

Disaster reduction in **AFRICA**

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From the editor

That slightly unusual risk ...

In our previous editorial, we said: "Africa seems to have opted gradually for the important (as opposed to the urgent): its pace in disaster reduction is more resolute and faster than that of those setting the disaster reduction agenda at global level."

We also quoted former US President Bill Clinton, in his capacity of UN Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, as saying: "*We cannot let this year pass without some real progress on disaster risk reduction... 2005 is a key year for the risk reduction agenda.*"

Africa has conformed to the above statements over the last six months.

Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into school curricula will soon be a reality in Cape Verde, Uganda and the Seychelles. Introducing insurance for disaster risk reduction has become a reality in Malawi, and the Seychelles is following suit. Academics' involvement in disaster risk reduction has kicked off with a University Network on Disaster Reduction in Africa. One more country – Senegal - has mainstreamed disaster risk reduction into its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. More national platforms have been established, many more are in the pipeline. An African Regional Centre for Disaster Risk Management will be established in Egypt. The "First African Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction" was held in December. And disaster risk reduction is poised to be on the agenda of the next African Union (AU) Summit in mid-January 2006.

It is clear that these also augur a very busy year 2006 for disaster risk reduction in Africa. The starting signal is expected from the above-mentioned AU summit. The signal will instil a sense of urgency at home. Government authorities, local communities, civil societies, the media and even private sectors will mobilize. Already disaster risk reduction training is drawing an unusually large number of people even in remote parts of Africa: they have understood that the whole thing was also about "*sustainable livelihoods*", their primary understanding of "*sustainable development*".

Will development partners match these? It may take some time for some of them to digest fully the major shift of tide that is brewing, but eventually they will do.

However, they will do so only after we contribute our own resources. Some government funds will have to be allocated... permanently. This is the most concrete translation of the top-level political commitment expected from African leaders in the next few weeks. It is also an incentive for potential partners, including local ones (private sectors).

Will our already pressurized finance ministers cooperate? The Senegalese finance minister did. The World Bank, the African Development Bank and UNDP are in favour, and our presidents may soon add to the list. Even so, nothing should be left to chance.

Close to our goal, we can afford no critical risk. It may be sensible to reduce *that slightly unusual risk...*

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ALGERIA: Disaster risk reduction discussed at national land use planning meeting

Prof. Djillali Benouar

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Experts from various fields have discussed new proposals for Algeria's National Land Use Planning Model (SNAT in French). The meeting took place on 25 October 2005 at the Land Use Planning Ministry headquarters in Algiers.

Being the first meeting of the kind involving scientists, planners and decision makers to debate issues relating to sustainable development in the framework of land use planning, it was an opportunity for seeking to mainstream, from the outset, disaster risk reduction (DRR) into land use planning – all the more because land use planning is the first chain link of the risk reduction chain.

National land use planning model

The primary objective of the SNAT is to identify the strengths and weaknesses, potential and resistance, and hindrances to Algeria's development and land use planning. This first model enabled to highlight ongoing developments, various trends, major challenges and what is really at stake in the framework of a proactive approach to sustainable development. The parameters emerging from the first phase of the SNAT are factors upon which shall be based the future of the Algerian territory.

The SNAT is based on four scenarios, each developed as follows: (1) *rationale* (desirable and desired direction for ongoing developments for the sake of sustainable development; sectoral policy orientations applicable to land use planning); (2) *strategy* (various strategies adopted to attain objectives set in the framework of sustainable development); (3) *governance* (primary importance of governance – roles of the State, local government authorities, decentralization,



Impacts of earthquake in Algeria

devolution, institutional tools, etc., - in land use planning policy in the framework of sustainable development) ; (4) *national land use planning policy* (integration between rationale, strategy and various modes of governance relevant to each scenario of sustainable development policy) ; (5) *population and territory* (territorial setup and main territorial balances – space and regions); (6) *economy* (integration between rationale and economic strategies for the proposed scenario, growth model, location of productive forces and impact on employment); (7) *infrastructures* (whole range of infrastructures involved in general policy and sectoral policies applicable to territory in the framework of proposed scenario, rationale and strategy for infrastructure policy, and international impacts) ; (8) *environment and resources* (environmental problems – natural phenomena, etc., rationale and environmental strategies in the framework of proposed scenario, ongoing general trend of sustainability, the proposed scenario's impacts on natural environments and resources, especially on water resources, and territorial impacts on sustainable development) ; (9) *society* (rationale and social strategies in the framework of proposed scenario, impacts on people's way of life and quality of life, political impacts - opposition, resistance, people's support for proposed scenario's

consequences) ; (10) *regional and international orientation* (rationale and opening-up strategies in the framework of proposed scenario).

Toward more detailed disaster risk studies

The meeting was particularly fruitful. Indeed, it enabled some awareness of priorities, trends, the concerns of each sector represented, leading to consensus by most of participants. In fact, similar meetings should be increased and adopted as a basic work tool.

Meanwhile, regarding risk reduction, the meeting enabled an initial awareness raising action: a rather successful one since the necessity of reducing disaster risks was discussed in all the scenarios proposed and debated.

Potential natural phenomena occurring on the Algerian territory were reviewed (earthquakes, floods, storms, droughts, landslides, mud flow, desertification, etc.) and risk zones were redefined. The participants resolved that more detailed disaster risk studies would be undertaken in the risk zones, in the frameworks of the Regional Land Use Planning Model (SRAT in French) and Local Land Use Planning Model (SLAT in French). ■

CAPE VERDE: Civil protection poised to be taught in schools, university from March 2006

Major Albertos C. Fernandes

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Praia, Cape Verde

Public awareness and education is being given special attention by Cape Verdean civil protection officials who, now focusing on risks, seek to help people deal with possible disasters, emergency situations and serious accidents adequately.

Betting on awareness raising

Out of concern for risks, and for the enforcement of Section (c) of Article 5 of the Civil Protection Act – which calls for « *information and training aimed at sensitizing the population on the need for self-protection and cooperation with government authorities* », the Cape Verde National Department of Civil Protection (“Serviço Nacional de Protecção Civil de Cabo Verde”, SNPC, in Portuguese) has embarked on information and awareness-raising activities on potential risks, together with a number of social communication agencies.

Contacts within Cape Verde Radio and a protocol agreement signed with the Education and Human Resource Evaluation Ministry’s « Education Radio » enabled the production of two radio programmes entitled respectively « Civil Protection – Preventing is Better » and « Civil Protection: Each and Every Citizen’s Business ». The two radio programmes are aired twice a week.

The radio programmes provide the public with important information on, for example, how to avoid serious accidents and what are the procedures in case of disaster. The purpose of the radio programmes is to ensure that citizens are provided with the necessary knowledge, norms and behavioural rules that enable them to protect themselves and their families in emergency situations.

Mainstreaming civil protection into formal education

But the National Department of Civil Protection has better plans, saying more



The national focal point on disaster risk reduction (in black trouser in front) and the Minister of Defence and Parliamentary Affairs (in front, middle) in Cape Verde

should be done to raise awareness on the need for prevention and safety. Successful contacts were made with institutions working in the same sector and with the Education Ministry to mainstream civil protection into school curricula. As a result, civil protection will be taught at all education levels – primary, secondary and tertiary – and several meetings have been held to ensure that the project kick off in March 2006.

It is to be noted that the involvement of higher education institutions – and their diverse structures and specialized departments – will give a significant boost to risk study and research. Already the few actions taken so far to sensitize educational institutions have arisen some students’ interest in risk-related issues.

As the SNPC believes that schools are major partners in the building of a culture of prevention and safety, activities involving students, teachers and school employees are under way in several schools.

Capacity building an ongoing concern

Meanwhile on Santo Antão Island in October 2005, the SNPC provided training for 39 civil protection personnel from government bodies, NGOs and the private sector. Likewise, Tarrafal Commune on Santiago Island benefited from a training session for 15 people who, eventually,

became the first firefighters and civil protection personnel in the commune’s chief town.

On 12 October 2005, the SNPC also organized, again on Santo Antão Island, traffic accident simulation exercises, in cooperation with and with the involvement of the law and order police, the Cape Verde Red Cross, The Ministry of Agriculture, The Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Fisheries, oil companies Shell and Enacol, Scouts, health authorities, and voluntary firefighters from the three Santo Antão communes.

And based on an urban fire scenario, drills, simulation exercises and routine procedure and adaptation practices were carried out on 15 November 2005 in Tarrafal Commune for local civil protection personnel.

Synergies, integrated plans needed

Civil protection being a cross-cutting and multi-disciplinary issue, it should involve the largest number of individuals and institutions. Hence, the need to develop synergies, integrated plans and multi-sectoral actions based on the principles of coordination and single command for risk mitigation and disaster vulnerability and impact reduction.

Moreover, these various actions are only a reflection of Article 9 of the Civil Protection Act which says « *civil*

protection policy is an ongoing, multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral policy that involves all government departments and agencies and other collective entities in the establishment of the environment necessary to its implementation ».

Given the important role played by the above-mentioned « other collective entities » - such as the civil society, especially the private sector in collective prevention and security, their involvement is particularly sought after. They have been urged to take full part in initiatives like training, simulation exercises, public awareness activities, etc.

Partnership, cooperation a must

To train and prepare civil protection personnel for disaster prevention and response, the SNPC also carried out training sessions, simulation exercises and lectures on issues related to disaster risk management, in partnership with other bodies.

Such a partnership – and also cooperation – are deemed necessary because of the country's economic and financial fragility. For instance in 2005,

the US administration, through its embassy in Praia (the Cape Verdean capital), built a town council civil protection emergency operation centre (CMOEP in Portuguese) in Rio Grande, Santa Cruz District, provided the centre with modern equipment and provided various resources and civil protection equipment to the three Santo Antão communes.

Towards a national platform in October 2006

One of the SNPC's main concerns is about the setting up of a National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), as stressed by the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 and recommendations from the First African Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 7 December 2005.

Even so, such a national platform is also required because of the country's strong vulnerabilities resulting from its geographical location, climate, geomorphologic features and poverty-generating factors.

To establish the national platform, a baseline document has been developed and various contacts were made in a bid to secure required technical and logistical assistance. The SNPC is currently finalizing a chronogramme of activities.

International support required

The launching of the national platform is scheduled to take place on 10 October 2006, the International Day for Disaster Reduction. However, to achieve this, the SNPC expects support from national and international organizations like the UNDP and UN/ISDR among others. To that effect, the SNPC will submit soon a project proposal to partner institutions.

After the proposed national platform is established, then the SNPC will have met one of the requirements of Section (a) of Article 4 of the Civil Protection Act, namely the setting up of national and municipal civil protection structures needed to « *prevent the occurrence of serious accidents and disasters and calamities* ».■

The GAMBIA: Disaster Management for Sustainable Development

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The Gambia has been experiencing more and more disasters. Realising that simply responding to these events is not enough, the Government has launched national initiatives to integrate disaster reduction into sustainable development.

The Gambia is ranked amongst the least developed countries in the world. A small

country, it has a land area of 11,300 km², bounded to the west by the Atlantic Ocean and by Senegal on all other sides. It is divided into the North and South Banks of the River Gambia, which claims at least 20% of the country area. During the ten years from 1993 to 2003, its population increased by over 31%, with an average annual growth rate of 2.77.

The Gambia has a large agricultural sector (livestock, crops and fisheries), a relatively small industrial sector (formal and non-formal manufacturing, building, construction and tourism) and a large services sector dominated by the government. Its 81 km coastline provides for tourism and recreation. Available natural resources include minerals, sand,

fish, forests including mangroves (wood and non-wood products) and wildlife.

Increasing Disaster Occurrences

The Gambian climate is Sudano-Sahelian, characterised by a long dry season from November to June and a rainy season from mid-June to October. The landscape is predominantly flat, with the lowest point at sea level and the highest point only about 50 m above sea level. This semi-arid geography and topography, coupled with the high population growth and density, makes the country prone to disasters, especially in the rural areas. Over the past 60 years, relative humidity has declined by

approximately 6.4 percent and temperature has risen by 1.1 degrees centigrade per decade. This has led to recurrent droughts, progressive desertification, storm surges, soil erosion and flooding.

The constantly rising sea level has in some cases resulted in the loss of agricultural land and infrastructure whilst other disasters often disrupt the daily lives of the population through destruction of basic necessities such as food, shelter, clothing and medical care.

Over the past ten years, The Gambia has experienced a number of natural disasters, man-made catastrophes and other calamities combining both natural and man-made factors, including: extensive flooding in 1999 and 2003, severe drought in 2002 which resulted in widespread and drastic reduction in household food stock and the loss of livestock, the capsizing of the Senegalese passenger vessel MV Jola in Gambian marine territory in 2002, Kotu coastal oily sludge spill in 2003, heavy fuel oil spill at the Yellitenda swamps in 2004 and locust invasion in 2004. As well as the above, the Gambia Red Cross Society's Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment of Hazards has revealed an increase in the number of man-made disasters over a two-year period in bush and domestic fires, and health-related incidences such as cholera.

The National Disaster, Emergency Relief and Resettlement Committee

The provisions that regulate the management of natural disasters are in the National Environment Management Act (NEMA), 1994. The Gambia is currently implementing its Gambia Environmental Action Plan (GEAP), executed by the National Environment Agency. One of GEAP's six components is Contingency Planning and Disaster Preparedness. Within this focus, national consultative meetings identified the following ten priority vulnerability areas for contingency plan development: floods, droughts, coastline oil spills, road incidents of hazardous substance transfer, refugees, building collapse, bush fires, ferry disasters, aircraft crash outside airport and industrial incidents.

In May 1996, The Gambia Government launched The Gambia Incorporated:



Impacts of floods in Gambia

Vision 2020, a national policy document for the period 1996-2020. In the document, the Government declared its will and commitment to initiate disaster relief strategies and programmes to combat and alleviate the cost of disasters when they occur. This policy commitment necessitated the establishment of the National Disaster, Emergency Relief and Resettlement Committee (NDERRC) in 1997, under the chairmanship of the Vice President. Initially, the NDERRC dealt with mostly refugee welfare; however its mandate has now been expanded into other areas of disaster management.

The main objective of the NDERRC is to manage and coordinate humanitarian assistance to disaster victims. It also works on planning and preparedness to prevent disasters where possible and reduce the impacts of natural hazards. The Committee has a broad membership including the Government of The Gambia, as well as national and international NGOs. From time to time, when their input is needed, other sectors including the media may be co-opted into the NDERRC.

To enhance capacity in disaster management, Committee members attend periodic training on risk reduction and humanitarian assistance. For instance, a simulation exercise was carried out on the Ferry Disaster Contingency Plan to test the understanding, capabilities and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders. The Coastal Oil Spill Plan was also recently reviewed to cover all types of oil spills. To complement the national plans, some institutions have developed risk

reduction and contingency plans specific to their activities.

National Disaster Secretariat Soon to be established

The aforementioned strategy has not yet addressed medium to longer-term aspects of disaster management. It focuses mainly on immediate emergencies and crisis management. The Gambia Government has acknowledged that disaster issues are complex, such that a committee cannot address them effectively. In this regard, there is a strong consensus to develop an integrated and effective disaster mitigation office with clear legal authority to undertake a revised method of disaster planning.

A plan is currently being implemented for the establishment of a National Disaster Secretariat, to be maintained under the multi-sectoral Office of the Vice President. The Secretariat is to address the following gaps:

- Lack of national capacity in risk reduction (human and financial resources).
- Identification of the gap between preparedness and response in order for better risk management to minimise disasters and impacts.
- Better integration of disaster management into sustainable development planning and poverty reduction programmes, for instance the Vision 2020 policy.
- Need to improve permanent communication systems to allow reporting of incidents and quick

mobilisation of stakeholders, especially where road networks and telephone lines are destroyed during incidents.

- Emergency data collection and improved recording techniques to include not only the number of occurrences, but also affected population, precise dates, secondary impacts and accompanying costs. A good data system will help identify trends to help strengthen long-term emergency planning.

Disaster Reduction for Sustainable Development

Over the past five years appeals for donor assistance have been made in response to various disasters. The received funds and material donations contributed to humanitarian relief needs, infrastructure

repair and rehabilitation of community services such as wells and livestock watering points destroyed by disasters.

The Government of The Gambia, recognising the need for adequate disaster preparedness in the wake of the accelerated pace of disasters in the country, launched a disaster strategy mitigation appeal to the UNDP. Through this appeal, The Government hopes to formulate and deploy an effective policy and legal framework and develop institutions that manage and coordinate disaster-related activities in an efficient manner at both national and local levels. This appeal has culminated in the establishment of the UNDP-supported Disaster Management Project.

The overall strategic objective of the project is to support the full integration of disaster preparedness, mitigation and

response into the country's longer-term development process. This in turn should promote a more effective use of The Gambia's available resources, minimise the suffering caused by disasters and ultimately ensure an uninterrupted pace of sustainable development. This fundamental objective is closely related to the country's broad development policy objectives.

The focus of this project amongst other things will be on capacity building support through training and awareness creation. Project interventions will be linked to decentralisation programmes at the local level as well as to national poverty reduction efforts.■

SEYCHELLES: Developing insurance for farmers, fishing boats to help reduce disaster risks

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Individual post-disaster compensation is neither sustainable nor economical. The Seychelles is developing insurance schemes for two of its most vulnerable communities. Indeed, when all other risk reduction measures fail, insurance provides a backstop to prevent disaster.

From recent experiences including the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the Government of the Seychelles has determined that the provision of individual post-disaster compensation is neither sustainable nor economical. To facilitate a shift from *ex-post* (after) to *ex-ante* (before) disaster financing for two of the most vulnerable communities, the Government is supporting the development of fishing boat owner's and farmer's insurance schemes.

Insurance coverage for fishing boats already exists but is to be made more attractive particularly to small boat owners. Agricultural insurance will be an entirely new product in the Seychelles. For both schemes to succeed, a culture of prevention needs to be instilled in the target communities, stressing that the Government will no longer provide compensation after disasters. At the same time, potential clients must be involved in the development of the schemes to ensure that stakeholder needs are met and widespread insurance uptake attained.

The farmer's insurance in particular provides an opportunity for developing insurance as a core component of a greater strategy for disaster risk reduction.

Government compensation not sustainable

In the aftermath of the 26 December 2004 tsunami, as well as torrential rainfall and floods in the Seychelles soon thereafter, the Government of Seychelles provided

direct financial support to fishing boat owners and farmers who had experienced losses.

Out of some 460 fishing boats, about 110 were damaged by the tsunami, with 15 more sunk and 6 totally lost. Small-scale individual fishermen generally do not purchase insurance, and many uninsured fishing boat owners were compensated by the Government after the tsunami - in some cases receiving more than those with insurance. It is often these uninsured smaller boat owners, whose sole livelihood is fishing, who struggle the most financially after experiencing damage or loss to their boat.

Regarding farmers, there is currently no agricultural insurance (crop or livestock) available in the country. Farm equipment and infrastructure can be covered under normal property policies, but many farmers fail to do so. As with fishing boats, the Government has, in the past - including after the 2004 tsunami and floods, often paid individual

compensation to farmers for disaster losses.

Based on these experiences, the Government has determined that it is uneconomical to provide such direct financial compensation. Therefore, it is now investigating, in cooperation with various stakeholders - including local insurance companies, how best to develop insurance for fishing boat owners and farmers. The goal is to shift disaster financing from *ex-post* to *ex-ante*, supporting a greater strategy of disaster risk reduction and empowering communities and individuals to manage their own risks.

Partnership for insurance development

The development and implementation of the needed insurance schemes is being undertaken through public-private partnerships. Government agencies involved include the Seychelles Fishing Authority, the Department of Natural Resources of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, the Insurance Authority of Seychelles and the Policy Owner's Protection Fund of the Ministry of Finance, and as an observer the National Disaster Secretariat in the Office of the President.

Two local insurance companies, H. Savy Insurance Company Limited and the State Assurance Corporation of Seychelles (SACOS), are key partners in the effort. The Seychelles Farmers Association and the Seychelles Fishing Boat Owners Association are also involved to a limited degree. As representatives of potential clients, their input in the development and implementation of the scheme was expected.

The Government recently enforced the *Agriculture and Fisheries (Incentives) Act, 2005*, recognizing the need to support these local industries to reduce dependence on imports and enhance local food security. Through tax concessions, social security enhancements, adapted employment regulations, fuel concessions and adapted foreign exchange regulations, the Act aims to make participation in agricultural and fishing industries more attractive. To have access to these incentives, a farmer or fisherman must be registered with the relevant



From left to right: Dr. Feng Min Kan, Mr. Michel Vielle and Mr. Daniel Kull

authority. It is under consideration whether insurance coverage should become a prerequisite for this registration.

Making fishing boat insurance more attractive

The two local insurance companies involved already offer fishing boat insurance, but few owners purchase it. Currently, the majority of insured fishing boats are of the larger commercial variety (about 80-100 boats) with insurance providing coverage for theft, accidents, fire, and natural hazards - including tsunami, flood and wind. Insurance companies paid out millions of Seychelles rupees for claims from the December 2004 tsunami.

Smaller fishing boat owners tend not to purchase insurance because they find the premiums too expensive and because there is a lack of a culture of prevention and risk reduction within the fishing community. With the Government in the past often paying individual compensations after disasters, many boat owners assume future similar compensation, thus finding no reason to pay for insurance.

Premiums are composed of the actual risk premium plus administrative costs and Government tax. While boats indeed carry a relatively high risk for insurers, because only a small number of fishing boats currently purchase insurance, premiums for those who do are high. A

fundamental of insurance is that the bigger the risk collective (number of clients), the smaller the burden on the individual (premium per client).

To help reduce premiums, it is proposed that the Seychelles Fishing Authority (SFA) manage a group insurance policy for fishing boat owners. SFA will therefore assume the burden of administering the insurance to individual boat owners, such that the insurance companies will only have to administer a single policy. This represents an indirect subsidisation of the scheme, with premiums being reduced because the Government covers administrative costs by providing administrative services.

SFA will also work together with the fishing community, aiming to increase the popularity of boat owner's insurance through dialogue and education. Either through such awareness raising or through the currently under-consideration requirement of insurance purchase for fishermen to register for Government incentives, increased insurance uptake will further help reduce premiums. At the same time, the Government may consider reducing the tax charged on fishing boat owner's insurance, also reducing premiums.

Developing farmer's insurance

Agricultural insurance will be initially provided for crops, covering the perils of flood, wind and drought. Livestock insurance, as well as crop coverage for

pests and diseases, will likely be investigated once the basic crop scheme is functional. An Agricultural Insurance Fund is to be established and managed by a Board consisting of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Ministry of Finance, National Meteorological Services, the two local insurance companies and the Farmers Association. Although the fund will sit within the Government, it will have a legal status wherein as a last resort clients can take claims disagreements to the judicial system.

It is proposed that the Government provide a seed grant to establish the fund on a stable financial basis. The fund will be reinsured with the local insurance companies through what is called a *quota-share treaty*. In such an agreement, premiums and claims are shared between the fund and the insurers at a pre-determined proportional basis. In the current proposal, the fund will retain 40 per cent of the risk, with each of the insurance companies assuming 30 per cent of the risk. Depending on the performance of the fund, this arrangement may be revised in future years.

Farmers in the Seychelles grow a variety of fruit and vegetable crops with wide-ranging market values, often mixing crops on small plots of land. Crops are also usually rotated at different times of the year on the same land. This adds to the complexity of rating (determining risks and premiums) of the crop insurance product. External expertise is

being pursued to help ensure that the scheme is sustainable, further considering the complexities of covering the slow-onset peril drought versus rapid-onset floods and wind.

Education, participation key for success

A key to the success of the fishing boat owner's and farmer's insurance schemes being developed in the Seychelles is education and participation of potential clients. Public education and awareness of how insurance works, its limitations and how it can be used to reduce risk will enable potential clients to voice their needs and desires better. At the same time, participation in the development process will enhance ownership, acceptance and insurance uptake.

With insurance policies normally written in sometimes confusing legal terminology, it has been decided to produce a non-technical manual to clearly explain the details of the insurance product and procedures. This will better enable potential clients to use the insurance for their own risk management.

Insurance part of greater strategy for disaster reduction

Insurance for natural hazards should be considered as the defence of "last resort," meaning that when all other risk reduction measures fail, insurance provides a backstop to prevent disaster. Indeed, premium levels, excesses

A key to the success of the fishing boat owner's and farmer's insurance schemes being developed in the Seychelles is education and participation of potential clients. Public education and awareness of how insurance works, its limitations and how it can be used to reduce risk will enable potential clients to voice their needs and desires better. At the same time, participation in the development process will enhance ownership, acceptance and insurance uptake.

(deductibles) and policy obligations can and should act as incentives to reduce underlying risk.

The Seychelles Farmers Association seeks the development of agricultural insurance as a component of a greater strategy for disaster risk reduction for the farming community. The Association understands that insurance must be linked to disaster risk reduction, and is willing to play an active role in this effort. The Red Cross Society of the Seychelles has also expressed interest in supporting this initiative for disaster risk reduction for vulnerable communities.

A targeted strategy for disaster risk reduction can include, for instance in the case of farmers, guidance, training and support for structural (secondary drainage, flood walls, etc.) and non-structural (land-use planning, crop rotation, etc.) agricultural risk management methods. This helps farmers reduce their risks and thus insurance premiums. Indeed, the crop insurance under development will consider individual levels of risk in such a way that farmers who actively mitigate, reduce risks of natural hazards will be charged lower premiums. Additionally, training on financial risk management, beyond the acquisition of insurance, will strengthen the farming community's coping capacity for all types of economic shocks. ■



Fishing boats in the Seychelles

ZAMBIA: Managing hunger with relief, risk reduction

Benedict Tembo¹ & Newton Sibanda²

Journalists

Some 1.7 million Zambians need food assistance. Hunger has been declared a national disaster. An appeal for international food aid was made. Meanwhile, alternative crops are being explored to reduce future hunger risks.

After enjoying bumper harvests in 2003 and 2004, Zambia has found itself in need of food aid. The good yields of the previous season saw the country bounce back quickly to the food deficit of 2001/2002. So rosy was the harvest in 2003 and 2004 that the World Food Programme (WFP) purchased food within the country, both to help vulnerable Zambians and to export to neighbouring countries.

Eating wild fruits, roots

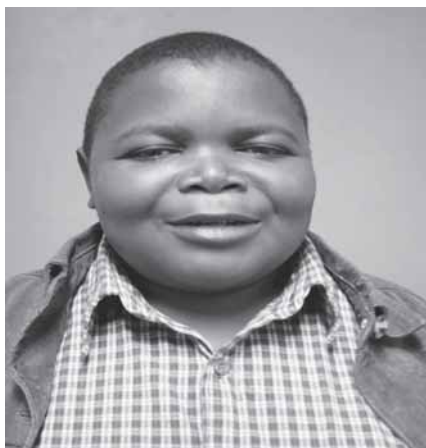
Recent vulnerability assessments by the government and its partners indicate that 1.7 million people will need food assistance this year. The WFP says a large number of Zambians are running out of food stocks held over from 2004, while some households have resorted to eating wild fruits and roots for survival, as well as selling livestock and household assets to raise money to buy food.

Erratic rainfall leading to drought and massive crop failure in the southern half of the country is the main reason behind the current food crisis. The WFP says the food crisis is further compounded by high HIV/AIDS prevalence.

National Disaster

When a country hunger survey was conducted in June 2005, it came to light that 23 districts across the country, but mostly in the southern, western and eastern provinces, needed urgent food relief. The survey revealed that an estimated 1.2 million people were threatened with hunger.

However, the recently released Comprehensive Vulnerability and Needs Assess-



Benedict tembo, a Zambian journalist who promotes DRR

ment Report established that the number of districts that were food insecure had risen to 43, with 1.7 million people now facing acute hunger.

Realising the urgency required to help people in dire need of food, Parliament on 16 November 2005 unanimously adopted a motion urging the government to declare the worsening hunger a national disaster.

Reacting to the MPs' resolution, President Levy Mwanawasa said: "Parliament has made a decision but there are various parties who feel that there is no need for us to make this declaration. But in this country, Parliament is the highest law-making body, so in view of Parliament's resolution, I hereby declare a national disaster in Zambia in so far as food shortages are concerned."

He appealed to the international community to assist Zambia with food needed to feed those threatened with hunger.

Serious socio-economic impacts

The main cause of the food insecurity is drought, with water levels in Southern Province having reached record lows. District officials in the province say over 70 per cent of boreholes and wells have dried up, and rivers have dropped to their lowest levels in nearly 12 years.

The impacts of the drought and resultant hunger reach beyond just a lack of food. Some families are reportedly walking up

to 15 km each day to collect water. In some areas, distress sales of livestock have increased significantly in the last month, with one cow now fetching half its normal cash worth. The price of chickens in rural areas most hit by hunger has plummeted to a third of the usual value. Most people have nothing left to sell.

In a normal year, people are able to rely on wild fruits and roots for sustenance between harvests. But this year, most wild fruits have already been depleted and are now difficult to find. Maize prices have also risen by about 60 per cent from one year ago, pushing the cost of this staple food beyond the reach of the poorest households.

12 million people face starvation in southern Africa

Earlier in the year, the WFP had said there was urgent need to raise about 187 million US dollars to buy food needed to feed over eight million people faced with hunger in the six southern African countries of Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Soaring prices of maize in several countries in the region are causing serious concerns as the WFP struggles to provide food for the most needy.

The situation in Southern Africa is considered so serious that UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has written to 27 heads of state, the European Commission and the African Development Bank to raise the alarm for urgent funding to avert a catastrophe.

The WFP says a critical window is closing fast for 12 million people across southern Africa to receive urgent help from the international community. The WFP reports that in Malawi, the hardest hit country in the region where about two million people face starvation, the average price of maize across 15 markets rose by nearly 50 per cent between April and July 2005. Maize prices in Mozambique were mounting rapidly throughout the country, while in Zimbabwe, where three million people need aid, the price had risen by 50 per cent over two weeks

and in many rural areas maize grain was not available.

HIV/AIDS an aggravating factor

“HIV/AIDS is not only a massive development problem but it also has a heavy impact on household food and nutrition security and greatly compounds the effect of a food crisis,” says WFP spokesperson Jo Woods.

Families affected by HIV/AIDS already face a daily struggle to feed themselves. During a food crisis, they are even more likely to become malnourished, especially children. “HIV often affects the most productive (adult) members of families; when they become sick or die, much of the family income is lost and access to food also becomes difficult,” reports Ms. Woods.

She added that in rural areas as farmers get too sick to work, less nutritious crops are often planted, or fields lie uncultivated. “Food and nutrition are very important for all people; people living with HIV or AIDS however should take extra special care to eat a healthy diet,” she says.

She explains that even in the earliest stages of HIV infection, when no symptoms are apparent, HIV-positive people need more energy and need to make sure they are eating a nutritious diet. “Good nutrition can make a big difference to a person’s well-being and can keep a person healthier for longer,” she says.

National, international responses

The Zambian government has already committed about 10 million US dollars towards the procurement of 118,000 metric tons of relief food. Some is already being distributed, with about 44,200 50-kg bags of food being sent to needy areas.

Other local stakeholders have also stepped up their efforts to help. The Council of Churches in Zambia has targeted an estimated 3,000 households for food assistance while the Zambia Episcopal Conference has drawn a 1.3 million US dollar budget towards hunger alleviation.

Responding to the government’s declaration of hunger as a national disaster, WFP has begun mobilising food for the



Women and children sell water to be able to buy food (Photo: WFP, Brenda Barton)

country. “WFP’s role is to respond to a government request for assistance. In turn, we ask the international community to fund our operational response,” says Ms. Woods. She adds: “For the last few years, WFP has based its operational response on assessments conducted by Government, UN agencies, and non-government organisations. The results of these assessments, which were conducted in May/June this year, were endorsed by the Government, and, in consultation with Government, WFP tailored its food assistance response.”

WFP is now trying to raise funds to feed 1.2 million people through to April 2006. As food distribution efforts are stepped up, many are looking beyond the current farming season, hoping there will be enough rains to guarantee a good harvest.

Cassava a sustainable risk reduction option

Over the years, Zambia has had several droughts and to avert hunger, the government resorts to importing maize from other countries, sometimes from as far as the US, at exorbitant costs that worsen the country’s foreign exchange reserves. The stopgap measure to import food has not provided any sustainable solutions that any large-scale production of cassava promises.

“The wish and determination of this office is to have holistic response to the drought-induced crisis by addressing areas of intervention,” says Bernard Namachila, Permanent Secretary in the Vice-President’s Office.

The Zambian authorities and agro-experts are looking to cassava as a replacement

for the staple crop maize. Experts advise that cassava is a sustainable option for maize because the tuber crop easily beats dry spells, grows well in less fertile soils, and is just as adequate as maize in providing starch needs. The cassava tuber could just prove to be the “white gold” that can provide wonder solutions to tragic maize crop failure that at the moment is as high as 65 per cent.

Cassava growing, as a suitable sustainable option, has generally not been explored to avert hunger. But Zambian and regional scientists have developed better yield cassava species called “tropical manioc selection” (TMS) breeds that have higher yields per hectare, bulk early, are resistant to diseases and have straight shapes that can accommodate mechanical processing in industries.

Research has also proved that cassava can be grown on the same plot for over 30 years without fertiliser with the same yield. This would help the Zambian government save a lot of money. The growing of cassava is also environmentally friendly because it takes a long time for farmers to shift to other plots to grow the root crop – unlike maize that requires fertile soil all the time.

Cassava is also a useful crop in the manufacture of animal feed and therefore would be ideal for growing in Southern Province where the highest number of cattle is found. Experts say it is 40 per cent cheaper to make stock feed from cassava chips and leaves than it is from maize.

Pilot projects

In Lusaka, a cassava distribution project

under the Lusaka Mitengo Women's Group has begun whereby one group is given the new TMS cassava breed to plant and then pass on cuttings to others as a sustainable way for peasant farmers to avert hunger and improve household food security.

Cassava until recently was predominantly grown in Luapula and Northern provinces where the soils are mostly acidic and the lower altitude favours the growth of the root crop. But trials are being conducted in Lusaka because the province has different agronomic conditions, including alkaline soils and a higher elevation than Luapula and Northern Provinces.

Agricultural extension officers and Food Policy Research Policy Institute (IFPRI) Senior Research Fellow Dr Steven Haggblade are giving professional guidance to women groups engaged in the breeding of high yield cassava in

Zambia. Dr Haggblade says cassava does not require fertiliser, therefore remaining accessible even to the poorest small farmer.

International NGO Care International, under a drought recovery food programme, has introduced a cassava planting initiative under which farm-families are supplied with cuttings which they plant, and they are also obliged to pass a designated number of cuttings on to others. Other NGOs are doing the same in a bid to fight hunger.

Changing tradition for the benefit of all

Southern Province faces the worst hunger problem but ironically it is an area where cassava growing is frowned upon as uncustomary. Inhabitant communities traditionally keep cattle and only grow maize as a main occupation. But this is

rapidly changing thanks to the widespread failure of maize and a further decrease of farmers' incomes due to cattle diseases. There is thus a need to grow cassava, which does not require the use of fertiliser.

Cassava has long held a reputation as a less labour-intensive crop than maize or any other food crop, needing weeding only once or twice in the first year and not at all in the second year. This means that even people with diminished energy such as the aged, the disabled, orphans and those afflicted by HIV/AIDS can manage to grow cassava more easily than other crops. ■

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KENYA: National museums pursue disaster preparedness, management

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To preserve and protect internationally important collections, human heritage and staff against disasters, the National Museums of Kenya's Technical Committee on Environmental, Health and Safety is actively pursuing a variety of initiatives.

The National Museums of Kenya (NMK) was founded by the East African Natural History Society in 1910 with the goal of fostering critical scientific examination of the natural attributes of the East African habitat. It has throughout the years grown into an institution of both regional and international importance, and become a valuable presence in the community. The NMK is a non-profit institution acquiring, conserving, researching and exhibiting material to the public for study, education and enjoyment.

The NMK has in its collection over 7 million priceless biological, cultural, historical, biotechnological and archival information pieces, serving as a national and international repository and centre of reference materials. Its prehistory collections, especially in palaeontology where the search for human origin has yielded remarkable collections of hominid and other fossils, are of global repute and importance.

Disaster preparedness important to NMK's overarching goals

The NMK aspires to be a world-class centre of excellence in heritage management and research for the benefit of humanity. This is achieved by collecting, documenting, preserving, researching/studying and presenting Kenya's past and present cultural and natural heritage, and to enhance knowledge, appreciation, respect, management and use of these resources for the benefit of Kenya and the world.

Considering the broad mandate of NMK in terms of research, collections, museums, antiquities, sites, monuments and information dissemination, NMK is in a unique position for disaster preparedness and management. Its priceless collection, human capital and environment at large must be protected. To achieve this, NMK has a vision to be a national repository of knowledge and centre of excellence in heritage management and research for the benefit of humanity in a safe and healthy environment.

Gaps before enforcement of disaster management measures

Before efforts to implement an environmental, health and safety programme, conditions were characterized by high risks and dangers in the usage of chemicals, poor protection facilities, poor collection management practices and weak emergency preparedness. Technicians, support staff and scientists were found to be highly exposed to chemical

risks and dangers as characterised by several cases of allergic reactions and other health complaints.

Most research and collection facilities suffered from poor space congestion and ventilation, as well as the lack of disaster-related information, practical guidelines, safety data sheets, communication systems, assembly points and technical experts. The NMK had weak environmental, disaster preparedness and management operation policies and standards in the workplace. The museum safety facilities were old and lacked modern design for disaster preparedness and management. These phenomena clearly created environmental, health and safety gaps in museum.

Establishing a disaster management technical committee

The initial concept of disaster preparedness and management came into being when the NMK established a three-person *ad hoc* committee on health and safety in 1999. The committee was mandated to investigate numerous complaints emanating from staff, in particular those working in scientific/collection departments, laboratories and regional museums, regarding potential dangers of working with hazardous/expired chemicals and risky conditions.

The *ad hoc* committee produced an Environmental, Health and Safety Manual, but unfortunately the recommendations of the document were not implemented. A systematic attempt to effectively address growing concerns had been lacking in the museum for many years. The idea of establishing a technical committee for disaster management (DM) finally came when major environmental, health and safety concerns in the research laboratories, collection rooms and regional museums came to light.

On 26 June 2003, NMK Director-General Dr Idle Omar Farah inaugurated a standing Technical Committee on Environment, Health and Safety (EHS), comprised of 10 members (managers from administration, scientific, research and regional stations). The vision was to make the NMK a safe centre of excellence with best environmental management practices and standards that promotes healthy workers and spirit for research and heritage conservation management.



Lake Turkana, in one of Kenya's arid areas

Technical committee's mandate

The purpose of the EHS is to assess, prepare and develop strategies to minimize environmental and human liabilities. The committee is mandated to:

1. Design and ensure implementation of EHS programmes in the NMK by advising management and staff on EHS issues and policy guidelines in reference to National guidelines.
2. Generate appropriate EHS information and material that is significant to the museum research, collection and conservation activities.
3. Organize awareness creation activities, conduct training and demonstrations that enhance EHS information and standards.
4. Carry out periodic inspections of EHS conditions in research, collection/conservation labs, theatres, gardens, etc. and make relevant recommendation for improvements.
5. Conduct special assessments and map potential hazards in museum facilities/environment e.g. (chemicals, radioactive materials, waste management, etc.), make relevant recommendations for their handling, disposal and management, and advise the museum management on disaster preparedness and management.

Improved disaster management

Assessing an organization's risk exposure

to issues related to the workplace's environmental, health and safety is a complex task. A number of sub-committees in satellite museums have been established to oversee the implementation of EHS activities, for instance in the Kisumu, Kitale, Narok, Kariandusi pre-historic sites and Meru museums.

There has been great improvement of collection management both at headquarters and various regional museums as new programmes like integrated pest management are fully adopted by the museums. Through expanded EHS programmes, there are now several task teams working in different areas like fire fighting and emergency preparedness, pest management, staff health and training, chemical and radioactive materials, water and sanitation, facilities improvements, and procurement of protective gear. All teams work closely with the Office of the Director General and the EHS Programme Coordinator, where arising issues are effectively discussed and tackled.

The committee has conducted several hazard mapping surveys, organizes fire-fighting and first aid training and further contributed to improved protection of museum staff through protective gear procurement. Presently, there are increased communications lines in several museum facilities with subsequent improvements in security surveillance. Services and governance improvements have been noted in the area of scientific procurements. There are also increased

fumigation frequencies in the collection systems to enhance their preservation and conservation.

Training & education

The EHS is becoming an important tool for awareness creation on disaster preparedness and management with increased capacity building for museum employees. Through a European Union-Museum funded project, several capacity building workshops have been organized for technicians and support staff. As part of an in-house training programme, EHS has organized capacity building workshops for different museums, training some 600 people. The NMK has also trained people on disaster preparedness and management at the Kenya Institute of Administration.

The EHS has developed education reading material including a safety manual, a summarized version of the manual and a brochure. These materials

are often consulted by museums for strategic planning, policy formulation, exhibitions and educational programme development.

NMK top management now strongly recognises the efforts of the committee and has started realising the important role played by the EHS programme. EHS has held a number of workshops to alert staff on safety and health issues both at the NMK headquarters, regional museums and Institute of Primate Research.

EHS benefits: beyond just disaster management

The establishment of EHS systems at the NMK and regional museums has brought many benefits:

- It has helped museums to implement best environmental management practices.
- It also manifests a practical commitment to prevent environment contami-

nation and care for people, hence help museums to avoid violation of laws, regulations or human rights principles.

- It has helped restore employee morale and public opinion about the museums, thus improving the NMK's public, intellectual and scientific image.
- In this day of rapid reorganization, the existence of EHS is beneficial as it can give quick identification and analysis of existing risks and disaster preparedness mechanisms in an institution.
- The museums have become more eco-friendly, living and dynamic places of interest for many.

The EHS continues to look forward to building partnerships that further enhance quality research, management and conservation of Kenya's natural history and cultural heritage. ■

ETHIOPIA: University to offer undergraduate degree in disaster risk management ¹

Mr. Feleke Tadele ²

Country Representative, Save the Children – Canada,
Ethiopia Programme

A Bachelor of Science Degree in Disaster Risk Management and Sustainable Development (BSc DRMSD) programme is being introduced at an Ethiopian university.

The institutionalization of disaster risk management training has remained a challenge in Ethiopia, even though the country has a long recorded history of disasters of both natural and anthropogenic origin [see box for Ethiopia's disaster profile]. Neither does the country have a disaster management training institution, nor is disaster management included in any higher education programme leading to any kind of certification. By offering the above-mentioned BSc degree programme, Bahir

Dar University, one of the country's largest and fast-growing universities, is therefore making a breakthrough.

With support from stakeholders such as the country's Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) and related agencies, the university is poised to produce competent professionals equipped with both academic and practical knowledge and skills in managing disaster and development problems afflicting the region and the nation in general.

Developing a training curriculum

Disaster management (DM) until recently was, in various parts of the world, variously included in higher education under geography, environmental studies, sociology, etc. DM as a "field" or "discipline" is relatively new: it began in the 1920s following Samuel Henry Prince's doctoral dissertation on the 1917

Halifax disaster (Scanlon, 1998; Drabek and McEntire; 2003). But it was not until the late 70s that DM started emerging as a new paradigm for dealing with rather complex development problems.

The current thinking on disasters is a product of theoretical and practical constructs that have seen the refining and reshaping the disaster (*and development*) paradigms that has occurred over the last 30 years. The most significant academic paradigms and policy guides, which have contributed immensely on the conceptualization of disasters, include: (1) the disaster-resistant community paradigm, (2) the sustainable development and sustainable hazard mitigation paradigm; and (3) the disaster-resilient community paradigm (McEntire *et al*, 2002). [For more details, see separate item in "Views & Reviews"]

Such an evolution of disaster paradigms is indicative of some search for an all-inclusive paradigm on which to base

Ethiopia's Disaster Profile

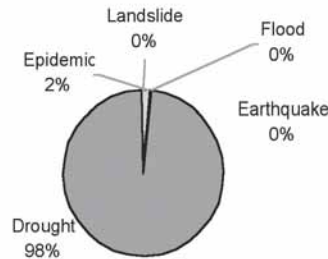
Ethiopia is located in the Horn of Africa with an estimated population of 74.2 million (UN, 2005). With an area of 1.13 million sq. km., it is a land of great physical diversity, with altitudes ranging from 116 m below sea level in the Danakil Depression, to 4,620 m at Africa's fourth highest peak, Ras Dashen. Over three-quarters of the population depend on agriculture for their living, and over three-quarters of Ethiopia's export earnings come from agriculture and livestock.

Being one of the poorest developing countries in the world, the vulnerability context of Ethiopia is quite challenging: in 2004 it ranked 170 in the human development index out of 177 countries; it ranks 21st in the world in under-five mortality rate; one-third of its population survive on less than 1 US dollar a day; it has the largest HIV/AIDS-infected population in the world; 31 per cent of female adults are literate; and 24 per cent have access to clean drinking water (UNICEF, 2005).

Ethiopia, unlike much of the rest of Africa has a long recorded history of disasters of both natural and anthropogenic origin. Common hazards include drought, floods, epidemics, landslides, earthquakes, environmental degradation and violent conflicts. Of all natural hazards, drought is the most common disaster trigger, accounting for over 98 per cent of disaster fatalities (see Figure 1 below).

Drought has in most cases combined with anthropogenic hazards, mainly civil conflicts, to trigger famines (Hancock, 1985; Clay and Holcomb, 1986). The frequency of nation-wide drought that trigger food shortages increased from

Figure 1: Fatality distribution by disaster origin



Source: Reliefweb (2003)

once in 10 years (in the 1970s and 1980s) to once in about three years now. And between 1970 and 1996, droughts and the resultant food shortage have affected millions and killed a significant number of people in Ethiopia. The 1984-85 famine, for example, is estimated to have claimed one million lives, and will go down in history as one of the greatest disasters on the African continent in the last century (Smith and Davies, 1995).

The major causes of famine include poor governance, drought, environmental degradation – poor farming practices on marginal lands, especially on exposed slopes in the North, deforestation mainly due to population pressure, poor and unplanned management of water resources. Furthermore, Ethiopia was not only caught in the crossfire of the Cold War but also there has been a marked distinction between relief and development. In addition, some donors set parallel structures alongside those of government due to distrust and suspicion between government and donors.

theoretical perspectives and policy guidelines. The disaster curriculum in higher education has been, to a large extent, shaped by these paradigms. Because of the multi-disciplinarity of subject, it is usually introduced from a variety of perspectives but may focus on any aspect of disaster management. Universities in Ethiopia shall also follow the same paradigm shift in their efforts to incorporate disaster management curriculum. It is to be noted that most universities, until recently, offered disaster courses at postgraduate level.

The B.Sc. degree programme

The BSc degree in Disaster Risk Management and Sustainable

Development (BSc DRMSD) consists of general, related and major courses. General courses offer basic knowledge and skills in communication, writing, social, civic and ethical issues. Courses found in this category are: Communication Skills; Sophomore English; Social Psychology; Civics and Ethical Education; and Computer Application.

Related courses are those which may provide prerequisite knowledge to understanding the disaster development ecology. Courses found in this category are: Introduction to Economics; Anthropology and Rural Sociology; Introduction to Statistics; Agriculture Economics; Natural Resource and

Environmental Economics; and Agro-meteorology and Climatology.

The major courses of the programme have two general themes running through: disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. This programme responds to the inherent and constructed complexity in the interrelationships between sustainable development and disasters. The programme views disasters as manifestations of non-sustainable development or unresolved development problems. At the same time, mainstreaming disaster risk reduction at all stages of the disaster cycle is viewed as an important strategy to achieve sustainable development.

The disaster risk management theme is structured within the logic of the disaster cycle. This begins with an introductory course to disasters, which is followed by a focus on pre-disaster, disaster and post-disaster situations. The sustainable development theme also begins with an introductory course in sustainable development. This is followed by specific courses in development planning, project planning, community participation and livelihood security. The programme concludes by focusing on the link between relief, rehabilitation and sustainable development. However, the courses on both themes are not independent of each other but complement each other and provide a wide range of content and analysis of real world issues alongside key skills for employment.

It is to be noted that a field practice course is offered in Year 2 Semester 2 where students will have contact with practitioners of disaster risk management and/or sustainable development and/or closely associated fields of work. Assessment will be through a report which students will submit at the beginning of the Year 3 Semester 1. Students will also complete a research methods course, which explores the research process, design, methods and data analysis. It introduces a variety of research methods appropriate to undergraduate level and prepares students for the design of their senior project. ■ (More on Ethiopia on next page)

Institutionalized Disaster Management in Ethiopia

The Relief & Rehabilitation Commission (RRC)

The first institutionalized effort in disaster management was made after the establishment of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) in 1973, which was mandated to coordinate emergency relief operations and settlement schemes in the country. The main theme of RRC disaster management was to avert drought-induced famine.

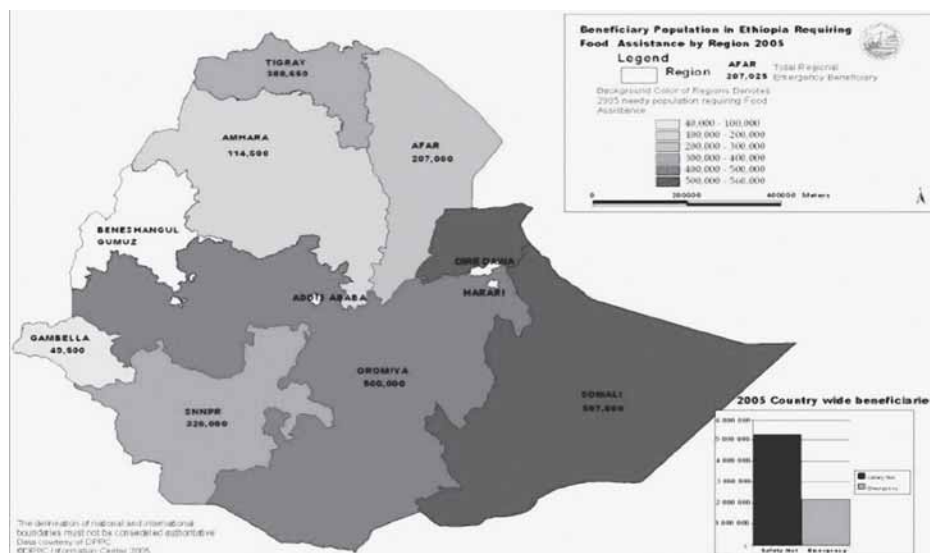
The National Policy on Disaster Prevention & Management (NPDPM)

In 1993, The Government of Ethiopia (GoE) ratified a more comprehensive disaster management policy, the National Policy on Disaster Prevention and Management (NPDPM).

The main priority areas of the policy are: saving human lives and their livelihoods; protecting the quality of the affected areas from deteriorating on the account of disaster; ensuring best use of natural resource endowment; and overcoming the root causes of vulnerability to disasters through provision of relief in the short term and promoting sustainable development in the longer term.

The Disaster Prevention & Preparedness Commission (DPPC)

A capable and effective disaster management by the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) remains a necessity as the GoE and donors work together to reduce vulnerability in geographic areas historically considered as high risk.



Map of Ethiopia

The Institutional Support Project (ISP)

In 1996, the DPPC, through its annual appeals for assistance, requested donor support in capacity building for implementation of the NPDPM policy. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), through Save the Children - Canada and Save the Children - UK, responded to the appeal, giving birth to the Institutional Support Project (ISP).

The goal of the ISP is to assist the GoE to prepare for, prevent and mitigate disasters and enhance community resilience and sustainability in the longer term. The overall strategic purpose of the project was to build the capacity of the government and other partners at regional, zonal and *woreda* levels to prepare for, detect and respond to disasters in timely and ultimately

contribute to reducing the vulnerability of people of target areas considered as high risk to disasters within the NPDPM framework.

ISP I was from January 1997 to March 1998, and ISP II from April 1998 to March 2002. During these first two phases, the project was mainly operational in Amhara and Oromia regions with some policy familiarization activities in Tigray and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples region (SNNPR). ISP III is a four year-project running from July 2002 to March 2006. It is mainly operational in Amhara and Oromia regions. It builds from previous phases of the project which provided comprehensive packages of human, physical and logistic capacity support to improve the capacity of the DPPC and relevant line departments at *woreda*, zonal, regional and federal levels.

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Footnotes

¹ Adapted from Bernard Maneya's ISP (Institutional Support Project) report on "Curriculum Framework for

Bachelor of Science Degree in Disaster Risk Management and Sustainable Development", Bahir Dar University, September 2005.

² Feleke Tadele is also the manager of the Institutional Support Project (ISP) implemented jointly in Ethiopia by Save the Children - Canada and Save the Children - UK.

Financing disaster mitigation in Nigeria: the imperative of public-private partnership

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In developing countries, cost-effective disaster reduction (DR) and new sources of DR funding must be sought. The following is an overview of some existing and proposed innovative DR funding arrangements in Nigeria.

Disasters are a development problem, posing an increasing threat to poverty reduction and sustainable development. *Ex-ante* (before) and *ex-post* (after) disaster reduction (DR) activities require adequate funding. Competing demands for resources required to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) imply that existing disaster mitigation financing mechanisms be critically examined.

This article, which provides an overview of some existing and proposed innovative financing arrangements for disaster mitigation through public-private partnerships in Nigeria, seeks to motivate different stakeholders to adapt similar arrangements.

The need for Public-Private Partnership (PPP) funding

Funding of disaster management programmes in Nigeria is presently the responsibility of the Federal Government. The primary source of financing for the responsible agency, the National Environment Management Agency (NEMA), and its activities is a proportion of the Ecological Fund. Other tiers of government have unfortunately not shown appreciable commitment towards disaster mitigation. Moreover, the entire pool of funds in the Federal Account, as well as the proportion allocated to each tier of government, are subject to the vagaries of oil pricing in the global market.

It must be understood that resources earmarked for preventing and mitigating



From right to left: Prof. Femi Olokesusi and Prof. Bola Ayeni of Nigeria

the impact of natural phenomena are high-yield investments in economic, social and political terms. In poor disaster-prone countries like Nigeria, there is need to attach importance to cost-effective mitigation and new sources of funding for loss recovery, taking advantage of recent developments in information technology and the emergence of new financial instruments and partnerships.

With a view to mobilizing financial, logistic and other relevant resources for disaster mitigation, partnerships between the government (public sector) and the private sector need to be developed. Partnerships mean joint initiatives of the public sector in conjunction with the private, for-profit and not-for-profit sectors, also referred to as the government, business and civic sectors. Within these partnerships, each of the actors contributes resources (financial, human, technical and intangibles such as information or political support) and participates in the decision-making process.

From the livelihoods approach, PPP arrangements can contribute tremendously towards disaster risk mitigation by building non-tangible assets (skills, self-help and solidarity of households and

communities), strengthening everyday lives and addressing local priorities.

Disaster risk insurance pool

There is limited domestic insurance coverage for catastrophic (disaster) risks in Nigeria, as well as a lack of economic incentives to engage in *ex-ante* disaster mitigation. It is, however, anticipated that due to a recent directive on recapitalization, insurance firms and banks should be better able to provide capacity to cover disaster risks and offer more flexibility to incur fiscal costs for relief and reconstruction.

There is the necessity for distinct PPPs to supplement the private insurance system. A proposed disaster risk insurance pool counts the insurance industry, the Nigerian Insurance Commission and banks as major stakeholders. Such a pool would add to existing *ex-post* funds and therefore provide immediate access to liquidity, as well as contribute to better risk management through inclusion of mitigation incentives, thereby enhancing prospects for investment and economic growth.

Those who obtained their houses under mortgage arrangements would especially benefit from the PPP insurance pool

scheme. The Real Estate Developers Association of Nigeria (REDAN) should therefore also be an active stakeholder in this partnership.

The development of a viable and formidable disaster risk insurance pool rests on both the fund itself and strong local and international reinsurance capabilities. Thus, involved administrative and financial agencies would have to make adequate preparations to ensure the success of this option.

States' Disaster Risk Mitigation Fund

To mobilize more finance for disaster mitigation, each state government should be encouraged to dedicate at least 2 per cent of its annual revenue as "Disaster Management Fund." Analysis of budgets for 2000-2005 indicates that no state government has a budget sub-heading for disaster mitigation.

This proposal would have generated about 55 million US dollars, had it been in place between 2000 and 2004. Local governments should embrace the same arrangement. Availability of funds at both state and local levels would enable these tiers of government to be more proactive on disaster mitigation issues rather than relying almost exclusively on NEMA whenever disasters occur.

Private sector-managed Disaster Mitigation Trust Fund

If properly managed, trust funds represent pragmatic and reliable ways of mobilizing financial resources, as exemplified by the success stories of various trust fund schemes in Nigeria. In the spirit of good governance, a proposed trust fund should be managed by two or more local reputable investment management firms.

This proposed option would sensitize people on the need for disaster mitigation and their social responsibilities to the state and its people. The fund could invest in projects that use natural resources for sustainability, bring benefits to rural areas, bring relief to victims after disasters, offer reasonable long-term dividends to investors, and offer protection and management of hazardous areas, parks and ecologically sensitive areas.

Lotteries and fund-raising events

Other potential financing options are lotteries and fund-raising events. If these schemes are properly publicised and there is widespread public perception of transparency and accountability, the money accruable from this option could be substantial. Former US Presidents George Bush Sr. and Bill Clinton together raised several millions of US dollars (as fund raisers) after the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and September 2005 Hurricane Katrina (USA) through such campaigns.

Accessing bilateral and multilateral assistance

Financial and logistic assistance from our development partners deserve attention. This is indeed a key message of the January 2005 *Hyogo Framework of Action* and *Hyogo Declaration*. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, even the highly industrialized US received offers of assistance from 70 countries. Perhaps the most critical factors in this option are astute and pragmatic international diplomacy and good governance on the part of the Nigerian government.

Special taxes and levies

While acknowledging the positive roles being played by some private operators during post-disaster events in the country, there is still ample room for them to show greater social responsibility given their peculiar operating environment. The following special taxes and levies are potential sources of finance, in view of the fact that they harbour minimal moral hazards and are progressive in nature:

- 1 US dollar per barrel of crude oil sold in the world market
- 2-3 per cent levy on air fares for domestic and international flights
- 5 per cent of all import duties collected by the Nigerian Customs Service

Accessing the Global Environment Facility

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is a special fund provided and adminis-

tered by the World Bank, with support from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). GEF's aim is to enable developing countries access funds for investment projects and related activities to protect and conserve environmental resources.

Specifically, the Fund's four main areas of concern are:

1. Protecting international waters vulnerable to pollution by shipping and other sources;
2. Conserving energy, promoting power generation that does not contribute to global warming, reforestation and forestry management;
3. Arresting the destruction of the earth's ozone layer by helping countries make the transition from chlorofluorocarbons, halons and other destructive gases to acceptable alternatives; and
4. Conserving the planet's biological diversity.

Innovative projects could be designed by NEMA, in partnership with interested state and local governments, institutions, NGOs and local banks, to access GEF for the purposes of putting in place *ex-ante* disaster mitigation measures that also serve to conserve natural resources and protect the environment.

Further policy recommendations

To support the above proposals, further policy recommendations include the establishment of a formal institutional structure to manage a proposed National Disaster Risk Mitigation Fund. This Fund should involve representatives from all levels of government, the private sector, civil society and the UN system. Facilitation of a low-interest loan facility for post-disaster reconstruction costs, modest relief grants and microcredit is needed. Such microfinance could be operated through communities, individuals and cooperative societies.

Since Nigeria is almost exclusively dependent on imported equipment, machines and chemicals for disaster risk mitigation, some fiscal and monetary incentives should be provided to importers and assemblers of such essential materials.

Availability of funds to support home construction, retrofitting and improvement can positively affect adherence to hazard-resistant building techniques in design and construction. Incorporation of natural hazard damage mitigation guidelines in local building codes, physical planning regulations, and proper enforcement of these can significantly increase building safety during hazardous events. Training local builders in the minimum requirements of safer home construction can institutionalize damage mitigation techniques in the construction of lower-income housing - typically the most vulnerable.

Conclusion

Financing disaster mitigation is a shared responsibility between the public and private sectors. In particular, state and

local governments should change their attitudes to disaster mitigation by properly budgeting for it and being more proactive. NEMA should devise appropriate strategies for mainstreaming disaster mitigation in economic development frameworks and poverty eradication programmes.

In developing innovative mitigation strategies, there is the need to consider ways of encouraging and/or requiring individual households, businesses and governments to adopt cost-effective loss reduction measures, especially insurance. It might be necessary to institute requirements through the private sector and/or governmental regulations/standards if Nigerians fail to invest in cost-effective loss reduction measures.

The following areas of research would further help in designing strategies for

financing disaster risk reduction:

- There is the need to better understand individual decision processes in areas prone to hazards. Within this context, a study could be designed to examine the concept of an insurance risk mitigation pool.
- Disaster risk mitigation measures have both direct benefits (e.g. reduction in property damage) and indirect benefits (e.g. reduction in business interruption losses). To prioritize loss reduction measures, it is therefore important to understand and quantify their costs and benefits.
- There has been no deliberate attempt in Nigeria to determine disaster cost. This is an important assignment for public policy purposes. ■

Understanding resilient, vulnerable livelihoods in South Africa, Malawi, Zambia

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Introduction

Daily, millions of people in southern Africa are suffering from food insecurity, lack of ability to secure their livelihoods, the impact of natural variability and a range of other stresses that make it hard to maintain an acceptable standard of living. On top of this, there are high rates of HIV/AIDS prevalence that impact further on the ability to undertake certain tasks and result in resources being spent on health-related issues.

A project called "Understanding Resilient and Vulnerable Livelihoods (UNRAVEL) recognizes that it is critical to understand the dynamics of these various stresses and what households are doing to respond to them. HIV/AIDS and its impact on food security were the focus of

the project but it was recognized that this needed to be situated in the broader environment of stresses. The project focused on three villages in rural areas in three southern African countries to pilot a methodology that integrates qualitative and quantitative data across time to try and capture the vulnerabilities that exist and how households are responding at present. It was felt that this rich understanding was of paramount importance in order to facilitate intervention and support that is appropriate to the people and their needs.

Implemented in South Africa, Malawi and Zambia, the project involved monitoring a number of households throughout a period of 14 months, with data collection starting in April 2004 and finishing in May 2005. There was both a research and advocacy component to the project with a focus on rural livelihoods, HIV/AIDS and food security in the three countries.

Research design & methodology

The research process involved administering a baseline survey to

respondents from 20 households in each village in the first month, then administering a semi-structured monitoring tool every two months and a final survey, based on the initial baseline at the end of 14 months. The households were selected based on their health status. Ten households in each village were chosen where there was a chronically ill person or someone who had passed away in the last year, while the other 10 households did not have a chronically ill person.

Cross-country observations

From the key vulnerabilities that were most important across all the countries, five were chosen as being important to all countries in the final collaborative meeting. These were then examined, and the symptoms of the stress were identified and the coping strategies outlined as shown in TABLE 2 below. These did differ between countries but are an indication of some of the ways that households in the three villages (one village per country) are dealing with the stresses.

This table shows a rich compilation of some of the key stresses identified as important in all the countries. For each stress, there is a range of ways that individuals and households are impacted that uncovers some of the dynamics of rural livelihoods in response to stress. The range of impacts often covers numerous factors and assets, which highlights the importance of taking a holistic approach to the assessment of vulnerability.

It is clear that individuals respond to the stresses in different ways. Some of these are sustainable and contribute to improved future household opportunities but many strategies erode livelihood assets and networks, which may make it difficult to respond to the stress in the future. Different members within a household appear to undertake different response strategies and it is not clear from this research who is bearing more of the burden. What does emerge is that children are being significantly impacted both by the stresses and in responding to the stresses. This is important to investigate as children's rights should be protected.

Understanding resilience to stress is also very important and a number of factors emerged that appear to make people more resilient to stresses. It was noted that the youth could provide a positive influence as they have many ideas, display greater interest and are keener on development whereas the elderly tend to be conservative. In Zambia, good education levels are seen as important to building resilience. Households used to send children to herd, but now they share duties and adults herd during school hours. Training about agriculture seems to help people succeed in home production and they are able to keep chickens, pigs, etc.

In Malawi, social networks and religious gatherings are a means of resilience. It is evident that most people are involved in a number of community organizations like home-based care groups, credit scheme groups, church groups like choirs, etc., and it is from these small groups that people interact, talk and sometimes support each other when they find themselves in trouble.

In South Africa, social networks were also noted as a means of resilience.

Order of stresses	Malawi	South Africa	Zambia
1	Climate	Climate	Water (lack of)
2	Food shortage	Sustainable income	Food shortage (and reduced agricultural production)
3	Participation	Dependency syndrome	Poverty
4	Literacy	Illness and death	Transport
5	Sustainable income	Coordinated activities	Illness and death

TABLE 1: Key Stressors for Households in Each Case Study Site
(according to researchers)

Symptoms of stress	Strategies to manage stress
Illness and death	
<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Coping</i>
Increased health expenditure	Borrow money when people are sick
Impacts on whole household that have to care and can't look for job	Medical expenses – resort to traditional healers and can get poor treatment
Children aren't looked after	Labour – children do adult work
Need transport to take sick to hospital but don't have money	Breadwinner loss – assets sold (Zm; Mal); some households do nothing as they were so stressed before
Special medicine required/collect on monthly basis (requires transport funds)	Funeral – get community members to donate; reduce funeral days (2 days in village; 3 in town)
Traditional healer costs	Community grieving and community safety net
Death costly – funeral and festivities - mourning for a week before and after - ritual cleaning	Migration – if husband dies woman might go back to her village or her son
Grant lost for disability, pension (SA)	Find support for children
After death of husband, 'cleansing' where widow sleeps with brother-in-law (Mal) → psychological impact and STDs	Traditional leader writes letter to school to explaining death and asks for exemption from school fees (SA) (based on govt. constitution of not denying education)
Migration after death – depending on family ties (Zm) → loss of land	School uniforms requested from the parish (Zam)
Children have to wait for grant as takes a long time (social worker assessment)	Multiple guardians care for patients in hospital in order to access food and patients stay on (Mal) – government trying to discourage
Person needs care after visiting traditional healer (SA)	Access child grants (SA)
Increased orphans	Orphan taken in by other family members
Climate	
<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Coping</i>
Drought	Finding piecework
Failing crops because of lack of rain (Zm)	Reduce food intake: Skipping meals, rationing
Failing crops because wrong crops planted – cassava still yielded but maize didn't	Food for Work – from NGOs
Food shortages	Deepen wells – try themselves else ask government
Reduced productivity of labour force due to high temperatures	Block river to channel water and grow vegetables
Wells and rivers dried out	Choose suitable crop for low rainfall (eg. Cassava)
Food shortages	
<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Coping</i>
Malnutrition	Amend diet
Ill health – decreased resistance to infection	Eat fruits and roots – wild foods
Reduced productivity	Use less preferred food, eg. cassava
Migration	Prostitution (Mal; Zm; didn't come across in SA)
Theft	Piecework
	Food for work
	Food from hospitals
	Deforestation
	Theft
	Sale of assets
Unsustainable income	
<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Coping*</i>
Children dropping out of school (Zm example of lady not able to pay for her son)	Get involved in social/community groups such as FBOs (but not in executive positions)
High percentage of income spent on food	No participation in social occasions
Prostitution	Early marriages supported by parents
Pulling out of savings clubs (SA)	Piece jobs such as making beer
Feeling of insecurity	Drinking beer
Clothing in poor state	Increased fighting
Variance in expenses (higher spending over Christmas – save during year)	Resort to volunteering with hope for provision of some kind or kept busy for sense of purpose (SA; Zm)
	Parents care for grandchildren
	Selling of assets
	Ask extended family for money – often parents
Non-participation – non involvement of targets in policy/practice formation	
<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Coping</i>
Lack of ownership	Village expresses need for assistance (eg. identification of health post in Zambia)
Destruction of property	Request meeting with local government
Abuse of the system	Direct action
Inappropriateness of projects	
Failure of development projects	
Lack of sustainability	
Community needs not supported	
Waste of resources	
Lack of information/maintenance of	

TABLE 2: Symptoms & Response to Stresses

Note: Coping strategies are a general list and are not specific to adjacent strategies

** Symptoms seem to be similar to coping mechanisms*

Informal savings clubs where people come together and share resources are important and there are funeral clubs where people put in money on a monthly or annual basis so that family members' funerals are paid for. There are also faith-based organizations and support groups.

In all the three countries, it was noted that there was a will to survive. People "don't have any else to do but they want to survive". This has also extended to the culture of caring for orphans, widows and the vulnerable. People pull together and help to the best of their ability, illustrating "the strength of the spirit of extended family in African culture".

Monitoring findings

Percentage of income spent on food

Figure 1 below indicates the percentage of income spent on food in 2004. It is clear that in South Africa less of the total income of households is spent on food. No household spent more than 75 per cent of their income on food, although the number spending 51 to 75 per cent on food increased from 1 household in 2004 to 6 in 2005, indicating a decline in food availability or increase in prices. In Malawi, the majority of people spend more than 75 per cent of their income on food and in Zambia, 10 households spend more than 75 per cent of their income on food, 7 per cent spend between 51 and 75 per cent of their income on food and 2 per cent spend between 25 and 50 per cent on food, but none spend less than 25 per cent.

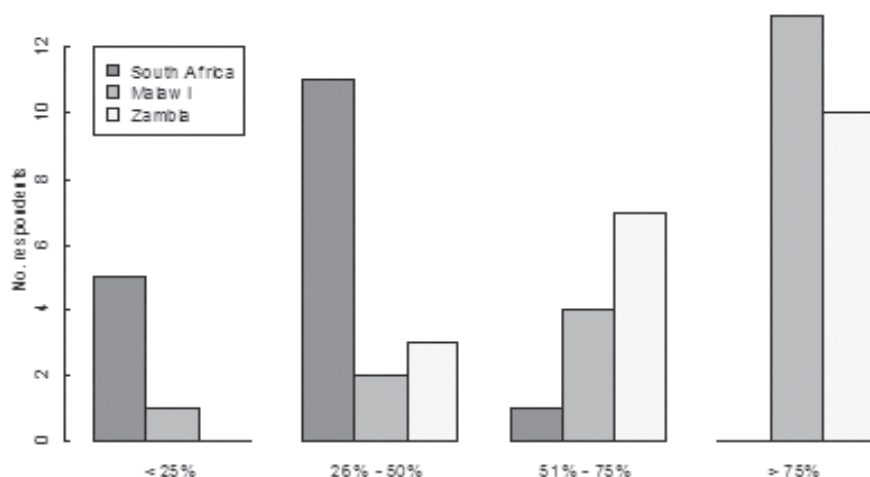


Figure 1: Percentage of income spent on food

Temporal access to food in Malawi

In Malawi, when investigating lack of food as a stressor, questions were asked about how long and in which periods households had enough food to feed the household. The results represent an important and interesting finding about food availability. Figure 2 shows the times when people were eating once or twice a day versus when they said they had "no food". Sale of assets has been overlain on this. In Malawi, the growing season is usually spread between October, when people start preparing their gardens, and April when they harvest. This means that from May until April the following year, households are expected to be eating food from their harvest. However, for the past decade, most households have been unable to harvest enough food to last for more than two months. This has resulted in most households having no food from May to February the following year. No food means literally having nothing to eat or store. However, the findings show that most people have absolutely no food from February to September (almost 75 per cent of the respondents) whereas households do have something to eat from October to January and then from February that year to September the situation gets worse again. This is contrary to the situation which might be expected, where households eat from

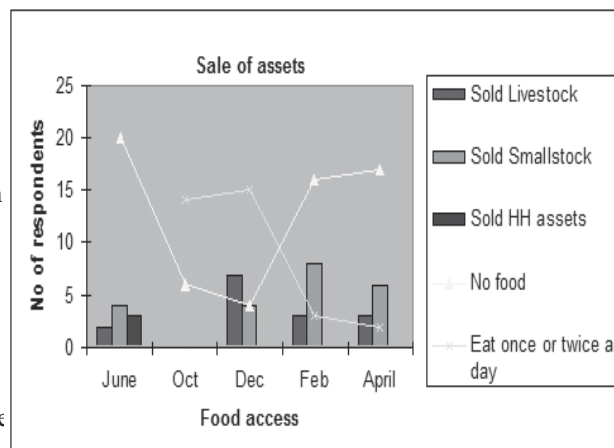


Figure 2: Food Stressors

Note: Data range April 2004 to April 2005 (Less food – eat once or twice a day; No food – nothing in a day)

their harvest during the months of February/April (soon after harvesting) until at least November. This abnormal situation can be explained by the timing of food handouts that are only distributed from October to January, yet leave people starving for the rest of the year. This is an important finding that needs to be addressed at policy level since it calls for a serious evaluation of the timing of food aid to people.

Use of coping strategies through the year in Zambia

TABLE 3 captures how use of strategies in Namakube, Zambia, changed in frequency. It shows that in 2005 some strategies were used every day whereas in 2004 they were used less frequently. In the second survey, some households reported sending their members either to eat or to beg food elsewhere, as most crops had withered or failed to grow due to drought as explained earlier. In this context, working members were the same family members who went to the field, gathered firewood, drew water or looked after cattle or goats. The cost of food purchased was high and eight households had skipped a day without food during the week in the second survey.

All the five monitoring phases have revealed inability of households to cope effectively with shocks and stresses. Between 11 and 19 households admitted they ate less preferred and cheaper food and most of them (16) failed to get help from relatives and friends. The number of meals reduced further from 2004 to

February 2005. Piecework is rare except during farming season when family members work for others for either food or cash and trading is limited to bananas and eggs and sometimes chickens.

In Zambia, a few households engage in charcoal burning (2 households) and firewood sales (2 households) frequently. Voluntary work was undertaken by caregivers who assisted those who had tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. A new AIDS patients support club has recently been formed in the village. Green vegetable growing offers income to a few who practice traditional systems of irrigation; but on a larger scale vegetables could create a steady source of income for some if there was irrigation but water is at a distance. Increasing herds of goats could support households as goats are less susceptible to diseases. Meat and milk could be obtained from them and goat milk is rich in proteins. Introduction of other types of livestock, such as donkeys and sheep, could improve on the difficulty of draught power and meat respectively. Donkeys are more resistant to diseases than cattle. It was found that there was stigma associated with HIV/AIDS, which possibly explains the small number going for Voluntary Testing and Counselling (VCT) but this highlighted the need for more sensitization by institutions involved in HIV/AIDS.

Findings

The research has provided arguments for a change in practice as well suggesting that existing policies should be carefully

Coping strategies	Every day		3-6 times per week		1-2 times per week		Less than once/week		Never	
	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005
Rely on less preferred food or less expensive food	2	9	9	6	8	2	1	1	0	0
Harvest immature crops?	0	6	2	4	8	6	1	0	9	4
Skip entire days without eating	0	1	1	3	2	4	0	0	17	12
Reduce the number of meals eaten in a day	2	12	1	0	6	1	3	0	8	7
Rely on piece work	1	1	4	4	9	4	1	2	5	9

TABLE 3: Frequency of Coping Strategies Employed in 2004, 2005 in Zambia

assessed. It should be noted that good policy is often developed but if there is no implementation and follow-up, it is useless. Emphasis should therefore be put on testing existing policies and examining how implementing available policies can be improved before coming up with new ones.

One of the key findings emerging from the research was that people are dependent on external intervention and this does not empower them to improve their situation themselves. It is critical that policy is formulated in conjunction with beneficiaries. This might help ensure that policies are responsive to the needs of communities and engage people to understand what support is needed both from the recipients' and providers' sides.

It is also clear that some policies are donor driven. Governments develop policies to benefit from international aid. This can be seen in some policies that do not reflect the needs of the recipients and

in turn lead implementation problems in terms of commitment to and ownership of the process.

Food-insecure individuals face severe constraints in their food production and in their access to food products and markets, which renders them vulnerable to food crisis. Households with ill members are particularly vulnerable: as members are often sick and weak, labour is reduced and money that might be spent on food is needed for health care including medicine, transport and support for the carer. This study examined some of the dynamics of how people survive when food is limited at the same time as facing other shocks such as illness, environmental shocks, governance failures as well as ongoing stresses.

Although this research cannot be considered as representative of southern Africa, the findings are an important step in unveiling the dynamics and realities of rural livelihoods. Much research is conducted on a short-term, once-off basis, whereas this research established relationships with participants and was ongoing through 14 months. This enabled the UNRAVEL project to capture information that was based on a good relationship with respondents that allowed them to open up and reveal the truth about their situations and show how trends changed through time. Because of the trust developed between participants and researchers, the villagers have approached the researchers to discuss their problems.

The respondents were given no remuneration, which was a problem for some at first because of some culture of expectation and dependency on external intervention. Later on, however, they



One of the households surveyed

understood that seeking information from them was another form of support. Providing information and using information from the participants enable them to own the problem and potentially start to address their livelihood constraints in a bottom-up manner.

This research was only implemented in one village in each country, and in-depth analysis was carried out only with 20 key individuals and household members in each village. To be more representative and for the sake of better policy arguments, there is need to increase the scope to capture more information. The project was intended to pilot the methodology and it is clear that there are certain benefits to this approach. However, it also has its limitations. Further work is therefore needed to develop a revised approach that builds on this project and continues to capture the dynamics and reality existing in rural southern Africa amidst a host of stresses.

The findings cover a range of themes, ranging from issues on livelihood assets and strategies to issues about climate and

health stress and how food security unravels itself through the years. This type of monitoring is very important in terms of advising on policy and programme implementation on food security, HIV/AIDS response and rural livelihoods. Many programmes have emerged recently with the primary aim of supporting HIV/AIDS-impacted individuals and households.

What emerged in this research is that people do not see their own vulnerability as being due to HIV/AIDS. They tend to see their poverty and lack of food as an overarching strain and within that, ill health makes their livelihoods more difficult to secure. They also do not see food provision as a solution but see, for example, the building of a canal as a solution. When asked why they do not just dig a canal, they say it is because they need advice on how to do it. This highlights the fact that the greatest strength is people working for their own development, and the poor are very aware of this. This has implications for policy and programming in the region and might

call for a reassessment of the focus of programming.

Community needs are seldom truly considered. There needs to be renewed emphasis on finding out what people want to know and change and then enabling them to access information and support. Quick-fix solutions might be wanted at first, but better support for longer-term solutions can make individual and village-level solutions sustainable. For this to be achieved, better coordination is necessary. This is definitely lacking at present and many people are not assuming the necessary roles. To improve this, cooperation is required between village members, district-level stakeholders, NGOs and government. The incentive for this is limited at present but would go a long way in helping people to help themselves rather than each group pursuing their own goals.



The evolution of disaster paradigms in higher education¹

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Disaster management until recently was variously included in higher education under geography, environmental studies, sociology, etc. However, DM as a “field” or “discipline” is relatively new. It began in the 1920s following Samuel Henry Prince’s doctoral dissertation on the 1917 Halifax disaster (Scanlon, 1998; Drabek and McEntire; 2003). But it was not until the late 70s that disaster management started emerging as a new paradigm for dealing with rather complex development problems.

The current thinking on disasters is a product of theoretical and practical constructs that have seen the refining and reshaping the disaster (*and development*) paradigms that has



Women and children waiting for food relief in Ethiopia

occurred over the last three decades. The most significant academic paradigms and policy guides, which have contributed immensely on the conceptualization of disasters, include: (1) the disaster-

resistant community; (2) the sustainable development and sustainable hazard mitigation; and (3) the disaster-resilient community (McEntire *et al*, 2002).

McEntire and his fellows discuss each of the paradigms in detail, which needs no repetition other than picking up the salient points, which they advance in their review.

The early paradigms

Although they do not offer some timeline, the early paradigms were comprehensive emergency management and disaster-resistant community.

The *comprehensive emergency paradigm* focused on hazards and failed to recognize the social, economic, cultural and political ecology of disasters.

The *disaster-resistant community paradigm* is related to geography, engineering and urban planning, thereby reducing its scope to mitigation activities such as hazard and vulnerability analysis, land use planning, community education and more stringent building codes. Like the former, it fails to view disasters from an ecological perspective to include the socio-economic, cultural and political dimensions.

The sustainable development & sustainable hazard mitigation paradigm

The *sustainable development and sustainable hazard mitigation paradigm* takes an ecological approach to disasters, providing a larger picture of problems and solutions to disasters than the predecessors do. It gained prominence in the late 80s and early 90s, culminating into the Rio Summit.

The Agenda 21 agreed at Rio in 1992, mainly focused on the environment as a panacea for sustainable development, and whose results, to say the least, save for the politicization of the environment, have rather been disappointing as it paid its attention to the problems of the environment rather than people within the environment (Middleton and O'Keefe, 2003:9). Or rather, it avoided central fundamental problems and instead went for the easier-to-discern peripheral fundamental causes of under or overdevelopment. It however, brought to light the importance of participatory development. Ten years later, a World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) or the Johannesburg Summit (as

it is generally known) was held in 2002. Although some of its outcomes are a mere repeat of the rhetoric which has been on the world agenda, albeit the descriptions and metaphors being different, has put the human being at the centre of the development process. In line with the *Millennium Development Goals*, WSSD affirmed that issues of poverty, hunger, ill health and the continuing deterioration of the ecosystem on which humanity depends for wellbeing, needed to be directly confronted using the participatory approaches where beneficiaries can influence and share control over their own development initiatives, decisions and resources which affect them.

It is argued that participation does not only give political legitimacy to decisions but it is also a democratic right. Because it draws on local, community-based knowledge and expertise, it tends to build ownership of decisions and trust as well as consensus and shared vision for the future. Although, in the name of participation, manipulation of people may be an *in thing*, it tends to be a useful tool for communication, cooperation and coordination between government agencies and the public (Conyers, 1992; Burkey, 1993; Chambers, 1997; Blackburn and Holland, 1998; Long, 2001).

Participation is not only based on ethical and moral grounds, it is also a pragmatic instrument for empowerment of the marginalized like women and children, in keeping with the principles of the sustainable development and hazard mitigation paradigm.

McEntire and his fellows do not doubt the efficacy of the paradigm. They, however, doubt whether the sustainable development and sustainable hazard mitigation paradigm is holistic: it tends to have some questionable relationship to certain types of disasters such as cargo spills, train derailments, airplane crashes and terrorism, making it more skewed towards natural hazards.

The invulnerable development paradigm

The invulnerable development paradigm is another paradigm suggested by McEntire (2001), under which: (1) development is pursued in a manner as to

address the vulnerabilities through altering cultural attitudes about disasters; (2) development practices are linked to vulnerability reduction; and (3) management institutions are built. While the merits of the concept cannot be doubted as it does emphasize the correlation between disasters and vulnerability, the concept tends to have more emphasis on mitigation and development than the whole complexity of disaster-development nexus and posits a danger of leading, or rather misleading, us to another debate on discourse.

The resilience paradigm

The resilience paradigm sees communities as being capable of drawing upon internal resources and competencies to manage the demands, challenges and changes from shocks and stresses resulting from a hazard event.

Resilience can take various forms depending on the nature of risk being posed by a hazard event. It can be in form of hazard-resistant building or adaptive social systems (Pelling, 2003). Resilience helps people who are living in adverse conditions or experience neglect, abuse, loss, disasters and other adversities, function with low levels of distress and high levels of hope and confidence for effective functioning (Grotberg, 2001).

The resilience paradigm has strengths. It recognises that hazard events are inevitable and recovery plans should be instituted. It captures the social, economic, political and cultural variables. It is multidisciplinary in approach to include physical sciences and engineering and social sciences.

Like any other paradigm however, the resilience paradigm has some weaknesses. Its emphasis on “bouncing back” for the community to quickly recover after a disaster makes its scope limited to recovery, thereby downplaying reduction of future vulnerability. In addition, its relationship with technological and civil disasters is questionable (McEntire *et al*, 2002).

Civil strife not captured by all the paradigms

The outstanding issue, which has not been captured by all the above

paradigms, is the aspect of civil strife, especially in the light of the September 11. McEntire and his fellows suggest the comprehensive vulnerability management as an inclusive paradigm.

However, whatever names, the required paradigm is one which will be able to reduce risks from natural or anthropogenic disaster triggers.

The disaster curriculum in higher education

The evolution of disaster paradigms is indicative of some search for an all-inclusive paradigm on which to base theoretical perspectives and policy guidelines. The disaster curriculum in higher education has to a large extent been shaped by these paradigms.

Because of the multi-disciplinarity of subject, it is usually introduced from a variety of perspectives but may focus on any aspect of disaster management. It will be noted that most universities, until recently, offered disaster courses at postgraduate level.

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Preparation for food relief distribution in Ethiopia

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Footnotes

1 Adapted from Bernard Maneya's ISP (Institutional Support Project) report on "Curriculum Framework for Bachelor of Science Degree in Disaster Risk Management and Sustainable Development", Bahir Dar University, September 2005.

2 Feleke Tadele is also the manager of the Institutional Support Project (ISP) implemented jointly in Ethiopia by Save the Children - Canada and Save the Children - UK.

2005 World Disaster Reduction Awareness Campaign

The International Day for Disaster Reduction was marked this year on 12 October 2005. Its theme in 2005 - which was designated by the UN as the "International Year of Micro-Credit" - aimed at increasing disaster resilience using microfinance and safety nets. However, as microfinance is a relatively little known topic in Africa, individual African countries were allowed to choose their own themes.

The following is a brief overview of activities marking the event in 11 African countries: Botswana, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Nigeria, the Seychelles and South Africa.

Botswana

The Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, Honourable Phandu T.C. Skelemani, broadcast a message on the significance of the International Day on national radio. A public exhibition was set up in the main mall, with various sectors represented in the National Disaster Management Technical Committee exhibiting. Since September 2005, articles on disaster reduction and the International Day's background, significance and themes had been published in the government newspaper which has national coverage. Copies of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's and Honourable Minister Skelemani's messages were also sent to all District Disaster Committees, with the Secretary General's message published in the government newspaper on 17 October.

Cape Verde

Various activities were undertaken throughout the country. Each year, a different island/municipality is chosen for the main celebrations, with Saint Antão, which experiences many forest fires, landslides and floods, this year hosting the event. A parade focusing on civil protection was held, followed by two exercise drills, one on rescue and the

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's Message

New York, 12 October 2005

"The past year has reminded people everywhere that no place in the world is immune from natural disaster. From the massive Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami to the drought- and locust-ravaged countries of Africa, from the devastation caused by hurricanes and cyclones in the United States, the Caribbean and the Pacific to heavy flooding across Europe and Asia, hundreds of thousands of people have lost their lives, and millions their livelihoods, to natural disasters.

The lesson we must draw is encapsulated in the theme of this year's International Day for Disaster Reduction: "Invest to prevent disaster." We cannot stop natural calamities, but we can and must better equip individuals and communities to withstand them. Those most vulnerable to nature's wrath are usually the poorest, which means that when we reduce poverty, we also reduce vulnerability.

In this International Year of Microcredit, we should recognize that microfinance can do much to help empower those with little or no access to traditional financial institutions, thereby reducing disaster risk and improving disaster management. By diversifying the income of high-risk populations and promoting disaster insurance, microfinance can strengthen coping mechanisms before disasters, while hastening recovery afterwards.

These are the type of innovative approaches called for in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in January, and reaffirmed in September at the World Summit at United Nations Headquarters in New York. On this International Day, after a year in which we should all have learned profound lessons, I call on governments at all levels, international organizations, civil society groups, and the private sector to implement this framework and invest in poverty reduction and disaster prevention, in order to build resilient communities and save lives."

other on combating urban fires. Civil protection was further strengthened through various training sessions and exercises. The International Day message of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan was disseminated in Portuguese to all insurance companies, institutions, NGOs and city councils. The use of microfinance for disaster reduction was promoted through roundtables with financial institutions, insurance companies and NGOs. Cape Verde has been focusing on disaster reduction through education (*see separate article in this issue*).

Central African Republic

Celebrations for the International Day were held on 12 October in the capital Bangui, organized by the United Nations. The mayor of Ouango, Mr Basile Akelelo, and the Roman Catholic

archbishop of Bangui, Mr S.E. Mons. Paulin Pombodimo, welcomed participants and opened the day. After the reading of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's message, UNDP reviewed the UN's local preparations for natural disasters. UNICEF then summarised how it had responded to recent floods, with testimony from flood-affected people. UNDP enlightened the audience on the use of microfinance for disaster risk reduction, including testimony from beneficiaries of a UNDP microfinance project. The Central African Republic Red Cross reviewed its activities on disaster reduction and response.

Congo, Republic of

Events held on 12 October in the capital, Brazzaville, focused on why and how education was an important tool for the promotion of a culture of disaster

prevention, as well as for protection against catastrophes. A radio platform was organized with representatives from the ministries of environment, foreign affairs, social affairs, humane action, public security, health, population, communication and national education, as well as members of Parliament, the Congolese Red Cross and NGOs. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's message was also widely disseminated, and the media was asked to support the Day by distributing information on the topic.

Djibouti

The International Day was marked with a speech by Interior and Decentralization Minister Mr Yacin Elmi Bouh. The minister comforted those who lost their children, relatives and friends in the 13 April 2005 flood in Djibouti. On disaster reduction in the country, he said Djibouti was one of the few African countries with a National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction. He added that the country was soon to adopt a National Policy on Disaster Risk Reduction and establish a permanent structure in charge of disaster prevention and disaster relief coordination. He ended his speech with a call for investment in disaster reduction.

Kenya

A National Platform meeting was held on 27 and 28 October (*see separate article in this issue*).

Lesotho

In Maseru, the capital, a march from the city centre to the Conference Centre was held to commemorate the International Day. In addition to government representatives, pre-school children, NGOs, UN agencies, commercial banks, savings and credit associations, financial services providers, insurance companies and other private sector actors participated. Outside the Conference Centre, all relevant institutions set up exhibitions. Particular emphasis was placed on financial services, available emergency equipment and relevant written material on disaster management issues in the country. Finally, speeches were made by all represented sectors of the economy.

Madagascar

The International Day was marked by a regional workshop on "Risk and Disaster Management" on 12 and 13 October in the northern town of Ambanja (*see separate article in this issue*).

Nigeria

The highlight of the International Day was the launch of the Nigerian National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction on 13-14 October (*see separate article in this issue*). Before the event, a press conference was held by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and other stakeholders. To

foster public enlightenment, the press conference focused on disaster risk reduction and its links with national development. National platform members also went on air (radio and television) to discuss issues of disaster risk reduction and its mainstreaming in development, as it relates to poverty reduction and job creation.

Seychelles

The Seychelles celebrated the International Day by launching its National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction on 4-5 November (*see separate article in this issue*).

South Africa

The National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC), in conjunction with the three Metros in Gauteng Province (where Pretoria and Johannesburg are), celebrated the International Day with an informative meeting. A speaker from the South African Insurance Association addressed the topic of reducing disaster risk using microfinance tools and safety nets. The gathering was attended by a wide variety of people, including local politicians, disaster management officials and members of NGOs and community-based organizations. The other eight provinces were requested to prepare their own programmes for the week of 10-14 October, and to supply the NDMC with a detailed provincial programme of action. ■

Inauguration of the National Platform of Stakeholders in Disaster Risk Reduction in Nigeria

Keynote Address

by

HE Chief Olusegun Obasanjo,
President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

Sheraton Hotel and Towers, Abuja, Nigeria
13 October 2005

“Today marks an important step in our resolve to ensure that disaster risk reduction becomes a national and indeed local priority. Actions aimed at reducing risks from natural disasters must be at the centre of development policy.

The number and gravity of disasters is on the rise globally with grave consequences for the survival, dignity and livelihood of individuals.

Before now, poor countries and poor communities were at greater risks. In recent time, however, developed countries have been at the mercy of the elements. Hurricane Katrina and Rita must by now have heightened global interest in concrete commitment to disaster risk reduction already created by the devastating earthquake and tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean on 26 December 2004. Nigeria should not be left out of the global initiatives and concerns.

A disaster is a severe disruption of a community's survival and livelihood systems, resulting from people's vulnerability to hazard impacts, and involving loss of lives and/or property on a scale which overwhelms their capacity to cope unaided.

The implication of this is that contrary to widely held beliefs, disasters, even the so-called natural disasters are not exogenous and uncontrollable events arising from abnormal situations. Disasters can therefore be reduced and, in many instances, even prevented.

Good disaster risk reduction begins well before disasters occur and continues well after a disaster. Disasters, including the everyday ones that go unnoticed by the

outside world, affect poverty reduction in many ways.

They have macroeconomic impacts. There is usually extensive damage to infrastructure and productive capital. The diversion of revenue into disaster response also has fiscal impacts. Prices of food go up and the ability of the State to provide social service is weakened.

Indeed, disasters slow down progress towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goals. Schools are often closed down during floods and earthquakes. Women and mothers (including young children) are left with heavier responsibilities and workloads, resulting in poorer health.

I am happy that we in Nigeria have taken some initiatives. The information of the multi-stakeholder National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction has arisen from the collaboration of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) and NEMA¹.

As the chairman of the African Union, I recall pledging to champion advocacy efforts at disaster risk reduction in Africa. It is largely due to the need to keep faith with that commitment that I am here today to inaugurate the National Platform.

The challenges before the Platform are many. There is now an international acknowledgement that efforts to reduce disaster risks must be systematically integrated into policies and programs for sustainable development and poverty reduction, supported through bilateral, regional and international cooperation and partnerships.

I hope therefore that the National Platform is truly a multi-stakeholder group and an all-embracing arrangement. Among other responsibilities, the Platform will need to:

1. Specifically identify activities aimed at implementing the African Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and other international Plans of Action to which Nigeria has assented;
2. Increase awareness of the importance of disaster reduction policies and practices;
3. Increase the availability of reliable and appropriate disaster-related information to the Nigerian public and disaster management agencies;
4. Mobilize resources and judiciously apply them to capacity building and advocacy functions to increase the resilience of communities in times of disasters.

It is on that note that I proceed to inaugurate the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Nigeria. Thank you and God

”
bless.

¹ National Emergency Management Agency, Nigeria

COMOROS: 2005 second volcanic eruption causes panic on main island

Mr. Ben Cheikh & Mr. Amir Karihila

National Directorate of Civil Protection,
Moroni, Comoros

Karthala volcano has again erupted on 24 November 2005 at around 1900 local time. Similar to that of 16 April 2005, the eruption occurred only inside the crater with no lava flowing outside. It, however, resulted in ashes and dust on most parts of the main island, Grande-Comore, especially in its central and southern parts.

2,000 people displaced

Due to a lava pond developing inside the crater, a thick red eruption cloud appeared and persisted for three days above the crater. Because upward lava feed was taking place at the bottom of the crater – due probably to the emergence of a lava fountain, the earth tremor remained active with high amplitude for two whole weeks.

Away from the volcano, dust was persistent on the ground, roads, buildings and trees tossed by the winds. As a result, some 2,000 panic-stricken villagers left their three villages. Some of the displaced persons took refuge at the Gendarmerie Station or the Emergency Operations Command Post, others at the INJS (National Institute for Youth and Sports) and Moroni's El-Marouf Hospital.

Earlier, officials of the Karthala Volcano Monitoring Centre had predicted three scenarios:

1. End of earth tremor followed by downward lava flow (through the lava tube) and end of eruption.
2. Lateral fissure followed by flank eruption and lava flow.
3. Lava overflowage from the crater top – even though this last scenario was, from the outset, most unlikely because the crater is very deep (about 1,200 m).



Ashes and dust on Grande-Comore island

Emergency response

On their return to their villages, the displaced persons had to deal with water that was not clean enough for consumption. The volcanic eruption also caused some damage followed by general slowing down of economic activities in several regions of the island.

An evaluation work was carried out on the ground by the National Coordination (in charge of emergency management and supervision) made up of teams from the National Directorate of Health, Army Medical Services, the Red Crescent and UNICEF. The following list of needs was submitted to the government:

1. **Water:** Draining and cleaning of public and private tanks; emergency supply of drinking water in affected regions.
2. **Agriculture & Livestock Breeding:** Establishing a monitoring system; environmental impact assessment by experts.
3. **Hygiene & Sanitation:** Site cleaning operations; protection of people (dust inhalation); information and awareness campaigns.

Efforts deployed by the Government of the Union of the Comoros during the emergency phase were supported by the UN System in the Comoros, the French

and Chinese governments, and PIROI (Regional Intervention Platform for Indian Ocean, French Red Cross).

The national emergency preparedness and response plan

The National Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, which became officially operational on 27 January 2005, was used for the first time during the 16 April 2005 volcanic eruption, which gave the Defence Ministry the opportunity of putting in place the above-mentioned National Coordination (NC).

However, all the structures forming the NC Permanent Command Post (for emergency operations) have encountered serious difficulties linked to lack of operating and transport means. For all these structures to be fully operational and effective, internal and external support is needed to strengthen their foundations for further development.

In fact, civil protection officials in the Comoros are facing the following challenge: how to ensure that all the structures agreed are established fully, at national level and island level, to ensure adequate coordination of disaster reduction (DR) and its mainstreaming into national sustainable development. ■

DJIBOUTI: Toward a national DRM strategy implementation plan

Mr. Ahmed Mohamed Madar

National Coordinator of Disaster Risk Management,
Djibouti

Members of the National Committee for Disaster Risk Management have met to discuss the implementation of Djibouti's National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management (DRM). The meeting took place at the Interior and Decentralization Ministry headquarters on 27 December 2005.

Present at the meeting were: the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Interior and Decentralization, Mr Guedda Mohamed Ahmed ; the director-general of ADETIP (Djibouti Executing Agency for Public Interest Works), Mr Kadar Ismaïl ; the national coordinator of disaster risk management, Mr Ahmed Mohamed Madar ; and members of the National Committee.

Also present was Mrs Lucile Randrianarivelo, an international consultant on DRM hired in the framework of the implementation of the National Strategy for DRM (as a project funded by the World Bank and implemented by ADETIP).

Following a welcoming speech by Mr Madar, Permanent Secretary Mr Guedda opened the proceedings with a speech



The permanent secretary of the Ministry of Interior and Decentralization,
Mr Guedda Mohamed Ahmed

highlighting the main features of the new national policy on disaster risk management.

He said mitigating disaster impact on the economy, environment and communities was possible with the help of a disaster management system focusing on well-defined goals that include all the components of disaster preparedness: vulnerability assessment, institutional framework, information systems, resources, warning systems, response mechanisms, education, and training and drills for the public.

Strategic implementation plan, technical support arrangement

The proceedings, which were facilitated by international consultant Mrs Randrianarivelo, sought to collect information on each national institution's role in DRM, and identify each institution's medium-term needs.

Eventually, the consultant will produce a document describing the tasks of a new structure to be established, the responsibilities of each technical ministries and national institutions involved in DRM, and a proposed strategic implementation plan for the National Strategy for DRM.

The ongoing study carried by the consultant will enable to develop:

1. A strategic implementation plan for the National Strategy for DRM;
2. A detailed organizational chart for the new structure, including task descriptions;
3. An evaluation of human, financial and material needs for the establishment of the new structure;
4. A proposal for a technical support arrangement for the implementation of the National Strategy for DRM. The proposal is expected to lead to the development of an operational action plan, a detailed activity schedule, a financial plan, a training plan and an information system. ■



Members of the National Committee for Disaster Risk Reduction in Djibouti

GHANA: Disaster voluntary groups successful, government to provide more funds

Brig. (Rtd) J. Odei

National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO)
Accra, Ghana

The Disaster Voluntary Group (DVG) initiative has proved to be suitable in the implementation of national disaster risk reduction programmes in Ghana. The Government has expressed willingness to provide more funds to continue the community-based programme.

The National Disaster Management Organization, NADMO, initiated a programme to put in place 550 DVGs - now with a total membership of over 12,000 individuals - to serve as credible community-based voluntary organizations that could be mobilized and equipped to assist in disaster management as well as serve as agents of community animation and sensitization on disaster risk reduction.

Latter on, NADMO set as its main objectives the enhancement of the DVGs' capacity to manage and improve the livelihoods of their members through social mobilization, community development and income generation.

Volunteers earned 310,000 US dollars for project

Poverty reduction and the building of more effective coping capacities within local communities can create a strong foundation and motivation for disaster risk reduction. The Government therefore provided funds for NADMO to assist the disaster volunteers with microcredit to enable them undertake various income-generating activities as a means of building resilience and reducing disaster impacts on the poor and vulnerable groups, particularly in rural communities. Projects under the scheme are community-based with the intention of strengthening linkages between livelihood and disaster risk reduction.



Disaster volunteers build school in Ghana

The most successful project undertaken by the DVGs, under the scheme, is the Seedling Project. In early 2004, NADMO was given a contract to raise seedlings in support of the Government's tree plantation and forestation programme. It is to be noted that the most common environmental disaster in Ghana is fire, particularly bush fire. Bush fire affects about 50 per cent of the Northern Savannah each year, with deleterious effects on the flora and fauna (Republic of Ghana 2001).

Under the Seedling Project, some 100,000 US dollars pre-financed the procurement of inputs, watering cans, chemicals and other tools like cutlass, mattocks, spades, hand trowels/forks, seeds and agrochemicals to assist the DVGs in the project.

As that was the first time the groups undertook such a project, orientation and sensitization workshops were organized for the DVGs to raise 9,230,000 seedlings of various tree species for the Government's Plantation Development Programme.

A total of 8,798,455 seedlings of various species were raised, and this was acclaimed to be the best performance by

a single public organization. Out of the quantity produced, 3,968,360 seedlings, representing 45 per cent of total production were lifted from the DVG nursery sites to be planted in degraded forest reserves throughout the country. The rest of the seedlings were distributed to communities, educational institutions, associations and organizations to be planted as wind breaks, avenue trees, community wood lots and small-scale plantations.

Some of the achievements of the programme were to: (1) restore the cover of degraded forest reserves; (2) protect public and private buildings from the ravages of rainstorms; (3) produce firewood for domestic use; and (4) generate income for the volunteers who earned 310,000 US dollars for the project.

DVG concept, nature, management

Concept

NADMO's desire to fulfil its assigned roles has led to the formation of the above-mentioned Disaster volunteer Groups (DVGs) to provide first-line response for disaster management and wealth creation in communities. They also provide early warning information on

imminent disasters. Through this concept, groups are organized, trained and equipped with skills to prevent and manage disasters. They are also assisted to undertake income-generating activities to enable them remain in their communities. In the short and long term, members of the groups shall benefit from poverty reduction programmes and be an asset to their communities.

Nature

DVGs are composed of community members with skills on various areas like farming, carpentry, masonry, plumbing, blacksmithing, carving, cottage industry, soap making, shear butler and oil extraction, who are willing to prevent and manage disasters in the community. The numerical strength of DVGs range from 10 to 25 male and female members. The groups are democratically formed and managed by members. These groups which are community-based may involve membership of the whole village and include even the village chief who can be the chairman of the DVG.

In addition to disaster management, DVGs play active roles in the following areas: (1) sensitization of the public on

disaster issues; (2) identification of hazards and early warning systems in the community; (3) disaster risk reduction; (4) rehabilitation of victims of disaster; and (5) provision of voluntary labour for the restoration of services after disaster.

The Groups' activities are also expanded to voluntary community development programmes like: (1) clean up exercises; (2) mobilization of labour and cash for the construction of school blocks, clinics, toilets, markets, community centres, libraries, etc.; and (3) environmental protection, etc.

Management

DVGs are voluntary organizations controlled by democratic principles. They elect their executives: chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, treasurer and organizer. Meetings are held periodically. The general meeting is the highest decision-making body to discuss pertinent issues relating to disaster management and economic activities of the Group. The activities of the DVGs are monitored and evaluated before registration and certification by NADMO. DVGs that are found to be functioning properly

are recommended for registration by the Department of Cooperatives after meeting their requirements.

Ghana disaster profile

The major incidence of disasters in Ghana is from epidemics, fire, pest, floods and conflicts.

Epidemics of communicable diseases such as cholera, cerebrospinal meningitis and yellow fever occur. Fire is the most common environmental disaster. Pest infestation also contributes to environmental causes of livelihood vulnerability. The most common hydrometeorological disasters that impact the livelihoods of affected communities are rain/wind storms and flooding. Windstorms are rampant between March and May, causing crop destruction and loss of life. Floods also impair livelihood security in affected areas, particularly Northern Ghana, Greater Accra and Keta Basin.

The main sources of vulnerability include poverty and development pressures, including low economic growth, rising population pressures and unplanned urbanization. Other factors include fragile and degraded environments, epidemic diseases (especially malaria and HIV/AIDS) and governance issues.

The National Disaster Management Organization

NADMO was established in 1997 to manage disasters and similar emergencies in the community. However, in line with UN General Assembly Resolution No. 44/236 of 1989, NADMO shifted focus from disaster response to disaster risk reduction with emphasis on poverty alleviation.

Indeed, studies have shown that the poor and the vulnerable bear the brunt of disasters such as drought, environmental degradation, epidemics, food insecurity, flooding, earthquake, etc. ■



The Yakabu community completely cut off from nearby villages and towns as a result of flooding (floods 2002 photo: World Vision).

KENYA: National Platform discusses country's disaster reduction activities

Mr. S.K. Maina

National Focal Point,
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Office of the President,
Nairobi, Kenya

The Kenya National Platform was launched in August 2004, drawing members from line ministries, UN agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders. The goal of the Platform is to build consensus on the way forward in promoting multi-level and multi-sectoral cooperation in disaster reduction, as well as the integration of disaster risk reduction into policy formulation, national development planning, programme and project implementation.

After the launch, a subcommittee was mandated to develop terms of reference, vision, mission, goals and objectives for the Platform, which were subsequently presented and adopted. Monthly meetings were held until March 2005 when it was recommended that future meetings be held on a quarterly basis.

A workshop, representing the first quarterly meeting, was organized on 27 October 2005 to update members of activities of the Platform, gather input to policy drafts, projects and other initiatives, and generate recommendations for the way forward.

Review of national activities

After reviewing the National Platform's background, objectives and terms of reference, specific activities were discussed. Stressing not only national initiatives implemented by the Office of Special Programmes (Office of the President) and line ministries, Kenya has been active at the international level, participating in global meetings such as the January 2005 Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR II), as well as regional meetings, particularly in the area of tsunami early warning and risk reduction in the Indian Ocean.

The National Operation Centre (NOC)



Kenya National Platform members at the workshop

operates on a 24-hours-per-day-and-7-days-per-week basis with staff seconded from line ministries and departments. NOC coordinates technical support for disaster activities and mobilizes national resources in response to disasters. Some recent coordination activities include responses to forest fires, floods, aflatoxin, conflict, and search and rescue.

Conflicts are one of the main causes of disaster in Kenya, particularly in pastoralist communities in arid and semi-arid areas. Operation *Dumisha Amani* focuses on seven conflict-prone districts where guns and ammunitions were voluntarily surrendered. The last three months have been relatively quiet except for some flare-ups, with accorded response focused on reconciliation, resettlement and rehabilitation.

The Ministry of Local Government has formed a disaster management committee with an associated budget line for disaster management. Feasibility studies for 25 local authorities has been carried out, with some local authorities having received fire tenders (16 donated by the Rotary Club). The Ministry has purchased High Response Vehicles which are expected soon and will help local authorities improve their fire fighting capacities.

All disaster situations involve medical

emergencies. A well-structured working mechanism to coordinate between medical personnel and other responding entities during disasters is therefore needed. Ambulances should be well equipped with first aid facilities, rather than just for transportation like *matatus* (public transport mini-buses).

Microfinance for disaster reduction

In the light of the 12 October 2005 International Day of Disaster Reduction, the use of microfinance for disaster reduction was reviewed. During normal times, communities should be encouraged to save some money out of their earnings through microfinance systems. During disasters, these savings and credit can be used to restore both production and distribution channels.

However, there are some challenges, for instance inadequate awareness among communities of the benefits of microfinance. Also, the purchasing power of communities is often eroded after disasters, which makes loan repayment sometimes difficult. Regarding the practicability of microfinance in rural areas, the Arid Lands Resource Management Project is implementing microfinance in some rural areas through village banks.

Early warning

The existing community-based Drought Early Warning System has been extended to the coast region through the support of FAO and the Swedish government, now covering 11 arid and 16 semi-arid districts. The new data analysis and reporting format of the EWS is more reliable, including indicators on the stability of the environment, food availability, food utilization and access to food.

The Kenya Meteorological Department, in collaboration with RANET, is founding radio stations with 25 km signal-radii to broadcast weather-related information to assist farmers. Stations have been started in some areas and will be extended throughout the main target arid and semi-arid areas. The Kenya Meteorological Training Institute and the Western University College of Science and Technology have started offering related courses in disaster management, with National Platform members encouraged to visit them for more information.

Draft national fire safety policy

A National Fire Safety Policy is being developed separately from the National Policy on Disaster Management due to the peculiarities of fire disasters. Fire incidences touch directly on individuals, communities and the entire nation, with the policy covering prevention, response and investigation at all levels. Key areas include goals and objectives, situational analysis, linkages to existing acts and

policies, policy elements and implementation strategies, legal and institutional framework, resource mobilization and management, monitoring and evaluation, definition of terms and recent documented fire outbreaks.

There is a need to coordinate and harmonise the many individual fire fighting organizations through a common strategy of service delivery, and fire services personnel/brigade should be brought onboard for further discussion of the draft policy. Human concerns of fighting fires, for instance fire fighting staff and their insurance, must also be considered. Schools should be included distinctively as public buildings that need to be protected, and the insurance component of fire safety must be expounded and contradictions cleared.

Proposed national environmental emergency contingency plan

Together with UNEP, the Office of Special Programmes (Office of the President) has been developing a National Environmental Emergency Contingency Plan. A team of representatives from line ministries identified six experts to develop a framework to guide the formulation of the contingency plan.

After reviewing existing disaster management policies and contingency plans, the experts developed a framework for the National Environmental Emergency Contingency Plan for consideration by stakeholders. The key areas of the outline are: background and justification, natural

resource base, responsibilities and objectives, development of national disaster plans, national natural resources institutional framework, response mechanisms, and authority, policy, regulatory tools and obligations.

The team should be expanded to include all relevant ministries - so as to better steer the process. All relevant ministries should also be included in the proposed Environmental Response Team. The proposed organization to implement the Contingency Plan will not conflict with the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), as the latter is a regulatory body and its mandate does not include preparedness, response and mitigation against disasters.

Threat of avian flu outbreak

Bird flu (avian influenza) has been a problem in Asia since 2003 and has spread to Europe. Avian influenza is lethal for chicken and other bird species, and is quite serious for humans, killing 40-60 per cent of those infected. The disease is spread through direct contact with infected wild birds/poultry and their products, contact with contaminated surfaces, and exposure to infected droppings or environments contaminated with the virus.

The risks for the spread of avian influenza to Kenya are migratory birds flying from affected areas and trade in poultry and poultry products from affected areas, which is enhanced by Kenya being a major transit point between global destinations.

A multi-sectoral National Avian Influenza Epidemic Preparedness Task Team has been established with technical working groups on surveillance and epidemiology, information, education, public education and social mobilization, laboratory capacity and research, infection prevention and control, as well as others. Actions so far taken by the Ministry of Health include: issuance of alerts to hospitals, awareness creation on the problem through the media, consultative meetings and collaboration with livestock counterparts, enhanced disease surveillance and procurement of protective gear for healthcare workers and others. ■



Members of the Kenyan National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

MADAGASCAR: Disaster Risk Reduction Activities in 2005 & Prospects for 2006

Mr. Jacky Roland Randimbiarison

Executive Secretary,
National Relief Council (CNS)
Madagascar

Madagascar's participation in the January 2005 World Conference on Disaster Reduction has determined the strategic direction for CNS (National Relief Council) activities in 2005 and those planned for 2006.

Efforts made in 2005 to implement the country's National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management (DRM) focused on building institutions and institutional capacity, strengthening mechanisms and means for building people's resilience to hazards, and adopting disaster risk reduction (DRR) approaches to emergency preparedness and response activities.

It is to be noted that as a result of its geographical location, relief and wind characteristics, Madagascar invariably has been vulnerable to a wide range of natural hazards aggravated by man-made factors, the negative effects of which being major hindrances to national development.

Overall objective & major events in 2005

With inadequate resources (infrastructure, financial, human), CNS did its best to undertake disaster impact prevention and mitigation in 2005.

The overall objective of CNS in 2005 was "To build further technical capacity at all levels and optimize risk and disaster impact mitigation". Activities and interventions carried out by CNS, in close cooperation with the country's National Platform, were listed in the 2005 Annual Work Programme (PTA in French).

Madagascar, in 2005, experienced some devastating disasters, including the following: cyclones Ernest and Felapi in the southwest early in the year; an inter-tropical convergence zone in the south-southeast and southeast; floods in some parts of the northwest, north and middle-



Some participants in training on disaster risk management

east; a fresh upsurge of fires in several districts; cases of malnutrition in the southeast; and the impact of the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami on the southeast coast town of Manakara.

Activities in 2005

Institution building & institutional capacity building

- CNS continued with its implementation of the country's National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in 2005. Major actions related to disaster issues - to be implemented by the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reforms - are mentioned in the Government's General Programme.
- In close cooperation with CNS, the Disaster Stakeholders' Brainstorming Committee (CRIC in French), which serves as a National Platform for DRR, played an important role in the implementation of the National Strategy. CRIC is made up of representatives of line ministries, financial donors, UN executing agencies, NGOs, associations, religious communities and major development projects. CRIC contributes to the identification of prevention, preparedness, emer-

gency relief and recovery measures and actions.

- Disaster risk management committees were established in at-risk zones at region, district and commune levels to harmonize various interventions.
- The President of the Republic demonstrated his personal commitment to DRR by donating 20,000 US dollars to UN/ISDR activities in Africa.

Identifying, evaluating and monitoring disaster risks; strengthening early warning systems

- CNS is developing a National Early Warning System with support from CARE International. To that effect, regional workshops were held. All risks are taken into consideration in the System and specific indicators are being developed for monitoring purposes.
- The cyclone and tsunami early warning system is already operational. Cooperation is under way between technical bodies and administrative authorities to improve the system.
- Early warning-related information have been disseminated to regions,

districts and communes which, in turn, sensitize the population.

Applying knowledge, innovation and education to develop a culture of safety and resilience at all levels

- Capacity building training sessions were organized in at-risk and vulnerable district capitals. The sessions were attended by region and district officials, mayors and representatives of neighbourhood residents and NGOs operating at neighbourhood level. Instead of the 11 regions initially targeted, CNS achieved a 120 per cent result by covering 13 regions. Among various topics touched on during the sessions, the internationally-applied concepts of vulnerability, risk and resilience were introduced to the participants.
- Implementing the recommendations of the Hyogo Framework for Action has been taken into consideration in school curricula. Teacher cards, notice maps and teachers' books are being used for teachings on some disaster-related issues.
- The Antananarivo University Geophysics Observatory Institute is carrying out applied research work on earthquakes in cooperation with the Directorate-General of Meteorology. Such a cooperation forms the basis of public awareness related to warnings

dispatched by the CNS, Madagascar being a participant in a recent « Early Warning Workshop for the East Coast of Africa ».

Reducing risk factors

- Biodiversity and ecosystem conservation now features as a priority in the country's environmental policy.
- The Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research will be mobilized for people's food security in the event of a disaster like flood. Grassroots communities have identified a water-resistant plant that can serve as a basic food commodity in times of crisis.
- During the above-mentioned training workshops, region, district and commune officials unanimously agreed for maximum implementation of the existing town planning policy, stressing that no building permit would be delivered in at-risk zones.
- All priority environmental protection and risk factor reduction measures will be mainstreamed into regional and communal development plans for relevant areas.

Strengthening disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels

- The above-mentioned training sessions in various regions also focuses on actions required in the

event of cyclones, floods, fires, droughts and tsunamis.

- Monitoring and aid distribution committees were established in at-risk zones. Being not part of the committees, local government authorities are in charge of implementation monitoring and report to higher-level authorities.
- Emergency plans were also developed during the same training sessions. Their implementation will be ensured, as needed, by local officials.
- Regarding the malnutrition cases observed in the southeast part of the country, response actions were taken, especially relief distribution, the establishment of needed centres, food-for-work activities, training and seed distribution under CNS coordination. These actions will still be under way in the first quarter of 2006.

Prospects for 2006

- Strengthening the mainstreaming of DRR into national policies.
- Reducing people's and property's vulnerability and improving awareness, facilitation and communication activities so as to reinforce the culture of resilience.
- Helping to reinforce the safety of infrastructures and equipment, and ensuring prompt interventions by CNS in the event of a disaster. ■

NIGERIA: ISDR National Platform launched

Dr. Olusegun Ojo

Deputy Director,
Relief and Rehabilitation
National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
Nigeria

Nigeria has established an ISDR National Platform, with the official launch taking place through a national consultative meeting in the capital, Abuja, on 13 and 14 October 2005.

As an eminent person in global diplomacy, Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo has been raising awareness and commitment on the importance of disaster reduction in the context of sustainable development among African heads of state. In Nigeria, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has been collaborating with UN/ISDR Africa to promote the mainstreaming of disaster reduction into various aspects of national development.

NEMA coordinated in March 2005 a National Roundtable Discussion of government departments, the National Assembly, the private sector and civil society. It was resolved to establish a National Platform of Stakeholders for Disaster Risk Reduction, with NEMA designated as focal secretariat. To launch the Platform, the above-mentioned national consultative meeting was held on 13 and 14 October 2005 in Abuja.

Objectives & Participation

As an overarching objective, this initiative is to ensure that disaster risk reduction becomes a national and local priority. The consultative meeting was held to prioritize goals and strategies for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into poverty reduction and sustainable development in the country.

Over 200 diverse stakeholders, comprising of federal and state representatives, the private sector, NGOs, the media and international organizations (UN agencies and donors) participated in the two-day event. Nigerian Environment Minister Dr Iyorchia Ayu, who represented the President, NEMA Director-General Mr Alhaji S.S. Markarfi were among the dignitaries participating in the Platform launch.

Proceedings

The Platform was inaugurated by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, represented by Environment Minister Dr Iyorchia Ayu. The Nigerian



Nigeria Environment Minister, Dr Iyorchia Ayu

president and the NEMA director-general, in their keynote addresses, called for a paradigm shift and the need to mainstream disaster risk reduction into Nigeria's national development planning and programmes, especially in activities such as poverty eradication. About 15 key papers were presented by strategic stakeholders to address issues of disaster



Main banner at Nigerian National Platform launch

reduction, community mobilization and diverse strategies to build national and community resilience to disasters. The national economic adviser to the president was represented by a high-ranking official of the National Planning Commission.

The coordinator of the National Poverty Eradication Programme, the UNDP country resident representative and the president's special adviser on migration and humanitarian affairs, who is also the representative of the director-general of Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research, chaired and made presentations during thematic sessions.

At the end of the inauguration, three feature articles and other short texts were disseminated through daily newspapers to domesticate the outcomes of the January 2005 Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Japan (i.e. the Hyogo Framework of Action)

for diverse policy makers and development practitioners. This was to enable them to mainstream disaster reduction into their various activities.

A communique entitled "Abuja Declaration for Disaster Risk Reduction in Nigeria" (see full text below) was adopted by participants. In summary, the Declaration makes a wake-up call to mainstream disaster risk reduction into national development activities and the

need for appropriate local and international resources to be devoted to disaster reduction issues.

Recommendations for the way forward

Agreement was reached on the way forward, focusing on the need to attract further input and build consensus on a draft "Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction for Nigeria". The meeting recommended that the draft Plan be subjected to a further process of consultation to attract relevant representative stakeholders to arrive at the final Action Plan.

Three follow-up meetings with a maximum of 20 strategic stakeholders in disaster management and national development were thus recommended to be held in Bauchi, Lokoja and Ebonyi States before the end of the first quarter of 2006. Modalities for the implementation, funding and sustainability of the various final activities of the draft Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction would be discussed and agreed during these meetings.

In conclusion, the interim committee of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction expressed its sincere gratitude to the director-general and general management of NEMA for the funding and championing of the cause of disaster reduction in the country. It also called for continued support from NEMA at this foundation stage, in view of the Agency's coordinating role in disaster management. ■

Abuja Declaration for Disaster Risk Reduction in Nigeria

1.0. PREAMBLE

1. In accordance with the Hyogo Declaration, African Regional Strategy and Plan of Action in Disaster Risk Reduction, and the persistent calls by the UN/ISDR, and conscious of the need to ensure that disaster risk reduction becomes a national and indeed local priority, desirous also that Nigeria would not be left out of the global concerns and initiatives on disaster risk reduction, a two day Stakeholders Platform in Disaster Risk Reduction in Nigeria was held at the Sheraton Hotel and Towers between October 13 and 14, 2005 under the auspices of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). The Platform, which represented over 100 stakeholder institutions, including the media and civil society, was inaugurated by the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Honourable Minister of Environment, Dr Iyorchia Ayu, who represented the President, and the Director General of NEMA, Alhaji S. S. Markarfi, were among the dignitaries at the Platform.

2. Concerned that disaster risks are on the increase globally;

3. Aware that both natural and human-induced disasters can be reduced and indeed prevented;

4. Aware also that good disaster risk reduction strategy begins well before disaster strikes and continues well after;

5. Mindful that disasters slow down progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;

6. Eager that disaster risks reduction be systematically integrated into policies and programs for sustainable development and poverty reduction in Nigeria, the Platform discussed the following 3 key sub-themes:

1. Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into National Development Programming & Strategies for Nigeria.
2. Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable National Development.
3. Multi-Stakeholders' Role in Disaster Risk Reduction.

2.0. OBSERVATIONS

1. Very aware of the urgent need for collaboration among all stakeholders in order to promote regional, national and local implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies;

2. Being also aware of the need to develop and adopt the Nigerian Plan of Action and national mechanisms for disaster risk management;

3. Noting that abuse of due process is a significant cause of disaster in Nigeria, such as in cases of collapsed structures and fire outbreaks that consume data on fraudulent financial transactions;

4. Noting also that disasters in Nigeria so far are induced more by conflict and development choices than by natural sources;

5. Recognizing that communities occupy the frontline position in response activities in times of disaster;

6. Convinced that risk management programs would require appropriate financial and moral support by development partners and stakeholders;

7. Thankful that the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, having pledged to be the chief advocate of disaster reduction in Nigeria and Africa, is now leading the campaign for Government to mainstream disaster reduction strategies into development and poverty reduction programs, the Platform, in concluding its two-day deliberations, resolved

to make recommendations and resolutions to give effect to the identified strategies for disaster risk reduction in Nigeria.

3.0. RESOLUTIONS

Whereas the Platform has extensively explored the sub-themes in a two-day plenary session;

Whereas the foregoing observations have been extensively discussed by the Platform;

Whereas also there is need to make declarations that would form the reference points for the country, the Platform hereby solemnly resolves that:

3.1. We, as individual members, shall encourage the institutions and organizations we represent to:

- a. Mainstream disaster risk management and prevention into their programs, tapping all available resources, including satellite-based, GIS, early warning and vulnerability mapping facilities now in the country;
- b. Develop and foster strategies associated with pre-disaster and post disaster management, including education and public enlightenment programs and progress, evaluation mechanism and insurance and reinsurance facilities for risk mitigation;
- c. Earmark and contribute resources to disaster risk reduction programs at the national, state and local levels, including especially programs designed to build the capacity and resilience of local communities;
- d. Support the campaign for sustainable population growth as a poverty reduction strategy;
- e. Devise ways to obtain the participation of vulnerable communities in the design and implementation of disaster risk reduction plans;
- f. Incorporate disaster risk reduction into the educational curriculum at all levels.

3.2. We, as the National Stakeholders Platform, hereby mandate NEMA to:

- a. Institute the process of finalizing the Nigerian Plan of Action for adoption by the Platform before the end of the first quarter of year 2006;
- b. Devise appropriate strategies, in consultation and collaboration with the relevant government offices, to mainstream disaster mitigation into NEEDS, SEEDS and LEEDS frameworks.

3.1. States and Local Government should, without further delay, establish Disaster Risk Reduction Stakeholders Platforms and Disaster Management Funds at their levels.

3.2. Finally, we:

- I. Invite the Federal Government to incorporate the principles of "polluter pays" into our environment laws, or vigorously implement them where they exist, to deter those responsible for human-induced disasters;
- II. Commend the federal Government for the war against corruption;
- III. Express our profound gratitude to President Obasanjo for leading the Campaign for governments in Nigeria and Africa to incorporate disaster risk reduction strategies into development and poverty reduction programs;
- IV. Thank development partners and the media for their support for the Platform.■

SEYCHELLES: National platform for disaster reduction launched

Mr. Michel Vieille

Director General,
Disaster risk and Management Secretariat,
Office of the President,
Seychelles

The Seychelles has established an ISDR National Platform. The launch took place during a national workshop held in the capital, Victoria, on 4 and 5 November 2005.

The frequency and intensity of storms and other hazards affecting the Seychelles is increasing. Events such as the 1997 floods, the 1999 bush fire, the 2002 tropical depression with winds exceeding 120 km per hour, the 2004 floods and the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami followed by torrential rains negatively impact the socio-economic status of the Seychelles. Yet, many individuals and organizations have remained reluctant to pursue risk reduction as a key activity and objective, or even to protect their own projects against potential hazards.

In this context, the national government of the Seychelles has increased its effort in disaster management and the promotion of disaster risk reduction. The National Disaster Secretariat in the Office of the President organized a workshop on 4-5 November 2005 to launch a national platform for implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), with support from UN/ISDR Africa.

Objectives & Participants

The overarching goal of the national workshop was to promote multi-level and multi-sectoral cooperation and collaboration in disaster reduction, and integration of disaster reduction into national development planning, policies and activities, through the launch of an inclusive national platform for disaster risk reduction. To facilitate a shift in emphasis from disaster response to risk reduction and integrated disaster management, the workshop:

- Provided a forum to evaluate progress made in disaster reduction and identify gaps and constraints;
- Provided an opportunity to discuss and agree priority actions for the integration of disaster reduction into national sustainable development planning and programmes;
- Officially launched the Seychelles Multi-Hazard Early Warning System.

Delegates from the ministries of environment, local government, land transport, land use and habitat, culture and health were present. Also attending were district administrators and regional coordinators from throughout the islands participated, as did the National Met Services, police, fire brigade, defence forces, Social Division, Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation, Members of the National Assembly and the National Archives. The Red Cross Society of the Seychelles, Seychelles Farmers Association, Seychelles Fishing Boat Owners Association. The National Disaster Secretariat and the UN/ISDR Secretariat also participated. In total, there were approximately 60 participants.

Proceedings

The workshop was opened by Mr Rolph Payet, acting chairman of the National Disaster Committee. This was followed by a series of presentations, providing the context for ensuing discussions. After reviewing the main points of the National Policy for Disaster Management currently under development, the National Disaster Secretariat provided a review of the hazards faced by the Seychelles. A description of the proposed early warning and response sequence, as an important component of the disaster management cycle, then followed.

The Secretariat further summarized some proposed changes to the National Disaster Committee. Gaps in need of urgent attention, critical areas and lessons learned from past experiences of

both individual components as well as the overall process of disaster management were reviewed.

The National Meteorological Service launched the national *Multi-Hazard Early Warning System*. Three colour levels are to be used, with yellow indicating an advisory, orange warning level 1 and red warning level 2. Thresholds based on observed data for floods, wind, tropical cyclones and tsunamis have been developed. A poster using descriptive text to identify the intensity of the hazard and thus urgency of the warning level has also been created, which further informs the public on how to respond to a warning.

The Red Cross Society of the Seychelles provided a review of the international Red Cross movement and the four core areas of action currently guiding the movement both at international and national levels, one of the four areas being disaster preparedness and response.

Current disaster management practices

Following these presentations, delegates held rigorous discussions on current disaster management practices in the Seychelles. Several gaps were identified, including: a need for decentralisation, lack of coordination, the need to mobilize financial and technical resources, lack of preparedness, lack of public education and involvement, the utility of risk identification, assessment and mapping, the need for community-level assessments for both risks and vulnerabilities, and the need for development of an information bureau and better media relations to avoid mixed or false messages.

Major factors that contribute to these gaps include disaster risk reduction not being a national priority, lack of political commitment, lack of understanding of the implications of not reducing risk and the geography of the Seychelles limiting the amount of land available for human development. However, many national

policies, strategies and frameworks, including those of the ministries of environment and local government, as well as the Red Cross Society, currently address some of the existing gaps in disaster reduction and response. These policies, however, are sometimes ignored or not properly implemented.

Urgent actions that can increase the efficiency of disaster risk reduction and disaster management include the development of a targeted list of recommendations from the National Platform to convince national government of the need for action, focused fund-raising, hazard assessment and mapping, use of the national policy to ensure that all sectors of development (projects) include disaster risk reduction provisions and increased information campaigns.

Outcome: national priorities for action

Delegates agreed the following priorities of action for the Seychelles National platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, listed in order of priority:

1. National leadership and ownership should be built into the finalization process of the National Policy, strategy and work plan for risk reduction and disaster management.
2. National Platform members should work both collectively and individually to lobby for political commitment to mainstream disaster risk reduction into development policy, planning and programmes. Participatory approaches should be encouraged, including involvement of high-level politicians.
3. Mobilization of financial resources at national and local levels is crucial for risk reduction and disaster management. Efforts should be made both internally (lobbying for resource allocation from national and local governments) and externally (partnerships with the private sector and mobilisation of support from donors, international organisations and the UN System).
4. The newly-established multi-hazard early warning system should be strengthened by advocating the importance of early warning among



The Seychelles National Platform members

- policy- and decision-makers, and by preparing the general public for positive response to early warnings through education, workshops and public awareness activities at community level.
 5. Knowledge enhancement training should be provided to educational institutions and the mass media. Their active participation in building a culture of disaster prevention and resilience of communities to disasters, for example mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into school curricula and weekly radio/TV programmes, should be encouraged.
 6. Communication networks and information-sharing should be enhanced among and within all stakeholders, especially between national and local governments and among all sectors related to disaster risk reduction, for example through strengthened networks (using modern technology), regular consultations, e-mail, web sites, etc.
 7. Coordination between the national and district levels should be strengthened. The coordination structure as well as roles and responsibilities should be well articulated in the national policy and work plan for risk reduction and disaster management. Multi-stakeholder consultations and decision-making processes must be transparent and empower communities.
 8. Capacity must be built through disaster risk reduction training, and material and tools to facilitate understanding and mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development programmes must be developed.
 9. Contingency plans should be developed at national and district levels to increase the effectiveness of relief assistance to affected populations.
 10. Regional collaboration should be enhanced through information sharing such as best practices.
- It was also agreed that the National Disaster Secretariat would develop the terms of reference of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, and that the Platform would then determine the frequency of its meetings based on these terms and related needs. ■

SENEGAL & WORLD BANK

IDA to fund disaster risk reduction under poverty reduction

Mr. Abdoulaye Ndiaye¹

Director of Civil Protection,
Dakar, Senegal

The International Development Association² (IDA) and the Senegalese government – represented by the Senegalese Economy and Finance Ministry – have called for the implementation of priority actions identified by the Senegal Plan of Priority Actions for Major Risk and Disaster Reduction, in the framework of the country's poverty reduction strategy.

This emerged from negotiations held in Washington from 17 to 20 October 2005 on a Second Support Credit for the Senegalese Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Mobilizing necessary resources

The Plan of Priority Actions aims eventually to make disaster reduction a government priority and mainstream it into national and local economic and social development plans and into sustainable development and poverty reduction programmes. The objective of the Plan is substantial reduction of the country's vulnerability to risks, calamities and disasters by 2015 – which conforms to the implementation period for the Hyogo Framework for Action adopted by the Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in January 2005 in Kobe-Hyogo, Japan.

Earlier, the Senegalese government had expressed its commitment to mobilize, with bilateral and multilateral partners, necessary resources for the implementation of the Plan.

The Plan of Priority Actions

The Senegalese Plan of Priority Actions for Major Risk and Disaster Reduction emerged from the following sequence of events. During a review of the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in June 2005, The Directorate of Civil



Mr. Abdoulaye Ndiaye, Director of Civil Protection

Protection was invited to take part in workshops organized by the Economy and Finance Ministry's National Poverty Reduction Monitoring Unit and by the Social Development Fund Agency. The Directorate of Civil Protection was asked to draft proposals on how to mainstream disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures into the PRSP. The Plan of Priority Actions was submitted to the Poverty Reduction Monitoring Unit to be considered for incorporation into the PRSP.

It is to be noted that earlier in the year, after the above-mentioned January 2005 Kobe World Conference, the Senegalese government had embarked on a process of re-energizing the country's institutional framework for disaster risk management, mainly by: (1) establishing a National Platform for DRR; and (2) developing a DRR Strategy Document conforming to the PRSP.

Expected results, planned activities

The Plan's expected results

- Long-term results (by 2015): DRR Strategy's substantial contribution to poverty reduction.

- Medium-term results (by 2010): DRR Strategy fully operational and attached to Poverty Reduction Strategy following formal recognition and strategic evaluation.

Planned Activities for 2005-2010

- Re-energizing the institutional and strategic framework by establishing a National Platform for DRR (in line with sub-regional, regional and international disaster risk management systems) and adopting a National DRR Strategy Document; the Strategy being a vision shared by all actors and a unifying factor to all sectoral initiatives taken in the field of disaster risk management.
- Strengthening the legal and regulatory framework in line with ongoing challenges in the fields of environment, land use and town and regional planning, etc.
- Developing and implementing sectoral programmes seeking to contain disasters like major industrial accidents and floods.
- Developing a culture of disaster risk reduction. ■

¹ Abdoulaye Ndiaye is also the current chairman (2004-2006) of the General Assembly of the International Civil Defence Organization (ICDO), and a member of the Africa Advisory Group (AAG) on Disaster Risk Reduction.

² The International Development Association (IDA) is part of the World Bank Group. It helps poorest countries reduce poverty by providing low-interest or interest-free loans and grants for programmes aimed at boosting economic growth and improving living conditions.

TANZANIA: National disaster risk reduction platform launched

Mrs. Beatha O. Swai

Director
Disaster Management Department
Prime Minister's Office
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

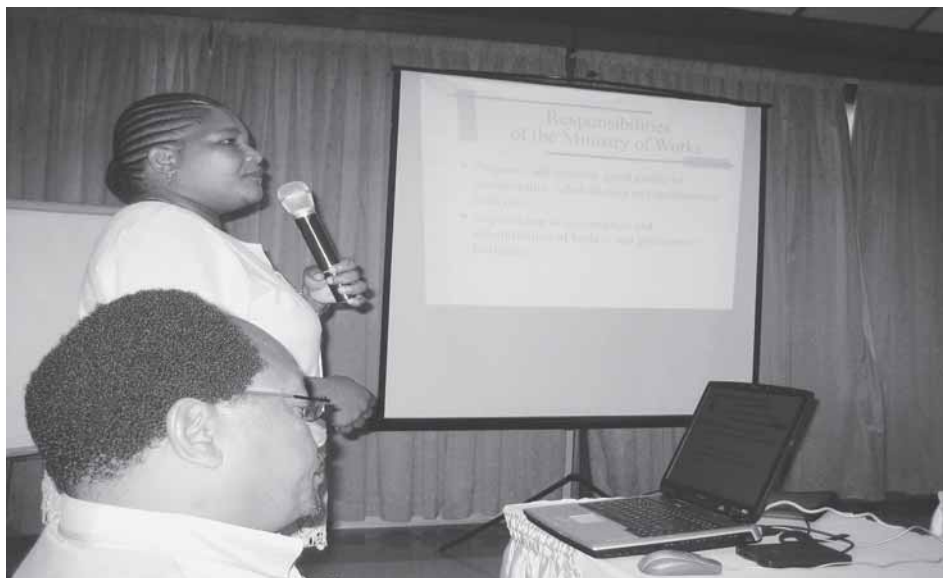
The launching of the Tanzanian national platform for disaster risk reduction took place during a national workshop from 28 to 29 November 2005 in the capital Dar-es-Salaam. 25 participants attended the event, representing various organisations that are key stakeholders of disaster risk reduction.

Tanzania experiences a variety of both natural and man-made disasters including drought, floods, epidemics, fire, strong winds, accidents (road, industrial, marine, aviation, railway), earthquake, pest infestation, influx of refugees and volcanic eruptions. These disasters have greatly disrupted development gains made over the years.

Disasters cause serious loss of lives, damage to property and infrastructure, and environmental degradation. The Government is increasingly concerned over the country's vulnerability to disasters, as well as a lack of mechanisms to reduce vulnerability, prepare for events that may occur and respond to the populations' needs in an effective way once the disasters strike.

Government Response

The Government has begun to take countermeasures to protect the nation against the impacts of disasters. This includes capacity strengthening of the Disaster Management Department (DMD), establishment of the Disaster Management Centre at the University College of Lands and Architectural Studies, development of a Disaster Management Policy, and implementation of disaster Vulnerability Assessments in all 21 regions which subsequently lead to the development of hazard maps. The latter report provided an important input



Mrs. Maria Bilia, Assistant to the Director, Disaster Management Department in Tanzania, making a presentation during the workshop

to the development of National Operational Guidelines (NOG), a document itemising responsibilities of stakeholders in disaster management process.

Disaster policy clearly recognises the importance of involving as many stakeholders as possible in all stages of disaster management. One of the key recommendations in the document is to form a national disaster forum. This forum is intended to provide an opportunity for a wider group of stakeholders to share information and experiences for better implementation of risk reduction initiatives.

In realizing the multi-stakeholder challenge to disaster risk reduction, the government of Tanzania asked UN/ISDR Africa to help establish a national platform for disaster risk reduction. The platform was subsequently launched during a national workshop, held 28-29 November 2005 in the capital Dar-es-Salaam.

Opening of the Workshop

The Director of Disaster Management Department Mrs. B. O. Swai, on behalf of

the Permanent Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office, opened the workshop with an address underscoring the importance of disaster reduction strategies and the commitment and support of the Government to the establishment of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Platform. Mrs. Swai further shared with participants the objectives and expectations of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Platform.

The history of global disaster risk reduction initiatives set the stage for the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (HFA)*, which came out of the second World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Kobe Hyogo Japan in January 2005. Of specific importance are the five priorities for action listed in the HFA.

The establishment and functioning of national platforms is the first key activity under the Priority 1 of the HFA. A national platform serves as a key institutional framework to facilitate coordination across sectors and to maintain a broad-based dialogue at the national level for promoting awareness among relevant sectors.

Proceedings

After the opening remarks and introduction by the Director the following papers were presented and discussed:

- An overview of Disaster Management was presented by Mr. D. Kirway of the Disaster Management Department (DMD). He took the participants through the definition of a disaster according to Act No. 9 of 1990 and the Disaster Management Policy. He also explained the Disaster Profile in Tanzania; Key stakeholders in Disaster Management, Decision Making Process in Disaster Response; Strengths and Task Ahead in Disaster Management.
- National Disaster Management Policy was presented by Ms. Bilia of (DMD). This policy was passed by the Government in 2004 as a general guideline on disaster management activities in the country. The policy also set an Institutional Framework from the National to Community level and specifies key stakeholders of disaster management in the country.
- Trends in Global and Regional Disaster Reduction and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction were presented by Ms. Noroarisoa Rakotondrandria from UN/ISDR Africa in Nairobi, Kenya. She explained the meaning of ISDR where it came from; how is it implemented and the rationale of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, its objectives and members and guiding principle for effective national Platform. She also pointed out lessons learnt and difficulties encountered in implementation of platforms in different countries and a framework for disaster risk reduction.
- Development and Disaster Risk Reduction was presented by Mr. Ib Knutsen of UN/ISDR Africa from Nairobi. He explained about the possible threats to development posed by disasters. He linked disaster risk management and poverty reduction, disaster risk management and climate change; disaster risk management and governance. Finally he shared with participants objectives of the World Conference on Disaster reduction.
- Poverty Reduction and Disaster Risk Reduction in Tanzania was presented by Ms. Nanai of DMD. She started by defining poverty reduction and a disaster. She also explained disaster management initiatives done by the department of Disaster management to reduce risk in the country. She continued with Sectors initiatives that address related issues on disaster risk reduction and limitations on reducing risks.
- Ms. M. Bilia shared with participants a paper on an overview of Disaster Management Sector Policies Implementation. The paper highlighted Sector Policies related to disaster management in the country. Sector policies explained were from six ministries namely; Home Affairs, Agriculture. She also linked the Disaster management Policy with Rural Development Strategy and activities done by NGOs.
- Mr. Ib Knutsen of UN/ISDR Africa from Nairobi reviewed the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 - 2015 and Declaration. He linked disasters and their impacts to development; disaster risk management as a cross-cutting issue and its relation to poverty reduction, water resources management, agriculture and land use, governance, climate change and sustainable development. He also presented the World Conference on Disaster Reduction.

Recommendations

After the two-day discussions, participants made the following recommendations:

1. Review and adoption of financial and funding mechanisms to support National Disaster Risk Reduction activities. The issue of financial and procurement arrangements governing disaster response and expenditure (Procurement Act)
2. Review of the existing legal framework and adoption of legislators that support National Disaster Risk Reduction. The issue of compensation to disaster affected persons and property was also discussed together with insurance and safety net mechanisms.
3. Link and align Disaster Management Policy to National Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategies. Uptake of disaster risk reduction strategies within sectoral and departmental plans and strategies and the adoption of a multi sectors approach to disaster management.
4. An effective information management system to support risks reduction activities is needed. Access to technologies that enhance early warning information and consideration of traditional systems and practices that support disaster risk reduction is required.
5. Link Disaster Management Policy and Sectoral Policies in order to support disaster risk reduction issues.
6. The Disaster Management Department (DMD) should be an Executive Agency instead of the current set up where by DMD is under PMO.

The Way Forward

Mrs. Swai presented keynotes on proposed Technical Committees (TCs) under the National Platform in the country. After discussion by participants, four TCs were formed as a way forward for implementation of activities of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Platform. The developed TCs are:

1. Policy, Legal and Institutional Framework (led by the President Office Planning and Privatisation)
2. Disaster Risk Assessment and Monitoring (led by the Prime Minister's Office)
3. Knowledge Management and Education (Led by the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children)
4. Disaster Preparedness and Response (led by the Ministry of Home Affairs)

After the formation of the TCs, the rapporteurs Ms. Baruani and Mr. Kwame, presented the Tanzania Follow-up of the HFA for 2005–2015. Under its guidance, the TCs were assigned responsibilities whereby they were required to present an Action Plan with a timeframe by March 2006. ■

UGANDA: Mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction under way

Mr Martin Owor

Head of Disaster Risk Reduction Division,
Department of Disaster Management & Refugees,
Kampala, Uganda

The Government of Uganda has, over the recent past, embarked on mainstreaming disaster risk reduction (DRR) into sectoral programmes and activities of line ministries and Departments of Government.

Disaster risk reduction concerns have been mainstreamed into the National Policy for Water and Sanitation and the National Health and Nutrition Strategic Plan. They are being mainstreamed into the National Plan for Education and Sports.

DRR a poverty eradication factor

Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into the programmes and plans of the relevant line ministries is of crucial importance. Indeed, from a development perspective, disasters should not be seen as isolated random acts of nature. Rather disasters should be viewed as expected consequence of poor risk management over the long term. From this perspective, both risk reduction and wider disaster management are clearly multi-disciplinary processes which require the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders.

Risk reduction is therefore a developmental imperative for achieving sustainable growth, as well as a strategy that protects the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable and hence a poverty eradication factor.

However, as government ministries and departments always have multiple and often competing priorities, disaster risk reduction happens not to be always a top priority. By integrating disaster risk reduction issues into ministerial policies, we place disaster

risk reduction issues amongst the core area of focus.

School curricula revised to include DRR

As indicated above, school curricula are being revised to include disaster risk reduction education. The Uganda Ministry of Education and Sports in particular is well placed to influence the future of society through teaching children how to minimize the risks communities face from both natural and human-induced disasters.

Students will first learn about disaster risks their own society and location face and how to minimize them. They will

also learn about disaster risks affecting other communities in their neighbourhood and the rest of the country.

To begin with, teachers will be trained to understand disaster risk reduction and adequate numbers of reading material will be produced in English and local languages.

The Government of Uganda is grateful to UNDP for availing two experts who are assisting the Department of Disaster Management in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into plans and programmes of other line ministries.■



Ugandan Women and children

2005 United Nations Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction

The UN Sasakawa Award Jury has named **Mr Chimeddorj Batchuluun** of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in the Government of **Mongolia** as the **2005 Laureate** for his efforts in raising awareness about the impact of the *dzud* on pastoral livestock.

Dzud, a Mongolian term for “white death”, refers to a winter condition that destroys or limits access to grazing stuff, preventing animals from eating and thus from surviving during the winter months from October to May.

Mr Chimeddorj Batchuluun provided a model for effective risk reduction combining traditional and cultural values with modern technical capabilities to increase the resilience of herding communities in Mongolia.

Mr Chimeddorj Batchuluun is the 18th laureate of the UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction. He received the crystal trophy and 40,000 US dollars during a ceremony that took place on 12 October 2005 - the International Day for Disaster Reduction - at the new ISDR Asia office in Bangkok, Thailand.

Two certificates of Distinction were awarded to **Mr Claude de Ville de Goyet**, former director of the Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Relief Coordination Programme in the Pan-American Health Organisation (PAHO) and to **Mr Jaime Parejo Garcia**, chief of the Rescue Dog Unit at the Fire Brigade in Sevilla, Spain.

Claude de Ville de Goyet received the Certificate of Distinction for his valuable efforts to minimize the number of victims and material losses in hospitals before natural hazards strike. **Jaime Parejo Garcia** developed an innovative method that improves the efficiency of dog rescue in the searching of survivors buried during natural hazards. His system has been extensively promoted through fire fighters and community volunteers in many countries in Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe.

A Certificate of Merit was awarded to the **Simeulue community**, in Indonesia, that suffered a strong earthquake in 1907. Since then, the local government has undertaken regular and diverse activities to maintain its community aware of potential disasters and to sustain an

acute degree of awareness and preparedness. This approach led to saving thousands of lives during the Indian Ocean tsunami on 26 December 2004. Of the 83,000 Simeulue community members, only seven lost their lives to the tsunami. ■

Interview with 2005 Laureate of UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction Mr. Chimeddorj Batchuluun of Mongolia

Could you give me some statistics about the impact of the Dzud? How does it affect the Mongolian people every year?

Mongolia is a large but sparsely populated country which often experiences extreme climate conditions. The economy is dominated by agriculture, especially livestock husbandry. *Dzud* is the Mongolian name for severe winter weather storms in which extreme cold, heavy snow and strong winds prevent cattle and other animals from feeding over long periods of time. The consequences of *dzud* can be very severe, especially when it involves the loss of livestock that is fundamental to the economy. If a *dzud* occurs in combination with another type of disaster, the damage can be catastrophic. For centuries, *dzuds* have caused serious losses to livelihoods with important resulting social and economic impacts throughout the country. According to historical records, there were 15 occurrences of *dzuds* in the 18th century, 31 in the 19th century and 43 in the 20th

century.

Climate conditions in the period between 1990-1999 were very favourable for Mongolia. Livestock grew from 25 million to 33 million animals. This was a period of considerable success for the herders who comprise almost 50 per cent of the country's population and for the economy of the country as a whole. *Dzuds* then occurred in Mongolia in 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002 with their effects compounded by accompanying droughts in the summer months. The period was also marked by some human factors in that there was only limited preparedness for such potential and accumulated disasters. Thirty-four people lost their lives due to *dzuds* and snowstorms and more than 8.4 million livestock perished from the direct impact of *dzud*-related disasters. These losses to the country were estimated at more than US\$ 330 million. Many thousand households lost all their livestock, seriously increasing their levels of poverty.

(more on the interview on the next page)

What did you do to reduce the impact of this natural hazard on herders' communities?

I grew up in a family of herders and I spent my childhood in livestock pastures. Later, working for an emergency management organization, I participated in the following activities to reduce the impact of *dzuds* on livestock:

- I studied the impact of booklets distributed by the Central and local government during the *dzud* disaster of 1999-2000 and concluded that they were very effective for young local authority leaders and herders.
- During the *dzud* period, special attention was given to the broadcasting and dissemination of best practices and measures to be taken to prepare for and help to reduce the effects of the disaster.
- As the manager of the National Emergency Management Agency of Mongolia, State Standing Emergency Commission and Disaster Mitigation Division, my primary responsibilities were to collect and process information in real-life situations in local areas, such as assessing the damages to submit it to the Central government for rapid decisions and implementation. I think I have contributed to reducing the impact of *dzuds* with my hard work.
- One of my main duties has been to organize training sessions, meetings and discussions jointly with the Government and agencies, local authorities and NGOs. These were able to introduce traditional knowledge and herding methods to young herders to help prevent *dzuds*. I also provided psychological assistance to herders in difficult situations.

How do you work with the meteorological services?

The meteorological and hydrological services of our country provide regular weather forecasts and warnings on hazardous phenomena on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. In order to improve disaster warning and disaster prevention, we work closely with the Institute of



Mr Chimeddorj Batchuluun of Mongolia, the 2005 Laureate

Meteorology for delivering timely warnings to herders so they can use them more effectively. We also organize monthly and weekly radio meetings with them about weather forecasts and to transmit urgent information. We also conduct joint research on hazardous phenomena and previous disasters.

How did you combine the cultural and traditional knowledge with modern capacities?

Mongols have a rich experience and knowledge on how to overcome natural disasters and have indeed a specific way of living and dwelling close to nature. The teaching of traditional knowledge about weather forecasting and its effects on livestock has become an important part of our approach to disaster management. We organize training sessions, meetings and discussions for the younger members of the community. We publish articles in newspapers and booklets on traditional herding as well as giving lectures too, for the general population.

How did you work with the international community to make *dzuds* known and better understood?

The international community and the humanitarian organizations have given us invaluable assistance and support in disaster response and recovery when *dzuds* occurred in our country. I have had

many meetings with ambassadors, diplomats and representatives of international organizations where I was able to provide reports to them about the situation of local herders and their extremely severe living conditions. I am proud that I have had a chance to meet and work with many specialists and representatives from international humanitarian organizations.

During the period of *dzud*, the Mongolian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Office representative to Mongolia issued an appeal for international assistance based on surveys and conclusions prepared by our working team. More than 15 countries and 20 international humanitarian organizations provided cash and extended their assistance. This enabled us to implement many projects and programmes to help in decreasing poverty. I am very proud of my contribution to disaster management. ■

Eastern, southern African coastal, island states reinforce early warning in aftermath of Indian Ocean tsunami

UN/ISDR Africa

Nairobi, Kenya

A Regional Consultative Meeting on Early Warning for the East Coast of Africa was held from 17 to 19 October 2005 in Nairobi, Kenya, under the auspices of the Early Warning Strengthening Project of the United Nations. Ten African countries agreed on regional priorities for action to address early warning and disaster reduction.

Background

In response to the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the international community mobilized to provide short-term humanitarian support to tsunami-affected countries and address the long-term need for more effective early warning systems. UN/ISDR is coordinating, with substantial input from the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, a multi-partner response through its Platform for the Promotion of Early Warning (PPEW), joining the broader UN Flash Appeal.

The *Early Warning Strengthening Project* outlines a partnership approach to supporting the integrated development of tsunami early warning systems, recognizing the numerous UN and other organisations that contribute to improving countries' disaster risk management and risk reduction. In particular, the project supports UNESCO-IOC in its leadership to establish the core elements of a tsunami early warning system. While focusing primarily on tsunami, the broader context of multiple hazards, risk management and risk reduction is also recognized and actively considered.

Context

With support from WMO and UN/ISDR, UNESCO-IOC has led expert assessment missions to 19 countries throughout the Indian Ocean, eight of which are in Africa.



Participants of the Early Warning Workshop in Nairobi

It was found that the African countries suffer from inadequate preparedness for tsunami and related risks, including a lack of effective early warning and public/political awareness.

To address these gaps, UN/ISDR Africa is supporting the regional implementation of the above-mentioned *Early Warning Strengthening Project*, continuing its tradition of working in collaboration with African officials and institutions to help reduce disaster risk. The reviewed workshop aimed to begin prioritizing and addressing the aforementioned gaps, as well as initiate regional collaboration for enhanced early warning and disaster reduction.

Workshop participants, objectives

The workshop was attended by 35 officials, including delegates from all 10 African countries on the Indian Ocean - Comoros, Djibouti, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa and Tanzania – and representatives from UN/ISDR Africa, UN/ISDR-PPEW, UNEP, UNDP, IFRC (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) and ICPAC (IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre).

The specific objectives of the workshop were to: (1) Increase knowledge of and capacity for disaster risk reduction, particularly on early warning; (2) Promote integrated disaster risk reduction, early warning and public awareness at the regional, national and community levels; and (3) Foster enhanced regional cooperation on early warning in the African Countries on the Indian Ocean.

Proceedings

The workshop was facilitated by two African experts: Dr Chris Hartnady, Research and Technical Director of South Africa-based earth science consulting firm Umvoto Africa (Pty) Ltd and Prof Gerard Rambolamanana, Head of the Laboratory of Seismology in the Madagascar Geo-Physics Observatory Institute. The event was opened by the Kenyan assistant minister of special programmes in the Office of the President, Dr Wilfred Machage. Thereafter, each day of the workshop was dedicated to different components of tsunami early warning and risk reduction.

Monday 17 October: Day 1 focused on the hazard of tsunami and disaster risk reduction in general, starting with a review of the UN/ISDR and international

frameworks for disaster risk reduction with emphasis on the January 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action. After a technical overview of the risks and concepts of tsunami and other natural hazards facing the eastern coast of Africa, each country shared their experiences from the December 2004 event. This included reviewing the tsunami impacts, lessons learned, as well as strategies and activities to address future risks. The day concluded with a plenary discussion on country tsunami experiences and responses.

Tuesday 18 October: Day 2 was dedicated to early warning, beginning with overviews of both UN/ISDR-PPEW (Platform for the Promotion of Early Warning) and UNEP-DEWA (Division of Early Warning and Assessment). After an introduction to people-centred early warning, delegates shared best practices and lessons learned in early warning from each of the countries. Focused group work to identify early warning gaps for the eastern coast of Africa then followed. The day ended with plenary discussion and agreement on the early warning gaps faced by the region.

Wednesday 19 October: The morning of Day 3 focused on public awareness and education. A review of successful public awareness experiences outside of Africa was provided. This was followed by plenary discussion on best practices in public awareness and education. The afternoon of Day 3 looked to the future, first establishing the regional needs for early warning, and finally agreeing on regional priorities for action.

African experiences from December 2004 tsunami

During the discussions, it became clear that in Africa, Somalia had experienced the greatest impact of the tsunami, followed by the Seychelles. Many countries, especially those further south, had felt little or no effect. Africa was quite lucky that the tsunami occurred during low tide, thus reducing the impacts. The region was generally unprepared for tsunami, with previous disaster risk management efforts focusing on other, better known hazards. In some countries, protection against tsunami was provided by natural systems such as coral reefs and mangroves.

During the tsunami, most countries suffered from lack of coordination at all levels, particularly between government agencies. It became clear that proper government response and early warning required multiple and well-coordinated agencies. At the same time, using the media required a difficult balance: while often useful, in some cases non country-specific or unclear information led to undesirable population responses.

In many cases where early warnings were issued, the population was reluctant to leave and some instead, out of curiosity, moved towards the coast. There was a distinct lack of public awareness and almost no pre-determined escape/evacuation plans and routes. Communication with local communities presented a further challenge. During the 28 March 2005 Sumatra earthquake, some populations panicked because they now knew more about tsunami, but response plans and preparedness measures were not yet in place.

Future events (tsunami and others) could have major negative socio-economic and environmental impacts on the region, such that the December 2004 tsunami has motivated both political and public will and action.

Regional gaps in early warning

In response to the tsunami, national early warning programmes are being developed or enhanced, with many basic components already existing but needing proper integration, coordination and utilization. Risk assessment and identification, particularly for tsunami, including risk zonation and mapping, is generally inadequate throughout the region.

Technical monitoring systems are needed, including seismic stations, tide gauges and buoys for tsunami, and rain gauges, radar and river gauges for floods and tropical cyclones. Bolstering the utility of such systems, regional data sharing, particularly in real-time, must be strengthened. However, without proper human resources, in particular technical expertise, implementation of such systems remains a challenge.

There is a regional lack of high-level political and media awareness, with

concurrent action and response plans. While programmes are being implemented at technical level, the media and high-level government officials must be made aware of and integrated into response plans. Challenging this is political instability that often leads to rapid changes in ministries and staff, resulting in loss of institutional memory. The need for permanent national platforms for disaster reduction was thus highlighted.

In order to reach vulnerable communities, understandable communication in local languages, highlighting the use of colour codes for different early warning levels to manage illiteracy, is needed.

A fundamental challenge is the mobilisation of adequate and sustainable funding. Delegates felt that a regional centre or focal point for early warning could help address many of these issues.

“While the December 2004 tsunami was terrible disaster, it also provided a window of opportunity for establishing proper early warning and disaster reduction programmes (in 10 African countries).” This is a comment made by officials from eastern and southern Africa.

Regional gaps in public awareness, education

A primary component of people-centred early warning is public awareness and education, to ensure that vulnerable populations not only understand the risks they face, but also know how to react if a warning is issued.

As contingency plans are established, all stakeholders from the government to the public must be made aware of their existence, individual responsibilities and expected responses. The training of national focal points and responsible officers is required on the different means and utilities of public awareness and education. Practice drills are needed.

Mechanisms for dissemination of both warnings and educational material are needed to ensure that information reach people at risk in a timely and understandable manner, including megaphones, sirens and radios. This can be supported through the identification and utilisation of existing communication channels, as well as traditional and religious teaching and communication methods. National education curricula should include disaster management topics and activities, starting from the primary education level.

An inventory of standardized and available public awareness material, including from regions outside of Africa, should be compiled and adapted to local cultures. Regular publications on risks and preparedness, including reports, posters, radio/TV shows and magazine/newspaper articles should be encouraged.

Outcome: regional priorities for action

All delegates agreed that, while the December 2004 tsunami was a terrible disaster, it also provided a window of opportunity for establishing proper early warning and disaster reduction programmes. Based on the reviewed gaps and acknowledging both regional and national needs, the delegates were able to agree on regional priorities for action on early warning and disaster reduction for the eastern coast of Africa:

- Establishment of a regional centre or focal point for early warning and disaster risk reduction, the terms of reference and constitution of which are now being finalized;
- Enhancement of technical observation networks (gauges and measuring stations) with improved regional data protocols and exchange;

- Better synchronization of national disaster reduction platform activities. In some countries, national platforms need still to be developed;
- Capacity building for technical data collection, monitoring and evaluation, as well as risk identification and analysis;
- Education and sensitization of policy makers on disaster awareness, reduction and preparedness.

Certain issues, for instance public awareness and education, were identified as regional gaps that had to be addressed at national and local levels. ■

First African ministerial conference on DRR held; next AU summit may discuss DRR

AU Commission

Directorate for Rural Economy & Agriculture
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The First African Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was held on 7 December 2005 at the AU Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Organized jointly by the AU Commission and UN/ISDR Africa, the Conference was chaired by the Republic of Congo Minister of Forest Economy and Environment, Mr Henri Djombo.

The Conference was preceded by an African Experts' Meeting held on the two previous days - 5 and 6 December 2005 – at the same venue (*see separate article*).

41 African countries represented

The Conference was attended by African ministers in charge of DRR, African ambassadors to the AU, other high-ranking government officials and African DRR experts from the following 41

African countries: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of Guinea, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, South Africa, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The following organizations, institutions and UN agencies were also represented: AfDB (African Development Bank), UNECA (UN Economic Commission for Africa), UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), UNDP/BCPR (Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery), UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme), WMO (World Meteorological Organization), ITU (International Telecommunication Union), WHO (World Health Organization),

WHO/World Aids Campaign, FAO, UN/ISDR, ICPAC (IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre), ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), UN/HABITAT, AAS (African Academy of Sciences), WFP (World Food Programme), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), UN/OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), some foreign embassies in Ethiopia, and South Africa-based earth science consulting firm Umvoto Africa (Pty) Ltd.

Opening statements

The AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, Mrs Rosehub Kurwijila, made a welcoming statement followed by statements by representatives of AfDB, UNECA, UNDP, UNEP, WMO, ITU, WHO and FAO.

The Ethiopian Minister of State for Agriculture and Rural Development opened the meeting. The Director of UN/

ISDR, on behalf of the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, delivered a keynote address.

Egypt to establish African disaster risk reduction centre

The African ministers considered the Arab Republic of Egypt's proposal to create a Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre and commended Egypt for the initiative. They agreed on the principle for the creation of continental centre and further suggested the need to establish sub-regional and national disaster risk reduction and management centres. To this end, they requested the AU Commission, in collaboration with Egypt, to convene an experts' meeting of member states to undertake further analysis and define working modalities for the Egypt-based centre.

Recommendations

After considering the Recommendations and Programme of Action (for the Implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction) forwarded by the Expert's Meeting, the African ministers adopted the Programme of Action, recommending the following priorities:

Policies & Regulatory Frameworks

- Review existing policies, legislation and strategies to provide guidance and direction for mainstreaming DRR in development planning, and for defining responsibilities of all stakeholders in disaster risk reduction;
- Make integration of disaster risk reduction a development priority and address DRR in all development programmes, poverty reduction policies and strategies;
- Integrate gender concerns in the DRR processes at all levels;
- Integrate environmental dimensions into DRR so as to mitigate severity of disasters to facilitate recovery and rehabilitation after disasters;
- Establish appropriate regulatory frameworks, policies, rules and procedures at national, regional and



Officials during the opening ceremony

international levels for an effective use of ICT (Information & Communication Technology) for disaster reduction taking into account special needs of people with disabilities;

- Ensure that an early warning network is an integral part of disaster risk reduction;
- Create an enabling environment by providing incentives for investors interested in DRR.

Institutional Arrangements

- Establish multi-stakeholders national platforms with the view to having all the skills and knowledge required for addressing risk reduction in development processes;
- Hold biennial meetings of experts and ministers responsible for disaster management;
- Establish and strengthen national-level coordination mechanisms for disaster risk reduction.

Capacity Building

- Include DRR in school curriculum at different levels to build a culture of prevention against disasters;
- Undertake capacity building at all levels;
- Develop databases, handbooks and manuals for DRR training purposes;
- Strengthen National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs)

and increase investments in the observation, communication and dissemination of warnings and forecasts;

- Establish and strengthen regional and national capacity for multi-hazard observation, communication and dissemination of warnings and forecasts.

Information & Knowledge Management

- Establish comprehensive early warning systems and networks at national, sub-regional and continental levels, including the need to link to advanced technologies such as GIS, remote sensing;
- Make effective use of the media for information dissemination;
- Develop and incorporate innovative ICT applications, solutions and services into new and existing early warning systems such as TV, radio, mobile phones and Internet;
- Communicate hazards in an easily understandable manner and make them accessible to decision makers and the public in a timely manner;
- Give due emphasis to information management and sharing, particularly to trans-boundary sharing of information.

Resource Mobilization

- Allocate resources for the establishment and maintenance of early warning systems and integration

of DRR in development processes through national budgetary allocation to ensure ownership and commitment;

- Set up a target of at least 5 per cent of the budget at sub-regional, national and local levels for investment in DRR activities;
- Undertake an objective assessment to determine the resources needed at all levels for DRR implementation;
- Establish and strengthen disaster trust funds at national, sub-regional and regional levels.

Partnership

- Promote and strengthen partnership between national, regional and international institutions, for support of DRR activities;
- Study possibilities of implementing partnership between the public, national governments and the insurance and reinsurance sectors with a view to sharing the risks of disaster.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- Establish mechanisms that can track and measure progress in DRR

implementation;

- Establish a mechanism that would enable development and application of standardized tools.

DRR poised to be on agenda of forthcoming AU Summit

It emerged from the conference that disaster risk reduction would feature on the agenda of the AU Executive Council for submission to the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government taking place in Khartoum, Sudan, from 16 to 23 January 2006. ■

African disaster reduction experts meet ahead of first African ministerial conference on DRR

AU Commission

Directorate for Rural Economy & Agriculture
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

An African Disaster Reduction Experts' Meeting was held on 5 and 6 December 2005 at the AU Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Organized jointly by the AU Commission and UN/ISDR Africa, the meeting was held in preparation for the First African Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (see separate article in this issue) which took place the following day, on 7 December 2005, at the same venue.

Participants from 41 African countries

The meeting was attended by experts from the following 41 African countries: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, the Comoros, Congo (Republic of), Côte d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of Guinea, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, South Africa, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Swaziland,



Participants at the Experts' meeting organized by the AU Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The following organizations, institutions and UN agencies were also represented: AfDB (African Development Bank), UNECA (UN Economic Commission for Africa), UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), UNDP/BCPR (Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery), UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme), WMO (World Meteorological Organization), ITU (International Telecommunication Union), WHO (World Health Organization),

WHO/World Aids Campaign, FAO, UN/ISDR, ICPAC (IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre), ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), UN/HABITAT, AAS (African Academy of Sciences), WFP (World Food Programme), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), UN/OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), some foreign embassies in Ethiopia, and South Africa-based earth science consulting firm Umvoto Africa (Pty) Ltd.

Opening addresses

Delivering a keynote address, UN/ISDR Inter-Agency Secretariat Director Mr Salvano Briceno underscored the importance and timeliness of the First African Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (taking place after the experts' meeting), given that the African continent was still reeling from the impacts of recent disasters such as floods, volcanic eruptions and locust invasions. He called for strong political and financial commitments to the issue of integration of disaster risk reduction (DRR) in development processes, which is a precondition for sustainable development and poverty reduction on the continent.

The UN/ISDR director commended the African Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction which, he said, had strategic objectives and orientations corresponding to priority areas set out in the January 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). He also observed that 18 out of the 45 countries that have communicated their national plans to implement the HFA to the UN/ISDR were from Africa. Furthermore, 15 African countries had already established National Platforms for DRR. He stressed the need for collective efforts and combined knowledge from all stakeholders to reduce risks and vulnerability. Governments would need, he said, to set their own priorities as regard the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy. Finally, Mr Briceno reiterated the UN/ISDR Secretariat's commitment, through its Regional Office in Nairobi, to supporting the process of disaster risk reduction within the framework of the HFA in the years to come.

Opening the meeting, Dr Babagana Ahmadu, the AU Commission Director of Rural Economy and Agriculture, recalled the work undertaken by the AU Commission, NEPAD Secretariat and partners to develop strategies and programmes to implement the January 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action in Africa. He urged the experts to look closely into all facets of action relevant for the successful implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction.

He further urged them to make pertinent recommendations to the Ministers, including on priority areas for action for the continent for the short and medium term that will foster partnership development and cooperation at all levels for the promotion and realization of risk reduction on the continent. He emphasized the need to pay due attention to the roles of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and regional financial institutions and organs in integrating DRR in development policies and programmes. Finally, he acknowledged, with deep appreciation, the invaluable support that the Commission and NEPAD Secretariat received from the ISDR Secretariat, particularly its Regional Office in Nairobi, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Development Programme Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (UNDP/BCPR), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other UN agencies and African specialized institutions during the development of the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Presentations

Various presentations were made during the experts' meeting:

1. "Overview of the Development Process and Major Components of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction" by Mr Foday Bojang, Head of Division of Environment and Natural Resources, AU Commission;
2. "The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters" by Dr Olusegun Ojo of the Africa Advisory Group on Disaster Risk Reduction;
3. "Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction" by Mr Foday Bojang, Head of Division of Environment and Natural Resources, AU Commission;
4. "Best Practices and Lessons Learnt from Establishment of National Platforms in Africa" by Mrs Maria Bilia of the Disaster Management

Office of Tanzania;

5. "Integration of Disaster Risk Reduction into National Development Planning, Policies and Programmes" by Mr Kenneth Westgate, Africa Regional Adviser on Disaster Reduction, UNDP/BCPR;
6. "Activities of the ECOWAS Region in the Area of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management" by Mr Douaye Faye, ECOWAS representative;
7. Other presentations by ITU and WMO.

Working groups

The meeting broke up into six working groups to review the Africa Programme of Action based on the following six strategic areas of intervention:

- Increased political commitment to disaster risk reduction.
- Improved identification and assessment of disaster risks.
- Increased public awareness of disaster risk reduction.
- Improved governance of disaster risk reduction institutions.
- Integration of disaster risk reduction in emergency response management.
- Overall coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy.

Outcome

The outcome of the working groups' subsequent plenary discussions of these areas of intervention proposed for the following improvements.

- Establishment of national platforms and their roles in DRR for sustainable development.
- Means and mechanisms for implementing the Africa Regional Strategy for DRR.
- Cooperation for disaster risk reduction in Africa.
- Ways to increase national, sub-regional and regional commitments to resource mobilization and allocation to DRR integration into development in Africa.

- Ways and means for resource mobilization from UN System and donor communities.

The experts adopted their report and agreed to submit it to the First African

Ministerial Conference for consideration and approval of their recommendations and the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction.

(See previous article on AU ministerial conference) ■

MALAWI: Weather insurance helps farmers manage drought

Erin Bryla¹ & Ulrich Hess²

The World Bank,
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Severe weather risk, such as drought disaster risk, can be insured in Africa. This emerges from a pilot programme under way in Malawi. The index-based weather insurance is a better alternative to traditional agricultural insurance. Better still, it allows farmers to access finance.

In Malawi, a pilot programme of weather index-based insurance has allowed groundnut farmers to manage drought risk and access finance that was previously unavailable to them. The pilot demonstrates the feasibility of market-based weather risk insurance and its major benefits for accessing finance for drought-resistant crop varieties, which reduces disaster risk.

The problem: impact of weather risk on agricultural finance

In the agricultural sector, weather risk is pervasive and remains one of the major constraints limiting agri-businesses and farmers from accessing financial services and investing in higher return production activities. While weather risk is not the only risk that farmers face, it has enormous impacts on farmers' incomes and their ability to repay loans.

From the lender's perspective, farmers (particularly small farmers in developing countries) lack traditional collateral and often have a limited credit history. Therefore, loan recovery and creditworthiness are directly linked to farmers' seasonal revenues. As a result, banks which wish to diversify their lending portfolio into the agricultural

sector are constrained by their inability to manage systemic risk in agriculture, notably drought.

The Commodity Risk Management Group (CRMG) at the World Bank has been piloting index-based weather insurance for developing country producers, agricultural businesses and banks. CRMG has been working in a number of countries around the world to pilot this approach, including India, Peru, Ukraine and Ethiopia, among others. Most recently, CRMG worked with local stakeholders in Malawi to pilot index-based weather insurance for the 2005-2006 crop season in order to enhance groundnut farmers' ability to manage drought risk and in turn access credit.

Managing drought risk a "win-win" for both farmers and lenders

Groundnut farmers, in Malawi, had traditionally relied on local seed for production but had shown interest in

planting with certified groundnut seed in order to improve revenues. Certified seed, while more costly, has a number of benefits over local seed, such as a higher resistance to diseases like fungal infections which can destroy a crop. In addition, certified seed can be marketed as a named variety of groundnut seed rather than a generic version. However, the main limitation inhibiting farmers from utilizing this seed had been lack of access to credit to buy this more expensive input.

The pilot introduces weather index-based insurance as a new product to the Malawian insurance market to help protect farmers against drought and to determine if banks would have a greater willingness to lend to weather insured farmers. One of the groups interested in testing this approach was the National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM) which, among other services, provides agricultural marketing for its member farmers who are organized



Distribution of food aid to rural communities in Southern Africa (Photo: 2005 WFP/Maulid Warfa)

into clubs, and enables farmers to undertake higher return activities.

NASFAM, in conjunction with the Insurance Association of Malawi and with technical assistance from the World Bank and Opportunity International Bank of Malawi (OIBM), designed an index-based weather insurance contract that would payout if the rainfall needed for groundnut production in four pilot areas was insufficient for groundnut production. Because these weather contracts could mitigate the weather risk associated with lending to farmers, OIBM and Malawi Rural Finance Corporation (MRFC) agreed to lend farmers the money necessary to purchase certified seed if the farmers bought weather insurance.

A cost efficient alternative to traditional agricultural insurance

Crop insurance has been tried in many different countries all over the world, but the policies have relied on measuring actual yield losses through on-farm assessment of damage. To determine the extent of yield damage and the payout, loss adjusters inspect farmer's fields.

This traditional way of insuring crops is extremely costly to administer, in particular when it comes to smallholders. The costs of "moral hazard" (that is farmers having incentives to alter their behaviour due to the insurance cover) and the costs of "adverse selection" (the insurer tends to get the bad risks because it knows less about the actual risk than the insured) tend to exceed smallholders' willingness to pay. This is where governments start subsidizing insurance premiums in countries such as the USA, but the environmental and market distortion costs of this approach are overwhelming.

To deal with the limitations of the traditional insurance approach, the Malawian pilot is utilizing an innovative index-based weather insurance product which uses a rainfall index based on data from national meteorological stations as a proxy for yield losses. By identifying the impact that deviations in rainfall have on yields, it is possible to determine payouts from an insurance policy.

Index-based insurance has a number of advantages over traditional insurance products. One of its primary benefits is

objective determination of payouts based on the index. In essence, by measuring changes in the weather relative to the needs of the particular crops, it is possible to estimate losses of farmers near the weather station. Its second key benefit is timeliness of payouts: almost immediately after a critical weather period, the insurance company can trigger payouts to farmers, because weather data is reported on a real-time basis to the insurer.

Design key for meeting demands of clients, financiers

The primary risk to groundnut in Malawi is drought during critical growth periods. The contracts that were offered in each of the four pilot areas were designed to compensate farmers when there was a deficit rainfall during the growing season.

Each contract has three phases with different levels of rainfall triggering payments in order to take into account the different rainfall needs during the three major phenomenological stages of the plant: "establishment and vegetative growth"; "flowering and pod formation"; and "pod filling and maturity". The contracts also contains a "no sowing condition" which would trigger a payout to farmers if a minimum level of rainfall was not received in order for the farmer to successfully sow the plant during the initial stages of the contract.

For the pilot, 892 farmers, organized in farmers' clubs of 10-20 members, purchased weather insurance from the Insurance Association of Malawi to both mitigate their weather risk and access finance. Because they bought insurance, the farmers have now received loans from OIBM and MRFC. These loans stipulate that the bank will be the first beneficiary if there is a payout from the insurance.

In addition, NASFAM, which will purchase the majority of the groundnut production from the participating farmers, has agreed to pay the first proceeds from the sale of the produce to the bank. If there was no drought, the farmers would benefit from selling the higher-value production. The farmers received information and training on the project jointly by NASFAM, OIBM and MRFC in order to make sure they fully understand

the costs and benefits before contracting the weather-insured loan product.

Great potential for managing risk, extending agricultural finance outreach

Duncan Warren, head of Crop Production at NASFAM, sums up the goals and the potential benefits of linking weather insurance to financing as follows:

"Drought is one of the major risks in rain-fed agricultural production. In the event of a drought, the farmer may face low yields or even total crop failure. If the farmer uses production loans, he/she may not be able to pay for the loan. While the farmer may be granted reprieve through another loan, he/she still has to pay the previous loan, and hence has doubled the liability. The Drought Insurance Pilot Project has offered an option so that he/she will be covered by the insurance and will not face the distress of having to pay two seasons' loans in one year."

Since the pilot is ongoing, the full outcome of is yet to be seen. So far this arrangement, input lending coupled with a weather insurance policy, has allowed the farmers in the pilot areas to access finance that would have not been available to them otherwise. It has also allowed the participating banks to expand their lending portfolio while managing their risk. In subsequent years, the stakeholders and CRMG are looking to scale this work up to other crops such as maize and other areas in Malawi.

This is the first such deal for index-based weather insurance in Africa outside of South Africa, but we expect this deal to demonstrate the feasibility of market-based weather risk transfer, and we believe it shows that access to finance can be enhanced across Africa thanks to this tool. This deal also shows that severe weather risk, such as drought disaster risk, can be insured, which has strong implications for disaster risk transfer programmes.³ ■

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³ See the recent Ethiopia Drought Risk Transfer Programme launched by WFP and "Refocusing Disaster Aid" by Joanne Linneroth-Bayer and others, Science Magazine, 12 August 2005, Vol. 309

IGAD develops training package on disaster risk management

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The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD¹) held a three-day consultative meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, from 25 to 27 August 2005, with senior government officials from disaster risk management institutions of IGAD member states participating. The meeting was held in collaboration between IGAD Secretariat and UN/ISDR Africa.

The purpose of the meeting was to review and finalize an outline of a new training manual on disaster risk management, which is to be elaborated and tested for its validity and appropriateness before being finalized. The manual is to be part of a training package that will also include other material.

Opening the meeting, Permanent Secretary Mr Mahabub Maalim of the Kenyan Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation stressed the need for synergies at all levels. Whether between different ministries and responsibilities of national government, or between national governments and regional strategies, disaster risk reduction cannot be successful without strong coordination and inter-linkages, he said.

Mr Keflemariam Sebhatu, IGAD's Programme Manager, Humanitarian Affairs, provided a brief overview of IGAD's Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Programme, noting that the current workshop would make an important contribution to the education and training component of IGAD's DRM strategy.

As chair of the IGAD DRM Programme, Mr Martin Owor, who is Uganda's assistant commissioner for Disaster Reduction, stressed that one of the greatest causes of poverty in the IGAD region was disasters, thus stressing the importance of the work at hand.

Training package

The meeting and the development of the training manual was facilitated by two experts: Mr Ron Cadribo, director of Programmes, African Institute for Capacity Building (Lesotho); and Dewald van Niekerk, director of the African Centre for Disaster Studies, North-West University (South Africa).

The manual is to be part of a training package that will also include a workbook, a poster depicting a roadmap for disaster risk reduction, additional reading and a CD-ROM containing all of these materials. After presentation of the outline and first draft of the proposed training manual, the objectives of the workshop were reviewed:

- To discuss, revise and agree on the training manual outline;
- To regionalize and internalize the training package through IGAD experiences;
- To agree on the way forward.

The focus of the meeting was thus on the general content of the training manual, stressing consideration of regional experiences and needs.

Input from participating national experts was crucial to ensure that the training manual was complete in terms of covered topics, provide necessary tools to implement successful training, be practical and adaptable for each member state's needs, and include disaster risk reduction issues and experiences unique to the IGAD region.

Consensual approval was reached with regards to the general outline of the training package, with discussions delivering valuable insight into critical pragmatic and regional issues to be included.

Sharing, compilation of regional experiences

Country examples of disaster risk

reduction activities that contribute to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as their links and similarities to programmes in other IGAD countries, were discussed. It was noted that many countries had similar programmes in place, for instance with regards to drought impact reduction, livelihood diversification and support, health management and conflict resolution

Delegates reviewed national governance institutions in their countries, including political commitment, policies, plans/strategies, coordinating institutions and mechanisms, and remaining challenges and gaps. It was found that proper governance structures were present in IGAD countries, although internal coordination was sometimes challenging, and that effective policies were in some cases not yet completed.

A discussion and information compilation on training, education, research and public awareness followed. Member states highlighted the focus of some of their initiatives, describing also which institutions were implementing the programmes and what lessons could be learned from these experiences. Similarly, experiences with early warning systems in the IGAD region were shared.

Defining the specific hazard being monitored, level of implementation of the system, and responsible agencies, delegates discussed best practices. Parallels between programmes in the different IGAD countries could be established.

Review of proposed roadmap

As a component of the training package, a proposal for a roadmap (in poster form) towards the implementation of disaster risk reduction at national level was presented. The roadmap was developed utilising and linking directly to the January 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action. Further guidance came from

IGAD's own disaster risk reduction strategy and from UN frameworks for sustainable development (MDGs, UNDAF² and CCAs³).

Started as a somewhat generic flow chart, delegates discussed ways to adapt the roadmap to IGAD member states' collective and individual needs. First and foremost, the strategic goals of the roadmap ought to be in line with those of the IGAD Disaster Risk Management Strategy. Distinction was also needed between global, regional and sub-regional strategic imperatives, with issues such as conflict resolution being of greater importance to IGAD than other sub-regions. The delegates gave further recommendations for priority actions, sectoral involvement, cross-cutting issues, general considerations and role-players of importance.

The way forward

Concrete action for the way forward included a review, feedback and adaptation procedure to finalize the training manual. A two-week training course would be held to test the training material before final production. To insure the continuity of both the process and the outcomes, it was recommended that the delegates participating in this meeting also attended the training course, together with additional delegates from each member state.

The consultative process used to develop the training material ensures local ownership by incorporating member states' needs and desires. At the same time, disaster risk reduction is a constantly developing process, such that training material and programmes will

need regular updating to incorporate new developments and approaches.

The long-term way forward stresses the creation of an enabling environment for disaster risk reduction at national level. Five components need to be developed to support this enabling process: (1) a national policy; (2) proper legal frameworks; (3) a national strategy; (4) adequate financial resources; and (5) a national platform. Public and political awareness is of great importance, and disaster risk reduction must be mainstreamed into the strategies of all line ministries. ■

¹ Regional economic community for East Africa and Horn of Africa countries.

² UN Development Assistance Framework

³ Common Country Assessment

SADC member countries hold pre-rain meeting, revise disaster management strategy

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The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) is shifting to a more pro-active approach to disaster management, both on the ground for specific high-risk issues and at institutional level. A task force has been put in place to evaluate the implementation of its Disaster Management Strategy.

Pre-rain season assessment meeting

SADC's Disaster Management Technical Committee (SDMTC) held its *Pre-Rain Season Assessment Meeting* in Windhoek, Namibia, on 19 and 20 September 2005. The meeting was officially opened by Namibian Deputy Prime Minister Dr Libertina Amadila and chaired by Mr. M. Ua-Ndjarakana, permanent secretary in the Cabinet of the Republic of Namibia. The main purpose of the meeting was to assess the region's capabilities to deal with natural and other disasters as well as harmonize regional

levels of preparedness, mitigation and reconstruction.

Primary meeting topics were preparations for the rain season and strategies to strengthen disaster management in SADC - reviewed later in this article. Further issues of discussion included enhanced engagement of international collaborating partners to assist in capacity building for disaster coordination, preparedness and vulnerability mapping

In this connection, defence and security forces can play a crucial role in disaster response. Under SADC's Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO), the SADC Secretariat's Directorate for Politics, Defence and Security, through the Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre, has scheduled training and exercise programmes for search and rescue in the event of disasters. It was recommended that the training should involve experts from disaster management offices of member states.

Preparation for rain season

Although there might be some localised differences, in general the rain season is

expected to be normal to above normal in most of the southern part of the SADC region. With the exception of the northern area of the DR Congo, which is expected to register normal to above normal rain fall, the northern region of SADC is projected to have normal to below normal rainfalls. These projections may be distorted by cyclones.

Regional Remote Sensing recommended that efforts should be made to get agricultural inputs in place before the start of the rains. Good management practices such as planting with the early rains, staggered planting to cater for dry spells, and planting different varieties of crops for alternative scenarios, should be encouraged.

The Water Division reported that with regard to the current status of water supply, storage levels in most reservoirs were very low. If a poor rainy season occurs, there would be negative impacts on hydropower production, irrigation and drinking water supply. The situation could however normalise with above normal rainfalls.

It was recommended that Member States'

disaster management units should inform members of the communities to closely liaise with national meteorological and hydrological services for short- and medium-term forecasts.

Task force evaluation of Disaster Management Strategy

After the above meeting held in Namibia, the SDMTTC (SADC's Disaster Management Technical Committee) requested a task force to review the region's Disaster Management Strategy, align it to the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO), as well as develop a five-year plan of action and a work plan for 2006-2007.

The task force is comprised of Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, which were involved in drafting the original Disaster Management Strategy, plus new SADC member Madagascar. It held its first meeting on 7 and 10 November 2005 in Madikwe Game Park, South Africa.

Revision of region's disaster management strategy

Implementation of the original SADC Disaster Management Strategy in 2001 was not well coordinated. In addition, the content of the Strategy reflected the institutional set-up in member states and the Secretariat at the time, which has since changed. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was instrumental in the development of the original SADC Disaster Management Strategy.

The following gaps were noted in the implementation of the Disaster Management Strategy:

- Disaster management within the SADC Secretariat is not put in the right department. Disaster Risk & Management is actually under the Board of Directors of the Social and Human Development and special programmes.
- No responsible of disaster risk management within the Secretariat.
- Lack of sustainable financial mechanism. Fund on emergency is uncertain. The financial resource of the Secretariat is based on classical phenomena such as hazards, disasters, flash appeal, donor funding. No

financial resource is allocated to disaster reduction activities.

- Most of member countries do not have sufficient funds to implement recommendations from the current strategy. They always rely on donors and Secretariat funding.

Therefore, the Task Force recommended that the new Revised Strategy should highlight the followings:

- Revisions should also ensure that the new Strategy is in line with global disaster risk reduction practices and approaches developed since 2001, notably recommendations and guidelines from AU/NEPAD and UN/ISDR.

Disaster Risk Reduction should be included in the new Strategy. The Plan of Action should emphasize on each phase of disaster management: response, rehabilitation, reconstruction, prevention, mitigation and preparedness. The Task force members recognised the substantive restructuring done at the Secretariat level and made the following recommendations: (a) commitment from SADC Secretariat to edit the actual Strategy, publish the new Strategic Directions and concept of DRR (disaster risk reduction); (b) introduction of new chapters in the current strategy; and (3) adoption of the revised Strategy through a sub-regional workshop to be organized by the SADC Secretariat.

The UNDP had also pledged to continue supporting SADC in the area of institutional capacity building by providing and funding a technical advisor to the Secretariat. Due to conflicting objectives and regulations, this has not yet occurred. This issue is to be emphasized with UNDP and be prioritized in a new cooperation formula.

Strengthening disaster management at SADC Secretariat

The SADC Disaster Management Unit was created when the original Disaster Management Strategy was approved in 2001, and was placed in the Directorate of Social and Human Development and Special Programmes. There is currently no focal point for disaster management, and this institutional set-up has been unsuitable for proper disaster management.

In view of SADC's restructuring and also noting that disaster management in most member states is located in high offices such as the Office of the President or Prime Minister, the SDMTTC recommended that disaster management was shifted to the Office of the Executive Secretary, also because of its crosscutting nature.

After studying the current structure, the Task Force members recommended that a Disaster Risk Reduction Unit (instead of the current Disaster Management Unit) should be under the Office of the Executive Secretary. Therefore, one officer should be nominated to assure the transition period. This should be assured by experts on DRR and from the sub-region, and rotated between member states on a regular basis. In the long term, the transitional Unit should be transformed into a permanent Unit in DRR under the Office of the Executive Secretary.

Development of a disaster management trust fund

Current disaster management funding is based on post-disaster appeals, with no resource made available for prevention activities. Member states do not have the financial means to implement the recommendations of the current Strategy, depending on resources from the Office of the Executive Secretary and donors.

The Task Force recommended that a trust fund be developed to ensure a more dependable and permanent funding mechanism for disaster management activities. The resources of the Trust Fund would come from member states as well as donors and collaborating organisations. Such a trust fund should also be replicated in each member state.

The way forward

Proposed chapters are to be added to the original Strategy, and a SDMTTC workshop for validation of the proposals is to be held in January 2006. The revised Strategy is to be submitted for approval by the SADC Council of Ministers in February 2006.

The Task Force recommended that the Office of the Executive Secretary commit to publishing the Disaster Management Strategy in order to make the new institutional organisation and risk management concepts known. ■



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