Settlements that are built close to rivers cause environmental degradation of the riverbanks and increase the disaster risk should flash floods occur. Pollution of the river, through inadequate waste removal and poor sanitation, further increases the community's vulnerability and leads to health problems for the inhabitants and for those in settlements down-stream.

3.1.2. Social Factors

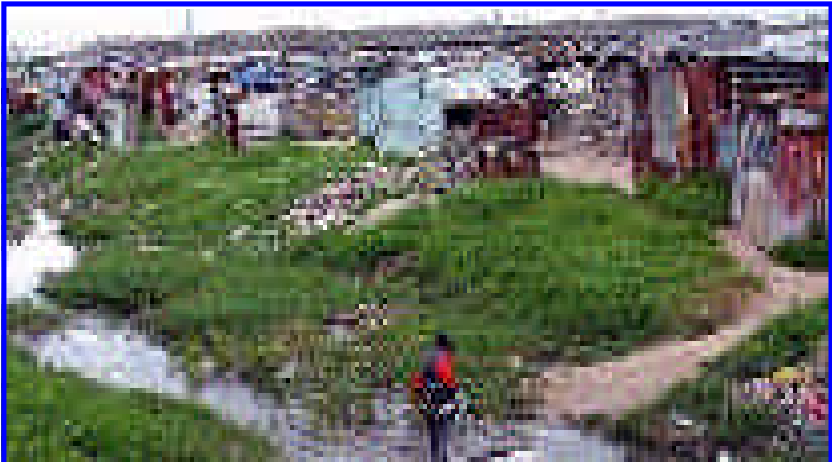
Social vulnerability refers to the wellbeing of a community. It includes aspects related to education, health, social security, human rights, peace and security. Poverty reduces social wellbeing. In general, it is more difficult for poor communities to realise a common purpose and coordinate their limited resources. This lack of communal resilience increases their disaster risks or intensifies the impact of disasters.

Lack of education combined with a short-time horizon may prevent movement towards a culture of prevention and protection. If one has security only for the next day, one only plans for the next day. This increases community vulnerability through both disbelief that any improvement in their circumstance is possible (despair) and resistance to change.

These factors can be worsened if there is also a rigid maintenance of certain cultural traditions that can no longer achieve their original purpose, not because the traditions are wrong but because the environment or circumstances in which they were devised has changed.

Lack of access to health services and lack of adequate sanitation and water supply lead to illness. This increases vulnerability to hazards and further increases disaster risk by inducing hazards (e.g. biological hazards such as disease outbreaks).

Inequality and lack of social security makes certain groups, such as the old, women and ethnic minorities, disadvantaged and marginalized, which increases their vulnerability to hazards. HIV/AIDS exacerbates low levels of economic performance, food insecurity and poor standards of living and thus increases the vulnerability of communities to disasters.



Education and Empowerment

The empowerment of women means that gender-biased traditions will adapt to meet changed circumstances.

In African culture, for example, inheritance is patriarchal and widowed women may have their assets taken away. In a landmark case in South Africa, the Constitutional Court has ruled this traditional law unconstitutional and awarded two girls the inheritance of their deceased father's estate (their home in the township Khayelitsha). The girls had brought the case against their grandfather who, under traditional law and custom, sought to inherit (and intended to sell) the girls' home.

Daily Mail and Guardian, South Africa
November 19, 2004

3.1.3. Economic Factors

Levels of vulnerability are highly dependent on the economic status of individuals and communities, with the poor the most vulnerable sector of society. The poor being have proportionally higher losses when a disaster strikes and have less capacity to recover.

At a community level, inadequate socio-economic infrastructure (e.g. communication networks, transportation and health care) increases people's vulnerability to disasters or exposure to risks. Inadequate access to credit leads people from transitory poverty (particularly following a disaster) to permanent poverty (see Section 2.1.2).

Poverty and Disaster Risk Reduction in Mauritius

As with many other Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Mauritius is a very vulnerable country prone to the vagaries of weather, especially cyclones and drought. Agriculture is a major component of Mauritius' economy, in common with most developing countries. Natural hazards such as cyclones and drought can have a huge impact on agricultural production, and can thus significantly affect the national economy. Not only do such hazards directly affect the livelihoods of communities, but also they impact the government's ability to provide aid to assist the communities to recover. This can lead to increasing poverty.

Although the nature and depth of poverty in Mauritius is distinctly less severe than the poverty levels in neighbouring African countries, the government of Mauritius is giving top priority to poverty reduction through the implementation of the National Action Plan for Poverty reduction by a partnership of the public and private sectors with civil society. As most of the poor have access to key social services, the issues in Mauritius are more of social exclusion than of abject poverty, and diversification of the economy.

In an effort to diversify the economy to maintain strong economic growth, in 2003 the government began to implement an ambitious economic programme called the New Economic Agenda (NEA). The programme has three key objectives: (i) increase competitiveness, (ii) bring about deeper social development and social cohesion, and (iii) preserve and protect Mauritius' fragile environment.

3.1.4. Ecological Factors

Natural ecosystems buffer communities from hazards. Both forests and wetlands, for example, protect against floods and landslides. Forests prevent erosion and wetlands act as water storage systems that protect against flash floods.

Environmental degradation lowers the natural resilience of ecosystems to hazards, which increases the risk of naturally occurring hazards becoming disasters and increases the vulnerability of the local community to disasters. Poverty leads to environmental degradation and hence to increased vulnerability and disaster risk.

3.2. POVERTY REDUCTION AND COMMUNITY COPING CAPACITY

Coping is the manner in which people use their existing resources in ordinary times as well as in the adverse conditions of a disaster. A community's coping capacity is a combination of all the strengths and resources available (social, physical and economic) used together to reduce the frequency and impacts of disasters.

Poverty is defined by inadequate and deteriorating infrastructure and a lack of economic security to provide for disaster recovery. This compromises a community's coping capacity and magnifies the impact of a disaster. Poverty reduction therefore increases a community's coping capacity.

Africans have great adaptive capacity in the face of challenges. Many have a long history of living in arid lands and farming in areas of low rainfall and have a range of coping strategies. Others have survived decades of conflict and have emerged liberated. This traditional knowledge and these strengths are important assets to DRR programmes.

Community leaders have a significant role to play in initiating and leading the DRR process and in incorporating local knowledge into DRR programmes. DRR programmes involve a number of phases of activity:

1. Understanding the hazard, assessing disaster risks and creating awareness of disaster risks;
2. Taking actions to reduce community vulnerability to a hazard and risk and to increase community coping capacity (largely through poverty reduction);

3. Developing early warning systems to allow communities to take timely action in impending disasters;
4. Developing a disaster management strategy to respond to and recover from a disaster. This strategy can initiate important medium and long-term developments in communities following a disaster. Remember that *"In every crisis, there is an opportunity"*;
5. Integrating disaster risk assessment to poverty reduction programmes.

Poverty, Environmental Degradation, Disaster and Successful Recovery

After four months of heavy rains in 2000, floods swept through south and central Mozambique, leaving loss and devastation in their wake. Half a million people lost their homes and property. The unusually heavy rains were possibly the result of La Niña, exacerbated by environmental degradation. Devegetation of riverbanks and floodplains, for example, reduced the capacity of areas to act as water sponges to mitigate flooding. Poverty further increased community vulnerability to the water hazard, causing a disaster.

Neighbouring countries, the United Nations, NGOs and the international community responded to the disaster, helping Mozambique recover and preventing a catastrophe. Aid organisations worked with local government and NGOs to make the best use of local expertise and knowledge and the outcome was a successful response and recovery, with no disease outbreaks and no serious malnutrition in accommodation centres.

The challenge to the community is to build on the network and relationships created and to engage the international community in continuing to rebuild the region and implement DRR strategies.

Christie and Hanlon (2001)

It is essential that communities take part in the assessment of disaster risks. This process, known as *participatory rural appraisal*, allows communities to:

- take ownership of the disaster risk assessment process;
- educate them about disaster risks; and
- facilitate the documentation of local knowledge and interpretation of risk.

4. STEPS TO POVERTY REDUCTION

“At the moment, many, too many of our people live in gruelling, demeaning, dehumanising poverty. We are sitting on a powder keg. We really must work like mad to eradicate poverty.”

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu

Poverty reduction strategies need to be rooted in the national, regional and community-specific causes of poverty to reach those in need. The strategies should be multi-targeted, build on the international and national government initiatives and be suited for practical implementation at community and individual levels. The community ownership of programmes is essential to achieving real and sustainable reduction in poverty.

All communities depend upon there being sound poverty reduction, policies and strategies in place at national and international level to secure economic development and good governance. In most African countries, such policies and strategies are in place, but not necessarily linked with disaster risk reduction.

4.1. POLITICS AND POLICIES

“Poverty, gender and environmental issues must be the heart of macroeconomic strategies and not add-ons.” (World Bank, 1996).

At the international and global level, there is increasing support for poverty reduction. Communities can inform themselves of these initiatives which frequently have their expression in the goals and purposes of local NGOs, aid organisations and individual leaders. In Appendix C, we present a short summary of the initiatives that support community effort.

African countries are taking the lead in reducing poverty and disaster risk. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), formulated by the African Union (AU) in 2002, is a vision and a framework for Africa's renewal. NEPAD's objectives are to eradicate poverty and ensure sustainable development. This includes reducing the disaster risks and assuring Africa's inclusion and participation in a globalised world. 37 African countries have joined NEPAD and have explicitly identified poverty reduction as an important policy objective.

International bodies have recently made major commitments towards poverty and disaster risk reduction. Such commitments have been factored into the majority of development policies and programs (see Appendix C). The World Bank has laid out a strategy for reducing poverty, resting on the three pillars of growth, empowerment and security (World Bank, 2001a). The international community has followed with targets for global sustainable development and poverty reduction known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Did you know?

At the first China-Africa Cooperation Forum in Beijing in 2000, China announced that it was cancelling \$1.2 billion in African debt over the following two years in order to alleviate poverty and promote development. Chinese companies are being encouraged to invest in Africa and China has set up an African Human Resources Development Fund to train professionals. China also plans to expand its assistance to Africa as its economy grows.

"China to Cancel African Debt"
Daily Mail and Guardian, South Africa
October 11, 2000²

4.1.1. Foreign Aid

Development aid that has common purpose within communities and debt relief are imperative to creating an environment conducive to poverty reduction and disaster risk reduction. Through NEPAD, African leaders have pledged accountable governance and strong economic policies in return for renewed investment and official state aid to battle HIV/AIDS, fight poverty and provide primary education.

Much of the aid spent in Africa in the past three decades has not demonstrably reduced poverty (World bank, 2001b). Aid-supported programmes often remain donor-driven and riddled with corruption at donor and local government levels. Democratic and transparent governance needs to be in place at all levels before aid can be successful and result in poverty reduction.

Community leaders need to ensure that the aid received in their area results in sustainable development. They can do this by ensuring that infrastructure upgrades, job creation and skills development are part of a greater development programme outlined by the community themselves. Budget support should replace project funding and aid programmes should be open and accountable. One way to achieve this is to initiate development programmes within your community and then to approach support organisations to coordinate financial and technical aid.

What can you do?

Nobel Laureate Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu recently gave the Nelson Mandela Lecture in Johannesburg (23rd November 2004). He challenged all South Africans to reconsider the quality of society they may want to create. Such a society can, he said, be based on the uniquely African principle of “ubuntu” which recognises that:

“We can be human only in relationship, that a person is a person through other persons”.

He cites the extraordinary example of an Irish millionaire. Every year, he brings out 350 Irish men and women who in a week build 50 houses costing \$10 000 each. He asks why South Africans can't do the same. This could be asked of all Africans who can contribute to the wellbeing of their fellow men.

How can you do this?

- Establish a Poverty Forum in your community;
- Create the opportunity for all sectors of civil society, business, women's groups and the poor to contribute to design a Poverty Reduction Strategy for your community;
- Engage with local NGOs and the UNDP representative for assistance in monitoring poverty;
- Engage with the regional government for support for poverty reduction programmes;
- Monitor your progress in achieving the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

See Appendix A

4.1.2. Trade and Investment

Africa needs more trade and investment as investment brings technology, jobs and skills. Investment can be encouraged by creating a stable political environment, combating corruption, creating jobs, enforcing contracts and by protecting property rights. This can start at community level.

Communities can negotiate with foreign investors to move away from resource extraction, such as oil drilling, logging, mining and cash crops. These activities create relatively few jobs, have little benefit for the poor and lead to environmental degradation (Chabal and Daloz, 1999).

Together with investors, communities can create a more diverse economy based on industrialisation and agricultural growth. Support for local entrepreneurs and businesses ensure that foreign investment provides mutual long-term benefit through improved infrastructure and skills development. Many businesses that started as self-help schemes now sell their produce locally, regionally and overseas.

4.2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The investment climate in Africa needs to be improved by strategies that increase investor confidence. This will increase a government's capacity to deliver, increasing political and social stability and further increasing investor confidence. A positive cycle of growth is created.

Poverty reduction requires growth. Economic growth generates employment, improves livelihoods and reduces poverty. Income generated by growth (e.g. taxes) can also be used to provide social security and services for the poor. Employment creation through industrial expansion, improved agricultural practice and the promotion of small, micro, medium and informal business is a key strategy at the community level.

A real reduction in poverty requires a sustainable increase in economic growth. Good relations and a common purpose with neighbouring communities will result in a better developed economic strategy for your region. Equity in economic growth is essential for poverty reduction.

Did you know?

South Korea had similar rates of poverty to those seen in Africa today. It is now one of the world's most prosperous newly developed countries and is a model for development. South Korea achieved its economic transformation through the implementation of growth-orientated reforms designed to reduce poverty.

World Bank (2000)

4.3. GOOD GOVERNANCE

The attributes of good governance are conflict prevention and resolution, democratic pluralism that promotes public participation, and equity, rule of law, accountability, responsiveness, strategic planning and vision (WCDD, 2004). Bottom-up control and public participation should be the aim rather than top-down control of government. The bottom-up approach encourages ownership of projects and hence empowerment of communities and individuals.

4.3.1. Improved social services and infrastructure

Improvements in health, education and water supply all make an enormous contribution to reducing poverty, both directly by improving the well-being of the poor and indirectly by supporting growth. The provision of cheap fuel and water relieves the labour burden of children, allowing them to attend school.

4.3.2. Administration

The implementation of poverty reduction policies requires good administration. It requires well-functioning organisations at all levels of governance. For DRR, it requires the enforcement of safety standards such as building codes and land-use planning.

4.3.3. Risk identification and monitoring

Disaster risk assessment, early warning and capacity building are all essential components of successful poverty and disaster risk reduction. Poverty monitoring systems are also essential in evaluating the success of poverty reduction strategies.

Did you know?

Africa can sidestep technology development and adopt the latest technologies, with potential economic, social and political benefits.

Botswana, for example, bypassed investment in outdated communications infrastructure (e.g. telephone line infrastructure) by installing the most advanced fibre optic and digital technologies. As a result, they have one of the most advanced communication networks in the world.

The benefits of these technologies are new opportunities for education, information sharing and marketing African products, services, and newspapers and magazines. African governments also have web sites which can make access to government offices and services more available.

4.4. THE ROLE OF COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS

Communities have an important role to play in poverty and disaster risk reduction, as they are a rich source of knowledge and resources. Many development strategies have failed, at least partially, because they were not suited to the circumstances of the intended beneficiaries and were not owned and led by the community. Poverty reduction strategies should be led by community leaders, using aid and technical support attained through international organizations and local NGOs.

Individuals need to be open to change and take the initiative to start the change process. Much of this change will be in adapting traditions and in the breaking of taboos. Education and empowerment have a major role to play in change.

Abalimi Bezekhaya: “Planters of the home”

Abalimi Bezekhaya was founded in 1982 to promote and facilitate urban food gardens in the Cape Flats, a dense informal settlement in the Cape of South Africa. It assists individuals, groups and community based organisations to initiate and maintain permanent organic growing and nature conservation projects as the basis for sustainable lifestyles, self-help job creation, poverty reduction and environmental renewal.

Abalimi Bezekhaya supplies low-cost gardening resources and offers advice to local residents. In addition, the gardeners have organised regular market days to sell their organic produce. Recently, with support from WWF, they have established the Green Schools Project and Community-Managed Parks. In each participating school, a major portion of the school grounds has been converted to a green area with vegetable gardens and indigenous, water-wise plants. The first community-managed park, Manyanani Peace Park in Khayelitsha, was established in 1994. This park remains the leading model for community-based park development.

Abalimi Bezekhaya has helped to improve informal settlements while boosting the economic incomes and morale of those who partake in their activities.



Self-help

An elderly rural artist, Phillip Rikhotso, from a village in the remote Limpopo province of South Africa received top awards at the Brett Kebble art competition held in Cape Town in October 2004. Rikhotso, who works in black wood, competed against top artists and was recognised for his craftsmanship. His work, consisting of 13 “traditionally South African” wooden figures, was praised by judges:

“The works have a magical, mythical quality which creates a strong sense of narrative. I particularly liked the simplicity of it and the economic use of colour and form. This is a proudly and distinctively South African piece with global credibility.”

Rikhotso is the sole breadwinner for his wife and eight children and had to borrow money to travel to the competition. Speaking through a translator, Rikhotso said:

“I am overwhelmed by this. I want to buy a bakkie (small van) so I can carry more wood to my house to do more carvings. I will also take some of it to send one of my children to school to go on a computer course.”



What can you do?

- Identify and understand the problems of the poorest and most vulnerable communities;
- Provide a forum for the poor to express their opinion;
- Improve access to resources and services;
- Implement assistance projects for these communities (e.g. feeding schemes, adult literacy);
- Increase awareness – ensure the community has access to and understands the information about disaster risks;
- Ensure early access to current information about risks to communities, e.g advice when to plant and warnings about crop failures, so that action can be taken before a disaster happens;
- Identify skills and opportunities, and promote possible job creation projects.
- Ensure that disaster risks and economic sustainability are taken into account in land-use and development decisions.

5. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

“Development may cause disaster risk; development may reduce disaster risk and disaster may limit development”. (WCDR 2004)

Development patterns that ignore poverty and that are environmentally unsound increase disaster risks by increasing vulnerability to hazards. For example, the unsustainable use of forest resources leads to their overexploitation and degradation, which increases the vulnerability of the users to disasters. Development needs not and should not increase disaster risk.

Sustainable development should protect against the impacts of natural or human-induced hazards. It is the balance between the use of natural resources to meet current needs of a population while at the same time preserving these resources for future generations. Sustainable development reduces disaster risk by causing an upwards spiral of environmental protection and development. Sustainable development ensures DRR, which in turn ensures investment and growth.

A community has (or has the capacity to build up) different kinds of capital (wealth). These include:

- natural capital
- economic capital
- social capital

The sustainable development of these capitals leads to a long-term reduction in poverty and disaster risk in communities.

Sustainability

“A sustainable society will differ from the one we now know in several respects. Population size will more or less be stationary, energy will be used more efficiently, and the economy will be fuelled largely with renewable sources of energy.”

Brown (1981)

5.1. NATURAL CAPITAL

Natural Capital consists of all the goods provided by the earth such as soil, water, plants, forests, wildlife, fish, minerals, oil and gas. Natural Capital also includes the many services provided by the natural environments such as forests providing oxygen, wetlands filtering water, and dunes providing wind shelter and flood protection.

The two key elements to the sustainable development of natural capital are environmental protection and land-use planning. Both approaches should be linked to DRR and involve the coordination of effort among community leaders, local NGOs and donor organisations and involves the integration of activities from widespread sectors such as tourism, agriculture and health.

Linking DRR with environmental protection, appropriate land-use practices and land care initiatives increases not only the natural capital of a community but also the social and economic capitals, leading to sustainable development and breaking the poverty cycle.

The reader is referred to the following UN/ISDR community leader's guides for detailed information on environmental protection and land use planning:

1. Environmental Protection and Disaster Risk Reduction
2. Land Use, Disaster Risks and Rewards

Did you know?

International lobbying and NGOs working at community level have raised levels of awareness around forest degradation and many countries are now reviewing their forest policies. International co-operative initiatives have been developed in Central and Southern Africa (FAO, 2001) and there is investment in sustainable forest management and reforestation.

5.1.1. Environmental Protection

“Environmental Protection, as a component of sustainable development and consistent with poverty reduction, is imperative in the prevention

and mitigation of natural disasters.” (UN/ISDR, 2003)

To date, development in Africa has been based on unsustainable environmental activities, and particularly on resource extraction. For example, the activities of the oil industry, on which much of Africa’s development is based, cause environmental disruption in the form of explosions from seismic surveys, pollution from refinery effluent, pipeline leaks, drilling fluids and blowouts. These activities lead to increasingly intense resource use and environmental degradation.

Environmental protection initiatives help control the environment, for example through reforestation and restoration programmes, pollution control and regulation of activities. They may indirectly impact on the environment by changing the attitudes and behaviours of communities to engender a culture of sustainability. The most successful initiatives are based on a number of communities identifying and agreeing on the

The Nile Basin Initiative

The Nile, the world’s longest river, travels through ten countries - Burundi, DRC, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. The Nile Basin is home to an estimated 160 million people and has a unique ecological system hosting a number of varied landscapes, with high mountains, tropical forests, woodlands, lakes, savannas, wetlands, arid lands and deserts.

Despite the natural wealth and rich cultural history of the Nile Basin, its people face considerable challenges. The Basin is characterized by poverty, instability, rapid population growth, environmental degradation and frequent natural disasters. Population is expected to double within the next 25 years, placing additional strain on scarce water and other natural resources.

Recognizing the need to take concrete steps to maximize the benefits of the Nile, the ten Nile countries launched the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) in 1999. The NBI provides an agreed basin-wide framework to fight poverty and promote economic development in the region at the community level. It is guided by a shared vision:

“To achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilization of and benefit from the common Nile Basin water resources”.

management of a regional ecosystem, for example a single water catchment.

The value of natural capital is not reflected in national accounting systems, for example national income measures such as GNP do not reflect the depletion of environmental assets. The economic value of environmental resources needs to be reflected in community accounting systems and integrated into planning and decision-making processes.

5.1.2. Land Use Planning

Africa has the fastest growing population in the world and this will continue to increase for some decades to come. Africans are faced with an increasing scarcity of natural resources such as arable land, forests and water. Linking disaster risk reduction with land-use planning and implementation is a key factor in mitigating the negative impacts of overpopulation and land degradation.

Planning for land use involves an investigation into geographic factors as well as socio-economic conditions, skills, traditional practice, knowledge, cultural values, role of women, current challenges faced within the community and pressures arising from outside of the community.

Did you know?

The carrying capacity of the land is the size of the population that can be supported by the available resources. An area is only overpopulated when its carrying capacity is exceeded and the land is being degraded (resources reduced or lost).

Sustainable development aims to maintain a population by sustainably increasing the carrying capacity of the land through appropriate land use and land care.

Agriculture

Farming intensity has increased, as has the utilization of marginal, unsuitable farmland. This ultimately leads to land degradation and poor

crop quality and yield, increases in food scarcity and a downward spiral into poverty.

The challenge is to adapt and develop our farming and water husbandry practices to ensure increased productivity and carrying capacity of the land without land degradation. They include improved tillage methods (e.g. minimum tillage, ploughing along contour lines and terracing), rotating crops, inter-cropping and the use of legumes as biofertilizers, mulching, composting and rainfall harvesting. These farming methods can improve crop production, use less water and reduce pressure to use more land or marginal land for food or cash crop production. The

What can you do?

Adopt improved farming methods to care for and increase the long-term productivity of your land.

Strip cropping : Cultivation of crops in strips following the contours of the land to minimize erosion.

Intercropping : The cultivation of two or more different crops at the same time on the same piece of land.

Agroforestry : A land-use system in which trees are planted with agricultural crops or on animal pastures.

Crop rotation: A pattern of alternating the crops grown in a specific field from year to year in order to control pests and to maintain soil fertility.

Terracing: The shaping of sloping land to create a series of broad, nearly level 'steps' with short vertical drops from one to another. This technique helps to conserve water and reduce soil erosion

result is increased natural, social and financial capital and hence poverty reduction.

Ecotourism

Alternative land-use practices such as conservation and ecotourism can provide economic capital in conjunction with land care initiatives and environmental protection, providing an option for sustainable



Agroforestry. Growing trees together with maize gives maize plants the benefit of shade and nutrients

development in rural areas. It makes use of and maintains the natural capital by conserving the land and maintaining the integrity of natural ecosystems. Conservation and ecotourism can only be successful in areas where there is also political stability, good governance and the support of local communities.

Ecotourism depends on the conservation of natural resources and therefore requires anti-poaching measures to prevent trade in endangered animals that attract tourists (e.g. ivory, rhino horn and bushmeat trades). The involvement of local communities adjacent to conservation areas in conservation initiatives is essential. The

Did you know?

Most African countries are party to the Convention on Biological Diversity and to CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. Africa has an impressive wildlife conservation record, with a well-established network of protected areas. Several trans-frontier reserves are being established in Southern and Eastern Africa.

World Wildlife Fund

The Community Game Guards project, initiated by WWF-South Africa, is an innovative approach to wildlife conservation based on the idea that indigenous people make the best conservationists in their areas.

This project and other community-based projects have been so successful that many species of wildlife have returned to areas of Namibia where they had disappeared due to hunting and illegal poaching.

Due to the success of the Community Game Guards project, two other conservation projects have developed, namely, the NGO initiative Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) and Living in a Finite Environment.



Tourists are poled through the Okavango swamps in Botswana by a local guide

communities can participate in land management and derive longer-term economic benefit from conservation.

5.2. ECONOMIC CAPITAL

Economic Capital consists of the financial capital (money) available to the community, as well as the built infrastructure that the community

uses (such as buildings, roads, ports, railways, wastewater treatment works, etc.). Generally, the greater a region or community's economic capital, the greater is its ability to prevent, withstand and recover from disasters.

Africa's resource extraction-based economy does not promote economic development at community level, for the benefit of poor communities. It reduces natural capital and decreases opportunities for longer-term sustainable economic development in the future. To increase economic capital, Africa needs to direct its terms of trade away from resource exchange, diversify its economic strategies and improve its participation in the global market.

A country or region's economic capital can most effectively be increased by adding more value to the resources used to earn income. These resources include natural products and resources, manufactured products and human resources (skills). Value can be added to a resource by processing it further within the community or region where it originates. For example, a community may make a modest income by selling fresh fruit. However, by processing some of the fruit into higher value products, such as fruit juice, dried fruit or jams, the total income from the same fruit can be greatly increased. Similarly, income from forestry can be increased if the community makes furniture or other processed products from the timber, rather than selling the raw timber. Processed metals also have a much greater value than the original ore that is mined.

Skills development is a way that individuals and communities can increase the value of their human resources. By acquiring new skills, people can improve and add value to the work they do, and thus increase the potential income from their work. Skills development through education and training is an important factor in a community's ability to increase its economic and social capital.

All communities have some people with natural marketing and negotiation skills. A community leader can assist in nurturing and adapting these skills to promote the local products, open new markets in the greater region and possibly internationally, as well as promote community ideas and obtain funding for infrastructure development projects. If access to the Internet is possible for your community, it is a great tool to reach potential customers and market products globally.

Land-use practices such as ecotourism convert natural capital into economic capital at community level. This is achieved by directly

increasing financial capital through employment and through alternative sources of income for community members (e.g. crafts). Economic capital is also increased through improved roads and infrastructure. Economic improvement and acquisition of skills create positive changes in the social fabric of a community.

Sustainable agricultural development increases the economic and social capital of communities. It increases the financial capital of individual farmers and the economic capital of the surrounding community through an increased demand for labour and increased rural spending. Food security also results in significant social well-being.

It is important to maintain and build financial capital within a community by avoiding debt and consequent poverty traps. The development of community banks is a solution to sustainably increasing financial capital. In South Africa, these initiatives are known as “stokvel” or “masigcwabane” (literally translated as “let’s bury each other”). They were first initiated by women in the townships as safeguards against sudden funeral costs and have developed into an organised system of small community banks.

The community group has a single bank account and share the cost of bank charges, while receiving interest on the money and the benefit of available cash. This system mitigates the downward poverty cycle initiated by unaffordable debt in communities with low financial capital, by giving members access to financial capital in times of need. The result is increased financial capital, poverty reduction, increased coping capacity and reduced disaster risks.

5.3. SOCIAL CAPITAL

“Development does not start with goods; it starts with people and their education, organisation and discipline.”

E. Schumacher (1973)

A community’s social capital consists of the people and their skills, as well as the systems of democratic governance, social services and the quality of government departments and other community organisations. Without social capital, the natural and economic capital of a community remains unused. With social capital, even low natural and economic capital can be transformed into a sustainable society.

The foremost task of aid programmes and sustainable development strategies is to develop social capital by increasing communities' wellbeing, be it health, education, cultural practice or organisation. It

also includes the development of a will to succeed and the discipline to carry out self-help and sustainable development programmes.

Development is not a problem for economists, it is the problem of communities and their leaders who need to build on their social capital to realise the opportunities their location offers. The development of social capital should be carried out in collaboration with communities, building on existing knowledge and strengths. Initiatives should be designed to develop adaptation options by appealing to reinforced traditional practices (Diallo et al., 2003) and enhance local knowledge and organisational capabilities inherent in the community.

It must be realised that poverty reduction, sustainable development and DRR are goals that cannot be bought or given: they have to be developed through increased social capital by investing in ourselves, for ourselves.



The Keikashamma Art project created this 100m tapestry (section shown) which won awards and has been auctioned to raise money for AIDS orphans.

Keiskamma Art Project

In a small town in the Eastern Cape of South Africa, a collective of women formed an art project to bring employment, art and hope to the women of the region. The project, which has grown to involve more than 100 women, holds regular workshops to teach embroidery and new skills.

The women of the project created a 120-metre long, vibrant embroidery work depicting the story of the Eastern Cape. It shows the great battles, including the defeat of the Xhosa people following cattle-killing prophecies in 1856/57. The story depicts deception, imprisonment, starvation and cultural loss. The conclusion of the work shows a new future in the restoration of land and freedom of people in 1994 and the presidency of Nelson Mandela.

The women entered the tapestry into the Brett Kebble art competition in Cape Town, where it received admiration and an award valued at about \$10 000 (R60 000). The Keiskamma women donated the tapestry to the “Art for Aid Orphans”, where it was recently auctioned for over a million Rand (about \$160 000). The money raised will be used to feed, cloth and educate children whose parents have died of AIDS.

This self-help project shows how social capital can increase economic capital within a community and how this positive influence can spread out of the community to improve the conditions of neighbouring communities. Donation of the tapestry to help AIDS orphans encapsulates the African concept of “ubuntu”.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Can Africa claim the 21st century? Yes!

Breaking out of and avoiding traps that maintain cycles of debt, poverty, conflict and environmental degradation will however require political participation and accountable governance. Africa will need individuals and communities to use the best of their indigenous knowledge, integrated with first world technology, to accelerate its development.

Job creation and social welfare are not only the responsibility of national governments. It is the responsibility of each individual to create a humane and compassionate society. Sometimes this calls for extraordinary courage and self-sacrifice but most times it is the small, sustained acts of compassion and generosity that can change lives for the better. Africa is most fortunate to have examples of such men and women in abundance.

The African continent has a wealth of natural resources, offering many opportunities for human, social and economic development. Its diversity of cultures and valuable indigenous knowledge provides the social capital to realise economic growth.

The key to this growth is self-help and responsible governance for the common good. To paraphrase the words of Archbishop Emeritus and Nobel Prize Laureate Desmond Tutu:

“Many people have excelled almost only because someone had faith in them, believed in them and so inspired them with a new self-belief, a new self-confidence, a new self-esteem. The same is surely true of (a community), a nation (or a continent), which is an aggregate of individuals.”

GLOSSARY

The following terms are taken from “Living with Risk” - A Global Review of Disaster Reduction Initiatives (UN/ISDR, 2002).

Capacity: A combination of all the strengths and resources available within a community or organisation that can reduce the level of risk, or the effects of a disaster.

Coping capabilities/Capacity: The manner in which people and organisations use existing resources to achieve various beneficial ends during unusual, abnormal, and adverse conditions of a disaster event or process.

Disaster: A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community/society to cope using its own resources.

Disaster risk reduction (disaster reduction): The systematic development and application of policies, strategies and practices to minimise vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society, to avoid (prevention) or limit (mitigation and preparedness) adverse impact of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development.

Ecosystem: A system of interacting living organisms together with their physical environment.

Environmental degradation: Processes induced by human behaviour and activities (sometimes combined with natural hazards), that damage the natural resource base or adversely alter natural processes or ecosystems. Potential effects are varied and may contribute to increases in vulnerability and the frequency and intensity of natural hazards.

Hazard: A potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity which may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation.

Hazard analysis: Identification, studies and monitoring of any hazard to determinate its potentiality, origin, characteristics and behaviour.

Land-use planning: Branch of physical planning that determines the most desirable way land should be used. Involves land-use studies and mapping, analysis of data acquired, formulation of alternative land-use

decisions and design of a long-range land-use plan for different geographical and administrative scales.

Mitigation: Structural and non-structural measures undertaken to limit the adverse impact of natural hazards, environmental degradation and technological hazards.

Preparedness: Activities and measures taken in advance to ensure effective response to the impact of disasters, including the issuance of timely and effective early warnings and the temporary removal of people and property from a threatened location.

Prevention: Activities to provide outright avoidance of the adverse impact of hazards and related environmental, technological and biological disasters.

Public awareness: The processes of informing the general population, increasing their levels of consciousness about risks and how to take action to reduce their exposure to hazards. This is particularly important for public officials in fulfilling their responsibilities to save lives and property in the event of a disaster.

Recovery: Decisions and actions taken after a disaster with a view to restoring the living conditions of the stricken community, while encouraging and facilitating necessary adjustments to reduce disaster risk.

Relief / response: The provision of assistance and/or intervention during or immediately after a disaster to meet the life preservation and basic subsistence needs of those people affected. It can be of an immediate, short-term, or protracted duration.

Resilience/resilient: The capacity of a system, community or society to resist or to change in order that it may obtain an acceptable level in functioning and structure. This is determined by the degree to which the social system is capable of organising itself, and the ability to increase its capacity for learning and adaptation, including the capacity to recover from a disaster.

Risk: The probability of harmful consequences or expected loss (of lives, people injured, property, livelihoods, economic activity disrupted or environment damaged) resulting from interactions between natural or human-induced hazards and vulnerable/capable conditions. Conventionally, risk is expressed by the equation $\text{Risk} = \text{Hazard} \times \text{Vulnerability} / \text{Capacity}$

Risk assessment/analysis: A process to determine the nature and extent of risk by analysing potential hazards and evaluating existing conditions of vulnerability/capacity that could pose a potential threat or harm to people, property, livelihoods and the environment on which they depend.

Risk management: The systematic management of administrative decisions, organisation, operational skills and responsibilities to apply policies, strategies and practices for disaster risk reduction.

Risk reduction measures: The development and application of policies, procedures and capacities of the society and communities to lessen the negative impacts of a possible impact of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters. This includes structural and non-structural measures to avoid (prevention) or limit (mitigation and preparedness) adverse impact of hazards, as well as the development of coping capabilities.

Sustainable development: Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of “needs”, in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet present and the future needs (Brundtland Commission, 1987).

Vulnerability: A set of conditions and processes resulting from physical, social, economic and environmental factors which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards.

ACRONYMS

CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
CCA	Common Country Assessment
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-governmental organization
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
WCDR	World Conference on Disaster Reduction
WFP	World Food Programme
WTO	World Trade Organisation

APPENDIX A1

UNDP Support for Poverty reduction	
Nature of UNDP Support	Illustrative African Countries
<p>Preparation and implementation of national poverty reduction strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-ordination role for national Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) or Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). This is concentrated mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa. Technical assistance for preparation, integration of lessons from pilot studies. Study results fed into preparation (e.g. decentralising financing, civic participation in PRS, determinants of poverty). 	<p>Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Tanzania, Gambia, Lesotho, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Togo.</p>
<p>Monitoring national PRS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity development of local institutions to monitor poverty and feed analysis into policy-making. Identification of Indicators for inclusion in PRSP. Gender Dimensions of poverty reflected in statistical aspects of integrating unpaid work into national policies. <p><i>See http://intra.undp.org/bdp/service/poverty.htm</i></p>	<p>Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Senegal, Tanzania</p>
<p>Macro-economic policy options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of policy options for poverty reduction and targeted programmes for the poor; with guidelines and training Sustainable livelihoods and informal sector policies that take account of human poverty dimensions 	<p>Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gabon, Mozambique,</p>
<p>Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-level meetings to secure political commitment to long-term national strategies for reducing poverty Expansion of debate to include civil society 	<p>Guinea, Zimbabwe, Uganda</p>

Source: Results Orientated Annual report (ROAR, 2000) inter alia

APPENDIX A2

Areas of Focus	Nature of Progress Reported	Illustrative African Countries
<p>Collaboration and data info</p> <p>19.52.1 policy document</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting national 19.52 and development plans upon which the 19.52.1 are based Production of technical assistance in 19.52.1 preparation, including lessons learned, communication on data Studies based on preparation of 19.52.1 (e.g., responsibilities on local social services, determinants of poverty inequality, issue of poverty 19.52) Identifying the responsibility of various institutions, integration effective 19.52, such as government, civil society, 19.52.1.5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda, Zambia Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo Guinea, Liberia, Malawi, Rwanda Kenya, Lesotho, The Gambia, Mauritania, Uganda Lesotho, Madagascar
<p>Human development and poverty policy landscape</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examining human poverty and human development including policy based approaches – are there any knowledge and emerging practices studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Angola, Benin, Ghana, Guinea, Lesotho
<p>Human economic policy landscape</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing macroeconomic framework, preparation of priorities and background studies 	
<p>Trade</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing international trade trends and values (including the impact of trade harmonization) into 19.52.1.5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kenya, Ghana
<p>Participatory consultation, data links</p> <p>participation in the 19.52.1 process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying stakeholders, constraints and inputs through locally owned, services and knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Angola, Cameroon, Guinea, Lesotho, Niger, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia Lesotho, Tanzania
<p>19.52.1 monitoring indicators and assessments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating high level defined measures on poverty position such as multi-stakeholder industry consultation Streamlining 19.52.1 monitoring capacity – development of development indicators, data, training of national and local levels as well as poverty observatories Validating poverty surveys and assessments, especially of grassroots level, to feed into policy formulation Monitoring progress towards 19.52.1.5 on benchmarking in development progress in poverty reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kenya, Malawi, Niger, Tanzania, Chad, Lesotho, Guinea, Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda Kenya, Chad, Ghana, Malawi, Mauritania, Niger, São Tomé and Príncipe, Tanzania
<p>Gender dimension and implementation Capacity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examining 19.52.1 inputs into 19.52.1 formulation and assessing country and global progress between 19.52.1 and the CCMA 19.52.1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ghana, Guinea, Lesotho, Niger, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritania, Niger, Uganda Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Rwanda, Mozambique

Areas of Focus	Nature of Progress Reported	Illustrative African Countries
Coordination and Implementation Capacity	o Coordinating UN Country teams into HCTs, a foundation and creating cohesiveness and shared strategies between UN agencies and the CSOs (UNDP)	o Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritania, Tanzania, Uganda
	o Improved alignment of the national planning bodies and ministries, and ensuring that it is compatible with other UN, development plans	o Congo, Kenya, Lesotho, Mozambique
	o Adopting government ownership and processes for HCTs' formulation and implementation	o Angola, Mauritius, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, São Tomé and Príncipe
	o Strengthening institutional framework government capacities for HCTs' implementation	o Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Tanzania, Zambia
	o Strengthening local government capacity for HCTs' implementation	o Lesotho, Uganda
Disaster risk reduction	o Helping governments build disaster resilience in support of HCTs through shared tables and other in-country dialogues and meetings	o Angola, Mali

APPENDIX B

THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS WITH ASSOCIATED TARGETS

See: <http://www.undp.org/mdg> for up to date information

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Target 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$US1 per day.

Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality

Target 5: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.

Goal 5: Improve maternal health

Target 6: Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Target 7: Have halted by 2015, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Target 8: Have halted by 2015, and begun to reverse, the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.

Target 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water.

Target 11: Have achieved by 2020 a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development

Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system.

Includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally.

Target 13: Address the special needs of the least developed countries (LDCs).

Includes: tariff- and quota-free access for LDC exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for HIPC countries and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA (Official Development Assistance) for countries committed to poverty reduction.

Target 14: Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing states (through Barbados Programme and 22nd General Assembly provisions).

Target 15: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term.

Target 16: In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth.

Target 17: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries.

Target 18: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.

APPENDIX C

Timeline of Political Commitments to Poverty Reduction

Date	Event	Principles and Products
1972	Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, Sweden.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressed the degradation of the environment and poverty in the developing world. Produced the “Stockholm Declaration”, containing 26 common principles. The first was the universal right to adequate conditions for life and the remaining 25 focused on environmental protection. Established the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).
1975	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), Helsinki.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The “Helsinki Declaration”. The 35 nations present (including the USSR) agreed to cooperate on environmental matters.
1980	Lagos Plan of Action (LPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set of general economic goals that can be viewed as the outline of an African declaration of economic independence. Goals surround food self-sufficiency; self reliance in industry, transport and communication; human and natural resources; and science and technology.
1983	World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examined environmental and developmental crises. Made proposals for a global agenda of change. Proposed to achieve sustainable development by 2000.
1990	International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN proclaims the 1990s the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR).

Timeline of Political Commitments to Poverty Reduction (continuation)

Date	Event	Principles and Products
1992	UN Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro ("The Earth Summit").	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Politicised environmental issues. ▪ Produced the "Rio Declaration" and Agenda 21 to implement its objectives of sustainable development. ▪ Framework Convention on Climate Change. ▪ Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
1994	International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ International governments committed to a 20-year action plan to ensure the universal access to reproductive health information and services, fundamental human rights, poverty alleviation, gender equality and environmental protection.
1997	Kyoto Protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 159 governments signed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. ▪ Global and national targets for reductions of 5.2% of the industrialized world's 1990 level of emissions.
2000	General Assembly of the UN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Millennium Declaration. ▪ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
2002	The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Formulated by the African Union (AU). ▪ Eradicate poverty and ensure sustainable development in Africa.
2002	World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Declaration on Sustainable Development. ▪ Plan of Implementation (for MDGs).
2002	G8 meeting in Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 8 most wealthy countries met for annual talks. ▪ NEPAD put forward a plan for Africa's recovery ▪ G8 made promises of aid to Africa in return for good governance and economic policies.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Rowena Hay: research, text compilation and graphics

Amy Spriggs: research, text compilation and graphics

Phila Sibandze: research and graphics

Andy Paige: editing

Peter and Pat Rogers: school's version

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International Strategy

ISDR
for Disaster Reduction

The United Nations Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Within the United Nations system, the Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction is responsible for co-ordinating disaster reduction strategies and programmes.

Its mission is to help people withstand disasters by making them aware of the importance of disaster reduction measures and providing support to help reduce human, economic and social losses.

The Secretariat also provides backing for an Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction headed by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and comprising representatives of several United Nations agencies, regional institutions and non-governmental organisations.

Within the United Nations system, the Task Force is the chief body responsible for the design of disaster reduction policy.

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