

# FAST FACTS

## United Nations Development Programme



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.

### Disaster risk reduction and recovery

Ninety-five percent of disaster fatalities occur in developing countries. It is the poor who live in the most drought, flood and extreme weather prone regions and suffer most when catastrophe occurs.

Disasters put hard won development achievements at risk, reversing economic growth and progress towards the elimination of poverty; cause environmental damage; and result in human suffering.

Disasters have killed more than 1.3 million people and affected an average of 220 million per year over the past two decades. In 2011 alone, 106 million people were affected by floods; 60 million were affected by drought, mainly in the **Horn of Africa**; and almost 30,000 people were killed. Disasters cost the world economy more than US\$ 380 billion in 2011.

### UNDP's approach

Investing in disaster preparedness before a natural hazard occurs reduces the need for humanitarian action. Every dollar spent on preparing for disasters saves around seven dollars in economic losses.

UNDP helps develop the capacity of governments in over 60 countries to respond to disasters and mitigate the risk they pose. UNDP is guiding policy; training communities and first responders; helping planners; and integrating disaster risk reduction strategies into national development plans.

Special attention is paid to the vulnerabilities of women and young people; as well as the risks posed by climate change and rapid urban growth.

As well as working directly with national governments, UNDP also adopts a regional approach to disaster preparedness. For instance, the Asia-Pacific region sees more than 70 percent of the world's earthquakes. A UNDP earthquake preparedness project is helping **Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India** and **Pakistan** share regional expertise in construction, building safety and to map earthquake risks.

Strong partnerships with donors, non-governmental and community organizations in countries where UNDP works are integral to the approach to disaster risk reduction. For example, in **Nepal**, humanitarian, financial and development agencies work with the government under the Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium.

Disaster recovery activities are often an opportunity to integrate improved disaster resilience into communities and *build back better*. Emergency employment schemes to rebuild a bridge are an opportunity to build something that will resist future earthquakes or floods; debris that is removed can be used to strengthen embankments to prevent landslides or flooding.

UNDP spends an average of over **US\$ 150 million** annually to increase resilience to natural hazards.



With UNDP support more than 500,000 people on Bangladesh's coast are better secured against floods through improved local infrastructure and disaster risk reduction strategies. UNDP Bangladesh Photo

### UNDP in Action

In **Armenia**, 15 years of UNDP support to the government has reduced disaster risk and allowed villages to benefit from practical assistance, such as drainage systems that reduce the risk of flooding. In 2011, UNDP helped the Ministry of Emergency Situations to create a public disaster risk E-Library that will help planners understand the risk present in different geographic locations.

## Priority countries receiving UNDP technical and financial support for disaster risk reduction and recovery



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

With UNDP's assistance, the Ministry also established a National Disaster Observatory, which collects and analyses disaster data to inform policy and decision making.

In Manizales, **Colombia**, seismic activity, high rainfall and rapid urban development on steep unstable land combine to make landslides a chronic hazard. UNDP support to a local government initiative has empowered 200 women by training and employing them as risk managers in their own communities. The women raise community awareness about the risk of landslides, identify areas at risk of collapse and maintain drainage ditches and retaining walls to prevent subsidence, making the city a safer place to live.

In **Haiti**, UNDP has helped to create more than 300,000 temporary jobs, providing an income to over 60,000 families, as part of the response to the 2010 earthquake. UNDP has also provided opportunities for training and experience in such areas as debris management, recycling, earthquake resistant construction, riverbank protection and watershed rehabilitation. Together with the government and partners, UNDP has contributed to the removal of more than 75 percent of the 10 million cubic metres of rubble created by the quake, helping affected communities to recover, and reducing the potential impact and risk of future disasters.

In **Indonesia**, since 2007, UNDP has been working with the government to reduce the human, economic, and social impact of disasters by establishing disaster risk management agencies across the country; integrating disaster risk reduction into the national five-year development plan; and developing comprehensive guidelines and tools for assessing damage, loss and needs for post-disaster recovery. In part, as a result of these activities, in January 2012 no lives were lost in Aceh when a 7.6 magnitude earthquake struck. Early warning systems worked and evacuations were made on time.

**Mozambique** shows how long-term investment in disaster risk reduction can help save lives. In the last 36 years the country has seen over 45 hazard events, including floods, droughts, cyclones, earthquakes and tsunamis. For more than three decades, UNDP has supported the government in disaster planning, risk mapping, early warning systems, shelter construction, establishing regional emergency operations centres and other disaster risk reduction strategies. Between 2001 and 2010, the total number of Mozambicans affected by disasters fell by 45 percent compared to the previous decade. Flood related mortality in 2010 was less than 25 percent of the 10 year average and although 16,000 people were affected by flooding, this represents a decrease of more than 90 percent on the previous decade.

The 2010 floods in **Pakistan**, which affected over 20 million people, and the 2011 flooding, which affected over 5.5 million, left homes, bridges, roads, electricity infrastructure, agricultural land and crops destroyed. UNDP's recovery programme has focused on re-establishing the capacity of the government to respond to these and future floods; restore the livelihoods of vulnerable people; and rebuild basic community infrastructure. Over 170,000 people have been given emergency employment to remove debris and rebuild infrastructure. The energy needs of 150,000 people are now being met thanks to UNDP supported solar panels that didn't exist before, which is an example of the build back better philosophy.

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