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Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

Asian Disaster Management *News*

Accelerating the Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) in Asia and the Pacific

CONTENTs

Note: The opinions appeared in this issue of Asian Disaster Management News do not reflect the view of ADPC.

Editor's Note

It is now midway through the HFA Implementation Decade 2005-2015. On 22 January 2005, 168 UN member countries adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) in Kobe, Japan, three weeks after the 2004 devastating Indian Ocean Tsunami. The expected outcome of the HFA– "the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives as well as the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries," was sought to be achieved through five specific Priorities for Action, namely, Making disaster risk reduction a priority, Improving risk information and early warning, Building a culture of safety and resilience, Reducing the risks in key sectors, and Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response. Two years later, the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) system developed the use of 20 indicators to measure progress against these 5 priorities which has been the framework used by the biennial HFA Monitoring process.

Mr. Aloysius J. Rego
Editor in chief

Following deliberations by the Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC) at its 5th and 6th meetings in Hanoi (2005) and Kunming (2006), ADPC in collaboration with Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) and UNISDR Asia and Pacific undertook "baseline study" on the status of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) at the start of HFA implementation decade, and two years later.

> " DRR stakeholders gather together to share successes, identify challenges, prioritize actions and provide guidance to accelerate HFA implementation "

It has also been five years since the Asia & Pacific ministers of DRR met in Beijing in September 2005, and subsequently at the 2nd and 3rd Asian Ministerial Conferences on DRR (AMCDRR) in Delhi (2007) and in Kuala Lumpur (2008). The AMCDRR supported by the inter-agency mechanism of the UNISDR Asia Partnership (IAP) and the Pacific Platform, plays an important role as the regional platform whereby Asia & Pacific disaster management leaders, their development partners and DRR stakeholders gather together to share successes, identify challenges, prioritize actions and provide guidance to accelerate HFA implementation. Following the call made at the 3rd AMCDRR, the countries and IAP developed a HFA Implementation Regional Action Plan (HIRAP) based on the ministerial commitments and direction given at the three ministerial conferences. This HIRAP was reviewed at the IAP meeting in Incheon in August 2009 and lays out suggested actions at national and regional level to advance HFA implementation.

The 4th AMCDRR, to be held in the futuristic city of Incheon, South Korea, during 25 – 28 October 2010, will deliver a road map for the way forward in Linking Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA). This linkage and the mainstreaming of DRR and CCA into development are the key themes of the forthcoming AMC. The road map will build on discussions on the theme in earlier AMCDRR, and contribute to the global processes at the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP16) at Cancun, this December 2010 and COP 17 in South Africa next December 2011. Deliberations will contribute to the Global Platform on DRR next May 2010 in Geneva and to the regional meetings in the run up to the Rio +20 conference in 2012 to review the implementation of Agenda 21; as well as the acceleration framework for implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

AMCDRR also is the regional platform monitoring and advancing HFA implementation through National Strategies, Action Plans and Road maps for DRR, developed by Asian and Pacific countries since 2005, supported by similar sub-regional and regional action plan and road maps. It is a key opportunity to share good practice, for peer learning from Southern and northern partners, and promoting South-South and triangular cooperation. The AMC will consolidate Asia Pacific standpoints on accelerating the implementation of HFA in our region, duly harmonized with Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) attainment over the same period till December 2015, being conscious of the changing climate and continuing environmental degradation. The AMC will also contribute to the UNISDR system global Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the HFA, currently under way.

This year's second issue of the Asian Disaster Management News (Vol. 16, No. 2) focuses on "Accelerating Implementation of Hyogo Framework for Action in Asian and the Pacific." The issue has two main sections: HFA and AMCDRR and taking stock HFA implementation in Asia. Several experienced and committed practitioners shared their valuable insights. We are grateful to ADRC, IFRC, ADRRN, Duryog Nirvaran, UNESCAP, EU and ADPC colleagues who made the time to write these thoughtful pieces.

In parallel and inspired by UNISDR earlier on-line debates on HFA themes, on-line forums run by ICIMOD, Duryog Nirvaran, DMWG Vietnam and ADPC; and demands from RCC member countries for enhanced inter-meeting electronic communications between RCC meetings, ADPC initiated an on-line dialogue on the theme; whose first round ran from 27 September to 22 October with about 70 forum participants and a disappointing 15 posts. We will diagnose reasons for the low traffic and motivate practitioners to participate more actively in the second round. The proposed theme for the 2nd round will be to follow up on the four AMCs and prepare for the 3rd Global Platform in May 2011.

We look forward to continuing engagement with all of you in the months following Incheon as Asian countries plan to catch up on implementing HFA goals and MDGs attainment in the last 5 years till December 2015.

AMCDRR as the Asian Regional Platform for DRR; with Ministerial Direction on Setting the Regional Action Agenda

By Loy Rego and Swairee Rupasinghe
Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

The Biennial Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) is the key regional mechanism on DRR to support implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015: *Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters;* adopted by 168 countries at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) held in Hyogo, Japan in January 2005.

The 1st Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (1AMCDRR) in September 2005 adopted the "Beijing Action for DRR in Asia". This declaration provided specific guidance to participating countries on specific action points for each of the 5 priorities of action. National governments were encouraged to formulate their National Plans for Action according to the national priorities for HFA implementation and to put in place a national mechanism for periodic review of the implementation of this Plan of Action. Existing DRR oriented regional mechanisms and Regional offices of UN agencies, ADB and World Bank were urged to continue to provide support and countries were encouraged to take advantage of intergovernmental meetings, including those organized by Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), ASEAN Committee for Disaster Management (ACDM), Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and UNESCAP; among others, to review progress.

The 2nd Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (2AMCDRR) with the theme of "Development Without Disasters" held in Delhi, India in November, 2007 reaffirmed the participating Governments' commitment to the HFA and achieving the MDGs through adopting the Delhi Declaration. The AMC affirmed the biennial Conference as the Regional Platform for DRR with the participation of National Governments, regional and sub-regional organizations, United Nations agencies, financial institutions and other stakeholders including civil society, scientific and technical organizations, the private sector and the media. With ministers providing the political leadership and commitment to the platform, the ISDR Regional office and the ISDR Asia Partnership (IAP) were mandated to provide the technical, operational and secretariat support.

The Delhi Declaration called for action on i) HFA implementation ii) Mainstreaming DRR iii) Enhancing early warning and preparedness iv) Taking effective steps to deal with long term disastrous impact of climate change v) Integrating DRR into recovery and reconstruction vi) Promoting multi-stakeholder partnership.

On HFA implementation, the Declaration stressed on formulation of National Action Plans by the governments, national mechanisms for review of plan implementation and multi stakeholder national platforms for coordinated action; linkages to national strategies for poverty reduction and achieving MDGs; using adapted versions of the ISDR system developed indicators and benchmarks; Enhancing regional and subregional cooperation for DRR on early warning, capacity building, sharing good practices networking among all stakeholders.

It called for mainstreaming DRR in sustainable development strategies, plans and programs in priority sectors of poverty eradication, housing, water, sanitation, energy, health, agriculture, education, infrastructure and environment. The declaration encouraged national governments to place community based disaster preparedness mitigation and response at the centre of DRM, mainstream gender and promote social inclusiveness in DRR; enhance multi-hazard end to end early warning systems including at the transboundary and regional level; strengthens disaster preparedness planning and link scientific knowledge and technological advancements to indigenous knowledge and coping mechanisms. On regional cooperation the ministers called for the IAP to promote greater coherence, harmonization, and closer collaborative working among stakeholders through improved information exchange and stocktaking of initiatives; to enhance their effectiveness, improve synergies and address critical gaps.

The 3rd AMCDRR was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in December 2008, with the theme "Multi-stakeholder Partnership for Disaster Risk Reduction from National to Local", with particular focus on Public Private Partnerships and community-based DRR. The Ministers adopted the Kuala Lumpur (KL) Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia 2008, called on Governments national and regional stakeholders to accelerate HFA implementation with special focus on the thematic areas prioritised.

The AMC called on the ISDR-AP Regional office to collaborate with IAP members to prepare a regional action plan on the three declarations at the 3 ministerial conferences in Kula Lumpur, Delhi and Beijing. This action plan called "Advancing Implementation of HFA in Asia and the Pacific 2009-2015" prepared under the guidance of the Government of Malaysia; was endorsed by participating countries and IAP members at the IAP meeting held in Incheon in August 2009.

roadmap and action plan has been drafted consensually over the last one year. The upcoming 4th AMCDRR also provided an opportunity to focus on the outcomes of the three previous Asian Ministerial Conferences, the priorities within the overall HFA agenda set by Ministers as outlined in the previous Conference Declarations, and actions taken by countries on these ministerial commitments. Deliberation will also reflect the lessons learned from the actions taken in-country both through regional and national action plans, pilots and programs over the last 5 years since the Ministers of the Asia and Pacific regions first met in Beijing in September 2005. Also shaping the discourse will be is the Pacific Regional Framework for Action (PRFA) adopted by the Pacific platform meeting in Madang, Papua New Guinea in May 2005, customizing the HFA for Pacific countries.

Box 1. Components of HFA Implementation Regional Action Plan

1. Accelerating HFA implementation through National Action Plans
2. Decentralized DRR: Empowerment of Local Government and Civil Society in DRR
3. Mobilizing Resources and Promoting Public Private Partnership for DRR
4. Linking Climate Change Adaptation to DRR: A new driver
5. Protecting Critical Infrastructure
   a) Education System Safe from Disaster (School Safety)
   b) Health Facilities Safe from Disaster
6. Public Education, Awareness and Engaging the Media in DRR
7. High Technology and Scientific Application (HTSA) for DRR

This Action Plan has 7 components (See Box above), based on the priority themes in the Kuala Lumpur AMC and earlier conferences, for implementation during 2009-2015. Each components (25 in all) has recommended national actions (32 overall); and with proposed regional actions by international and regional stakeholders to support countries. Every country is encouraged to identify and select up to 10 actions to implement under its national action plan. Each component is led by an implementation support group comprising of lead mentor countries and IAP member agencies.

The 4th AMCDRR conference has been two years in the making, with a clear invitation made by our generous hosts, the National Emergency Management Agency of Korea in December 2008 in Kuala Lumpur. The theme of the conference is "Disaster Risk Reduction for Climate Change Adaptation" and an ambitious declaration,

The 2nd Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in June 2009 acknowledged the Global Platform acknowledged the important supporting role national and regional platforms and partnerships, such as the AMCDRR and the ISDR Asia Partnership (IAP). The platforms targets on safety assessments of schools and hospitals by 2011 and national action plan on safety schools and hospitals; earmarking 10% of funding of humanitarian relief; post-disaster reconstruction for DRR; and 1% of national development funding for this purposes. So too the platform set priorities for action at local government and community levels; and recognised leadership roles of women and children.

Thus, substantively too, priorities highlighted at the meeting reflected the prioritized identified in the 3 Asian Ministerial Conferences and incorporated in the Regional Action Plan. The theme of the 4th AMCDRR on climate change was also a priority concern at the platform deemed critical for future program. Thus the regional platform in Asia is well connected and influences global processes and priority setting.

Box 2. Kuala Lumpur Declaration

Third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction
Kuala Lumpur, 2 – 4 December 2008

We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the countries of Asia and the Pacific, attending the Third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Kuala Lumpur on 2 – 4 December 2008,

Alarmed by the increasing impact of recent disasters in Asia, including Cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh; the Wenchuan Earthquake in China; the recent floods in Bihar and Orissa in India and Nepal; and Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar;

Concerned that the Asia and Pacific region, home to 61 percent of the world's population, thus remains by far the region most affected by disasters in terms of human and economic impacts, but also in occurrence, threatening to roll back hard-earned development gains and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the region;

Appreciating that the losses, damages and costs of disasters have been reduced where Governments and the international community made effective investment in the field of disaster risk reduction;

Aware of the changing nature of disaster risk in the region brought about by the likely increase in weather and climate hazards and the increased vulnerability of communities to disasters;

Recognising the need to scale up commitment and promote innovative approaches to reduce disaster risk to achieve the goals of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 – 2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (HFA);

Noting recent global and regional developments, which are expected to further the course of disaster risk reduction (DRR) in Asia and the Pacific, such as the recognition for the first time of disaster risk reduction by the Bali Action Plan 2007; the South-South Cooperation Program under the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR); the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) resolutions 64/1 establishing a new intergovernmental Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction and 64/2 on the implementation of the HFA; the Tripartite Core Group comprising the Government of Myanmar,

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the United Nations following Cyclone Nargis under the ASEAN led mechanism; the cooperation in the area of disaster risk management decided at the Trilateral Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea held in Japan, 2008; the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum's Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, Emergency Preparedness and Response; and the Australia – Indonesia Disaster Reduction Facility;

Noting also other important initiatives such as the calls made at the Seventh Meeting of the Regional Consultative Committee (RCC 07) in Colombo, Sri Lanka to undertake national community-based disaster risk reduction programmes in all communities at risk; the recommendations adopted by the Third Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO)- International Conference on Disaster Risk Management held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran in 2008, the proposed courses of action in advancing DRR at the Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction (ACDR) 2008 in Bali, Indonesia; the call to advocate and implement programmes for the protection of the health of the population before, during and after disasters as in the Global Disaster Risk Reduction Campaign, "Hospital Safe from Disasters", 2008 – 2009; and the International Recovery Forum as one of the International Recovery Platform (IRP) activities;

Acknowledging the leadership of the Governments of the People's Republic of China and India in hosting the First and Second Asian Ministerial Conferences on Disaster Risk Reduction and noting the achievements of the Asian Ministerial Conference process, including the raising of awareness at the high level on the importance of disaster risk reduction issues in the region, the facilitation of national activities led by Governments and civil society organisations, the implementation of activities called for by the Delhi Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia 2007 by the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Asia Partnership (IAP), including improved regional coordination, regional mapping of activities on disaster risk reduction, and the improved monitoring and reporting of progress against HFA in the region;

Recognising that governments have responsibility to reduce risks of disasters, there is a need for support and assistance from other stakeholders including international, regional and national organisations, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, civil society organisations and their networks to ensure appropriate implementation of the recommendations of the Asian Ministerial Conferences (AMC);

Appreciating the theme and objectives of the Third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction "Multi-stakeholder Partnership for Disaster Risk Reduction: From National to Local";

DO HEREBY call on regional and national disaster reduction stakeholders:

On ***public-private partnership*** for disaster risk reduction: to promote corporate social responsibility and business continuity plans; to promote fiscal policies that enhance disaster risk management including micro-credit and micro-finance schemes; to encourage the establishment of multi-stakeholder mechanisms for the promotion of private and public partnerships; and to create an enabling environment for the development of catastrophe risk insurance markets that provide financial incentives for disaster risk reduction.

On ***high technology and scientific application*** to disaster risk reduction, including climate change adaptation (CCA): to encourage dialogue and collaboration between ministries and agencies at the national level; to promote innovative partnership with scientific communities and academic institutions to enhance scientifically informed national policies for DRR and CCA; to develop partnerships between existing regional knowledge sharing mechanisms and networks on DRR and CCA with other information sharing and analysis mechanisms; and to further encourage cost-effective and widely accessible technologies in support of early warning at national to local and community levels, multi-hazards risk assessment and disaster risk reduction efforts.

On ***involvement and empowerment of local governments and civil society*** in disaster risk reduction: to encourage ongoing efforts towards decentralising disaster risk reduction by building local capacity to integrate disaster risk reduction into local development planning; to encourage effective national legal and policy frameworks, financial and technical support to local authorities and community-based organisations to undertake DRR programmes; to enhance multi-stakeholder collaboration with local governments and communities to reduce climate and disaster risk in urban and rural areas; to empower an increasing number of vulnerable communities, including elderly people, children and in particular people with disabilities as a means to promote their right for protection and socially inclusive disaster reduction through community-based disaster reduction activities; to acknowledge that women are impacted differently from disasters and to make special efforts to mainstream gender in disaster risk reduction to reduce their vulnerability; and also the strengthening of legal preparedness for international disaster cooperation, in particular through the promotion and use of relevant guidelines.

On ***mobilising resources for disaster*** risk reduction: to encourage development of legal and institutional arrangements, including innovative financial mechanisms; to integrate disaster risk reduction into national, sub-national and sectoral development planning; to encourage the setting of voluntary targets in allocating resources including by the private sector; to build capacities to evaluate financial and economic costs and benefits of disaster risk reduction to promote greater investments in reducing disasters in the region; to promote comprehensive preparedness planning to mitigate the impacts of disasters; to promote resource sharing arrangements in the region; to call on the international donor community to increase its funding support for regional and national activities for disaster risk reduction and HFA implementation; and to apportion 10 percent of humanitarian assistance funding for disaster risk reduction by 2010.

On ***engaging the media*** in increasing coverage on disaster risk reduction: to promote training opportunities to regional, national and local media representatives and journalists to generate public risk reduction and disaster preparedness measures; and to develop broadcasting systems for the dissemination of early warnings for the Asia and Pacific region, in close collaboration with the concerned national, regional and international organisations, local authorities and civil society for conveying warning to the 'last mile'.

On *public awareness and education* for disaster risk reduction: to acknowledge the fundamental role of public awareness and education as the necessary starting point for all other disaster risk reduction initiatives; to promote inclusive education through systematic integration of disaster risk reduction into school curricula, regular teachers' training, informal and non-formal education; to strengthen cooperation and multi-stakeholder partnerships with international and regional organisations, and civil society; to recognise the value of indigenous knowledge and practices, as well as technological development such as e-learning; and where governments have made it a priority, to call on donors to provide support in building and/or retrofitting schools and education facilities to meet disaster resilient standards.

WE, DO HEREBY:

Invite the Asia and Pacific regional office of the United Nations Intermational Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and members of the IAP to carry the messages in this Declaration to the Second Session of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, in June 2009 and beyond.

Endeavour to report on progress made in implementing the HFA at the Second Session of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, in June 2009, and to establish regular and multi-stakeholder mechanisms for monitoring, advising and reporting for disaster risk reduction of the HFA.

Encourage the promotion, wherever appropriate, of disaster risk reduction as an integral component of adaptation efforts in regional and international fora leading to the 15th Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Copenhagen, December 2009, as suggested in the Bali Action Plan.

Take into consideration recommendations from this Declaration, where appropriate, within existing policies, strategies and action plans for effective mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, including the consideration of setting targets for public spending on multi-year disaster risk reduction programmes at the national and local levels and report on their implementation at the Fourth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2010.

Call on international organisations and regional institutions to provide technical, operational and programmatic support to accelerate implementation of HFA in Asia and Pacific countries, especially the national action plans on DRR.

Encourage all stakeholders to keep health facilities safe from disasters by intensifying efforts in advocacy, support in mobilising resources for structural and non-structural components of safe health facilities, and providing technical support in essential areas of disaster resilient hospitals such as organisation, contingency planning, and preparedness activities.

Call on regional inter-governmental bodies and regional institutions to consider contributing through their existing forums to the follow-up of the AMC ministerial declarations and preparation of future AMCs.

Invite the Asia and Pacific regional office of the UNISDR in collaboration with members of the IAP to prepare a Regional Action Plan on the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction as well as earlier declarations in Delhi and Beijing, and to report on its progress at the Fourth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and to also call on donors to support the preparation process and implementation of the Action Plan.

Support the Kuala Lumpur initiative on the promotion of public-private partnerships for disaster risk reduction by the Government of Malaysia, the Government of India and the Government of the Republic of Korea, the present, past and in-coming hosts of the Asian Ministerial Conferences on Disaster Risk Reduction.

We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the countries of Asia and the Pacific, attending the Third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and on behalf of all participants, place on record our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Government and people of Malaysia for their gracious hospitality in hosting and organising the Conference and welcome the offer of the Government of the Republic of Korea to host the Fourth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Incheon, in 2010.

ADOPTED in Kuala Lumpur on 4 December in the year 2008.

HFA
Implementation in Asia and the Pacific

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More than five and half years have passed since 168 countries adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (HFA) at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe City, Hyogo Prefecture in Japan in January 2005. The HFA put forward *"The substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries"* through the HFA decade. Unfortunately, many disaster incidents since then, such as Cyclone Nargis and Sichuan Earthquake in 2008, Haiti Earthquake and Monsoon Floods in Pakistan this year, show a rather contrary trend.

Countries reported mixed results

As noted elsewhere, a remarkable contrast between Priority areas has been reported. On one hand, HFA Priority 1 – *Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national priority and a local priority with a strong instructional basis for implementation* – has been showing good progress, most notably in the development of new policies and legislations, and in strengthening multi-sector institutional systems. On the other hand, HFA Priority 4 – *Reduce the underlying risks factors* – seems to be the most challenging. Progress on other priority areas indicates mixed results. HFA Priority 2 has been progressing in early warning systems. HFA Priority 3 in disaster education and information management systems, and HFA Priority 5 in disaster preparedness and contingency plans. Some observers describe this situation as "pockets" of progress vs. "holes" of stagnation.

Closer examination reveals many gaps and challenges

A closer look, at areas where progress across HFA Priorities is reported, reveals that there are still many gaps and challenges causing stagnation. Various syntheses and country reports show some of the reasons behind this.

First and foremost, there is still lack of political or institutional commitment to disaster risk reduction efforts under usual circumstances. Often, it is normally after large-scale disaster that countries are motivated to scale up disaster risk reduction measures. This has been observed in many recent incidents, most notably Indian Ocean Tsunami 2004, Kashmir Earthquake 2005, and Cyclone Nargis 2008. Also in my personal experience, the Kobe Earthquake 1995 brought about drastic changes in the ways government at all levels and the civil society deal with natural disasters in Japan.

Secondly, there is also lack of dedicated or adequate resources, including human and technical capacities for disaster risk reduction. These constraints are especially reported in low-income countries as well as at lower levels of government and community levels within them. In those circumstances, disaster risk reduction efforts often depend on external funds and partners, both bilateral and multilateral.

Furthermore, they tend to be seen as ad hoc initiatives rather than continuous practices with insufficient transfer of skills and competency.

Finally, while new institutional and legislative frameworks have been established in line with the HFA Priority 1, the link between national policies on disaster risk reduction and sector policies is often weak or not explicit. More candidly, disaster risk reduction organizations often do not have the political authority or technical capacity to intervene in development planning, environmental planning, and other relevant fields. In this context, the creation of an integrated multi-sector institutional system for disaster risk reduction that could bring greater cohesion and synergy to on-going sector-based approaches remains a challenge.

The way forward

Based on my personal experiences in the areas of disaster management and regional development both at national government and at international organizations (UN, OECD), the progress of HFA implementation is quite positive. It has already produced tangible results on many fronts within last five years or so and, hopefully, will continue in coming years. Above all, it has affected the ways people approach disasters. In this respect, I am very proud of what was named after Hyogo, the place where I am currently stationed. However, in view of growing losses and tremendous pains and sorrows caused by natural disasters in recent past, further efforts to accelerate the implementation of the HFA is crucial. I would like to offer some of my views on this issue.

HFA promotes "*the integration of risk reduction with climate variability and climate change into strategies for the reduction of disaster risk and adaptation to climate change*". In Asia, as most of you are aware, governments and various organizations have teamed up to make necessary preparations for the upcoming 4th Asian Ministerial Conference (AMCDRR) to be held in Incheon, Republic of Korea on 26-28 October, 2010 to explore workable guidance for climate resilient disaster risk management systems. Previous AMCDRR (Beijing, Delhi, Kuala Lumpur) also called for closer linkage between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Eventually, the overarching theme of the 4th AMCDRR has been decided as "*Disaster Risk Reduction through Climate Change Adaptation*". This is certainly challenging but urgent task. We all have to measure up to high expectations for fruitful and tangible outcomes of the Conference.

More practically, it would be necessary to enhance the effectiveness of HFA as policy guidelines across countries, both high-income and low-income, and at different levels of government. In my view, the HFA still lacks consistency along its priority areas in terms of how concrete and how useful these areas might be. HFA Priority 4 is a case in point, where difficulties of integrating disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and development are encountered due to its cross-cutting nature, involving a wide spectrum of policy sectors. More pragmatic guidelines together with appropriate technical support are necessary for all levels of government.

To my knowledge, HFA is well known to focal points in governments, but rarely known to other stakeholders. In many cases, even those who work for emergency response or recovery are not very familiar with HFA, not to mention people working in other domains, such as environment and development. However, it is not a matter of whether HFA is recognized or not. What is important is that the spirit and ideas of HFA should continue to penetrate into various policy fields and down to the communities.

Lastly but not the least, we should explore untapped resources such as private sector, scientific community, mass media, civil society and so forth. Most of them have been working for disaster risk reduction in varying degrees and in different settings, thus their efforts and resources should be more fully exploited and integrated in the process of HFA implementation.

Only nearly four years left, and it is rather short to achieve the whole objectives of HFA. To attain more meaningful results, countries with their partners should have a strategy based on their own analysis of strengths and weaknesses and by prioritizing their activities.

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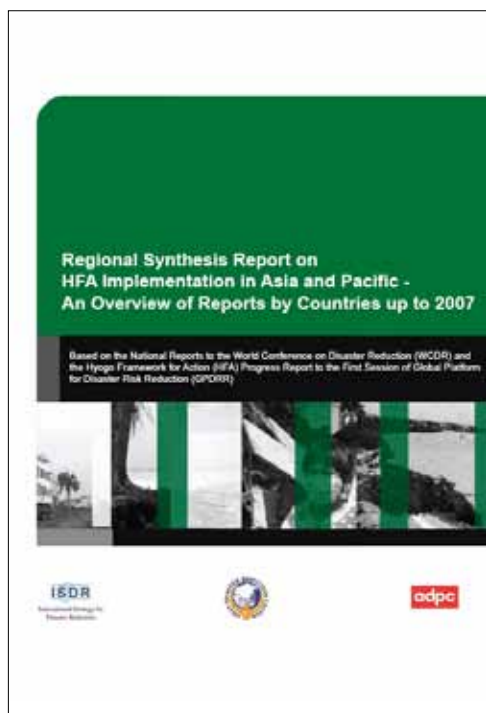# Regional Synthesis Reports on HFA Implementation in Asia and the Pacific

Compiled by Arghya Sinha Roy, ADPC
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At the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR), January 2005, which adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, countries had submitted the National Reports. These reports were based on the Guidelines provided by UNISDR. Following the adoption of the HFA, the countries have been submitting HFA Progress Report for the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). The HFA Progress Reports are developed by the countries following the set of indicators developed by UNISDR under the HFA Monitoring Tool.

Considering these national reports carries a wealth of information and source for developing a synthesis of DRR overview at the regional level, two reports have been developed till date at a regional level, based on the information provided by the countries in their National Reports and HFA Progress Reports. These two reports are titled:

- Regional synthesis report on HFA implementation in Asia and the Pacific; an overview of reports by countries up to 2007, developed by ADPC, ADRC and UNISDR
- Regional synthesis report on HFA implementation in Asia and the Pacific; 2007 -2008/09, developed by UNISDR

This article attempts to take extracts from these two reports to highlight some of the findings, challenges and recommendations for accelerating implementation of HFA in Asia and Pacific region. Complete version of these reports is available at www.preventionweb.net.

1. Regional synthesis report on HFA implementation in Asia and the Pacific: an overview of reports by countries up to 2007

This report provides the regional synthesis within two timeframes: as on January 2005 and during 2005 and 2006. In both cases, the synthesis is presented under the core indicators developed by UNISDR for each of the HFA Priorities for Action. The National Reports submitted by the countries to the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) in January 2005 and the HFA Progress Report submitted during the First session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR) in June 2007, form the base of the synthesis. With these two timeframes the report highlights the following findings under each of the five HFA Priorities for Action.

HFA Priority 1

At the beginning of 2005, many countries in the region had legislations related to disasters, but most of these focused primarily on disaster response and management of emergencies and rarely on risk reduction. However, in the years 2005 and 2006, new legislations were being crafted in many of the countries encompassing a holistic approach towards DRR. Though most of the initiatives are a result of large scale disasters, such as the Indian Ocean Tsunami, the trend has been to adopt a multi stakeholder approach and to move away from disaster management towards the wider issues of DRR. It is also recognized that development of legislation is a time consuming process and requires support from the highest level of the system. Though an occurrence of a large-scale disaster such as seen in Indonesia and Sri Lanka can accelerate the process of shaping the legislation, in usual situations, this depends on numerous factors, such as the political, socio economic conditions of the country, and the importance of DRR in relation to other competing development priorities. Drafting legislation is also influenced by frequent changes of government officials in the system, which not only delays the process but also often calls for fresh needs to influence high level policy makers and fresh efforts to orientate new officials on the importance of DRR.

The development of National Disaster Management Plans is another area where substantial progress has taken place since 2005. Typically the plans chart out the priorities for DRR in the coming years, identify stakeholders and resources required for implementation. However, to date, implementing the plan has started in only a few of the countries and a threefold challenge remains. First, the focus of these plans is still more on preparedness and response and sometimes even on a single hazard. Second, the development of complementary plans at provincial and local levels is essential and needs to be accelerated. Lastly, implementing these plans successfully depends not only on allocation of budget and mobilization of resources, but also on decentralizing the functions of the DRR system in the country, ensuring a devolution of power and responsibility, and most importantly maintaining capacity at various levels.

Most of the countries had disaster related institutions already in place before 2005, at least at the national level. However, the focus of these were largely restricted to post disaster response and relief and the focal points were typically in four clusters; namely, defense,

home/interior, agriculture and social welfare. However, post 2005 in many of the countries, new institutions have been established or are being reinforced at both national and sub national levels in order to undertake long term DRR measures and to adopt a multi stakeholder approach. National Platforms for DRR are also being established or existing partnerships are being strengthened to act in unison. However, the challenge remains in how effective these institutions are. This largely depends on the position of the institution within the national government's administrative structure, composition, and the level of engagement with various stakeholders.

The allocation of resources from the national budgets for risk reduction activities remains a continuing challenge in most of the countries. Even in some cases, such as India, where a budget is allocated, the share is much smaller than compared to what is needed. This is partly because of other competing priorities as well as the lack of recognition of DRR as an investment. Although some countries such as Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Vietnam had attempted initiating alternative funding mechanisms like micro credit for DRR interventions or even sharing a percentage of profit earned from business towards disaster mitigation, it has not yet become a widespread practice. In spite of this, it cannot be the primary source of funds.

HFA Priority 2

Risk assessments were not a common feature in these countries prior to 2005. Although hazard assessments were being carried out on various scales and for various disasters, vulnerability assessments were characteristically rare especially at national levels. In recent years the importance of comprehensive national risk assessments has been realized by most of the countries and it is identified as a priority in the National Disaster Management Plans; however, very few countries have completed a risk assessment on a nationwide scale. More importantly, how far the results of these assessments are used in shaping the policies remains unknown. The problem lies partly in the unavailability of data on hazards, and more importantly on socio economic conditions. Challenges also lie in the much needed coordinated role between the various agencies that collect the information, carry out the assessments, and use the results of these assessments in planning and making policies. Such an integrated approach is currently being initiated in the Philippines in a partnership between the National Disaster Coordinating Council, and its members; National Economic Development Authority, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Interiors and Local Governance, and the Philippines Institute of Volcanology and Seismology under the project Hazard mapping and assessment of effective community-based disaster risk management.

While the years prior to 2005 saw an improvement in the technical capacities for early warnings, end-to-end early warning systems are currently being established in the countries in the region. However, the focus of these systems varies from the single, most prevalent, to multi-hazard. The capacities also differ and require expertise at both ends; technical capacities to monitor hazards and communication capabilities to impart the probable risk from the hazard to the community and thus prepare them to act on the warnings. The challenge also lies in sustaining the system in many countries, especially given the cost of maintaining infrastructure, equipment and capacities. Equally challenging is institutionalizing a system, which links both the upstream and downstream of early warnings. This covers hazard monitoring, risk assessment with dissemination over the last mile, and workable disaster preparedness and response plans that enable protective action by communities who receive the early warning.

HFA Priority 3

Imparting knowledge on the science of hazards has been a part of the formal school curricula for years, and recent initiatives have been taking place to introduce disaster preparedness and response too. Despite these efforts, much needs to be done to make this widespread. Furthermore, the importance of teaching children the underlying factors of risk in their surrounding community has yet to be adopted in most of the school curricula. Hence, the challenge remains in reinforcing the role that children can play as advocates for environmental management, land use planning and hazard resilient construction, and various aspects of community safety.

The initiatives on integrating DRR into school curriculum are mostly taking place in pockets. NGOs that work closely with the communities often introduce disaster related concepts into the non-formal curricula of the area in which a particular NGO is working, but these initiatives are largely project based. Although, some countries like Cambodia, India, Lao PDR, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Tajikistan have adopted the sustainable approach of working with the Ministry of Education to integrate DRR into school curricula, the challenge remains in integrating it into private schools, which often outnumber the public schools, especially in urban areas.

The availability of resources is also an important criterion for the success of the integration of DRR into the curricula. A successful integration is related to developing a system for regular teacher training, production of teaching aids, and printing of additional books.

The importance of public awareness on DRR is recognized by the majority of the countries and initiatives have been undertaken at various scales, but large scale national programs on public awareness are not yet a common feature in most of the countries.

HFA Priority 4

Though prior to 2005, projects related to reducing underlying factors of risk were being implemented in some of the countries, the scope of these was often limited in time and geographical area. These initiatives primarily looked into physical aspects of hazard resilient planning, such as construction of dykes, river embankments and others. However, in the last two years, there has been a growing realization of the importance of integrating DRR into holistic planning through a wide range of measures, starting from poverty reduction strategies, adopting ecosystem based measures for risk reduction, enforcing building codes and zoning for post disaster recovery. Initiatives under this priority are very recent and largely at a policy and institutional level and not yet fully translated into ground implementation.

However, in this case the challenges are twofold. Firstly, to integrate DRR concerns into development policies, plans and programs of all ministries requires acceptance and political commitment at the highest level. At the same time the success of such integration depends on the level of understanding in the sectors, the operation capacity, and where needed, the enforcement. Although mainstreaming DRR into development is more recognized by the countries of the region, very few have made concrete advances. For example, Bangladesh has integrated DRR into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the Economic Committee of the National Economic Council of Bangladesh made the decision that all development project proposals must contain a national hazard risk assessment. However, in spite of such progress, the actual success depends on the implementation mechanism adopted by the country. This would also require a strong public and private partnership, planned mitigation measures and monitoring mechanisms.

Secondly, with the need for building codes incorporating hazard resilient features, are the challenges of adopting such provisions in municipal by-laws, capacity building of architects and engineers for compliance and establishment, and capacity building of effective enforcement mechanisms. In addition to these challenges are the problems of dealing with existing building stock and the huge proportion of non-engineered buildings in the rural areas, which currently do not require any compliance with structural codes. Such challenges exist in almost all of the developing countries of the region, and hence, the need for large reso*urces for retrofitting the existing stock of buildings.*

Challenges remain in social sectors, namely education and health. Although the importance of their roles as critical social infrastructures in facilitating disaster recovery is well documented, much of their involvement continues to be only in preparedness and response. National programs focusing on improving the resilience of schools, universities, hospitals and health facilities are insufficient in scale and momentum to match the needs.

Much of the challenges under this priority of the HFA are partly due to the complexity of the existing institutional system. This is particularly visible in the case of climate change and DRR. In spite of the close links between the two, due to the different institutional systems responsible for dealing with each, many of the required links and alignments of DRR and climate change policies and programs, do not take place.

HFA Priority 5

Preparedness planning was, and still is, considered important by most of the countries; however, the level of preparedness differs from country to country and often within each country at national and sub national level. Lack of resources and manpower as well as institutionalizing systems like capacity building institutes, particularly at the sub national level, remains an urgent challenge.

The report also identifies the following as some of the challenges at regional level:

■ In recent years in Asia and the Pacific Region, several meaningful frameworks have been developed and platforms established or strengthened to promote collaboration and regional partnership on DRR. However, the challenges remain in implementing such frameworks, which often have to compete with a range of economic and political concerns that are priorities for inter-governmental sub regional organizations, such as The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC). On the one hand, humanitarian imperative and neutrality of disaster management agendas provide a valuable subject for regional cooperation and partnership. On the other hand, it requires tremendous drive to transcend the sectoral divide and elevate cooperation to the long-term development subject that DRR is, and sustaining the attention it needs. It must also be recognized that sub regional organizations have highly articulate and elaborate consultation mechanisms that make the decision making process lengthy; because of its various layers of committees, particularly where consensus is the preferred mode.
■ The risk profile of Asia and the Pacific Region is varied as are the administrative regions, governance systems, and levels of socio economic development. Therefore, different priorities in regional DRR programming are required. As such, regional programs with one-size-fits-all activities are not always suitable to be implemented and need to be matched with the development priorities and approaches of the respective country. This requires active coordination between various implementing agencies, at regional and national level, to avoid duplication and

to increase complementary aspects in order to achieve sustainability. Although recent years have seen the establishment of mechanisms like the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, which are important for advocacy and information sharing, much coordination still needs to be achieved at an operational level.
■ Typically, programs implemented at a regional scale primarily look into development of tools and techniques, advocacy, awareness raising, capacity building and some demonstration projects. The approaches and outputs of the programs are expected to add value to existing or planned national programs. Similarly, specific tools and processes adopted by national programs should be shared with surrounding countries through the regional programs. Gaps remain when implementing regional and national programs by different entities; and specific challenges need to be overcome to achieve more effective coordination, synergy and coherence.
■ At an institutional level, gaps exist in the lack of clarity in the roles of agencies that work at a regional level and the programs at a national level. In addition, there are information gaps and challenges of donor coordination which impact on programming coherence and the desired and needed synergy. This often leads to overlapping and duplicated initiatives and unnecessary competition for scarce resources.
■ To address these challenges, one of the proposed priority activities of the UNISDR Asia Partnership is to undertake a regional stocktaking and mapping of past and ongoing regional DRR initiatives; and maintain this database with periodic updates. It is expected that this will provide widely available information to key stakeholders; namely, countries, regional and global organizations, and donors when they identify gaps and plan new initiatives.

Based on these findings and challenges, the report identifies the following priority concerns:

- Need for National Risk Profiles and Sub Regional Hotspots Analysis
- Small Island Developing States
- Urban Risk Reduction
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Improved Data Gathering and Analysis of 'Local' Disasters
- Dealing with ENSO: Better Use of Climate Information
- Trans-boundary Hazard Risk Management

Lastly, the Report concludes with the following suggested approaches and thematic areas for action for the coming three years of 2008-2010, in order to facilitate a workable implementation of the HFA for the countries in the region:

■ Develop new National DRR Action Plans in countries where it has not yet been prepared;
■ Implement National DRR Action Plans where such plans have been developed and establishing a mechanism for periodic review and update of the plan based on the level of actual implementation and resource mobilization;
■ Develop and implement National DRR programs with emphasis on community led initiatives;
■ Undertake Priority Implementation Partnerships between National Disaster Management Offices, Planning, Finance and Sectoral Ministries to mainstream DRR into development;
■ Take stock of initiatives in the countries on hazard and vulnerability assessments and, based on this, carry out a comprehensive multi-hazard risk assessment on the national scale;
■ Build early warning systems for more frequent hazards in the countries;
■ Continue advocacy with wider stakeholders, especially with the private sector to integrate DRR into school curricula;

■ Develop action plans and initiate implementing retrofitting of critical buildings, such as schools and hospitals in all countries of the region;

■ Undertake, in partnership with national training institutes, nationwide programs on capacity building for DRR; and

■ Identify specific selected high-risk provinces, districts and cities for focused implementation of local DRR programs, in partnership with local authorities, local institutions, humanitarian NGOs and other development partners.

2. Regional synthesis report on HFA implementation in Asia and the Pacific; 2007 -2008/09

The main objective of this report is to provide a synthesized overview of some of the main achievements, challenges and issues in implementing the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) in the Asia and Pacific region from 2007-2009 as identified by national and regional actors. The report covers the period June 2007 –April 2009 within the second biennial HFA reporting cycle.

The report uses the HFA, its three overall goals and five priority areas as the main frame of analysis. The structure of the report reflects the subsections and indicators of the UNISDR online Monitoring Tool enriched by the Regional HFA Progress Review Framework for Asia and Pacific 2008/2009. The Report "DRR in Asia and Pacific: Overview at the Start of the HFA Implementation Decade and Progress Made 2005 – 2007" provides an overall context for this information.

All reporting countries have evaluated their progress against five levels (1-5) which have been developed by UNISDR for the HFA Monitor. These are applied to all five HFA Priorities and facilitate a self-assessment of the extent to which policies, programs and initiatives have gained momentum in facilitating risk reduction on a sustainable basis. The report is based on a review of reports provided by 3 regional and 17 national actors via the HFA Monitor tool, which is coordinated by UNISDR and hosted online at PreventionWeb.

Findings:

The report finds that there are "pockets" of progress that are concentrated within the first three priority areas of the HFA. These are: priority area one and here in particular the policy and legal framework for DRR; priority area two with substantial progress in Early Warning, and priority area three where work on disaster management information systems figures prominently. Altogether five countries revised or established new bills and acts on risk reduction in 2007/08. Similarly nine new policies or strategic plans were drafted in 2007/08. Maybe most importantly the policy frameworks and plans that were created 2005/06 in three reporting countries are in the process of implementation with a number of accomplishments in 2007/08. However not all national plans are well synchronized with national policy, or sufficiently coordinated among the different stakeholders. Together with a lack of institutional and human capacity as well as financial resources this results in slow implementation.

A recent mapping exercise on Tsunami Early Warning Systems (TEWS) in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia published by UN-ESCAP finds considerable progress with governance and institutional arrangements and monitoring and warning both at international and national levels. Though important advances have been made in some countries (Indonesia reports substantial achievements) dissemination of early warning and community preparedness and response strategies require further strengthening.

The establishment of disaster information management systems has attracted much attention during the reporting period. Eight countries report concrete initiatives in this area with important achievements in establishing an entirely new system (1), establishing important data-bases for the system (2), making important improvements to existing systems (3) or having initiated the development a new system (4). These national efforts are complemented by subregional disaster management information systems: the Pacific Disaster Net and the ASEAN Disaster Information Sharing and Communication Network that have been launched respectively further developed during the reporting period.

However, while there are "pockets" of progress there are also "holes" of stagnation where very little progress or even activity is reported. Under priority 4 "Reduce the underlying risk factors" only a small group of well-advanced countries report important levels of achievement and continuing progress. While all country reports illustrate a reasonable level of commitment to "mainstream" DRR into development plans and projects, translating hazard and risk information into integrated policies across sectors and undertaking coordinated and concerted action is a challenge. Of particular concern is the slow progress in acting upon the DRR challenges of climate change. Overall low achievements in this area should not come as a surprise since priority 4 signifies the biggest departure from the previous emphasis upon response and depends upon the preceding priorities i.e. solid risk assessments and information management systems, clear risk reduction strategies, strong institutions, awareness of risks and risk reduction options and capacity to implement/enforce and evaluate.

Surprisingly the self-assessment of progress in priority area 5, disaster preparedness and response, an area that most countries have more solid experience of than risk reduction, is not very high. Yet this area scores lower than both HFA priority areas 1 and 3. While institutional and policy development and planning at the national level have been stronger, the areas of financial resources and mechanisms for local level preparedness and risk reduction capacities are lagging behind. Strategies and policies increasingly acknowledge the crucial significance of community preparedness and risk management; however capacities are often not in place to pursue nationwide implementation. Emergency response and contingency plans currently focus on response and do not cover the key areas of recovery and reconstruction potentially leading to delayed recovery processes where the integration of risk reduction is easily pushed aside.

Conclusions:

The following highlights some key challenges in making progress on the three strategic HFA goals based on observations from national and sub-regional actors and the preceding analysis of their reports.
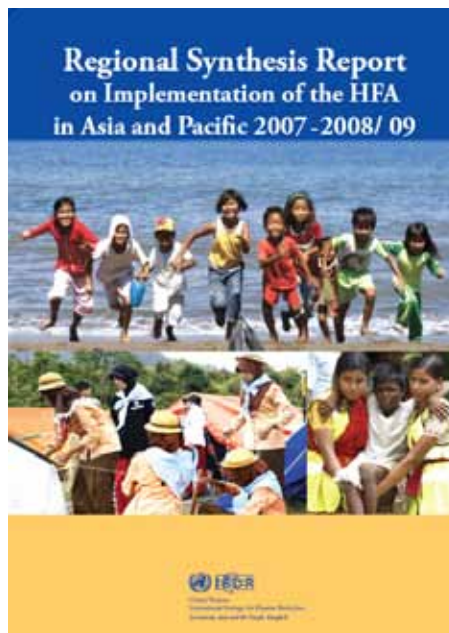
Goal 1: The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction. The shift from disaster preparedness and response to an emphasis on risk reduction and development represents a major departure in many countries of the Asia Pacific region. Translating the HFA into a strategy that fits the conditions in each country and giving it the necessary legislative and political support is not trivial. There has been an impressive range of initiatives to design and enact new DRR policies, plans and legislation and these achievements should not be under-estimated. However policies and plans have only rarely been based upon comprehensive multi-hazard risk assessments and capacity assessments. Policies and plans are not backed up by adequate budgets and implementation is often dependent upon external support that tends to be selective. In addition stakeholder buy-in, particularly in line ministries and sectoral departments is not yet strong. Consequently there are so far only few examples of using existing national planning or development mechanisms to "mainstream" risk reduction. Local governments, who are, eventually, the government entities most critical to the progress of risk reduction often have no or little knowledge of the policy changes and/ or lack the instruments and capacity to translate them into local realities and enforce them. Only few countries have undertaken concerted efforts to discuss and consult DRR draft policies and legislation with key stakeholders and critically assess their enforceability. Last but not least resources outside the government are not sufficiently tapped into and cooperation with non-governmental actors is not based upon clear strategies and cooperation agreements.

Goal 2: The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels in particular at the community level that can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards. In many countries national efforts have so far focused upon the strengthening of national-level capacities often concentrating on the national "Disaster Management" or "DRR" agency. While this effort sometimes involves the institution and/ or strengthening of local satellite offices more needs to be done to build the capacity of a) local government actors and the community and b) of key sectors. This includes the understanding and commitment that such capacity building is not a one off exercise but an ongoing task that requires dedicated budgets. Furthermore multi-stakeholder platforms with clear tasks need to be created not only at national but also at the subnational and local levels. Solid systems that would guarantee the dialogue, information exchange and strategic and operational coordination between different administrative levels and across key sectors are yet to emerge. This involves the need for better coordination and dialogue between government agencies and NGOs and CBOs. The effectiveness of public awareness campaigns and formal education programs has suffered from a lack of clear long-term strategies and harmonization of the various objectives pursued by key players. There is need for more targeted, hazard- and sector-specific inputs into curricula and training modules and for the identification and activation of local knowledge. In several countries this includes the requirement to address training of the informal sector, for example, in safe building techniques. With the exception of some community based DRR programs learning about and applying risk reduction measures is too often pursued in separation. Last but not least the role of women in the prevention, mitigation, preparedness and response and recovery is largely ignored and their capacities remain under-utilized.

Goal 3: The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programs in the reconstruction of affected communities

There is as of yet an insufficient linkage between hazard monitoring, risk identification and analysis and disaster preparedness and response including Early Warning. There is a need to design preparedness activities that are informed by both an understanding of risk and local capacities and of local knowledge including social factors that influence the decisions of communities to act upon hazard information and take precautionary measures. Such activities or programs are contingent upon local monitoring and risk management capacity which is still in short supply as national level capacity building efforts are rarely matched by sufficiently supported parallel efforts at local levels. Budgets for local planning and preparedness are highly inadequate in a majority of countries. There is a need to intensify the exploration of alternative financial instruments to relieve address the burdens of response and recovery on communities and governments including micro-finance, micro-insurance and reinsurance options. Contingency plans currently focus on response and do not cover the key areas of recovery and reconstruction leading to delayed and inefficient recovery processes where local actors tend to get sidelined. If not properly considered beforehand and backed up by regulations and standards the integration of risk reduction gets easily pushed aside in the aftermath of a disaster. Business continuity plans for key local government agencies and solid coordination structures for both response and recovery require more attention.

Recommendations: Analyzing these key gaps in HFA follow up the report concludes that there is need for a smaller list of prioritized recommendations and more specific and time-bound targets per country. These can realistically only be generated at the national level. The support given to the creation of National Action Plans at country levels, particularly in low capacity / high risk countries has been a good start but requires substantial follow-up, consolidation and support. Core gaps and limitations that require special attention and more specific interventions at country level are:

■ Adapt risk reduction strategies and agree on national action plans that create a consensus amongst all key stakeholders on an all of government risk reduction agenda covering national and local levels (HFA priority area 1)
■ Continue to gradually strengthen multi-hazard and risk monitoring capability while emphasizing the creation of integrated, user-friendly information management systems that can inform the design and regular review of national and local risk reduction strategies and initiatives (HFA Priority Area 2)
■ Urge governments to create comprehensive risk reduction programs in the educational sector4 through primary, secondary and higher education; address informal education needs; as well as interventions to increase structural resilience of educational buildings (HFA priority Area 3)
■ Promote the systematic integration of DRR and Climate Change Adaptation in priority countries (HFA priority Area 4)
■ Initiate or accelerate the design of programs and initiatives to address underlying risk while prioritizing sector(s) and areas that are at high risk and/ or demonstrate particular interest in risk reduction and cooperation (HFA priority Area 4)
■ Ensure that communities are at the centre of all aspects of preparedness, response and recovery strategies and planning (HFA priority Area 5)
■ Develop more specific benchmarks and indicators of progress at national levels against national targets and strengthen national and sub-regional monitoring and reporting capacity

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Hyogo Framework for Action Red Cross Red Crescent Mid-Term Review in September 2010

International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is the world's largest humanitarian organization, providing assistance without discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. Founded in 1919, the International Federation comprises 186 member Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, a Secretariat in Geneva and more than 60 delegations strategically located to support activities around the world. There are more societies in formation. The Red Crescent is used in place of the Red Cross in many Islamic countries.

Background

The UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) is in 2010 performing a system-wide mid-term review of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA): Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters 2005-2015. Committed to the HFA, the Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) is contributing its substantial experience, as well as that of the vulnerable communities it serves, to the mid-term review. This article summarizes the perspectives of the RCRC national societies and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) based on the broad strategic questions developed by the UNISDR secretariat for the review.

Successes

The HFA has provided strong guidance at the global, regional and national levels for developing policies and strategies. The most important achievements have been the agreement of common policy frameworks, raised DRR profile, increased awareness and knowledge, and more effective disaster preparedness. In the Red Cross Red Crescent, the HFA has served as a reference for programme planning and review, staff development, and capacity building at the institutional and community levels.

Challenges

The HFA has been challenged by a lack of resources, constantly changing contexts and insufficient coordination. There has been limited integration of disaster risk reduction (DRR) into sustainable development. Structural limitations, inadequate legislation and policy, lack of leadership, weak participatory coordination, lack of clear guidance and limited reach have hampered the strengthening of resilience of the most vulnerable. DRR investments are challenged by a lack of prioritization and tangible evidence of cost efficiency.

Local action

While in some countries community participation is consistently facilitated, in many there is a lack of initiative to engage with local actors. In some cases HFA dissemination to the local level has occurred in a very structured manner while in other countries there has been minimal cooperation between central government and local levels. The link is often not achieved when responsibilities are unclear or split between different agencies, also with limited coordination and leadership. Even where local government is legislatively empowered to lead on DRR, it often lacks the capacity and resources to do so.

Underlying risk

A culture of safety and resilience has to a limited degree been established, with greatest progress in communities targeted by local-level DRR. People often have more pressing needs even though they know actions to meet such needs may make them less safe in the future. If development policies and programmes are designed based on self-identified and prioritised needs of vulnerable communities, underlying risk will by necessity be addressed through a multi-sectoral integrated approach. In support, community participation and empowerment, education, awareness raising, institutionalised but flexible partnerships, leadership, ownership and political will are all needed.

Climate change

Climate change adaptation (CCA) must be treated as a multi-sectoral issue and be integrated into sustainable development focusing on those who face the brunt of the impacts of climate change, the most vulnerable. Development and DRR programs must consider increased uncertainties and/or magnitudes and frequencies of climate-related disaster risk across all sectors. Early warning and early action needs to be strengthened by better linking scientific studies and data with DRR practice across all time-scales, especially at the local level. Innovative partnerships with knowledge centres and meteorological services are needed, as is political will for supporting DRR as a major tool for CCA.

Next five years

International and national coordination must follow common priorities and targets through comprehensive planning, based on the needs of the most vulnerable. Better support for operational and community-centered DRR, particularly financing mechanisms that pool and guarantee long-term DRR and CCA resources, are needed to achieve scale. Governments should develop enabling environments for community-based DRR, also in terms of national budget allocation to the local level. Practitioners' culture should shift away from focusing on outputs to achieving demonstrable outcomes and impacts. A more proactive and participatory approach for sharing information, experiences and expertise, including across languages, should be supported. Finally, stronger professional skills development across the DRR and development spectra at all levels to expand the human resource pool is needed

After HFA

The voluntary nature of the HFA has provided flexibility of engagement, with actors able to participate and contribute to the degree with which they are comfortable. However so far there has been little accountability despite important efforts both at national and international levels. More creativity is needed to improve this situation, for instance, through measures to connect development aid to DRR progress and the agreement on quantifiable and time-limited targets related to DRR similar to the MDGs.

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Reviewing progress since the first, second and third Asian Ministerial Conferences on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR)

Dr. Vishaka Hidellage
Regional Director, Practical Action – India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan
Chair, Duryog Nivaran
Practical Action is a development charity with the vision that the simplest ideas can have the most profound, life-changing effect on poor people across the world. For over 40 years, we have been working closely with some of the world's poorest people using simple technology to fight poverty and transform their lives for the better.
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LOOKING AHEAD

The process of moving ahead with disaster risk reduction (DRR) and incorporating the added burden of climate change is a challenge that most countries in the Asia and Pacific have taken on board. As recent studies (e.g. Global Assessment Report 2009 (GAR 2009), UNISDR and Views from the Frontline: Independent study reviews HFA progress at local-level, Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction) have shown, the uptake of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) priority for action 4 -Reduce the underlying risk factors, has been lagging behind the rest, and this is unfortunate as it is the most crucial in overall vulnerability reduction and resilience building. GAR 2009 has identified reducing underlying risk factor is most crucial part in overall risk reduction. Vulnerable livelihoods, poor urban and local governance, degradation of environment, climate change are all seen as major drivers in increasing challenges to reducing risk of communities.

Among the reasons discussed on the slow uptake of HFA 4, the practical incompatibility of current DRR structures to address development issues is noted. The HFA driven national disaster management centers/authorities do not have required mandate to ensure that the DRR is achieved through poverty reduction strategies. Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) programs too, in many parts of the world, work in isolation of DRR, development and poverty reduction. Thus, there is very little practical focus on this. It is therefore unfortunate that in the upcoming 4th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) meeting in Incheon, Korea and in the process leading up to it, the development planners are not seriously involved. Getting their commitment in addressing underlying risk will remain a challenge.

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Emerging economies in the region which targets maximum growth would be reluctant to implement DRR and CCA through mainstreaming development due to the requirement of additional resources and time; the implication of slowing down growth or current development pace. The focal agencies for disaster mangement who are responsible for national HFA implementation have an extra burden of trying to convince the development planners in their own countries.

GREEN GROWTH FOR DRR?

Asia is considered to be the global growth center. Unfortunately the past axiom of "Grow first, Clean up later" has been seen as the dominant economic model adopted in the region, which is obviously not appropriate in the current context of pollution threatening human existance. The region has a rapidly growing population which is directly dependant on natural resources that is already in a depleted.status. Asia needs to and should grow. The countries should continue its fight against poverty to achieve social wellbeing. However, increased pressure on the environment and increased risk posed by changing climate suggest that an alternative approach to growth is required in the Asia and Pacific region.

The "green economy" and "green growth" seem to be the options promoted at international policy level that most stakeholders (e.g private sector and goverments) are comfortable with. The 4th AMCDRR in Korea, in the proposed Incheon road map, the theme 3 of 'Promoting Integration of DRR & CCA into Development for green growth' is an attempt to bring DRR, CCA and development together. Green Economy is also one of the themes to be discussed at the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in 2012, 20 years after the Rio Earth Summit.

In March 2005, at the 5th Ministerial Conference on Environment & Development in Seoul, Korea, it was agreed that Asia should pursue a path of "Green Growth." This should enable countries in the region to continue the much needed economic growth necessary for poverty reduction (Millenium Development Goal 1) without compromising environmental sustainability (Millenium Development Goal 7) of the region. Five years hence, although it is difficult to see Asia

growing through green concepts, some encouraging development can be identified particularly from stronger economies in Asia.

On a cursory glance, green growth may seem the answer to our long struggle towards achieveing sustaianble development as it is expected to facilitate a shift in thinking from "green against growth" to "green for growth" as it prioritizes economic and cultural considerations within the limits of environment, which could make sustainable development attainable. But looking closer, a host of questions arise, such as 'is it a first step to a more sustainable economy or instead will limits on growth imply that the enviroment is central to green growth and will lower consumption as to stay within the limits?' 'Would ecosystem services which are the central theme in green growth impinge on rights and access of poor communities in Asia who have been dependant on it for generations and kept it going even though quality has gradually decreased due many complex reasons?' 'How does a green economy agenda empirically relate to the agenda of poverty eradication and social development?' and 'where will the countires of Asia, the bulk of who are poor, fare in the green growth process?'

As the disaster hotspot, Asia needs to also understand how to deal with a string of major disasters that seem to be regular occurance. How would, for example, Pakistan which today has over 21 million displaced after the monsoon flood disaster in August, effecively shift to green growth (policy shifts with long term prespective) and reconcile that with taking care of the displaced poor which may mean that they have little time to worry about long term.

In this context, perhaps the Incheon road map should have been bit more ambitious. That very low targets are set – e.g. 'Implement joint DRR & CCA projects in selected countries for selected development sectors promoted by partners in at least two countries', maybe an indication that green growth targets are not easy to reconcile with ambitions in Asia.

However, if the efforts can be concentrated and demonstrated in a couple of countries in the first two years, then slowly moving to five countries, may be realistic and achievable, and may even help taking off green growth wider.

Disaster Proofing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Enhancing resilience and accelerating achievement of MDGs and HFA in Asia and the Pacific Region

This brochure is jointly developed by the Asia Regional Office of the UN Millennium Campaign and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and would be launched by Ms. Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Disaster Risk Reduction, at the Side Event on Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into development, organized by the Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management at the 4th Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR, Incheon, Republic of Korea on 26th October, 2010.

The 2010 MDG Summit Outcome acknowledges the importance of disaster risk reduction and increasing resilience to natural hazards, in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, in order to accelerate achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This brochure thus emphasizes the importance of integrating DRR in the MDGs and their relevant targets and affirms the commitment of the RCC under its program on Mainstreaming DRR into Development Policy, Planning and Implementation, to develop guidelines for selected RCC member countries on integrating DRR in MDGs.

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Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC);
a regional mechanism supporting the implementation of HFA in Asia and Pacific region

The Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC) comprises of members who are working in key Government positions in the national disaster management systems of countries of the Asia and the Pacific region and was established at the initiative of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) in 2000. To date, 26 countries are represented by 30 RCC members from Asia and the Pacific region namely, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam.

Annual meetings of the RCC are convened by the Government of host member country collaboration with ADPC. To date, all RCC meetings have been supported by the Government of Australia. ADPC serves as the secretariat to the RCC. Each meeting of the RCC has a special theme as selected by the host country.

In the context of strengthening regional cooperation, RCC has been organizing special sessions on progress on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) in Asia and Pacific. The following paragraphs briefly explain the sessions organized by the RCC since its 4th meeting and the key outcomes of the sessions to guide accelerate the implementation of HFA in Asia and Pacific.

RCC 4- Preparatory Event in Asia for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, Dhaka, March, 2004

At the Fourth Meeting of the RCC held in March 2004 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, a special consultative session was organized in partnership with UNISDR on the preparation for the Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction. The session facilitated discussion on the constraints faced by the various countries for effective disaster risk management in their respective countries, processes for national reporting and information for WCDR and priorities that need to be addressed at the WCDR. Reporting on constraints for effective risk management, countries identified among others the need for synergies between agencies and a coordinating role, the need for increased information exchange and communication, training and increased awareness of risks and vulnerability amongst decision makers as well as the populations at risk.

RCC 5- Follow-up Event in Asia for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, Hanoi, May, 2005

At the Fifth Meeting of the RCC held in May, 2005 in Hanoi, Vietnam, a special consultation session was organized in partnership with UNISDR and UNDP on the Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 as a post –WCDR follow up for the Asian region. The session introduced the HFA, the concept of National Platforms and provided good examples of the implementation of the HFA by National Governments. The objective was to ensure that the HFA is kept on the agenda of the RCC Member Countries such that its implementation is discussed and planned for in the future. The

session outcome was the expectations of the RCC member countries for support of implementation of the HFA and which included the following:

The RCC Members and delegates called for the UNISDR, the IATF, the UN Agencies, ADPC, the ISDR Asia Partnership and the donor community:

- To play a greater role beyond supporting and monitoring;
- To provide guidance on program in key areas such as mainstreaming DRM in Development;
- To encourage the implementation on the HFA within a regional context with regional HFA projects/activities/programs for every sub-region within Asia;
- To conduct Capacity Building programs for HFA implementation;
- That the ISDR Asia Partnership role as catalyst be improved;
- That the regional advisors from UNOCHA/UNDP/UNISDR who have started working together at their regional offices in Bangkok, and the Deputy Resident Representatives of UNDP from each of the Asian countries, who have met recently, should consider the HFA implementation as one of many forms for regional collaborative action through working closely with all of the partners of the UNISDR Asia Partnership;
- That assistance be provided to enhance the exchange of information, communications systems and capacity of communication and technology transfer between RCC member countries including funding and resource mobilization for these activities.

RCC 6- Special Session on Progress on the Implementation of HFA, Kunming, November 2006

At the Sixth Meeting of the RCC held in Kunming, China in November 2006, a special session was co-organized by ADPC and UNISDR to discuss the progress on the implementation of HFA. The session outcome included the call by the RCC members and delegates for:

- Support from UNISDR to provide guidance to the countries to implement HFA, to advocate for and support financially;
- Support from ADPC to provide technical assistance, advocacy, and provide coordination and facilitate information sharing;
- Support from RCC to act as monitoring mechanism and contribute to information sharing through newsletter, regional

REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT (RCC)

Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC)

welcomed the partnership of UNISDR, ADPC and ADRC to organize the session and urged these agencies to take joint activity in supporting HFA implementation by the National Disaster Management Offices of the member countries. The Meeting agreed on endorsing greater integration of RCC into the regional and global system namely linkages with the Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR and Global Platform for DRR. The meeting recognized that intensive discussion among senior officials was needed and the RCC served as a welcome forum and mechanism to translate ministerial commitment, as reflected in AMC Declarations, into action. It encouraged RCC to serve in preparing for, and following up on, Regional and Global Platform Meetings.

RCC 8- Consultation on preparations for the 4th Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR and Review Progress on the Implementation of HFA, Manila, February 2010

The Eighth Meeting of the RCC held in Manila, The Philippines in February 2010, included two sessions, Consultation with RCC members on the preparations for the 4th Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR and Review Progress on the implementation of the HFA in Asia, challenges and priorities for the coming years. The Session on consultation with RCC members on the preparation for the 4th AMCDRR provided an opportunity for the RCC member from Republic of Korea, namely National Emergency Management Agency to brief the other RCC members on the preparations and to seek their guidance. The meeting greatly benefited from the inputs of past hosts of AMCDRR namely Government of China, Government of India and Government of Malaysia. The Kuala Lumpur Regional Action Plan to implement the Kuala Lumpur Declaration endorsed by participating governments at the 3rd AMCDRR was presented by the National Security Council of Malaysia.

The Session on HFA Implementation in Asia: Accelerating Progress highlighted HFA implementation status in 2005 and the progress made up to 2007, HFA implementation in Asia and the 2009 Global Assessment Report and the ISDR Asia Partnership initiative on Regional Stocktaking and Mapping of DRR interventions in Asia and the Pacific. The session also elaborated on UNISDR global campaigns on safe schools and hospitals as well as initiatives undertaken by ADPC under the global campaign on safe hospitals. UNISDR also provided a brief overview of the upcoming global campaign on building resilient cities, with ADPC presenting activities to be implemented under the global campaign on building resilient cities which addresses urban risk.

For more information on the RCC and its outcomes please visit *www.rccdm.net*

websites, formal communications with and between countries, consolidating progress of individual countries and documenting sector specific progress;

- RCC expressed its willingness to serve as a regional platform/ network as envisaged in the HFA and for monitoring implementation of HFA in the member countries, coordinating between the countries and international organizations consolidating the HFA themes and reporting to the Global Platform;

- ADPC Committed to compile the responses of November 2004 questionnaire on mainstreaming and RCC member country responses to WCDR 2005 into a baseline assessment of disaster management status in RCC countries; at the start of HFA Implementation decade (2005-2015) in collaboration with UNISDR.

RCC 7- Special Session on Progress on the Implementation of HFA, Colombo, May 2008

Responding to the call from RCC members at the Sixth Meeting in Kunming, November 2006, a joint session was organized by UNISDR, ADPC and ADRC at the RCC 7 Meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka in May 2008, which demonstrated continued and enhanced partnership between regional agencies with a full-time focus on DRR i.e. UNISDR, ADPC and ADRC. The session was divided into two halves, the first one encouraged discussion on progress in the region and actions needed to move ahead on the five priorities of the HFA that in reflected in each country's national framework plans and the second session discussed the preparations for the 3rd Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR hosted by Government of Malaysia. The RCC

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Development and Disaster Risk Reduction: An EU & Asia Partnership

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Why is Asia is important to the European Union?

The European Union (EU) is one of the largest humanitarian donors in the world, responding to needs caused by natural disasters and man-made crises, assisting those in distress, irrespective of race, religion or political convictions. In 2009, 22% of the European Commission's total humanitarian budget of almost €1 billion benefited Asia and the Pacific. Of that amount, 6% was dedicated to disaster preparedness measures.

In the last thirty years the Asia Pacific region suffered 91% of the world's fatalities and 49% of the world's damage due to natural disasters. Any serious thinking about disaster preparedness has to take the experience of Asia into account. The EU is proud to have been at the forefront of modelling community-based disaster risk reduction models. The latter, designed and implemented by EU's international and local partners, are now being widely disseminated.

The EU also contributes to a large number of development and investment programs in Asia and the Pacific, including, but not limited to, post-disaster recovery and disaster risk reduction efforts.

Both the humanitarian and development agendas offer a unique platform to bring together traditional and emerging donors. The EU sees a dynamic Asia playing a key role within the donor community, and the Asian Ministerial Conference as an ideal forum for developing closer interactions with longstanding and emerging Asian donors. Building and expanding these platforms is a priority for the EU.

Related to the issue of disaster risk reduction (DRR) is Europe and Asia's broader cooperation on climate change. The science is clear - climate change is happening and it increases the severity and frequency of natural disasters. Among the sectoral dialogues and support programs underway in the region, one of the most important is the bilateral and regional engagement on climate change and energy conservation. Tackling climate change needs the full participation of all Governments of the region. For this reason climate change is a priority for the EU at all levels of engagement with Asia and the Pacific. The efforts by the Korean Government to promote this topic and its inclusion with DRR on the agenda of the Conference will hopefully lead to concrete and pragmatic steps, in order to jointly address common challenges of tomorrow, among which the negative effects of globalisation.

Asia and the Pacific regions are among the most advanced in terms of DRR platforms, dialogue and definition of implementation steps. The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response – a legally binding instrument for DRR – is a good example of consensual approach among countries for reducing the impact of disasters and helping one another. Regional integration is a value close to the heart of the European Union, which has promoted it as a model to foster peace, stability and prosperity for its people.

Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation are concepts fully integrated into the 2005 European Consensus on Development promoting a more coherent European Commision's policy, and into the 2007 European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid. In 2009, the European Union adopted a Strategy for Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction in countries outside the EU and the Community Approach to the Prevention of Natural and Man-made Disasters.

How does the European Union bring its commitments into action?

In countries affected by disasters, the integration of DRR and climate change adaptation are now systematically included in the EU's cooperation frameworks and are part of its dialogue with Governments, regional institutions and civil societies The outcomes of the four Asian Ministerial Conferences on Disaster Risk Reduction and the reported progresses on the implementation of their action plans will be essential references such dialogues to move ahead. The 2010 Incheon Conference will build on past achievement and propose clear guidance for concrete actions on DRR, while promoting the improvement of DRR-Climate Change integrated approaches.

The European Union has already answered the pledges made in the Copenhagen Accord to provide nearly US$ 30 billion in funding over the next three years to help the poorest and most vulnerable developing nations, including for climate change adaptation. Almost a third of this funding will come from the EU alone and the delivery of this assistance is already on track, in Asia and in particular in the Pacific.

As far as DRR is concerned, the European Union has already mobilized various instruments available in Asia and the Pacific to support numerous Governments in their DRR and climate change frameworks and programs, regional institutions' mechanisms for instance with ASEAN and SOPAC. Most importantly, the EU has reached numerous local communities through well recognized and appreciated community-based DRR models, now being disseminated. The European Commission through its Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) is also a partner to the World Disaster Reduction Campaign 2010-2011, including the 'One Million Safe Schools and Hospitals Initiative'. This support will continue, in a more comprehensive manner and looking towards the 2015 objectives of the Hyogo Framework for Action. The European Union is fully committed to enhance its Asia-Europe dialogue and its support to the region. Its commitment reflects its interest in the Asia Pacific internal mechanisms, as well as its international commitment towards the DRR and Climate Change agendas and the systems promoted by the United Nations Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR).

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Regional Stocktaking and Mapping of DRR interventions in Asia and the Pacific: Introducing the DRR Project Portal

Background

The Regional Stocktaking and Mapping of DRR interventions in Asia and the Pacific initiative is currently being implemented by the ISDR Asia Partnership (IAP) with an aim to achieve greater coherence and better coordination at regional level on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) interventions. The initiative hopes to provide an enabling environment to strengthen the capacities of nations and communities to effectively address DRR.

The initiative is supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) with Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) acting as the executing agency on behalf of the IAP. Being implemented under the auspices of the IAP and the Asian Regional Platform for DRR, the initiative is guided by a Project Steering Committee (PSC) comprised of members from the IAP Working Group on Regional Stocktaking and Mapping including ADB, ADPC, ADRC, IFRC, SOPAC, UNISDR, UNDP, UNESCAP, UNOCHA and The World Bank. The primary objective of the initiative was to develop a system which would help in the exchange of information on the planning, programming and implementation of DRR projects in Asia and the Pacific.

The DRR Project Portal

The DRR Project Portal (www.drrprojects.net) is the online system developed to host information on DRR projects and provides an opportunity for users to find information on regional or multi-country DRR projects in the region. Users can obtain information on DRR projects in terms of which organisations are doing what, where and who they are funded by. They can also rapidly analyse the types of initiatives and trends in the region thus helping in identifying gaps, minimising overlap, maximising resources, and increasing coherence and planning at the regional level. It is anticipated that such a system when used and regularly updated by partners will contribute to bringing coherence and strengthening partnerships in implementing DRR projects in Asia and the Pacific.

DRR projects entered include those which are currently being implemented, those which are proposed, and those which have been completed in the last 5 years. All agencies working in the Asia Pacific region are encouraged to upload information on their regional or multi-country DRR projects; nearly 300 projects have been entered onto the DRR Project Portal so far. SOPAC have been particularly supportive of this initiative and projects from SOPAC's Pacific Disaster Net have been entered into the DRR Project Portal.

Features of the DRR Project Portal

Features and functions of the DRR Project Portal have been developed with wide consultation and taking into account the feedback received from users. They include project list and search, a map and customisable graphs, and a DRR frameworks list.

The project list and search features allow users to browse through all projects and also to filter the projects that are displayed. Searches can be filtered by key text or by selecting countries, hazards, themes, HFA priorities, RFA priorities, lead organisations, partner organisations, and/or donors. Users can also select whether they search through all projects or only by current, proposed or past projects. Project details include project start date, duration, countries covered, hazards addressed, themes, objectives, activities, outputs, HFA or PRA priorities, lead organisation, partner organisations, and donors. It also includes the contact details of a project focal person

who can be contacted for further queries (this is visible when a registered user is logged in only) and it may also include relevant uploaded documents and links for further project or organisation information.

The functions for analysing projects include graph and map tools. Customised graphs can be created by displaying only information selected by the user, this is done by selecting filters from the categories listed (countries, hazards etc.). There is also a map tool which shows country markers of proportionate size to the number of projects being implemented there, when clicked these markers list the DRR projects. The map tool also allows users to view hazard activity in the region by selecting cyclone intensity or earthquake frequency for example, which is then displayed on the map.
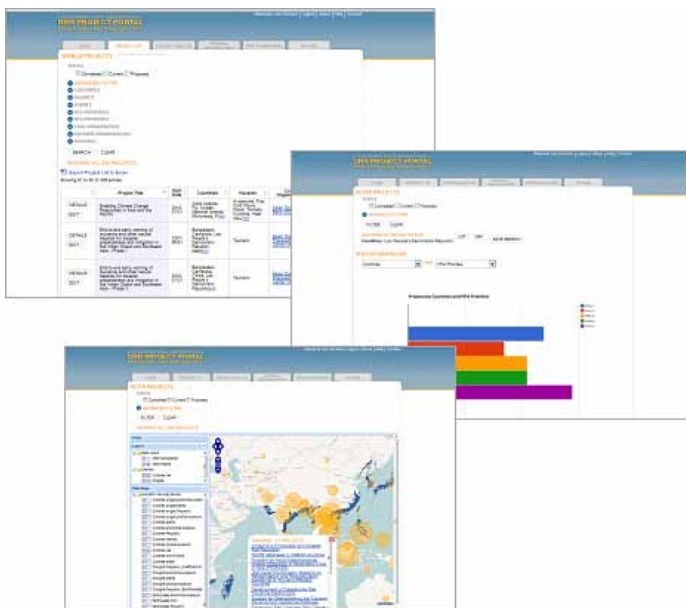
The DRR Project Portal also includes lists of regional organisations, committees, forums, mechanisms, meetings and networks. Additionally, there is a list of DRR frameworks where users can find information on frameworks which are relevant to implementing DRR in the region. Currently entered frameworks include documents for download on national disaster management plans and regional road maps.

Who the DRR Project Portal is useful for

The Portal is useful for national governments to gain clarity on the type of support that may be accessed from the regional level and thus receive coherent regional assistance. It is also useful for them to quickly analyse the organisations and donors involved in DRR projects being implemented in their countries. Organisations implementing DRR projects in the region will find the Portal useful and using the Portal might result in better planning; by knowing who is doing what and where organisations can minimise overlap and maximise resources. Organisations can also determine which organisations have experience and expertise in specific countries, hazards or themes, and find potential partners and scale up implementation. Organisations can also find donors who fund similar projects in the region and learn from past and ongoing projects. Donor agencies will also find the Portal useful for identifying priorities to match policy and programmatic aims; they too can use it to minimise overlaps and maximise resources.

Orientation training and launching the DRR Project Portal

An orientation training on the use of the DRR Project Portal was held in Bangkok in June to show users how to enter projects and use

the Portal effectively by searching and analysing the project information. Project partners attended as well as representatives from ASEAN, ADRRN, Duryog Nivaran, ECHO, EMI, ICIMOD, IUCN, MRCS, SAARC, SEI, UNEP and USAID. Comments and feedback were gratefully received and considered in the continued development of the Portal.

In August the DRR Project Portal was introduced to the wider audience in the Pacific during the 5th Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership Network (PDRMPN) Meeting, in line with the 2010 Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management in Suva, Fiji. It will be launched in October at the 4th Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR in South Korea.

From left: Russell Horwarth (SOPAC), Loy Rego (ADPC), Jutta May (SOPAC), Angelika Planitz (UNISDR), Edy Boroitsworo (ADB) at the Pacific launch in Fiji.

The success of the Portal depends on its usage by all agencies and their support in entering and updating project information for ongoing and proposed DRR projects. It also relies on the dissemination of its importance through newsletters, websites, platforms etc.

Share and obtain information on DRR projects in Asia and the Pacific at:
www.drrprojects.net

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Asia-Pacific Gateway on Disaster Risk Reduction and Development

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The floods in Pakistan are creating one of the greatest humanitarian crises in recent history. Too many people in our region live on flood plains and earthquake fault lines. It's timely to reflect Wednesday October 13th upon the important role that disaster risk reduction plays in reducing and avoiding the risks from natural hazards in our region.

In response, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) will be launching the Asia-Pacific Gateway on Disaster Risk Reduction and Development during the second session of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, 24th November 2010. It will be doing this in partnership with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, Microsoft and the United Nations' International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

The Gateway is a web portal that will promote the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development planning in Asia Pacific. It aggregates relevant information from existing online sources in the region and, where relevant, other parts of the world, thereby promoting an online community of practice where professionals can network and exchange information. Once launched, the Gateway will be available at www.APDRRGateway.net.

The Gateway focuses on providing information that is relevant to government decision makers at the national level; primarily National Disaster Management Agency's and line ministries mainstreaming DRR into the development planning work.

There are many websites, networks and organizations in Asia Pacific that deal with disaster management and, to a lesser extent, disaster risk reduction. These websites provide an incredibly diverse range of tools and information to users. This information is scattered, however, and is not necessarily organized in a way that promotes the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development planning.

The Gateway will provide a directory of development organizations doing DRR work in the region. It will provide a list of DRR services available to national governments in the region. Databases are also being developed that aggregate national disaster management policies, legislation, strategies and plans

The Gateway will work through partnerships to ensure that efforts are not duplicated and that resources are shared.

The United Nations' International Strategy for Disaster Reduction launched *Prevention Web* a number of years ago. It has the worlds most extensive publications database on DRR. We intend to use this database as ours, with a customized series of views for the Gateway. Prevention web also collects detailed disaster information by country that ESCAP will augment with Development Statistics. This will become a shared resource of both groups and a prototype that can potentially be rolled out to other regions.

The **Asian Disaster Preparedness Center** has launched a website called the DRR Project Porthole. This is the first attempt at providing a common project tracking system in the Asia Pacific region that allows users to see what activities are happening, and for Donors to see where the potential gaps are in providing assistance. ESCAP has discussed promoting this database as a common DRR project database to be used by Prevention Web, ESCAP and Pacific Disaster Net. There is early agreement on the idea, which still needs to be formalized.

Natural disasters pose a significant challenge to the realization of inclusive and sustainable development in Asia Pacific. When disasters strike, significant development gains can be lost overnight. The Gateway will help countries better access the online resources that exist for our region.   The partnerships formed to support the Gateway will help ensure that information providers leverage their important work rather than duplicate efforts.   The Gateway will assist professional communities of practice by linking specialists with the resources they need to mainstream disaster risk reduction with development planning for a safer future.

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Publication on HFA
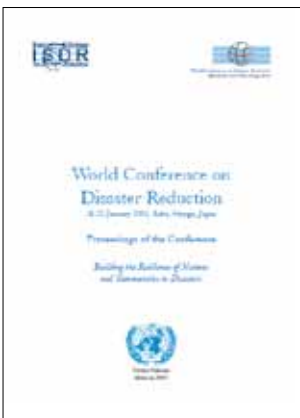
World Conference on Disaster Reduction: proceedings of the conference, UNISDR, 2005

The World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) proceedings include primary documents together with a summary on the thematic segment of the conference and includes:

1. The Hyogo Declaration
2. The Hyogo Framework for Action

The conference was structured in three segments: intergovernmental, thematic and public. It was a rich forum for exchanging views on many issues related to risk reduction, with the objective to reduce the loss of life and assets of populations in risk-prone areas. The Hyogo Framework for Action adopted by the conference provides valuable policy direction and practical guidance for the next decade across many areas related to risk management and disaster reduction.

Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters, UNISDR, 2007

Extract from the final report of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (A/CONF.206/6):

The WCDR was held from 18 to 22 January 2005 in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, and adopted the present Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters. The Conference provided a unique opportunity to promote a strategic and systematic approach to reducing vulnerabilities and risks to hazards. It underscored the need for, and identified ways of, building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.
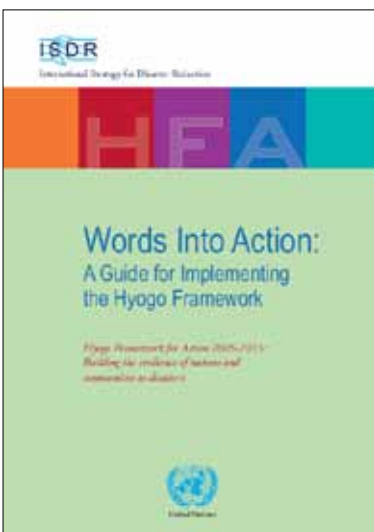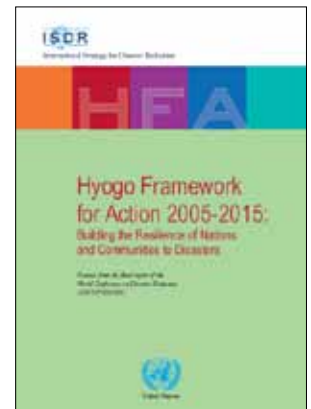
Words into action: a guide to implementing the Hyogo Framework, UNISDR, 2007

This Guide has been created to provide advice on useful strategies for implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (HFA). It represents a distillation of the wealth of experience that exists throughout the world on how to manage and reduce disaster risks. The Guide can help states to assess where they stand in the implementation process and, by building on existing experience and structure, to identify possible gaps and useful next steps to take. It does not attempt to cover all risks, nor all elements of disaster risk reduction. Some sections outline basic points and processes for disaster risk reduction, while others describe more complex tasks.

Because states have the primary responsibility for disaster risk reduction, the Guide's target audience is national governments and their subsidiary local governments, including decision makers, leaders and practitioners, and other civil servants. In addition it is expected that the Guide will be of interest to a diverse audience and may be used at different levels for a variety of purposes, such as by leaders and representatives of specific sectors, civil society organizations, community organizations, the private sector, academia, international and regional organizations, and others working to reduce disaster risk reduction.

The UNISDR secretariat has compiled this Guide in response to paragraph 33 (b) of the HFA, which requests that the ISDR system "support the implementation of this Framework, identify gaps in implementation, and facilitate consultation processes to develop guidelines and policy tools for each priority area." The Guide has been developed through extensive consultation with key actors in disaster risk reduction, including partner agencies and experts, national platforms and regional agencies.

Disaster risk reduction: 2007 global review, UNISDR, 2007

The Disaster Risk Reduction: 2007 Global Review contrasts and compares contemporary trends and patterns in disaster risk with the progress being made by countries in implementing the priorities for action outlined by the Hyogo Framework. In particular, the Review identifies scenarios of intensive risk (where concentrations of people and economic activities are likely to experience catastrophic disaster impacts from large-scale hazard events) and scenarios of extensive risk (where more dispersed populations are likely to experience highly localised, low intensity but cumulative disaster impacts from small-scale, mainly climatic hazards).

The Review examines whether current progress in implementing the Hyogo Framework will reduce mortality and economic loss risk in the face of earthquake and climatic hazard in intensive risk and extensive risk scenarios.

Regional Synthesis Report on HFA Implementation in Asia and Pacific An Overview of Reports by Countries up to 2007, ADPC, ADRC, UNISDR, 2007

Based on the National Reports to the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) and the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) Progress Report to the First Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR), This report is an overview of reports by countries up to 2007. It provides a regional synthesis within two timeframes: as on January 2005 and during 2005 and 2006. In both cases, the synthesis is presented under the core indicators developed by UNISDR for each of the HFA Priorities for Action.
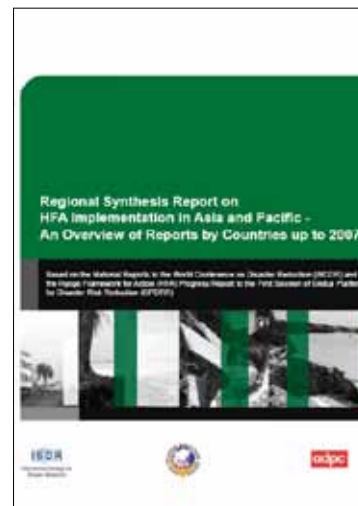
The Red Cross Red Crescent and the Hyogo Framework for Action: Focus on the Asia-Pacific region, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), 2008

This IFRC publication describes some of the ways that National Red Cross Societies in the Asia-Pacific region have been contributing to the implementation of the five priorities of the HFA, grouped according to the main activities under each priority.

Global Assessment Report on Disaster risk reduction, UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR), 2009

The forwarded by Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon states, "This first edition of the United Nations Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction is not only a comprehensive review and analysis of the natural hazards menacing humanity. It also provides new and arresting evidence on how, where and why disaster risk is increasing globally. That risk is highly concentrated in middle- and low-income countries, and is felt most acutely by people living in poor rural areas and slums. But of course, wealthier countries are not immune, as bush fires in Australia reminded us so tragically at the start of this year. The risk of disaster touches every woman, man and child on Earth. Drawing on detailed studies, this Global Assessment urges a radical shift in development practices, and a major new emphasis on resilience and disaster planning. Floods, droughts, storms, earthquakes, fires and other events, when combined with 'risk drivers' such as increasing urbanization, poor urban governance, vulnerable rural livelihoods and the decline of ecosystems, can lead to massive human misery and crippling economic losses. The risks posed by global climate change and rising sea levels carry additional grave implications for how we will live in the near future.

While we cannot prevent natural phenomena such as earthquakes and cyclones, we can limit their impacts. The scale of any disaster is linked closely to past decisions taken by citizens and governments – or the absence of such decisions. Pre-emptive risk reduction is the key. Sound response mechanisms after the event, however effective, are never enough."

Clouds but Little Rain…: Views from the Frontline – a local perspective of progress towards implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, Tearfund, 2009

This publication is the first independent assessment of progress ever undertaken towards implementation of the HFA at the local level. The review serves to connect policy formulation at international and national level with the realities of policy execution at local level.
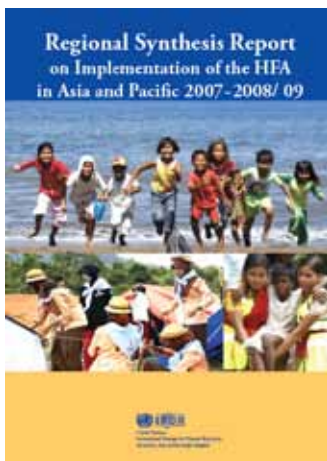
Regional synthesis report on implementation of the HFA in Asia and Pacific 2007-2008/09, UNISDR, 2009

The main objective of this report is to provide a synthesized overview of some of the main achievements, challenges and issues in implementing the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) in the Asia/ Pacific region from 2007-2009 as identified by national and regional actors.

Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and the Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Framework for Action 2005-2015, Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), 2009

This is a Pacific regional synthesis report on the progress of implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015. The Hyogo Framework for Action has been adapted in the Pacific as a regional DRM policy document entitled "An Investment for Sustainable Development In the Pacific Island Countries – Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management A Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters" (Regional Framework). This report uses the reporting guidelines prepared by the UNISDR to assist countries and organizations to respond to the reporting requirements that are set out in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

The Regional Framework has six themes as follows: Theme 1: Governance – Organizational, Institutional, Policy and Decision-Making Framework; Theme 2: Knowledge, Information, Public Awareness and Education; Theme 3: Analysis and Evaluation of Hazards, Vulnerabilities and Elements at Risks; Theme 4: Planning for effective Preparedness, Response and Recovery; Theme 5: Effective, Integrated and People-Focused Early Warning Systems; and Theme 6: Reduction of Underlying Risk Factors.
Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action in Asia and the Pacific: follow-up to the outcome of the third Asian Ministerial Conference on disaster risk reduction - from the regional to the global platform, UNESCAP, 2009

A Guide for Implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action by Local Stakeholders, Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies, Kyoto University, 2010

The aim of this publication is to serve as a guide for Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) implementation for local governments and stakeholders by customizing the ISDR publication "Words Into Action: A Guide to Implementing the Hyogo Framework" (2007) for local governments and stakeholders to support their HFA implementation to take comprehensive disaster risk reduction actions. This consultation version can be used for training/capacity development program on disaster risk reduction targeted at local government officials. This publication has been developed with the participation of many experts and organizations, under the umbrella of the ISDR Asia Regional Task Force on Urban Risk Reduction which is coordinated by the UNISDR Office in Kobe.

SUMMARY of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015:
Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (Hyogo Framework)

International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Expected outcome, strategic goals and priorities for action 2005-2015

Contributing to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals (including the MDGs)

Expected Outcome

The substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries

Strategic Goals

The integration of disaster risk reduction into sustainable development policies and planning	Development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities to build resilience to hazards	The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes

Priorities for Action

1. Ensure that disaster risk reduction (DRR) is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation	2. Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning	3. Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels	4. Reduce the underlying risk factors	5. Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels
Key Activities				
• DRR institutional mechanisms (national platforms); designated responsibilities • DRR part of development policies and planning, sector wise and multisector • Legislation to support DRR • Decentralisation of responsibilities and resources • Assessment of human resources and capacities • Foster political commitment • Community participation	• Risk assessments and maps, multi-risk: elaboration and dissemination • Indicators on DRR and vulnerability • Data & statistical loss information • Early warning: people centered; information systems; public policy • Scientific and technological development; data sharing, space-based earth observation, climate modeling and forecasting; early warning • Regional and emerging risks	• Information sharing and cooperation; • Networks across disciplines and regions; dialogue • Use of standard DRR terminology • Inclusion of DRR into school curricula, formal and informal education • Training and learning on DRR: community level, local authorities, targeted sectors; equal access • Research capacity: multi-risk; socio-economic; application • Public awareness and media	• Sustainable ecosystems and environmental management • DRR strategies integrated with climate change adaptation • Food security for resilience • DRR integrated into health sector and safe hospitals • Protection of critical public facilities • Recovery schemes and social safety- nets • Vulnerability reduction with diversified income options • Financial risk-sharing mechanisms • Public-private partnership • Land use planning and building codes • Rural development plans and DRR	• Disaster management capacities: policy, technical and institutional capacities • Dialogue, coordination & information exchange between disaster managers and development sectors • Regional approaches to disaster response, with risk reduction focus • Review & and exercise preparedness and contingency plans • Emergency funds • Volunteerism & participation

Cross Cutting Issues

Multi-hazard approach	Gender perspective and cultural diversity	Community and volunteers participation	Capacity building & technology transfer

Continued
SUMMARY of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015:
Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (Hyogo Framework)

Implementation and Follow-Up

In order to achieve the goals and act upon the priorities identified in this Framework, the following tasks have been identified to ensure implementation and follow-up by States, regional and international organizations in collaboration with civil society and other stakeholders. The ISDR partners, in particular the Inter-agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and secretariat, are requested to assist in implementing this Framework for Action.

General Considerations

Implementation by different stakeholders, multi-sectoral approach; participation of civil society (NGOs; CBOs; volunteers), scientific community & private sector is vital	States primarily responsible; an enabling international environment is vital, incl. strengthened regional capacities	Build multi-stakeholder partnerships	Particular attention to: - Small island developing States: Mauritius Strategy; - Least developed countries; - Africa	States, regional and international organizations to foster coordination among themselves and a strengthened International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)
				Follow-up integrated with other major conferences in fields relevant to DRR; reviews as appropriate

Actors

States

Critical tasks

- Designate national coordination mechanisms for the implementation and follow up, communicate to the ISDR secretariat;
- National baseline assessments of the status of DRR;
- Publish and update a summary of national programme for DRR including international cooperation;
- Develop procedure for reviewing national progress including systems for cost benefit analysis and ongoing monitoring on risk;
- Consider acceding to, approving or ratifying relevant international legal instruments and to make sure they are implemented;
- Promote the integration of DRR with climate variability and climate change into DRR strategies and adaptation to climate change; ensure management of risks to geological hazards.

Regional Organizations and Institutions

- Promote regional programmes including for technical cooperation, capacity development, the development of methodologies and standards for hazard and vulnerability monitoring and assessment, the sharing of information and effective mobilization of resources;
- Undertake and publish regional and sub-regional baseline assessments;
- Coordinate and publish reviews on progress and support needs, and assists countries in preparation of national summaries;
- Establish specialized regional collaborative centers;
- Support the development of regional mechanisms and capacities for early warning, including for tsunami

International Organizations (including UN System and IFIs)

- Engage in the implementation of the ISDR by encouraging integration of DRR into humanitarian and sustainable development fields;
- Strengthen the capacity of the UN system to assist disaster-prone developing countries in DRR and implement measures for assessment of progress;
- Identify actions to assist disaster-prone developing countries in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework; ensure their integration and that adequate funding is allocated; assist in setting up national strategies and programmes for DRR;
- Integrate actions into relevant coordination mechanisms (UNDG, IASC, RCs and UN Country Teams);
- Integrate DRR into development assistance frameworks such as CCA/UNDAF, PRSP;
- In collaboration with networks and platform support: data collection and forecasting on natural hazards and risks; early warning systems; full & open exchange of data;
- Support States with coordinated international relief assistance, to reduce vulnerability & increase capacities;
- Strengthen international mechanisms to support disaster stricken States in post-disaster recovery with DRR approach
- Adapt & strengthen inter-agency disaster management training for DRR and capacity building.

ISDR (Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction & secretariat)

- Develop a matrix of roles and initiatives in support of follow-up to the Hyogo Framework;
- Facilitate the coordination of effective actions within the UN system and other international and regional entities to support the implementation of the Hyogo Framework; identify gaps, facilitate processes to develop guidelines and policy tools for each priority area;
- In broad consultation, develop generic, realistic and measurable indicators. These indicators could assist States in measuring progress in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework;
- Support national platforms & regional coordination;
- Register relevant partnerships with Commission on Sustainable Development;
- Stimulate the exchange, compilation, analysis and dissemination of best practices, lessons learnt;
- Prepare periodic review on progress towards achieving the objectives of the Hyogo Framework and provide reports to the UNGA & other UN bodies

Resource Mobilization: States, Regional and International Organizations

- Mobilize resources and capabilities of relevant national, regional and international bodies, including the UN system;
- Provide and support the implementation of the HFA in disaster prone developing countries, including through financial and technical assistance, addressing debt sustainability, technology transfer, public-private partnership and North-South and South-South cooperation;
- Mainstream DRR measures into multilateral and bilateral development assistance programmes;
- Provide adequate voluntary financial contribution to the UN Trust Fund for DR to support follow-up activities to Hyogo Framework, review usage and feasibility for the expansion of this fund;
- Develop partnership to implement schemes that spread out risks, reduce insurance premiums, expand insurance coverage and increase financing for post-disaster reconstruction, including through public and private partnerships. Promote an environment that encourages a culture of insurance in developing countries.

Safer communities and sustainable development though disaster risk reduction