

An open opportunity to reduce disaster impacts

**Request for funding to support the
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)
and its Secretariat**

*Developing the coordinated international action needed
to reduce the impacts of disasters and to not allow
disasters to grow and increase their reach*



International Strategy
ISDR
for Disaster Reduction

The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), its Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR) and Secretariat (officially titled the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the ISDR), were set up by the UN General Assembly to promote and coordinate the disaster reduction efforts of the UN and member countries. The Secretariat is totally supported by voluntary extra-budgetary contributions of donors.

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Overview - the request for support

This request seeks US\$ 12.5 million for the next two years to help reduce the growing worldwide impacts of disasters. The funds are needed urgently to build the systematic international effort needed and to support the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

Disaster risk is an important and growing issue, with roots deep in the development process and serious consequences for development, humanitarian and environmental progress. Millions of the most vulnerable and poor are affected. Millions of dollars of development investment and relief funding are at stake.

At present, the amount of investment in disaster reduction is small, at both national and international levels, despite the clear evidence for the need for action and the availability of methods to tackle the problem. Lack of political commitment and lack of institutional development are impeding progress on reducing disaster impacts.

Coordinated international action under the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) is beginning to put disasters and disaster reduction more firmly onto centre stage in many forums and programmes, mobilizing understanding and support at the regional and national levels where action is paramount. But much more remains to be done.

The ISDR and its Secretariat provides an experienced and uniquely placed UN organization to build the international awareness and capacities needed to systematically and substantially reduce disaster impacts.

The ISDR Secretariat needs baseline funding of US\$ 9,598,000 for the biennium 2004-2005, or about US\$ 5 million per annum, in order to maintain the necessary basic capability to influence international agendas and to mobilize regional and national action.

Budget Requested 2004-2005	
Policy and strategy	2,859
Advocacy	2,261
Information and networks	2,121
Partnerships for Applications	2,357
Total, US\$ 000	9,598

Additional biennial funding of US \$2,913,000 is needed for the following priorities.

- Strengthen the organizational mechanisms of the ISDR.
- Develop more integrated information capacities.
- Complete a new thrust to develop global consensus guidance on confronting disasters.
- Expand the ISDR outreach into more regions.
- Develop a new programme initiative on early warning.

These and other opportunities offer high value, high leverage investments for donors. The requested US\$ 12.5 million represents a tiny fraction of the development and relief assistance spending.

This request document explains why international action is so badly needed and it describes the advantages of using the ISDR and its Secretariat as the ideal partner in the international movement to deal with disasters and their reduction.

The added value of ISDR is to provide a common international platform to develop coherence and guidance to the existing and emerging wide range of approaches that are available in the field of disaster risk reduction.

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1. The opportunity for donors

1.1 Core offering, core benefits

The core offering of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) is a platform for coordinated, coherent, well-informed, international action to reduce disaster risk, supported by a skilled well-organized Secretariat and extensive networks and partnerships.

The core benefit for the donor is the achievement of reduced risk and reduced vulnerability for the poor, through association with a unique and credible international organization that achieves high leverage on critical actors through partnerships.

1.2 Four focuses for international action

Disasters are a serious and growing problem (see details in Sections 4 - 6). To make disaster risk reduction a widespread feature of public action worldwide, international energies need to be directed at four key areas of focus:

- Policy and strategy at an international level in the United Nations and beyond, in order to orchestrate common frameworks, and to support national actors to develop national platforms and other institutionalisation.
- Advocacy and education, especially at global and regional levels and in leading forums and specialized audiences and networks, and to assist national advocacy capacities.
- Information and networks to support countries and partners, including summary materials, translations, coordination of technical standards and benchmarking, and network development and stimulation.
- Partnerships, particularly to link initiatives, projects and capacities at regional, national and sub-national levels with international contexts of policy, expertise and information, and to achieve mutual understanding between all levels.

1.3 Target audiences and beneficiaries

The ISDR targets those who have responsibility for managing risks and protecting the vulnerable and the poor - the policymakers, decision-makers and expert groups at international, regional and national levels - especially those who are eager to partner, to learn and to act. The ISDR seeks to provide them with the concepts, information and motivation to empower their countries and their communities to effectively deal with disaster risk.

*lack of political
commitment and
lack of institutional
development*

Typical partners include government departments, for example for emergency management or environment; mayors and city administrations, regional disaster reduction entities, such as the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, regional development banks, like the Andean Development Bank and African Development Bank, economic cooperation organizations such as the New Partnership for

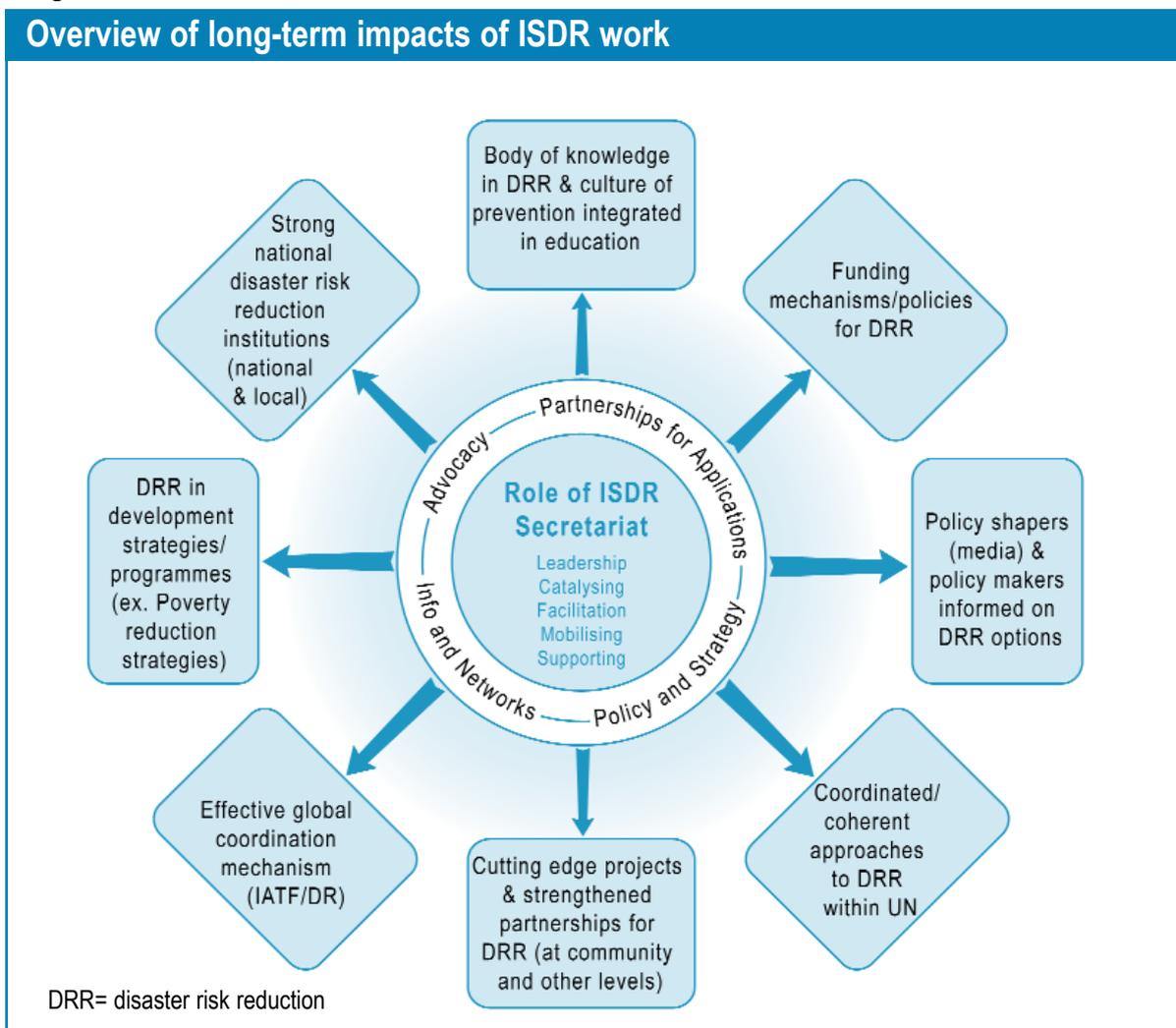
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Africa's Development (NEPAD) Secretariat; UN organisations such as UNDP, OCHA, WMO, UNEP, UN-Habitat, and UNFCCC; and a range of civil society actors including the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the ProVention Consortium insurance companies, and educational institutions. Community level actors are also linked, via ISDR's open processes of advocacy and information provision.

The immediate beneficiaries are these actors. The benefits are evident from increased political commitment, the development at national level of new legislation, greater public awareness and engagement, better information and methods, more systematic training and education, and the incorporation of disaster risk reduction in international and regional agendas, such as poverty reduction and climate change.

The resulting benefits to end-users occur over national and regional scales, and over long periods, evident as lower risk profiles and reduced impacts when hazards do strike. These benefits can be demonstrated through case studies and statistical analysis.

Figure 1



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2. Priorities and financial needs

2.1 Supporting a basic capability - a permanent priority

The Secretariat's priorities for the biennium have been developed through continual dialogue with partners and within IATF/DR and other UN forums, including guidance from the General Assembly. A permanent priority is to maintain a basic capacity for global support and partnership development across the critical issues, institutions and programmes concerned with disaster risk reduction, including responding to the requests of UN member states. The Secretariat's baseline budget needs for the four key focus areas are summarized below.

Table 1: Breakdown of baseline budget for the biennium 2004-2005 for four focus areas and main cost elements, in US\$ 000

	Policy and Strategy	Advocacy	Information and Networks	Partnerships for Applications	TOTAL
Staff	1,344	1,022	1,097	709	4,171
Non-staff inputs	1,172	958	737	1,382	4,249
Management services	343	281	287	266	1178
TOTAL	2,859	2,261	2,121	2,357	9,598

Donors are strongly encouraged to provide funding to support these foundational capacities of the ISDR Secretariat to stimulate the advances needed in all of the focus areas.

2.2 Supporting a new thrust for global guidance

Over 2004-2005, a major priority will be the successful conduct of an international process to develop a new thrust for global guidance on disaster reduction for the next decade, as directed by a UN General Assembly resolution being finalised in December 2003.

high value, high leverage investments for donors

The process will provide the opportunity to make a quantum leap in global thinking and commitment to disaster risk reduction. It is expected to lead to a new and much more substantive global Programme of Action on disaster risk reduction for 2005-2015. It will capitalise on all areas of ISDR partners' activities.

The process is already underway with the review of progress under the previous landmark strategy, the Yokohama Strategy, the development of the new conceptual framework for disaster risk reduction, and the planning of the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, January 2005, in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan. The conference will provide a powerful platform for all parties to advance their disaster risk reduction interests and gain from the synergies that will arise. It will form an important milestone for the global reduction of disasters.

Donors are strongly encouraged to support this UN-mandated priority, especially to support the Secretariat's work to engage stakeholders in the process, from governments, developing countries

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and target groups in the conference and its preparatory processes, as well as the engagement of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and other UN policy bodies.

2.3 Supporting the other top priorities

Five special priorities have been identified for 2004-2005 that require extra funding over what can be drawn from the baseline funding, as listed in Table 2. The request for special priorities is US\$ 2,913,000. This brings the total biennium request to US\$ 12,511,000.

*"The need to formulate strategies for early warning systems, disaster preparedness and monitoring in order to secure sustainable development is now more deserving than ever before."
Kenya, Second Committee of General Assembly, 58th Session (October 2003)*

Table 2: Priority opportunities for 2004-2005

Priority Item	Significance	Estimated minimum additional costs
1. Organizational strengthening	Completion of the Secretariat organizational development process, including more integration with the IATF/DR and more stable finances.	US\$ 150,000
2. Integrated information	Strengthening of integrated information resources, including upgraded databases website, and the foundations of a substantive information capacity on disaster risk reduction.	US\$ 349,000 (Switzerland has expressed interest)
3. Global Guidance	Additional resources are needed to capitalize on the opportunity of the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, January 2005, in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan.	US\$ 474,000 (Japan has expressed interest)
4. Impact in regions	Expanded impact in regions, particularly through more national platforms and strengthened ISDR regional presence, e.g. in Asia, Europe, the Pacific and Francophone Africa.	US\$ 390,000 (per region or sub-region)
5. Early warning	Expanding work on early warning via a support capacity in Bonn, Germany, acting on the recommendations of the Second international Conference on Early Warning.	US\$ 1,160,000 (Germany has expressed interest)
TOTAL (assuming two new regional capacities)		US\$ 2,913,000

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2.4 More opportunities

There are many other important opportunities where further investment is highly merited, and where much could be achieved with additional donor support. These include initiatives on:

- Developing networks to reduce drought impacts, especially in Africa.
- More explicit mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into Millennium Development Goal activities.
- Achieving stronger entrainment of disaster risk reduction into the many large programmes concerned with water.
- Contributing disaster risk reduction inputs to policy and practice for adaptation to climate change.
- Developing international protocols for collecting and archiving disaster data, and international, policy-relevant research agendas on disaster reduction.
- Promoting the use of space-based tools for disaster risk assessment and warning.
- Developing internationally accepted approaches to the valuation of disaster risks and disaster risk reduction, and to benchmarking risk reduction systems.
- Expanding access to disaster risk reduction information through translation into more languages.
- Developing risk reduction policies and guidelines that are gender-relevant and that address the needs of vulnerable groups - children, the elderly and the handicapped.
- Developing awareness and educational tools for disaster risk reduction.

3. ISDR provides the international platform

3.1 Countries call on the UN

The United Nations member states have increasingly expressed their concern about the growth in disasters and the impacts on vulnerable countries in a series of resolutions debated and passed at the UN General Assembly. An important new resolution is being finalised in December 2003 to put additional emphasis on climate-related disasters and the potential linkages with policy initiatives on climate change. It calls for more action to defend the vulnerable and the poor.

The will of the international community is clear; as is the need for internationally coordinated action. All that is required is the matching commitment and allocation of resources.

3.2 Institutionalising international action

The ISDR was created by the UN General Assembly as the centrepiece of UN efforts to address the causes of disasters and to guide commitments and action by UN agencies, governments and other parties to reduce disasters (see GA Resolutions 54/219, 56/195 and 57/256). In December 2003 a GA resolution is expected to be approved, launching a preparatory process for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in January 2005 as an opportunity to share experiences and adopt a framework and programme for global action to reduce risk.

The concepts, purposes and plans of the ISDR are set out in the June 2001 document Framework for Action for the Implementation of the ISDR (www.unisdr.org/framework.htm). The ISDR vision is "To

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enable all societies to become resilient to the effects of natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters, in order to reduce human, economic and social losses."

3.3 The advantages of a United Nations platform

A United Nations home for the international platform provides the means for all of the countries of the world and other major stakeholders to act in a coherent systematic fashion to reduce the risks and impacts of disasters.

The ISDR has been specifically set up as a mechanism for all stakeholders. Its guiding body, the Inter-Agency Task Force of Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR) is currently composed of 26 representatives from leading UN, regional and civil society organizations concerned with disaster risk reduction, and IATF/DR meetings continue to attract numerous observers (see Annex 1). Many members and observers are active collaborators and partners in ISDR activities. At present, the Secretariat is seeking to strengthen the Task Force's role in steering and stimulating disaster risk reduction and ISDR policies.

The United Nations home for the ISDR ensures accountability to the needs and wishes of all countries, and it enables the promotion and endorsement of disaster concerns at the highest levels of international consideration. It also facilitates coordination among the UN's many activities and agencies.

3.4 Networks and partnerships

Success in reducing disasters can only come through mobilizing and supporting multiple partnerships that address the multiple factors that cause disasters. The ISDR is advanced through the collaborative efforts of many partners throughout the world. It provides a natural platform for stimulating and coordinating international partnerships and networks on disaster risk reduction.

Several years of extensive outreach, networking and advocacy by the ISDR Secretariat has resulted in significant progress in developing networks and partnerships, as is described in section 8. As a result, the Secretariat is now very widely appreciated, not just within the UN but throughout the target audiences. This is evident from the high and growing levels of requests for information and assistance and for the participation of the Secretariat in initiatives, programmes and meetings throughout the world.

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4. A growing and complex problem

4.1 Disasters affect millions

Disasters have long been a threat to societies. Millions of people have died or have lost their livelihoods and assets through their vulnerability to natural hazards - drought, flood, storm, heat waves and freezes, earthquake, volcanic eruption, wildfire and tsunami.

*growing worldwide
impacts of disasters*

Given modern knowledge and technology, one might think that the problem of disasters will be shrinking. Partly this is true, with marked declines in the numbers of deaths, but astonishingly, we also see that disaster impacts on populations have increased enormously over the last thirty years (see Figure 1).

Disasters are causing debilitating impacts on struggling developing countries and the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of the poor. Worldwide, more people are affected by disasters than by conflict. In affluent societies, the economic costs of natural hazards are growing inexorably.

On average, over a thousand lives and over a billion dollars a week are lost globally to disaster impact, ranking it one of the biggest threats to sustainable development. It is a major handicap to the efforts of developing countries to escape from poverty.

4.2 Disasters and poverty

Vulnerability and poverty are common bedfellows. Vulnerability to hazards means the risk of loss of assets and livelihoods and the slide to poverty. Poverty means minimal access to the physical and social capital needed to prepare for and deal with natural hazards and other threats.

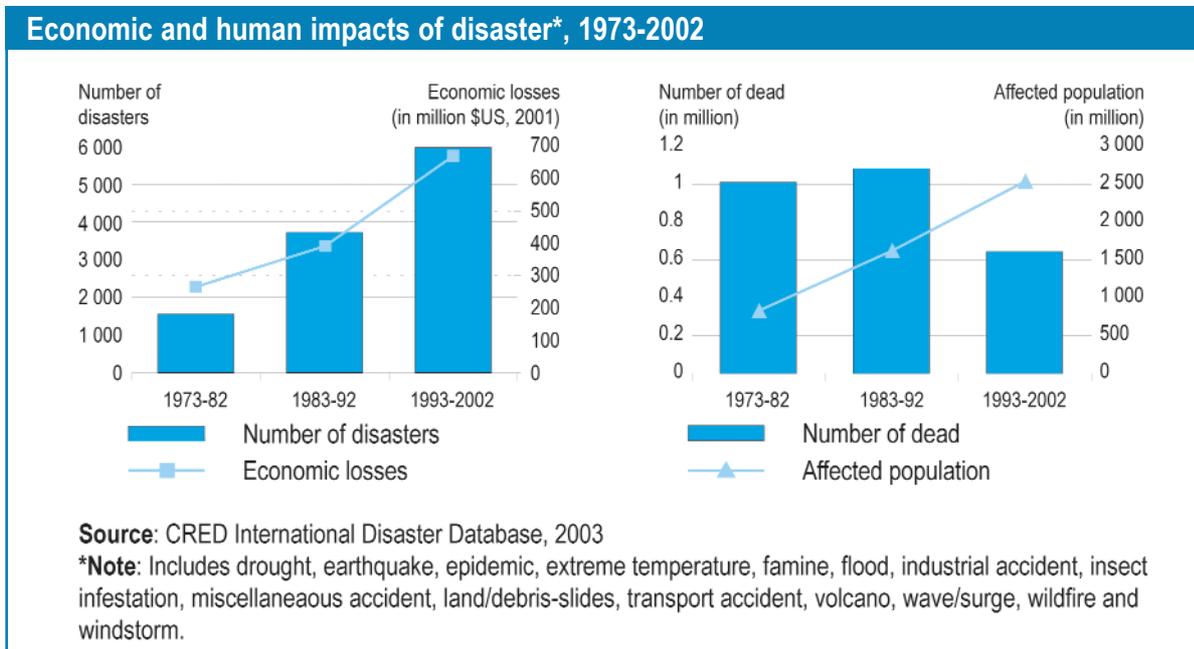
Poverty also means minimal choices, and living in places where no one else wants to live - where vulnerability to hazards is high - on flood plains, landslide-prone hill slopes, unsafe buildings in seismic zones, and barren fields.

New risks are in the making. Climate change looms. Technological disasters are on the increase and can interact in unpredictable ways with natural hazards. HIV/AIDS is greatly reducing coping capacities. Natural hazards expose populations to the secondary but often major threat of disease, and may also lead to civil conflict.

Too few people recognise the important role being played by humans and flawed economic development as a primary cause of the growing disaster risks. Too many still see disasters as a natural event, not knowing the potential for informed human action to substantially reduce the risks and the impacts.

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Figure 2



4.3 Both a humanitarian and development concern

At its core, disaster risk reduction is about saving lives and livelihoods. Disaster risk reduction directly supports the goals of both humanitarian and development communities, though this is not yet fully reflected in donor funding allocations.

In the humanitarian community, some see the reduction of risk and vulnerability as a humanitarian aim in itself, and also as an essential step to reduce the growing pressure on limited humanitarian aid. Leading lights from this community have shown the way, and have stoutly supported the ISDR and the Secretariat over their formative years.

Increasingly, specialists in sustainable development are recognising that poverty reduction efforts will be in vain if the underlying adverse factors in ecological sustainability and socio-economic security are not addressed. For them, disaster risk reduction is a necessity, to reduce the vulnerability of the poor, to protect the environment, to help secure the gains of their development investments and to avoid inadvertently creating additional risk from new development projects.

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5. Strategies and action

5.1 The struggle to change minds and behaviour

Dispersed around the world, a relatively small and loose coalition of scientists, activists, public servants, community leaders and policymakers are working to change thinking and behaviour in order to reduce disaster risks and disaster impacts.

Motivated by the recognition that practical means are available to reduce disaster threats, and supported by enlightened governments and donors, these people are building the strategies, policies and practical tools to tackle the root causes of disaster risk and vulnerability. The core theme is to reduce the sources of disaster risk, not merely to manage the consequences of natural hazards. Energetic, creative, effective efforts are already making their mark in several countries. Many partners and partnerships are at work. Underpinning efforts by the ISDR Secretariat are raising global awareness and stimulating wider action. But the surface of the problem has been barely scratched - disaster impacts worldwide continue to grow.

5.2 Advancing the Millennium Development Goals

At the highest international level, the Millennium Development Goals agreed by world leaders in 2000 target the fundamental needs of the most vulnerable, with the eradication of poverty as the primary goal.

Disasters impact heavily on many of the goals. Section IV of the Millennium Declaration entitled Protecting Our Common Future identifies the need "to intensify our collective efforts to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters".

5.3 Scaling up and mainstreaming

The problem of disasters is now reasonably well understood, in general outline at least, and a host of workable solutions is available. So what is needed to cut the disaster toll?

The primary need is to link and scale up existing knowledge and efforts into a systematic, coordinated, international approach. Advocacy, information, and strengthened processes at national and community levels lie at the heart of what needs to be done.

This is a simple message. Disasters must be allowed to grow and continue to rob the poor and bleed all countries of valuable resources. Risk reduction must be mainstreamed into policies in all quarters, in all sectors, from the household level to international programme level, and in humanitarian, development and environment communities.

It can be done, with a systematic international approach, with the participation and support of many partners, and the support of donors.

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6. International problem requires international action

6.1 No boundaries for disasters

Disasters do not recognise borders or international law. Rain in one country becomes a flood in another. Drought creeps across plains and mountains. Food availability and prices span continents. Disaster-displaced persons press upon neighbouring communities. Insurance premiums rise globally. Equally, knowledge and policies now can be quickly spread around the world, and often can be adapted and used in different countries. Information is the most powerful of tools. The alternative, where each country separately develops its own individual approach, would be prohibitively costly. Cooperation and coordination among countries is therefore a fundamental basis for dealing effectively with disasters. It is especially important for regional issues, and for achieving economies of scale and cost effectiveness in disaster risk reduction investments.

6.2 Patchy progress and policy

Many countries have learned a great deal about disaster risk and how such risks can be managed. Some can face the most powerful hurricanes ever experienced and lose few lives, whereas a neighbour is devastated with thousands dead. A successful community awareness program operates in one region, but is unknown to others. Some cities operate very effective building safety codes while others have none at all.

Even where successes are demonstrated, the potential long-term benefits will not accrue if there is no long term supporting foundation of political will, financial commitment, institutional commitment and sound policy. Practitioners and researchers repeatedly state that the lack of coherent policy and political commitment is the biggest impediment to progress on disaster risk reduction.

So long as disaster risk reduction efforts remain localised, patchy and unsupported by policy and political will, worldwide progress will be slow. Systematic internationally coordinated action can change this, by disseminating and magnifying successes in a thousand other places, and by anchoring national institutions in a strong international web of policies.

"In light of the increasing frequency and intensity of natural hazards - particularly extreme hydrometeorological phenomena such as El Niño impacting directly on Andean countries - it is necessary to consider a more complete and comprehensive strategy for mitigating the causes [of disasters]."

*Andean Community (Ecuador),
Second Committee of General
Assembly, 58th Session (October
2003)*

6.3 Chronic under-investment in international efforts

The estimated global economic impact of disasters amounts to many tens of billions of US dollars per annum on average. With concerted and effective disaster reduction action it should be possible to reduce the impact by at least a few billion US dollars per annum, hopefully much more.

Now, if international coordination activity can stimulate even a few percent increase in such action, then the payoff of the coordination should be worth at least some tens of millions of dollars per

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annum. This is substantially more than the current contributions to the Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction, which averaged about US \$3.4M per annum over the 2002-2003 biennium.

This is a conservative estimate of the value of international coordination; a similar non-monetary analysis would demonstrate the same large leverage for reducing the immense social impacts on the poor and the vulnerable. It indicates that there is under-investment in international coordination, and ample opportunity for large gains from the application of additional investments.

Under-investment is also confirmed by the comparison of ISDR Trust Fund contributions to total spending on humanitarian and development assistance for the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) member countries (see Annex 2). The highest ratio for any one country is 0.03% and the overall average contribution is 0.004%, or about 4 cents for every \$1000. The potential for increasing the effectiveness of humanitarian and development assistance through international action to reduce disaster risk is likely to be much higher than these tiny percentages.

Beyond the ISDR needs, it is clear that disaster reduction activities worldwide also suffer from chronic under-investment. There is a growing need for better mechanisms to raise, manage and disburse funds for disaster reduction projects in vulnerable countries. Consideration could be given to developing such mechanisms making use of the Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction.

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7. ISDR Secretariat capacities

7.1 Unique role, unique responsibility

The ISDR Secretariat's mandate from the United Nations provides it with a unique capacity to provide advice and guidance to the UN Secretary General, the UN General Assembly, and UN member States - and a unique responsibility to articulate and serve the needs of all countries in respect to disaster risk reduction.

The Secretariat responds to several accountabilities - to the General Assembly through the UN Secretary-General's reporting to the Second Committee under "Environment and Sustainable Development"; to the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs who is also head of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for ISDR administrative matters; to the donors who supply the full funding of the Secretariat activities; and to partners in the IATF/DR and beyond, for providing the leadership and support expected of it.

Through its extensive institutional networks in the UN system, to government missions and bodies, and through the IATF/DR members and numerous other regional and national bodies, it is both well informed and very influential on risk reduction activities worldwide.

7.2 Access to experience, expertise and energy

With a permanent staff of 14 and about 16 others - temporary staff, consultants, volunteer advisers and interns - and its physical presence in Geneva, San Jose, Costa Rica, and Nairobi, Kenya, the Secretariat is well positioned to address an array of international, regional and national concerns. Additional capacity is being established in Bonn, Germany, in 2004 and plans are being formulated for new outposts in Asia, Europe, Francophone Africa, and the Pacific.

The Secretariat has experienced and energetic staff and advisers from all continents and with wide experience of disaster contexts in vulnerable countries. They have training in diverse socio-economic and natural sciences, some to the PhD level, and are knowledgeable and experienced in achieving results through complex international and United Nations processes.

Equally importantly, the Secretariat has access to a broad array of expertise and experience through its network of partners, in the form of secondments, participation in specific activities, and the provision of voluntary advice. Consultants are also called on for specialist tasks.

Those working in the Secretariat are highly motivated professionals. They want to reduce disaster risks, and they understand the linkage between results and funding. The lights burn late in the Secretariat's offices.

"We support a stronger focus on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and would like to see enhanced regional outreach because it is a means by which to introduce best practices through policy integration, advocacy and information-sharing in order to strengthen cooperation on disaster reduction among existing regional stakeholders." Croatia, Second Committee of General Assembly, 58th Session (October 2003)

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7.3 Planning to change

Following several years of growth, the Secretariat is now undertaking a new stage of internal organizational development. A leading consultant in organisational design and development has been engaged to guide the process thanks to the support of the Swiss Government. A revised internal strategic framework has been developed (see 8.2 below), and a new process for work planning and management is being instituted. These steps have been undertaken with the wide participation of Secretariat staff and will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of use of the funds entrusted to the Secretariat.

A central element of the organizational change is the shift toward a modern, flexible, matrix-like approach that focuses on outcomes and outputs, with each officer contributing to a variety of outputs according to their skills and the output's needs.

These and other features of the organizational strengthening to be completed over 2004 have been laid out in an internal working document *Certainty and Change: The ISDR Secretariat Plan (2004-2005)*. The title reflects the Secretariat's determination to respond to the challenge of change and to achieve more certainty in its outputs and achievements.

8. ISDR Secretariat achievements

8.1 Institutional progress

During its first biennium, over 2000-2001, the ISDR established the new organizational format to follow the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR, 1990-1999) - including a redefined Secretariat, the innovation of the consultative and policy-setting Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, and the recruitment of a new Director of the Secretariat. This period was marked by considerable uncertainty and severe financial constraints.

The second biennium (2002-2003) has seen great progress. Donor support has grown, including substantial non-earmarked funding from the United Kingdom and Switzerland. Many outputs are coming to fruition and internal processes are being strengthened.

Of particular importance was the confirmation by the UN General Assembly of the ISDR and its institutional elements as an enduring and valuable mechanism for achieving disaster risk reduction.

ISDR Secretariat purpose statement

The ISDR Secretariat is a catalyst to advance and facilitate the realisation of the ISDR worldwide, striving to mobilise commitment and resources for its wide implementation and for disaster risk reduction through partnerships at international, regional and national levels.

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8.2 Strategic framework

The new internal strategic framework developed by the Secretariat in August 2003 is set out in Figure 3. It is solidly based on past, widely endorsed strategic aims of the ISDR, while having a greater emphasis on a needs-driven, results-based approach.

The purpose statement identifies the Secretariat's role as primarily a catalyst and facilitator of action toward the development of disaster risk reduction. This is achieved through the four focus areas. While similar to previous formulations, these contain three important new features:

- A more explicit role in stimulating the development of a strong policy basis for disaster risk reduction, and in identifying and responding to emerging opportunities and impediments in respect to disaster risk reduction.
- Recognition of the Secretariat's role to support numerous projects in regions and countries, but as a secondary partner and with the aim to achieve value-adding, leveraging, or the testing and demonstration of risk reduction and policies and methods.
- Coordination and regional outreach remain as important as ever, but they are not identified as focus areas; instead they are seen as natural and essential means to achieve progress on all of the outcomes.

The outcome statements in Figure 3 represent specific, enduring targets relevant to the overall ISDR mission. As they are high-level results, they depend on many external factors and on the actions of many other parties. The Secretariat contributes to their advancement through the specific outputs that form its operational work programme.

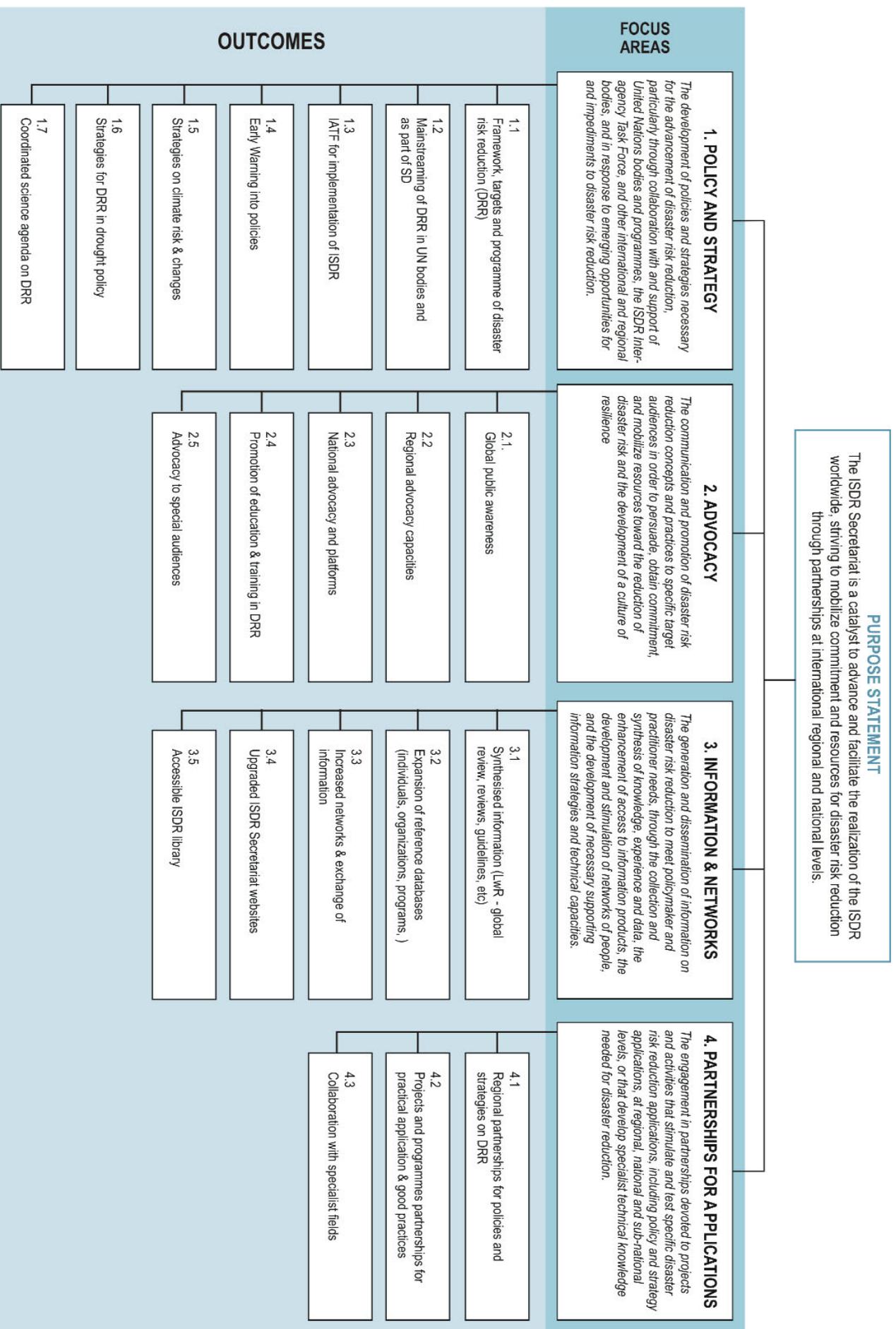
8.3 Highlights of achievements

The following highlights of the ISDR Secretariat's achievements are closely in line with the goals set for the biennium in the document presented to donors on 24 January 2002 An Institutional Overview and Plan for the Short and Medium-Term (Biennium 2002-2003).

- The inclusion of disaster risk reduction in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), as a result of a systematic campaign to introduce disaster risk reduction as an important issue into the preparatory processes for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg (August-September 2002).
- Coordinated input of disaster risk reduction into relevant international policies and programmes, in particular to the policy and work planning for water, sanitation and human settlements that followed the JPOI, as well as through dialogue with UNFCCC and climate mechanisms, and in the production of decision-maker guidelines for reducing flood losses in collaboration with key partners.
- Regional programmes initiated, including the development of national platforms for disaster risk reduction, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean (with Sweden's support) and Africa (with Germany's support).

Figure 3

ISDR Secretariat Summary of Strategic Framework



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- Substantially increased availability of information and awareness and education materials, including the acclaimed publication *Living with Risk - A global review of disaster reduction initiatives*, the ISDR *Informs* magazines, the annual awareness campaign for the International Day for Disaster Reduction, the UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction, and the innovative Riskland game and radio soap-operas.
- The major process to review early warning and its integration into policy, which included regional consultations and culminated in the very successful Second International Conference on Early Warning, in Bonn, Germany, 16-18 October, 2003.
- Growing recognition of the need for disaster risk reduction, as evidenced by the many calls for the ISDR Secretariat to provide inputs to projects and deliberations of partners and other organizations.

8.4 Partnership development

The ISDR Secretariat is a tiny part of the global risk reduction community. To serve its particular role, it very actively seeks to develop and support partnerships and networks, especially with IATF/DR members and regional actors.

For example, joint staff meetings are held with UNDP Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery and there is active collaboration on several projects, including IATF/DR Working Group activities and the development of the new Framework for Guidance and Monitoring of Disaster Risk Reduction. Collaboration with the ProVention Consortium has included the organization of a risk reduction workshop with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) for the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in December 2003.

A joint self-assessment was carried out by OCHA, UNDP and the ISDR Secretariat to identify synergies and overlaps at global, regional and national scales and in all phases of disaster and risk management. This has resulted in more effective coordination and a joint initiative on volcanic risk in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and on El Niño in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Regional and sub-regional collaboration is extensive, and for example includes policy consultations in Africa with AU/NEPAD, IGAD, ECOWAS and SADC; policy development support to Latin American entities such as CAPRADE, CEPREDENAC, CAF, and CIIFEN; cooperation in Asia with ADPC, ADRC and ESCAP, and in the Pacific with SOPAC; and co-organizing the Euro-Mediterranean Forum of disaster reduction with the Council of Europe.

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9. Operational issues

9.1 Measuring impacts of ISDR Secretariat activities

Since the ISDR Secretariat acts in wide partnership and the goals it seeks involve long and complex chains of actors, it invariably cannot claim successes as its own. In team play, an individual cannot claim the prize.

Nevertheless, indicators of achievement are critical, not only to provide guidance on the effectiveness of particular Secretariat activities but also to increase understanding and measurement of the fundamental conditions being targeted by the activities. The Secretariat is therefore seeking to develop tools and approaches to better identify and measure impacts of its work. There are five main elements to its current approach.

- A survey of UN member states will be undertaken in 2004, to establish the state of national progress and the changes that have occurred in disaster reduction since the last survey in 2001.
- The Secretariat's existing impacts database will continue to be developed, and an annual review of impacts information will be prepared.
- The global review process accompanying the Living with Risk document will be continued and will provide periodic assessments of progress.
- The Secretariat will conform to internal UN processes on indicator-based performance management.
- The work planning process will systematically identify indicators for each of the 19 outcomes targeted by the Secretariat, and will include measurement steps as part of the ongoing work activities.

The Secretariat recognises that further work is required to develop its measurement activities into an effective tool of its work.

9.2 The ISDR-donor partnership

The ISDR Secretariat is the child of the UN member states and must be nurtured by them in order to grow into full competency. As yet it is still young and vulnerable, and it needs the unflinching support of its family.

In particular, the ISDR Secretariat's total dependence on voluntary, extra-budgetary contributions has exposed it to large fluctuations and great uncertainties in income and frequent severe cash flow crises. This has wasted management energies and has badly handicapped the establishment of sustainable approaches to reducing disaster risk.

Over the next biennium, the achievement of a more predictable and sustainable financial base will be a central organisational goal for the Secretariat. For this reason, the Secretariat is seeking to develop more durable, collaborative partnerships with donors. While all support is very welcome of course, donors are invited to consider the advantages of working closely with the Secretariat to develop enduring, multi-year commitments.

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The dominant donors are encouraged to assist in this task through their participation in the ISDR Support Group. Among other things, the group could assist the Secretariat to establish a stronger financial position within the UN system, and to more effectively engage the support of the development community.

9.3 Earmarked contributions

The Secretariat recognizes that donors often wish to " earmark" funds toward specific activities or outcomes. Several such earmarked funds are making important contributions to the Secretariat's work, for example in supporting the regional outreach programmes.

At the same time, non-earmarked funding represents a commitment to systematically addressing the whole issue of disaster reduction, and it enables the ISDR Secretariat to direct resources in a coherent and planned way to address all needs. In this respect, the continuing provision of non-earmarked funding by current donors is fundamental.

The Secretariat's internal work planning processes will endeavour to ensure that the costs of necessary inputs of Secretariat management and information services are appropriately attributed to the outcomes, without assuming inputs from non-earmarked funds.

9.4 Budgets

Budgeting for the Secretariat is a challenging task owing to rapidly changing demands, the highly uncertain funding stream, earmark requirements, and the requirements of UN rules and regulations. The Secretariat's shift to output-based budgeting will be implemented over 2004. Table 1 (see page 4) provides a breakdown of the base level budget.

9.5 Work planning and operations

The Secretariat is currently developing a new output-based and skills-based management system. Each of the outcomes shown in Figure 3 will be advanced by specific planned outputs. The system has three key elements: (i) a one-page summary for each outcome, which describes the rationale and priorities, outputs and inputs, and the key partners and staff involved; (ii) a detailed work plan for each output, with timeframes, responsibilities and costs, and (iii) individual staff plans that list the tasks which the person has accepted responsibility for, with deadlines and time allocations.

Outputs are produced through the contributions of specific staff, while each person contributes to several outputs, according to the needs of the output tasks and the skills and availability of the person. Staff are accountable to output leaders for task achievement, and are mentored by their home group leader.

The internal evaluation of priorities and negotiation of resource allocations to particular outputs, within staffing and budget limits, is supervised by the senior staff as a team, under the Director's leadership. Changes in tasks, commitments and budgets are recorded on updated output work plans and individual staff plans. Once the system has bedded down it will be transferred to a computer-based system.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Participation in Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction Eighth Meeting, Geneva, 5-6 November 2003

IATF/DR Members (26)

African Union (AU)
Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)
Asian Disaster Reduction Centre (ADRC)
Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED)
Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) International Council
Council of Europe (CoE)
Drought Monitoring Centre (DMC-Nairobi)
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC)
Iberoamerican Association of Civil Defence and Civil Protection
Inter-American Committee for Natural Disaster Reduction (OAS/IACNDR)
International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU)
International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
Munich Reinsurance
South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC)
The World Bank (IBRD/WB)
UN Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD-Kobe)
UN Development Programme (UNDP)
UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
UN Environment Programme (UNEP)
UN Programme for Human Settlements (UN-Habitat)
United Nations University (UNU-Tokyo)
World Food Programme (WFP)
World Health Organization (WHO)
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

Observers from Governments (30)

Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, México, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Russian Federation, Spain, Sudan, Switzerland, United States, United Kingdom

Observers from other organizations (8)

European Commission (EU/ECHO)
International Civil Defence Organization (ICDO-Geneva)
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA-Geneva)
The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Secretariat
Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
Université de Genève/CERG

Annex 2: ISDR Trust Fund contributions in relation to development and relief assistance for OECD-DAC* countries

Country	GDP US\$B	Aid US\$M	as % of GDP	Relief US\$M	as % of GDP	as % of AID	ISDR** US\$000	per annum US\$000	as % of Aid+Relief
United Kingdom	1438	4724	0.33%	361	0.03%	8%	2745	686	0.014%
Sweden	240	1978	0.82%	291	0.12%	15%	1801	450	0.020%
Germany	1870	5838	0.31%	207	0.01%	4%	1452	363	0.006%
Switzerland	240	988	0.41%	161	0.07%	16%	1435	359	0.031%
Japan	4764	13007	0.27%	81	0.00%	1%	834	209	0.002%
Norway	167	1238	0.74%	199	0.12%	16%	527	132	0.009%
Italy	1075	1556	0.14%	82	0.01%	5%	391	98	0.006%
Denmark	159	1860	1.17%	139	0.09%	7%	255	64	0.003%
Finland	120	417	0.35%	44	0.04%	11%	134	34	0.007%
Canada	714	1683	0.24%	194	0.03%	12%	100	25	0.001%
Austria	191	483	0.25%	34	0.02%	7%	13	3	0.001%
Australia	388	1065	0.27%	91	0.02%	9%	0	0	
Belgium	228	933	0.41%	29	0.01%	3%	0	0	
France	1308	4721	0.36%	183	0.01%	4%	0	0	
Greece	113	262	0.23%	9	0.01%	3%	0	0	
Ireland	95	259	0.27%	26	0.03%	10%	0	0	
Luxemburg	20	141	0.71%	11	0.06%	8%	0	0	
Netherlands	371	3516	0.95%	410	0.11%	12%	0	0	
New Zealand	52	130	0.25%	3	0.01%	2%	0	0	
Portugal	107	305	0.29%	4	0.00%	1%	0	0	
Spain	561	1335	0.24%	42	0.01%	3%	0	0	
United States	9762	9756	0.10%	1141	0.01%	12%	0	0	
TOTALS	23983	56195	0.23%	3742	0.02%	7%	9687	2422	0.0040%

* OECD Development Assistance Committee.

Aid and relief data (2000) from World Disasters Report 2002, IFRC.

Other country inputs include: Cyprus \$8K, Philippines \$12K, South Africa \$15K.

Other cash inputs include: ANEM (France) \$10K, UNEP \$\$\$30K, WMO \$19K.

** These are totals for four years 2000-2003.

GDP data from OECD for year 2000.

ISDR Mission

The ISDR aims at building disaster resilient communities by promoting increased awareness of the importance of disaster reduction as an integral component of sustainable development, with the goal of reducing human, social, economic and environmental losses due to natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters.

ISDR Secretariat purpose statement

The ISDR Secretariat is a catalyst to advance and facilitate the realisation of the ISDR worldwide, striving to mobilise commitment and resources for its wide implementation and for disaster risk reduction through partnerships at international, regional and national levels.



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