



# 01 Summary Progress Report to the Second Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction



This paper highlights key areas of progress made in tackling the gaps and challenges identified in the Chair's Summary<sup>1</sup> from the First Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in June 2007. It accounts for major developments or results from follow-up to the commitments made in the Chair's Summary. It is based on inputs from ISDR system partners.

## **Overall progress on implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action: Supporting country efforts**

1. A total of 120 Governments have designated official focal points for the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of progress of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (HFA). Fifty countries have now established multi-stakeholder national disaster risk reduction (DRR) platforms compared to 39 at the First Session of the Global Platform. But progress is regionally uneven and remains highly dependent on non-systematic external support from, in the main, ISDR system partners. There is also a long way to go to systematically incorporate climate change adaptation planning dimensions. The HFA Monitor, a global tool to facilitate national progress reporting was launched by the UNISDR in May 2008 and used by partner organizations and national authorities for monitoring and reporting on their progress. By February 2009, nearly 100 countries had instigated reporting and 62 national reports had been concluded and submitted online, thus contributing significantly to the level of public information and reporting on the progress of HFA implementation.
2. The results of the self-assessment review of national progress presented in these reports indicate mixed success on HFA implementation to date. Many countries are advancing with capacity building, legislation and institutional systems, and with establishing early warning systems. In contrast, there is little development in the practical mainstreaming of DRR into social, economic, urban, environmental and infrastructural sector planning. As a result, global economic loss risk continues to grow at a faster rate than mortality risk. The extent to which progress has been made across the five HFA Priorities for Action is closely correlated with national income levels. High-income countries are making greater progress in adopting hazard

<sup>1</sup> Chair's Summary. Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. First session, Geneva, 5-7 June 2007. ISDR/GP/2007/6. [www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform](http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform)

resistant building standards and environmental planning regulations, compared to many low-income countries which lack the essential technical, human, institutional, and financial capacities for fully realizing these significant aspects of DRR.

3. Specific details of progress in the different HFA priority areas drawn from the reports show:
  - More than 16 countries of the 62 which submitted are advancing new legislations on institutionalizing disaster risk reduction, and upgrading national disaster management activity.
  - About 45% state that dedicated resources for disaster risk reduction are available for implementation at the national and local level.
  - 42% of the countries indicate a growing dedication of efforts and resources towards the strengthening of capacities at both the local government and community levels.
  - About 50% confirm the attainment of institutional commitment and progress in the implementation of national and local risk assessments and the improvement of hazard and vulnerability information for key sectors.
  - Over 25% report substantial achievement in the implementation of early warning systems for all major hazards, with outreach to communities.
  - More than 20% of the countries report substantial achievements in the integration of risk reduction and recovery concepts and practices into school curricula, education materials and relevant trainings involving actors at the national and local levels.
  - More than 25% (some 20 countries) report substantial progress in the implementation of effective countrywide public awareness strategies to stimulate a culture of disaster resilience, with outreach to urban and rural communities.
  - Only 6% of the countries indicate some progress in mainstreaming risk reduction considerations into national and local level policies or frameworks and development plans, including economic and sectoral policies.
  - Nearly 40% report substantial achievements with disaster preparedness at the national and local levels.
4. The landmark first edition of the *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction: Risk and Poverty in a Changing Climate* (GAR) was launched in Bahrain on 17 May 2009. It provides strong evidence of how disasters are both a cause and a consequence of poverty, and how climate change impact magnifies disaster. It also delivers consolidated evidence of where, why and how disaster risk occurs and shows how such risk can be addressed and the cost of doing so. This is the first global report to provide a specific assessment of the low intensity extensive risks in developing countries, and a comprehensive assessment of progress in implementing the HFA by disaster prone countries themselves.
5. The *Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction* has, since the First Session of the Global Platform, made an inventory of the composition and needs of its members and has also prepared a review of progress towards HFA implementation entitled *Views from the Frontline* on the achievement of HFA priorities in 38 countries, involving 400 civil society organizations. The preliminary results of this review will be presented at the Global Platform's Second Session in June 2009.

6. A group of 116 parliamentarians from 66 countries involved in DRR has begun to advocate the linkages to climate change. Their initiatives have included briefings for the G8-plus, dialogue with the European Union, an action plan for African parliamentarians, a draft resolution for the 120<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Inter Parliamentary Union, and national and regional consultations.
7. Responding the first (2007) Global Platform's call for better integration of risk reduction in development and poverty reduction frameworks, commitments from the development side of the United Nations were expressed by the Secretary-General reflecting proposals to his Policy Committee and High Level Committee on Programme. In response to this commitment the UN Development Group (UNDG) finalized a Guidance Note for UN Country Teams and Governments on how to assist disaster risk aspects for inclusion in Common Country Assessments (CCA) and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF). A review of 67 UNDAFs from Asia showed that 65% of these included disaster risk in one of their outputs or outcomes and 15% recognized the relationship between poverty reduction and disaster risk reduction.
8. In the same vein, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), a partnership of major donors, developing countries, UNISDR and the World Bank, has worked towards mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in development and building capacities for sustainable development in a changing climate. This included a review of the 67 full and interim Poverty Reduction Strategy papers (PRS) which showed that:
  - 19% devoted a whole chapter or section on disaster risk;
  - 75% mentioned the relationship between disaster risk and poverty;
  - 25% did not mention risk at all.

GFDRR has supported the mainstreaming of risk reduction through its Country Assistance Strategies and systematically in the formulation of country development strategies such as PRS. However, translating plans into practice remains a challenge. In addition, GFDRR has catalyzed global support for building resilience in recovery and reconstruction in major disasters since the 2007 Global Platform and launched a South-South Cooperation Program which is fostering greater developing countries' leadership through exchange of knowledge and experiences among the Southern Governments, institutions and networks. UNISDR is implementing the global and regional component of GFDRR, building stronger leadership capacities in the regional organizations.

9. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is another major ISDR system partner. A network of full time UNDP Regional and National Disaster Reduction Advisors provide disaster reduction and recovery services to high risk countries and coordinate with other ISDR system partners in Africa, the Arab States, Asia, Europe/CIS and Latin America and the Caribbean.
10. The ISDR system's PreventionWeb has developed into a substantial repository of accessible information and mechanism for collaboration, dissemination of practical information including standards and guidelines, lessons learned and access to expertise, networks and tools. This includes a virtual library on disaster risk reduction and online communication tools such as e-mail groups and web-based workspaces for many thematic groups and stakeholder

groups. Networks established through the “twinning” of national platforms in Europe have boosted information sharing, further encouraged by training and South-South partnerships.

11. The area of private sector participation in DRR remains largely undeveloped. Global workshops conducted through a partnership of the World Bank, UNISDR and World Economic Forum led to some initial project proposals from Africa and India. The third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in December 2008 reviewed the current status of public-private partnerships and launched the *Kuala Lumpur Initiative on Public-Private Partnerships for Disaster Risk Reduction*. This included the promotion of corporate social responsibility and supportive fiscal policies as well as facilitating the development of the catastrophic risk insurance market.

### **Programme focus**

12. Based on known commitments, many activities have been undertaken to systematically link disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation policies. The UN Secretary-General, supported by UNISDR, convened a ministerial meeting on disaster risk reduction for climate change adaptation in September 2008 as a platform to determine ways to correlate “Hyogo” and “Kyoto” in the lead up to the climate change negotiations COP-14 in Poznan. The Secretary-General has designated climate change as a key priority for his term of office and the UN and created a senior climate change team within the UN Secretariat to advise him.
13. Through the review period, UNISDR presented a number of ISDR submissions and statements to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). These contributions were explicitly recognised in the UNFCCC Bali Action Plan, which is guiding the preparations for a new agreement on climate change for the Copenhagen conference. The UNFCCC Nairobi Work Programme on Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change has identified climate-related hazards together with sectoral and national level planning as one of its core areas of activity. UNISDR co-sponsored a UNFCCC workshop in this topic in Cuba in March 2009. Many UN agencies are active in addressing risk related issues. In particular, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee – together with UNDP, UNEP, WMO and World Bank – has led coordinated efforts to address the humanitarian face of disaster risk reduction and climate change in ongoing global climate change negotiations and in their own programming.
14. As tasked by the 2007 Global Platform, UNISDR proposed to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) the preparation of a sound scientific basis for governments to reduce the growing risks of disasters and support UNFCCC policymaking and practical adaptation to climate change. This was actively supported by the Government of Norway, which hosted a scoping workshop in March 2009. The IPCC subsequently decided to prepare a Special Report on *Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation*. The Report will be completed by mid-2011 and – illustrated by case studies – will focus on disaster risk reduction and management of policy and practice, as well as effectiveness and costs.
15. The publication of OECD guidelines on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Disaster Risk Reduction provides a framework for applications of the Assessment in diverse

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areas. A series of advisory notes have been prepared to link the SEA to key topical challenges such as climate change, ecosystems services and post conflict recovery. The ISDR Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction was developed to assist professional networks which operate in the DRR, environmental and sustainable development fields at the global level to build up and implement integrated disaster risk reduction, ecosystem management and livelihoods policies, plans and projects. A work programme has been prepared on these matters for inclusion in the ISDR Joint Work Programme.

16. To address the increasing urban risk, as identified during the 2007 Global Platform, several initiatives have developed. The GAR identified good urban and local governance as critical to reducing risk in urban settings. At regional level the Asia Regional Task Force on Urban Risk Reduction, established in January 2008, has developed draft HFA guidelines for city governments, an inventory of initiatives and analysis on urban risk reduction in Asia, and a *City Profile* publication of 15 cities. In Latin America, a similar task team has been established. WB-GFDRR and UNISDR have produced the publication *Climate Resilient Cities: A Primer on Reducing Vulnerabilities to Climate Change Impacts and Strengthening Disaster Risk Management in East Asian Cities* as a practical tool for urban planners. Local government representatives met with UNISDR to identify elements for a local government alliance, which will be helpful in designing and conducting the next global campaign on Safer Cities and Urban Risk for 2010-2011. This will be further developed in a meeting to be hosted in Incheon, Korea in August 2009. The United Cities Local Governments (UCLG) worked with Mayors to develop political momentum to invest in risk reduction as means for climate change adaptation.
17. The 2007 session of the Global Platform committed to scaling-up of community level action. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies undertook to launch a Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction to expand the efforts of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies working among some of the most vulnerable communities on the planet. Currently 20 National Societies are planning the implementation of pilot projects within the Alliance. The ProVention Consortium partners have promoted local platforms for DRR with a number of grass-roots organizations. Numerous local communities worldwide have been managing disaster risks using indigenous knowledge passed on from one generation to the next. A review of experience from the Asia and Pacific region has been published aimed at sharing more widely good practices and lessons. The full involvement of local communities and local governments to reduce risk remains a challenge that needs to be addressed.
18. Education is central to effective disaster risk reduction, but there is still no strong leadership by a distinct entity to take this forward. Both UNESCO and UNICEF are involved, but the commitment still needs to be fully articulated for leading the Thematic Platform on Education and Knowledge for Disaster Risk Reduction. This Platform has focused on advocacy including encouraging children to become agents of DRR through the incorporation of disaster education into education policy and innovative school programmes. The Platform organized a special session on DRR as an essential contributor to inclusive education at the UNESCO International Conference on Education in Geneva, November 2008, with Ministers of Education and senior national delegates presenting their achievements. A workshop was also organized by UNESCO and UNISDR on the role of DRR education in sustainable

development at the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development in Bonn (March, 2009).

19. The World Disaster Reduction Campaign 2008-2009 – entitled '*Hospitals Safe from Disasters*' – was launched with WHO and the World Bank at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2008, and in all regions thereafter. Involving numerous stakeholders, the campaign has stimulated the development of regional frameworks, safety assessments of hospitals, the provision of guidance and tools, and advocacy through World Health Day 2009, with the aim of making health facilities safer and creating better understanding of DRR within the health sector. The campaign is continuing through the committed leadership of WHO.
20. A review of good practices and lessons learnt on integrating DRR-specific gender perspectives into climate change adaptation was published in 2008, with practical tools for enabling grass-roots women's leadership and participation. It illustrates the vital nexus between women's experiences of natural resource management, climate change adaptation and DRR, and how these can come together to make whole communities strong and sustainable. The Beijing Conference on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction (April 2009) gathered high-level representatives of 43 countries, UN agencies and civil society. Participants adopted the Beijing Agenda for Global Action on Gender-Sensitive Disaster Risk Reduction with nine deliverable initiatives before 2015, calling for integrated development policies and implementation DRR processes with gender as a cross-cutting issue. This was adopted as a multi-level cooperation win-win option to achieve and sustain gender equality.
21. In response to the 2007 Global Platform's call for scaled-up action based on strong foundations of scientific and technical data, two major results can be reported:
  - Firstly, the preparation of the Global Assessment Report and risk information update involved work by a vast number of specialized international research institutions, regional and international organizations which provided a sound evidence base underpinning risk analysis and related documentation that shed new light on the underlying risk factors and risk-poverty nexus in both rural and urban contexts (see paragraph 3).
  - Secondly, the establishment of an ISDR Scientific and Technical Committee (STC), which has prepared a report for the Second Session of the Global Platform on the use of scientific and technical knowledge as an essential foundation for DRR, with recommendations on key issues and priorities on how scientific and technical information can be more effectively adopted and put into practice. The STC has also established a sub-committee to develop collaboration on an international early warning programme.
22. A joint World Bank - UN study on the economics of disaster reduction has been initiated to provide a sounder evidence base for raising awareness and political commitment for DRR and to provide guidance on options for investment and interventions. It will be completed in late 2009.

## ISDR system development

23. As part of the follow-up to the recommendations of the 2007 Global Platform, UNISDR commissioned a survey of stakeholders on the positioning of ISDR. The exercise confirmed that the secretariat of the UNISDR is valued most for its ability to conduct high-level advocacy and to convene, mobilize and help set policy. ISDR system partners, in the Inter-Agency Group at working-level, have developed a joint work programme, which is responding to HFA priorities to contribute to international and national efforts, with particular emphasis on involving more development stakeholders. Mobilizing resources for the joint programme however, remains a persistent and ongoing challenge and development actors have been engaged for example through the United Nations Development Group and World Bank as described above. Many of the results have been accomplished through existing commitments by the partners. The ISDR Management Oversight Board, comprising heads or deputies of six major international organizations including the International Red Cross/Red Crescent, has contributed to raising the profile of disaster risk reduction within the UN system. There is still scope for improved coherence and closer monitoring of joint results within the ISDR system.
24. In response to calls in the HFA and to improve the understanding and application of disaster risk reduction, the UNISDR developed two new ISDR system products over the review period:
- An updated (2009 edition) *Terminology: Basic Terms of Disaster Risk Reduction* was finalized in consultation with a broad range of experts and practitioners in various international venues, regional discussions and national settings. Subsequently it was translated and adapted by expert groups in Spanish, French, Arabic, Russian and Chinese. The HFA requires ISDR to “update and widely disseminate international standard terminology related to disaster risk reduction, at least in all official United Nations languages, for use in programme and institutions development, operations, research, training curricula and public information programmes”.
  - A *Directory of “who-is-who” in disaster risk reduction*. This first comprehensive compilation describes the mandates, programmes and services aligned with HFA priorities mainly of UN organizations and the World Bank. It is also available on PreventionWeb and will be regularly updated. Future versions will include details of regional organizations and other partners. HFA encourages all organizations to incorporate disaster risk considerations systematically in their own strategies, programmes, advocacy, budgets and internal organization and to participate in ISDR initiatives. It emphasises strengthening of the UN system to assist disaster-prone developing countries with disaster risk reduction initiatives and to support States’ own efforts with technical assistance and capacity development.
25. The most encouraging developments have been at the regional level where cooperation mechanisms, such as regional platforms, networks and meetings – and through existing regional inter-governmental institutions – have been active in catalysing increasing commitment:
- In the *Americas*, the Organization of the American States has been active in co-sponsoring a Regional Platform for DRR, in addition to sub-regional entities, such as the Central

American Coordination Centre for Natural Disaster Prevention, the Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Response, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency and the Association of Caribbean States.

- In *Asia and Pacific*, the strengthening of regional supporting mechanisms and coordination led to the establishment of the Asia Regional Platform by the Second Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Delhi, in November 2007. The Third Conference was held in Kuala Lumpur (December 2008), supported by the ISDR Asia Partnership (IAP). SOPAC convened the Pacific Regional Platform in May 2009.
  - The African Union co-hosted the second *African Platform* for DRR in which African States took stock of progress and updated the regional work programme for the African Strategy on DRR adopted in 2004.
  - In *Europe*, the Council of Europe, through its European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA), has facilitated the development of a regional platform on DRR focusing on major disasters triggered by natural or technological hazards, the sharing of good practices, and supporting country assessments and implementing activities to reduce vulnerability.
  - The League of *Arab States* convened the first regional platform meeting in Jeddah during the review period and the Arab Academy of Science, Technology and Maritime Transport launched a Research and Training Centre for DRR.
26. DRR investments are currently not well defined and much more work is needed to reveal and track the true levels of investment, particularly in longer-term development investments and national budgets. Accordingly, UNISDR has initiated a consultation exercise on this key issue. There are signs of increased commitment to greater DRR investment but actual scale-up of financing instruments is slow. Some donors have adopted benchmarks such as allocating the equivalent of 10% of humanitarian expenditure to DRR. On the development cooperation side, the 2008 Oslo Policy Forum sought to identify “Good Disaster Reduction Donorship Principles”.
27. The GFDRR (see para 7) is a partnership of major donors, developing countries, UNISDR and the World Bank intended to mainstream disaster risk reduction into development and build capacities for sustainable development in a changing climate. Total pledges in GFDRR during 2007-2008 exceeded \$90 million USD. A two-fold increase in GFDRR funding at least – with focus on low income high risk countries – is envisaged for 2009-2010.
28. Since 1998, UNDP country offices have worked with high risk countries to build up a global disaster reduction and recovery portfolio operating on a long-term basis in more than 50 high risk countries. In 2007 disaster risk reduction expenditures climbed to \$140 million of which more than 90% went directly to national programmes.
29. Voluntary contributions to the UN Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction, which supports the UNISDR Secretariat, reached US\$ 49.9 million in 2007-2008, with spending prioritized to the regions, including the contribution from GFDRR. No UN regular funds have yet been allocated to UNISDR, although efforts continue on this front. Member States approved a UN post of Assistant-Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, and Margareta Wahlström was appointed, effective January 2009.
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