

Disaster Risk Reduction, Governance and Development



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORWARD	4
1. SETTING THE SCENE	5
1.1. Disasters Problem	6
1.2. Governance	7
1.3. Basic Concepts	9
1.4. The Disaster Risk Reduction Agenda	13
2. DISASTER RISK AND DEVELOPMENT	16
2.1. Disaster Risk	16
2.2. Disaster Risk Factors	17
2.3. Disaster Risk and Poverty in Africa	20
2.4. The Millennium Development Goals and Disaster Risk Reduction	23
3. GOVERNANCE AND FACTORING DISASTER RISK REDUCTION INTO DEVELOPMENT	27
3.1. The Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction	27
3.2. Good Governance for Disaster Risk Reduction	28
3.3. Local Governance and Decentralisation	40
4. REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	44
4.1. Regional Actions	44
4.2. International Role and Responsibilities	45
5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS: GOVERNANCE AS GUARANTEE FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION	49
BIBLIOGRAPHY	54

FORWARD

Natural disasters put development gains at risk, but development choices in turn can increase disaster risks. Therefore, one should ensure that every aspect of development contributes to reducing disaster risks rather than generating new risks.

In this context, governance is increasingly recognized to be critical. Good or weak governance can be seen as one of the fundamental factors influencing disaster risk.

Appropriate institutional, policy and legal frameworks are essential. Good governance is expected to elevate disaster risk reduction into a policy priority, allocate the necessary resources to it, ensure and enforce its implementation and assign accountability for failures, as well as facilitate participation by all relevant stakeholders.

There are some encouraging examples of good governance with regards to disaster risk reduction. For instance, the development, in several countries in Africa, of multi-stakeholder national platforms or national committees provide strong evidence of political will towards sharing decision-making power - one of the key ingredients for good governance.

However, it is a fact that adequate institutional, policy and legal frameworks are still missing in many African countries to advance sustained disaster risk reduction.

This booklet, entitled *Disaster Risk Reduction, Governance and Development*, seeks to raise awareness among decision makers and community leaders in Africa of the importance of good governance in disaster risk reduction.



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1. SETTING THE SCENE

Did you know ?

The impact of disasters, on basis of data available, is on the rise:

between 1980 and 2000,

- More than 1.5 million people were killed by natural disasters and for every person killed, 3,000 people are estimated to be exposed to natural disasters worldwide;
- 160,000 deaths were associated with earthquakes and 130 million people are estimated to be exposed to earthquake every year;
- 251,000 deaths were associated with cyclones; an estimated 119 million people estimated to be exposed to cyclone every year;
- 170,000 deaths were associated with floods, and 196 million people exposed to flood in over 90 countries;
- 833,000 deaths were associated with drought, and some 220 million people found to be exposed to drought every year worldwide.

real economic losses from natural disasters averaged

- US \$ 75.5 billion in the 1960s;
- US \$134 billion in the 1970s;
- US \$ 214 billion in the 1980s;
- US \$ 660 billion in the 1990s;
- Estimated annual average damage from disasters assessed at about US \$ 69 billion as at 2002¹.

in 2003 alone

- 700 natural disasters were recorded globally;
- Economic losses of US\$ 65 billion represented 18% increase over 2002.

¹ UNDP (2004). *Reducing Disaster Risk: A Challenge for Development*. 2004.

1.1. THE DISASTER PROBLEM

This booklet is set against the background of the phenomenal increase in disasters and their impact on economic and human development over the last two decades, documented by two recent United Nations state of the art publications².

This increasing human and economic losses from disasters have been paralleled by two interrelated developments: an increasing understanding of the nature and causes of disasters on the one hand, and on the other, increasing concern with and commitment to activities that could reduce the effects of disasters. These developments have helped to shape the agenda and the increasing shift towards disaster risk reduction as a priority.

In particular, there has been a greater awareness of the economic and social determinants and consequences of natural disasters. Natural disasters are now known to be intimately linked to human development and we now understand that human vulnerabilities are closely associated with specific development conditions and processes. This understanding has led to increasing shift in focus from the traditional disaster management cycle emphasising response, preparedness and prevention/mitigation towards disaster risk reduction³. It is recognised that effective disaster risk reduction cannot be accomplished without integrating disaster risk reduction into development planning and development processes.

On the other hand, there has been recognition of the governance systems and processes that affect the outcome of disaster risk reduction efforts. There is now consensus that political will is an essential element in effective disaster risk reduction at all levels of government and throughout society as a whole. While ultimate responsibility for disaster risk reduction policy and implementation lies with the highest levels of government, effective disaster risk reduction requires a broad-based approach, involving partnerships between government and international partners and, at the national level, partnership between various levels of government, the private sector, civil society and the media. This requires

² Living With Risk: A Review of Global Disaster Risk Reduction Initiatives (*ISDR, Version 2004*) and Reducing Disaster Risk: A Challenge for Development (*UNDP 2004*).

³ For detailed discussion of the shift from traditional disaster management concerns towards disaster risk reduction, see *Living with Risk (ISDR, Version 2004, pp1-15)*.

a commitment by the state to play a facilitator role and accept power sharing and responsibility with various levels of government and civil society actors.

This booklet focuses on governance, a critical element in the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development planning and development programmes. It is advocacy as well as a tool intended for decision makers and community leaders in Africa, to help them appreciate the importance and benefits of good policies and strategies and appropriate institutional and legislative systems at national level as frameworks for the design of effective disaster risk reduction plans and programmes. The booklet elaborates on requirements of good governance and the links between good governance and effective disaster risk reduction efforts. It emphasises the importance of community involvement in disaster risk management planning and activities and the need for decentralised government structures to facilitate broad-based participation. It is a message to all actors in disaster risk reduction on the need for partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society, and between national governments and regional and international institutions in disaster risk reduction.

1.2. GOVERNANCE

Governance refers generally to the set of instruments through which people living in a state, believing in common core values, govern themselves by the means of laws, rules and regulations enforced by the state apparatus. It denotes a system of values, policies and institutions by which society manages its economic, political and social affairs through interaction among the state, civil society and the private sector. It also denotes those processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, and meet their obligations and mediate their differences.

Governance has three components: economic, political and administrative.

- Economic governance includes the decision-making processes that affect a country's economic activities and its relationship with other economies. This has major implications for equity, poverty and quality of life.

- Political governance is the process of decision making to formulate policies, including national disaster reduction and planning. The nature of this process and the way it brings together the state, non-state and private sector actors determines the quality of the policy outcomes.
- Administrative governance is the system of policy implementation and requires the existence of well-functioning organisations at the central and local levels. In the case of disaster risk reduction, it requires functioning enforcement of building codes, land-use planning, environmental risk and human vulnerability monitoring and safety standards.

The fundamental principles of good governance include respect for human rights, political openness, participation, tolerance, administrative and bureaucratic capacity and efficiency. The rule of law, transparency, equity, consensus-orientated accountability and strategic vision are other essential elements of good governance.

One of the key principles of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World (10) asserts that each country has the sovereign responsibility to protect its people, infrastructure and economic and social assets from natural disasters. As the critical actor in development, governments can shape the destinies of their populations through economic choices they make that promote equity, poverty reduction and an appropriate political culture - policy and decision making processes that promote participation and inclusiveness, and administrative processes that promote efficiency, transparency, accountability and people-centredness. The principles of good governance provide the key to sustainable development and by implication to effective disaster risk reduction.

Good governance creates a conducive environment for effective disaster risk reduction through mobilising the political will and facilitating the broad participation and partnerships to ensure that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and most vulnerable are heard in the decision-making processes.

1.3. BASIC CONCEPTS

Disasters, Disaster Risk and Vulnerability

Disasters are often triggered by hazards. A hazard is defined as the potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity which may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption and environmental degradation. The occurrence of hazards alone does not necessarily cause disasters. A disaster is the serious disruption of a community or society causing widespread human, material, economic and environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community/society to cope using its own resources. Disasters are caused by the extent to which the elements at risk (people, infrastructure, buildings, assets) are vulnerable to the hazard or threat.

Vulnerability is the existence of conditions of defencelessness and insecurity resulting from physical, social, economic and environmental factors, which expose a community to the impact of hazards.

Disaster risk is thus the probability of harmful consequences or expected loss (lives, people, property, etc.) resulting from an interaction between a hazard and vulnerable conditions. Disaster risk is largely the result on the one hand of the vulnerability of groups or communities arising from physical, social, economic and environmental factors that expose them to risk that may determine the likelihood and scale of the impact of a disaster; and, on the other hand, of the capacity of a group or community, through existing organisations and resources, to cope with or limit the losses arising from a disaster or the capacity to adapt by creating conditions that minimise the conditions that generate risk. Capacity is associated with resilience. Different segments, groups or geographical areas are exposed to a lesser or greater degree depending on the degree of physical exposure and their social and economic conditions.

Hazard x Vulnerability - Capacity/Resilience = Disaster Risk

Though not the most disaster-prone continent, the Africa region is considered the most vulnerable to the impact of disasters, largely because of the extent of exposure to disaster resulting from poverty and a range of physical, social, economic and environmental factors that limit or frustrate the achievement of development goals necessary to secure and protect peoples' livelihoods.

Development

Development is generally viewed as the achievement of economic growth and hence improved living standards achieved through the use of a society's human, natural and institutional resources. Development means simply improving society - enabling people to achieve their aspirations. Improving society includes provision of social services, acquisition of economic assets, improved productivity and reducing vulnerability to natural disasters. Low levels of development are thus closely associated with high levels of risk and vulnerability to natural disasters.

The key elements of development that relate to vulnerability and disaster risk can be best summarised as follows:

- An economic component dealing with the creation of wealth and the improvement of conditions of material life equitably distributed;
- A social ingredient measured as well-being in health, education, housing and employment;
- A political dimension including values such as human rights, political freedom, enfranchisement and some form of democracy; and
- An environmental dimension: Commitment to ecologically sound and sustainable development, which ensures that the present generation does not undermine the position of the future generation.

Economic development and improvement in the conditions of material life are closely linked with social wellbeing and are key elements in increasing the ability of individuals, communities and society in general to cope with the impact of disasters. Political freedom, enfranchisement and democracy provide society with the tools for controlling their destiny by participating in decisions that affect their daily lives, and by demanding accountability from those in power. Through participatory planning mechanisms, groups and communities can ensure that disaster risk reduction measures are factored into development programmes. The environmental dimension ensures sound sustainable development practices.

The attributes of development that are introduced briefly above represent ideals to which every people and nation aspires. However, for many

people across the globe particularly, ideals remain a dream and a rather remote one. One manifestation of these unattained goals is the increasing number and intensity of disasters triggered by both natural hazards and human conditions that generate conflict. At the same time, development efforts and other human activities related to development may and do contribute towards disasters by increasing vulnerability as well as creating new hazards.

Things to do

Examine development activities or programmes in your country, local authority or community that are currently taking place or have been completed, and make a list of them. Based on your observations and experiences, answer the following questions, indicating clearly the actual effects of the development activity:

- In what ways has the development activity helped in reducing risk? (Example: greater food availability, more organised community, more accessible health services).
- In what ways has the development activity increased risk? (Example: food shortages due to increased emphasis on cash crops, dams that increase the risk of floods).
- In what ways have disasters affected the development activity? (Example: floods destroying roads or bridges or houses, trees being cut for building).

This exercise is the beginning of a risk assessment. Once you know the importance of development or risk factors, you can plan better.

The following table (on page 11) is a useful way of summarising the relationship between disaster and development. Understanding the nature of the relationship between disasters and development is a primary condition for effective disaster risk management.

Development-Disaster Relationship

Disasters limit or destroy development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destruction of physical assets and loss of production capacity, market access and input materials. • Damage to infrastructure and erosion of livelihoods and savings. • Destruction of health or education infrastructure and personnel. • Deaths, disablement or migration of productive labour force.
Development causes disaster risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsustainable development practices that create unsafe working conditions and degrade the environment. • Development paths generating inequality, promoting social isolation or political exclusion.
Development reduces disaster risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to safe drinking water and food and secure dwelling places, which increase people's resilience. • Fair trade and technology can reduce poverty, and social security can reduce vulnerability. • Development can build communities and broaden the provision of opportunities for participation and involvement in decision-making, recognising excluded groups such as women, enhancing education and health capacity.
Disasters create development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Favourable environment for advocacy for disaster risk reduction measures. • Decision makers more willing to allocate resources in the wake of a disaster. • Rehabilitation and reconstruction activities create opportunities for integrating disaster risk measures.

*Adopted from "Reducing Disaster Risk: A Challenge for Development"
(UNDP 2004, p.20)*

1.4. THE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AGENDA

Towards Disaster Risk Reduction

The period 1990-1999, which the UN General Assembly declared as the International Decade for National Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), led to a greater awareness of the social and economic consequences of natural disasters. The 1994 Yokohama Strategy noted as follows:

Natural disasters continue to strike and increase in magnitude, complexity and economic impact. Whilst natural phenomena causing disasters are in most cases beyond human control, vulnerability is generally a result of human activity. Therefore society must recognise and strengthen new ways to live with such risk, and take urgent actions to prevent as well as reduce the effects of such disasters. (Living with Risk, ISDR 2004, p 9)

The importance accorded to socio-economic vulnerability in disaster risk analysis informed the crucial role of human action in reducing vulnerability. At the same time, it is acknowledged that the achievement of disaster reduction as a social and economic imperative required a long-term perspective. In 1994, the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World conceived at the First World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction was adopted. The 10 principles outlined in the Yokohama Strategy, the Strategy for the Year 2000 and Beyond and the Plan of Action put disaster risk reduction firmly on the agenda. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), the successor to IDNDR, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2000, has shifted the focus towards the processes of integrating disaster risk reduction into environmentally sustainable development. Building on the lessons of the IDNDR, the ISDR provides a framework for action for reducing human, economic and environmental losses due to disasters triggered by natural hazard and related technological and environmental phenomena.

Part of the motivation for the emphasis on disaster risk reduction arises from the aim of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set out in the Millennium Declaration. The Declaration acknowledges both the risks to development posed by natural disasters and the positive

contributions that achievement of the MDGs can make to the reduction of human vulnerability to natural hazards. The MDGs have as one of their key objectives the intensification of efforts to reduce the effect of natural and man-made disasters and direct development planning towards the eight priority goals. At the same time, the MDGs place great emphasis on the processes undertaken to meet each goal as the key determinant of the extent to which meeting the development goal will reduce risk. It is the importance of these processes that helps to focus the attention on governance as a fundamental requirement for effective integration of disaster risk reduction into development.

The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) further reinforced the disaster risk reduction agenda. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation commits itself to poverty eradication and sustainable development in Africa through efforts and initiatives at all levels. In particular, WSSD seeks to deal effectively with natural disasters and conflicts, including humanitarian and environmental impacts, which have hindered and, in many cases, obliterated both gains and efforts aimed at sustainable development, with the most vulnerable members of society, particularly women and children.

Understanding Disaster Risk Reduction

Disaster risk reduction is viewed as the systematic development and application of policies, strategies and practices to minimise vulnerabilities and risks throughout a society to avoid (prevention) or limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse impact of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development (ISDR 2002: 25).

Disaster reduction policies should have a two-fold aim:

- To enable societies to be resilient to natural hazards;
- To ensure that development efforts do not increase vulnerability.

The focus on disaster risk reduction is based on the understanding that with proper planning of development programmes and integrating disaster risk reduction in development strategies, the negative effects of development can be reduced, while the positive effects can be enhanced through the reduction of poverty, improvement of human livelihoods and coping strategies and overall reduction of vulnerability.

Disaster risk reduction strategy places great emphasis on the governance process. Like the Plan of Action of the Yokohama Strategy, which identifies effective national legislation and administrative action as a high priority at the political decision-making level, the ISDR places great emphasis on the governance dimension:

Governments and communities will benefit by understanding that disaster reduction policy is a wise investment. Direction and resource allocation often need to be provided from higher levels of authority within society, even as decisions and individual commitments need to grow from the local understanding and participation by people most immediately affected by disaster risks... There is a need to gain a level of wide and inclusive national participation before a disaster occurs. This public responsibility will require collective discipline that can be sustained through the education and practice of many trades and professions.

(ISDR 2004, p 13)

2. DISASTER RISK & DEVELOPMENT

2.1. DISASTER RISK

Clear understanding of the nature of disaster risk is critical both for establishing the relationship between disaster risks and development and aiding in thinking about effective disaster risk strategies. The UNDP Disaster Risk Index (DRI)⁴ attempts to establish, on a scientific basis, the relationship between development and disaster risk through systematic analysis based on available data.

Underlying the DRI is the premise that disaster risk is not caused by hazardous events per se, but rather historically constructed through human activities and processes. The risk of death in a disaster is therefore only partially dependent on physical hazards such as earthquakes and floods. For these physical phenomenon to be hazardous, there has to be a subject to experience such as hazard or threat, such as people or infrastructure. The concept of physical exposure is used to express the relationship between the number of people located in areas where hazardous events occur and the frequency of events, which is regarded as primary for disaster risk to exist, but not necessarily an indicator of vulnerability. Vulnerability is the important concept which explains why, with a given level of physical exposure, people are more or less at risk. Vulnerability brings together the different variables that configure risk as well as the resilience or the capacity to cope or adapt to the effect of a disaster.

An analysis of risk profiles of different countries will illustrate the key social and economic variables associated with risk. For example, risk factors for earthquakes are associated with physical exposure and processes associated with urban growth, such as overcrowding and poor housing. Risk to tropical cyclones is associated with physical exposure, large rural populations and percentage of arable land as well as the human development index score. Flood risk is associated with physical exposure, and variables tied to GDP per capita and low densities of population.

The analysis relating to drought is particularly instructive, especially in the African context. For drought, as compared to the rapid-onset hazards

⁴ See "Reducing Disaster Risk: A Development Challenge", UNDP 2004, pp30-34.

identified above for which physical exposure is associated with deaths, it is suggested that socio-economic factors play a predominant role in generating risk. It is argued that it is the duration of drought that may be the most important element in characterising drought as a hazard, and that it may be incorrect to consider deaths recorded during drought as drought deaths. Drought impact appears to demonstrate the greatest relationship between disaster risk and development processes.

Deaths due to drought are not direct, but rather the result of a complex interaction of drought and vulnerability as embedded in the economy. For example, the socio-economic variable, which appears to have the greatest association with recorded drought deaths, is identified as the percentage of the population with access to improved water supply and physical exposure.

Drought as disaster risk appears to be closely related to political processes and poor governance. The role of political processes in aggravating the drought disaster risk is demonstrated by the fact that most of the countries that are more vulnerable have suffered major armed conflicts during the period 1980-2000, examples being Ethiopia, Uganda, Sudan and Mozambique. It is significant that while evidence suggests that few sub-Saharan Africa countries have large populations exposed to meteorological drought, seven of the world's 10 most important vulnerable countries are located in sub-Saharan Africa: Ethiopia, Sudan, Mozambique, Chad, Mauritania, Somalia and Madagascar.

2.2. DISASTER RISK FACTORS

A brief outline of these factors is provided to demonstrate the relationship between disaster risk, development and governance processes, especially in the African context. It will be noted that the disaster risk factors identified below are closely associated with development processes and decisions and activities of governments, local authorities and communities. These factors also provide a menu to policy makers, planners and community officials of the issues that will largely influence disaster risk reduction policies, strategies, programmes and activities at national and local levels, as these represent key development issues.

2.2.1. Urbanisation

Disaster risk factors associated with urbanisation clearly demonstrate the relationship between development processes and disaster risk on the one hand, and disaster risk and governance processes on the other. Among these factors are:

Risk by origin: Cities that are historically founded in hazardous locations for both political and economic reasons.

Physical exposure: Urbanisation processes lead to concentration of populations in informal settlements, in city centres and districts where the capacity of urban authorities or the private sector to supply housing or basic infrastructure results in greater exposure to disaster risk.

Social exclusion: Social exclusion is tied to high numbers of migrants at risk among rapidly expanding urban populations where unemployment is high and means of earning money scarce. Poor or non-existent sanitation, deficiency in health and education services, insecure land tenure combined with social ills such as crime, violence and other factors configure everyday risk.

Modification and generation of hazard patterns: Through processes of urban expansion, cities and their hinterlands may generate and create new hazards associated, for example, with industrial plants and pollution, inadequate waste disposal, increasing risk to city dwellers, especially the poor.

Poor planning and control: In low and middle income countries, governments and city authorities have proved ineffective in planning and controlling the process of urban growth through land-use planning and building codes, leading to unregulated settlements where the poor are concentrated in land with low value and in most hazard-prone locations. Physical and economic deterioration, lack of maintenance and overcrowding may also increase risk. Cultural heritage and cultural landscapes may be exposed to disaster risk.

Urbanisation of new regions: Construction of new roads that link previously isolated areas may trigger rapid urban growth and transformation of the territory, leading to configuration of new risks not previously experienced by the population.

Lack of access to loss mitigation mechanisms: For low-income communities, risk is tied to hazardous living conditions and environment with limited access to emergency services, sanitation and safe drinking

water, and there may be no coping or mitigation mechanism when floods and fires destroy assets and infrastructure.

Economic globalisation: Globalisation acts as a dynamic pressure to configure disaster risk. Shrinking space, shrinking time and disappearing borders are increasingly bringing people into more immediate and intense contact. Disaster events in one place can have potential effects on lives and public policies in distant areas, for example through disruption of trade. Economic globalisation may also aggravate risk factors for the poor through unfair trade and uncontrolled investments. On the other hand, globalisation provides opportunities for enhancement of livelihoods and quality of life for the majority of the world's poor if properly managed.

Urban risk factors are most visible in developing regions and particularly in Africa, and indicate that disaster risk in urban areas arises from both natural and human-induced disasters. Many of these factors are the result of poor development as well as governance practices. The placing of cities in disaster risk areas, physical exposure arising from inadequate building standards and poor planning and control, urbanisation of new regions through the construction of new roads without proper environmental impact assessment are all poor governance processes which often lead to poor and unsustainable development practices. Other factors such as social exclusion and lack of access to mitigation mechanisms may be the result of unequal or unsustainable development, while also pointing, on the one hand, to governance practices that exclude the poor and underprivileged in decision-making structures, and on the other to the consequences of poor or inadequate capacity of governing institutions at various levels to address issues of poverty and unequal development.

What is clear from the above outline is that disaster risks associated with urbanisation underline the critical importance of local authorities as the most important institution for reducing the effects of these natural and human-induced disasters. This requires that urban and municipal authorities become more accountable through greater transparency and the creation of broad-based participatory structures. Municipal governments need to play a key role as champions of governance, linking public, private and civil society actors in a broad based partnership for disaster risk reduction in urban areas, bridging the gap between national and international level actors on the one hand, and urban or community organisations on the other.

Things to do

If you live in a municipality, observe how fast your town may be growing, and identify some of the problems arising from a growing town. Remember especially to note the growth of informal settlements and talk to people living in these areas as well as the town planners to hear different perspectives on the problem. Develop medium to long term plans to address the problems.

2.2.2. Rural livelihoods

It is estimated that 70-80% of the population of sub-Saharan Africa live in rural areas. Again it will be observed that the varied factors that configure vulnerability and disaster risk in the countryside are related to development and governance processes:

Rural poverty: For the majority of the population, absolute lack of assets and means of livelihood and precarious economies with low coping or adaptive capacity present one key factor that configures risk to hazards such as floods and drought. Climate change, environmental degradation and population movements or displacements due to violence and conflict may compound these risk factors.

Environmental degradation: The poor tend to occupy marginal lands, eking out a precarious existence and as such are subjected to market pressures aggravated often by unfavourable government policies

Trade regimes: The vulnerability of rural livelihoods to fluctuations in world commodity prices is well documented for countries dependent on the export of primary agricultural products. These fluctuations harm incomes, as well as job opportunities for the rural poor, undermining coping strategies.

Isolation and remoteness: Isolation due to a lack of infrastructure may limit choices and coping strategies during times of stress.

Climate change: Climate change acts as a dynamic pressure which aggravates the vulnerability of rural populations to natural events. Climate changes are a threat to rural agricultural livelihoods. In particular, climate change may configure drought, which may lead to decrease in agricultural

yields. It may also lead to increase in the complexity and uncertainty of risk, changing risk patterns as floods and storms become more frequent. These may in turn change risk profiles of communities requiring changes in coping strategies. The interaction between climate change and globalisation may also aggravate the disastrous effects of natural hazards.

Cross-cutting factors: Drought, violence and armed conflict may turn natural hazards into disasters. In addition, changing epidemiologies such as malaria and HIV/AIDS may interact with human vulnerability, exacerbating disaster risks brought about by urbanisation, climate change, violence and armed conflict, and marginalisation.

The factors that threaten rural livelihood and expose the rural poor to disaster risk are both internal and external. Poverty, environmental degradation, isolation and remoteness and social exclusion as factors configuring risk are outcomes of failed or unsustainable development on the one hand, and on the other poor governance practices that do not heed the voices of the poor. Climate change and fluctuations in world commodity prices are dictated by decisions and development practices outside the control of developing nations.

Disaster risks associated with rural livelihood clearly call on governments to develop policies targeting poverty reduction through the improvement of infrastructure, employment and income-generating opportunities. Critically important is the existence of policy and decision-making processes that involve community participation. Disaster risk reduction requires support to local social organisations, social integration and political participation of the communities and vulnerable groups, particularly women, and the development of risk profiles that are based on the knowledge and experiences of communities. Local plans should be linked to central institutions.

2.3. DISASTER RISK AND POVERTY IN AFRICA

The occurrence of disasters triggered by natural hazards is on the increase in Africa. From an average of about 25 disaster episodes in 1975, disaster occurrences in Africa have increased to an average of 130 in 2000. During the same period, the number of people affected by natural hazards in Africa has also increased. Disasters due to

Did you know?

- Famine induced by drought killed 1 million people in Ethiopia in 1984/85;
- Seven of the world's 10 countries most vulnerable to drought are in sub-Saharan Africa: Ethiopia, Sudan, Mozambique, Chad, Mauritania, Somalia and Madagascar;
- 35 million people in Africa (4 % of the African population) were affected by disasters;
- 24 % of the population of Mozambique was affected by floods in 2000;
- 46 % of the population of Kenya was affected by drought in 2002;
- The entire population of Ghana was affected by drought in 1982;
- During 1993-2002, US\$ 424 million were lost in Africa due to drought and famine in Africa, US\$ 841 million due to windstorm and US\$ 1,109 million due to flood.

hydrometeorological⁵ hazards, namely drought, floods, tropical cyclones, are the most common in Africa, accounting for 59 per cent of disaster events.

Poverty is the major risk factor and cause of vulnerability in Africa. Poverty is also aggravated by development actions. A recent study done by NEPAD identifies several ways in which disasters, development and poverty are linked. The development-generated outcomes that increase both poverty and vulnerability to disasters in Africa are low economic growth, highly skewed income distribution, fragile agrarian economies relying largely on natural resource-based economic activities, demographic and social factors such as high population growth, rapid urbanisation and rural-urban migration. These factors combine with the effects of globalisation and climate to undermine the coping mechanisms and increase the vulnerability of the poor.

⁵ "Hydrometeorological" means related to climate change.

Poverty, development failure including low economic growth, rising population pressures, unplanned urbanisation, environmental degradation, disease, especially malaria and HIV/AIDS, and weak governance all conspire to increase vulnerability in Africa. In addition, conditions of war and conflict and other threats of violence have induced complex humanitarian emergencies that compromise human security in Africa, increasing further the vulnerability of already vulnerable populations, thus worsening the effects of natural hazards.

High economic losses due to disasters in Africa undermine sustainable development process by obliterating past development gains. Development patterns may themselves increase inequality and environmental degradation and thus increase disaster risks. There is thus a complex interaction between poverty and development in configuring disaster risk.

Development interventions that target poverty should therefore enhance the resilience of the poor to the impact of disasters. At the same time, efforts towards disaster risk reduction can contribute to poverty reduction and development. Integrating disaster risk reduction into development and poverty reduction programmes thus makes a lot of sense. Disaster risk reduction therefore is a challenge for development. Thus linking disaster risk reduction with the aim of achieving the Millennium Development Goals is very important. In Africa, perhaps more than anywhere else on the globe, disaster risk reduction is very much a poverty reduction concern.

2.4. THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

2.4.1. The Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) initiative has, as one of its objectives, the intensification of efforts to reduce the effects of natural and man-made disasters. The motivation for linking disaster risk reduction with the MDGs derives from the close links between disaster risk and development processes. In many countries and communities,

particularly in Africa, losses from disasters undermine development objectives. Loss of lives and destruction of infrastructure, livelihoods and property interact and aggravate financial crisis, social conflict, disease and environmental degradation, and thus set back programmes directly related to the achievement of the MDGs, programmes aimed at improving the quality of life in the areas of health, education and housing. At the same time, it is now known that disaster risk accumulates historically through inappropriate development interventions. Hence, the argument that meeting the MDGs will be more difficult if disaster risk is not integrated into development planning.

Appropriate development policies that reduce risk can make an important contribution toward the achievement of the MDGs by reducing losses and protecting existing development gains as well as avoiding the generation of new risks. (UNDP, 2004:10)

Thus the MDGs direct planning towards eight priority goals, each of which interacting with disaster risk and contributing to a reduction in human vulnerability to natural hazards.

- MDG 1: Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger
- MDG 2: Achieving universal primary education
- MDG 3: Promoting gender equality and empowering women
- MDG 4: Reducing child mortality
- MDG 5: Improving maternal health
- MDG 6: Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- MDG 7: Ensuring environmental sustainability
- MDG 8: Developing global partnership for development

In particular, MDGs 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 seen to provide critical opportunities for policies that help in disaster risk reduction.

MDG 1: Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger

Development intervention that could at the same time reduce disaster risk, poverty and hunger are:

- Strengthening and diversifying livelihoods;
- Encouraging responsible foreign investment and job creation;

- Offering a flexible and participatory approach to urban development;
- Building social security and access to health and education; and
- Providing risk/loss spreading mechanisms for those excluded by insurance covers.

MDG 3: Promoting gender equality and empowering women

Women tend to be more vulnerable to disasters due to traditional exclusion from decision making and access to resources. Measures include:

- Empowerment of women;
- Full participation in decision making at all levels;
- Women to have a voice in identifying development;
- Reform in land and dwelling ownership;
- Inheritance and employment rights; and
- Social justice and access to health, education and legal services.

MDG 4: Reducing child mortality

Children are at greater risk of being affected, injured or killed during disasters than adults. Emphasis should be on appropriate safety nets, such as help to extended families with capacity to absorb orphans, or support to orphanages.

MDG 6: Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

HIV/AIDS and other diseases tend to undermine individual and collective coping capacities, as disaster impact can take away development gains and livelihood, making people more vulnerable. Intervention include:

- Strengthening basic health care provision, family health care and preventive health;
- Developing innovative development policies required for those where natural hazards coincide with high rates of illness; and
- Providing subsistence and security for the children of families affected by death or illness.

MDG 7: Ensuring environmental sustainability

Governments, communities and local authorities must devise strategies to enhance environmental sustainability and break the chain of accumulated risks.

MDG 8: Developing global partnership for development

Greater political will by rich countries to transfer resources and willingness to create an international economic environment for more meaningful participation by developing countries is critical.

2.4.2. Disaster Risk Reduction, Poverty Reduction and the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

Many countries now endorse the close links between poverty reduction and disaster risk reduction, and in some countries in Africa disaster risk reduction is factored into national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). Uganda's revised Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) includes disaster risk management as one of the five pillars of the strategy, while in Madagascar and Mozambique disaster risk management is a component of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs), and UNDP Country Cooperation Frameworks (CCFs). The Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers are also viewed as frameworks for achieving the MDGs.

3. GOVERNANCE & FACTORING DISASTER RISK REDUCTION INTO DEVELOPMENT

3.1. THE ISDR FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The ISDR Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction below describes the general context and primary activities of disaster risk management, and elements regarded as necessary for any comprehensive disaster risk reduction strategy.

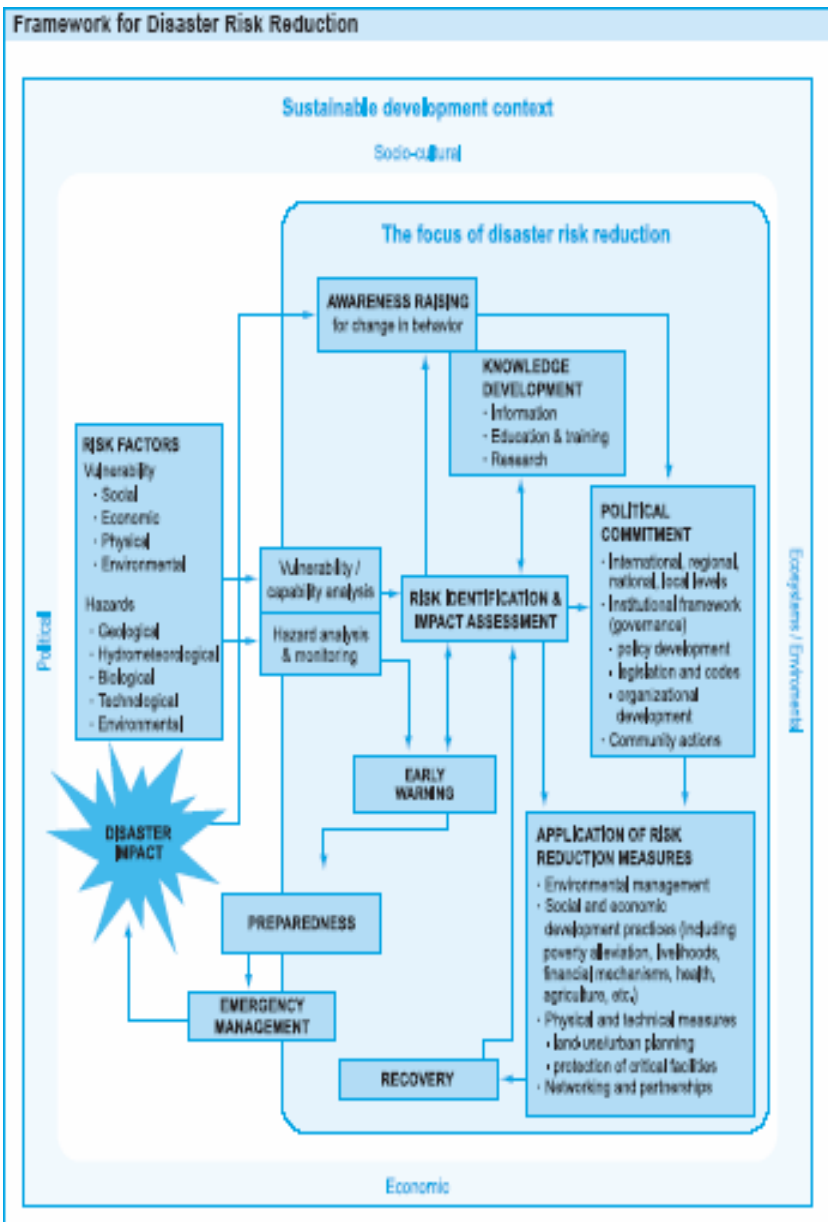
Among the key elements of a disaster risk reduction strategy highlighted in the Framework are:

- Vulnerability and risk assessment;
- Effective early warning systems;
- Information sharing and public awareness;
- Political commitment at international, regional, national, local and community levels;
- Creation of multi-disciplinary and inter-sectoral partnerships;
- Improved scientific knowledge about the causes of natural disasters as well as the effects that natural hazards and related technological and environmental factors have on society;
- International cooperation and partnerships; and
- Strengthening of disaster reduction capabilities and coordinating structures for policy and strategy development and the development of early warning.

The Framework helps to harmonise and systematise the various elements required for comprehensive disaster risk reduction. It serves both as a set of criteria for benchmarking the effectiveness of disaster risk reduction measures and a tool for monitoring progress. In particular, the Framework serves to:

- provide a basis for political advocacy as well as practical action and implementation;
- reflect the multi-dimensional, inter-disciplinary and multi-hazard nature of disaster risk reduction;

Figure 1: ISDR Framework for disaster risk reduction



- assist stakeholders in determining roles, responsibilities and areas of accountability;
- highlight areas where capacities need to be developed; and
- provide a basis for setting goals and targets adapted to different circumstances, against which progress can be measured and gaps identified.

3.2. GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Governance defined by political commitment and strong institutions is identified in the Framework as a key area for the success of effective and sustained disaster risk reduction. Good governance will:

- elevate disaster risk reduction as a policy priority;
- allocate the necessary resources for disaster risk reduction;
- enforce implementation of disaster risk reduction measures and assign accountability for failures; and
- facilitate participation from civil society.

In the context of this booklet, the Framework links the economic, political and administrative components of governance identified earlier more directly with disaster risk reduction.

The major components of governance for disaster risk reduction are:

- Policy and planning;
- Legal and regulatory frameworks;
- Resources; and
- Organisation and structures.

3.2.1. Policy and planning

Policy

Authority and external resources normally flow from the apex of political power, while knowledge of the situation, information, local resources and leadership all rise from the local community levels. Disaster planning will always be ineffective if confined strictly to a process of central planning and command and control

practices... In order to achieve effective local disaster plans, it is essential that provincial, district and local level officials be given power to manage disaster protection activities. (ISDR 2004)

A good policy provides a multi-sectoral framework for disaster risk reduction and institutions for the coordination of government agencies, participation of civil society and collaboration with the private sector and all stakeholders. Risk identification and assessment is the foundation of a comprehensive disaster risk management policy.

A good policy in disaster risk management should:

- demonstrate government leadership and commitment to disaster risk reduction;
- provide a clear definition of the disaster risk and an understanding among policy makers and the general public, and conveys the often severe and potentially far-reaching economic consequences of natural disasters;
- define disaster management coordination structures at national, local and community levels;
- serve as a basis for sound organisation and clear allocation of roles and responsibilities of various structures as well as accountability channels;
- provide mechanism for the participation of local communities;
- provide overall direction for ensuring optimum utilisation of resources;
- ensure that disaster risk management issues are integrated within overall national development planning;
- promote awareness to ensure that these issues are applied across sectoral, ministerial and jurisdictional lines of interest or responsibility;
- be multi-disciplinary in nature and ensures that disaster risk elements are properly included in the design of major development projects across sectors; and
- provide a foundation for legislation and related regulations.

The 1990-1999 International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) promoted the importance of disaster risk management policy and planning. During that decade, some countries in Africa developed disaster management policies. National policies appear generally to be in place or in the process of development in most countries, though these vary in depth of coverage and comprehensiveness. Although many of these policies include the integration of disaster risk management into development planning as a key objective, in practice the disaster management systems in many countries are still oriented towards emergency response. The challenge in a great number of Africa countries therefore is to translate policy objectives into concrete disaster risk management programmes.

MOZAMBIQUE

The National Policy for Disaster Management was approved by the Council of Ministers in September 1999. The policy defines general and specific objectives, strategies and action plans. The policy establishes a legal and institutional framework for a Disaster Management Action Plan for Mozambique. The policy represents a departure from the reactive approach which characterised the urgency of emergence assistance and response in the first two decades of Mozambique's independence. The move towards a more holistic approach is premised on the adoption and enforcement of new regulations, action plans, the integration of disaster management into the education system, and the maintenance of a strong institutional framework for coordination, as the main aspirations of the Government. The overall objectives of Mozambique's National Policy on Disaster Management are to:

- spread the cost of disaster management and encourage a more varied approach and greater integration into long-term development;
- reduce loss of life and damage to natural resources and property and protect vulnerable communities from natural and man-made disasters;
- ensure environmental conservation;
- create an effective system of integrated development

and disaster management at national, provincial and district levels and the active involvement of communities in these processes to reduce vulnerability;

- ensure effective cooperation and coordination of the private sector, non-governmental organisations, the UN System and multilateral and bilateral donor agencies; and
- initiate and promote, through SADC (Southern African Development Community), regional cooperation in disaster management in relation to threats which either originate outside Mozambique's borders but which affect the country substantially (e.g. floods), or which occur on a wide regional basis (e.g. drought).

UGANDA

Uganda's Disaster Management and Preparedness Policy and Institutional Framework was drafted in 1999 and revised in June 2003. The Policy and Institutional Framework sets out as its overall goal to "promote disaster management to be implemented in such a manner that integrates disaster management with development planning and programming." As a broad policy framework for harmonisation of sectoral and cross-sectoral policy objectives, the Policy outlines a number of principles, namely land-use planning, conservation of the environment, gender integration, education, training and public awareness and public participation in disaster management.

The policy advances a comprehensive set of policy objectives, including:

- Reducing Uganda's vulnerability to likely disasters;
- Promoting proactive disaster management through risk reduction programmes;
- Establishing national planning, coordinating and monitoring institutions;

- Ensuring that adequate financial arrangements are in place for disaster management;
- Promoting public knowledge and awareness of disasters through training and awareness;
- Promoting integrated and coordinated disaster management through partnerships;
- Promoting the conservation of the environment with a view to mitigating the occurrence and effects of disasters; and
- Integrating disaster management into central, district and local development planning and programming.

Planning

A national disaster risk management plan backed by legislation translates into programmes and activities. The plan, which needs to be updated periodically, spells out in detail the actions to be taken with a time frame, allocation of responsibilities, resource requirements, preparedness measures such as early warning, public awareness, knowledge development and management, risk and vulnerability assessment, as well as mitigation and risk reduction activities.

Effective planning and maintenance of relevant plans has the following advantages for improved disaster risk management:

- A clear and coherent approach to disaster risk reduction;
- Offers common reference for sectors and all stakeholders involved in disaster risk reduction;
- Provides a basis for coordinated action;
- Provides clear allocation of responsibilities;
- Provides focus for training and capacity building for disaster risk reduction activities;
- Refines a framework against which to review and evaluate current and future disaster risk management activities.

The inadequate quality of disaster risk management plans have been targeted in NEPAD's Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Reduction as

one of the weakest links in governance for disaster risk reduction in Africa. It is therefore an area that governments need to focus on.

3.2.2. Legal and regulatory frameworks

Legislation provides evidence of political commitment and Government intention to provide a solid basis for the policy and sound planning and the coordination of disaster risk management measures. Legislation usually defines the institutional arrangements and roles and ensures compliance for the implementation of policy, resource allocation and a framework for enforcement regulations and building codes. Legislation remains a critical element in ensuring effective coordination and local participation:

- Legislation provides a formal basis for disaster risk reduction action and supports policy, plans and organisational arrangements.
- It allocates roles and responsibilities in a legal form, elicits compliance and ensures that such responsibilities and roles are executed properly.
- Facilitates uniform national effects to ensure that all levels of disaster risk management structures receive the full benefit of its support.
- Provides a framework for accountability and the enforcement of regulations relating to disaster risk management.

While governments have acknowledged the importance of disaster legislation, few have translated policy commitments and plans into a legislative framework. South Africa's disaster management legislation is viewed as a model for the Africa region, and should provide a useful example.

3.2.3. Administrative arrangements

While disaster management and response coordination requires centralised command, there is a need to decentralise disaster risk reduction. Along with the decentralisation of power and devolution of government authority, disaster risk reduction at the local level needs to be encouraged and supported.

(Living with Risk, ISDR, 2004:81)

An administrative structure that promotes good governance for disaster risk reduction has the following characteristics:

- Coordinating body which promotes partnership with sufficient authority to command compliance and accountability;
- Existence of an implementing body with necessary capacity and resources;
- Intra and Inter-ministerial, multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral mechanisms;
- Local Institutions for decentralised planning decision-making and the implementation of disaster risk management programmes; and
- Mechanisms for civil society, NGOs, private sector and community participation.

Underlying all disaster risk reduction efforts is the need for partnerships of a broad range of stakeholders with a key role played by government through a web of coordinating and participatory mechanisms. Many disaster management organisations in Africa recognise the importance of broad-based representation. In a number of countries across the region such as Ethiopia, Lesotho, Uganda and Djibouti, policy frameworks and coordination mechanisms include the private sector, NGOs and civil society organisations in their structures. There is also an increasing commitment to decentralised planning and the implementation of poverty reduction programmes. In Madagascar and Uganda for example, decentralisation and devolution of powers and authority to local government structures is enshrined in the Constitution.

A MODEL: SOUTH AFRICA'S DISASTER MANAGEMENT ACT 57 OF 2002

Key elements of the Act are the establishment and clear definition of roles and responsibilities for:

A multi-level and multi-sectoral **Intergovernmental Committee on Disaster Management (ICDM)**. The ICDM consists of national-level cabinet ministers, provincial cabinet ministers and members of municipal councils selected by the South African Local Government Association (SALGA). The Committee, chaired by the minister responsible for

disaster management, gives effect to the principle of cooperative government provided for in the Constitution. The committee is accountable to the cabinet for the coordination of disaster management among all spheres of government.

A National Disaster Management Advisory Forum (NDMAF) with membership which mirrors the membership of the ICDM. In addition, a broad range of stakeholders and role players are represented including business, labour, professional and religious bodies, traditional leaders, NGOs and CBOs (community-based organisations). The Forum is a body in which national, provincial, local government and other disaster management role players consult with one another and coordinate their activities. It makes recommendations to the ICDM and advises organs of various levels of government, private sector institutions or civil society on matters relating to disaster management.

A National Disaster Management Framework provides for a coherent, transparent and inclusive policy which places emphasis on different kinds and severity and magnitude of disasters that may occur in Southern Africa, and the measures that reduce vulnerability of disaster prone-areas, communities and households, and other elements.

A National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC), the main mandate of which is to create an integrated and coordinated system of disaster management with special emphasis on mitigation and prevention by all levels of government, statutory bodies and all role players. The Centre has responsibility for establishing a Provision for the establishment of **disaster management frameworks at provincial and municipal levels**, which mirror the all inclusive and participatory structures at the national level. communication system with all role players, management of a disaster management information system, gathering of information, development of disaster management plans and strategies, development of mitigation and prevention programmes, and coordination of disaster response.

MADAGASCAR'S DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The *Conseil national de gestion des risques et catastrophes* or **National Council for Disaster Risk Management (CNGRC** in French). The CNGRC is intended by the Government of Madagascar to lead nationally and within government the coordination of all stakeholders. The disaster management structure consists of nine levels which extend the National Strategy from national to communal levels, presenting an integrated capacity for both preparedness and response.

The CNGRC is proposed as the principal institution for the coordination of disaster risk management in Madagascar. The Council, chaired by the Prime Minister, is tasked with the general coordination of disaster risk management. Members of the Council are Government Ministry and Department representatives concerned and provincial governors.

The CNGRC can decide to establish a **Working Group** to support the implementation of the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management. It can invite national or international consultants, as well as members of the donor community, to sit on the Working Group for strategy and to advise the CNGRC according to its needs.

The CNGRC's responsibilities include the:

- coordination of disaster risk management;
- coordination and strengthening of the provincial governments in disaster risk management (DRM);
- preparation of strategies and national and provincial policies for DRM;
- preparation of budgets for DRM;
- promotion of legal powers nationally within the framework of external relations and cooperation for development;

- management and accountability of all funds for emergency operations;
- mobilisation of international aid in major emergencies;
- liaison between development and rehabilitation;
- liaison between poverty reduction, disaster reduction and environmental risk management.

Crisis Cells have been established within the CNGRC to respond to specific emergencies, including epidemics such as cholera, locust swarms, and cyclones. The Crisis Cells assume responsibility for the coordination of all aspects of the response and assistance for a particular emergency. The Crisis Cells would work in close collaboration with the National Bureau for Disaster Risk Management (BNGRC in French) mentioned below.

National Bureau for Disaster Risk Management (BNGRC in French): The above-mentioned CNGRC and its Crisis Cells are supported by the National Bureau for Disaster Risk Management (BNGRC) which is the operational arm of the CNGRC. The Bureau is based at the Interior Ministry headquarters but is directed by the CNGRC. The BNGRC's responsibilities include: Identification of hazards, evaluation of risks associated with hazards, development of measures for the reduction of potential damage, laws and their application, information, education and communication, and identification and promotion of structural and non-structural mitigation programmes.

Technical Teams for Disaster Risk Management: Each ministry identifies a technical team for DRM for specific hazards and risks. The role of these teams is to support their ministries in all aspects of disaster risk management, during all phases of the response. The technical teams are also responsible for liaison between the ministry and the BNGRC.

Provincial Councils for Disaster Risk Management (CPGRC in French): The principal responsibility for DRM in the provinces rests with the Provincial Council of DRM, chaired by the provincial governor, which coordinates and ensures liaison with the CNGRC. This reflects the province's

priorities and individual vulnerability profile. Each provincial council is supported by a technical team, situated in its capital town, which ensures responsibility for training and technical support for natural disaster risk prevention, preparation and rehabilitation. These technical teams establish field centres for emergency coordination.

The field structures include **Regional Centres for Emergency Operations** and **Commune Relief Councils**. In each commune, a Council is established with the responsibility of launching programmes at communal level, and also ensuring liaison with the Regional Centre.

Commune Relief Teams. Commune Relief Teams are being established and trained to collaborate with the communes to prepare and also to assist during the aid phase.

These nine levels within the Malagasy Government's National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management are supported additionally by national NGOs and community-based organisations (CBOs) with their international partners. Liaison responsibilities at each level are described above.

Lastly, Madagascar's National Strategy recognises the role of an international team for DRM supporting the work of the CNGRC in implementing the Strategy. The international team operates under the terms of a protocol established between the international community and Malagasy government ministries/agencies.

Disaster risk reduction need not originate strictly from administrative structures or political initiatives. Scientific or professional interests, civil society organisations such as NGOs and other organised groups or even individuals can provide an institutional champion for disaster risk reduction and exert a major driving role in influencing relevant policy initiatives. The important thing is the need for engagement between state and civil society institutions, and public officials and politicians should have their ears open to ideas of concerned groups and citizens from different sectors of society. This is an indication of good governance.

In Africa, we can learn from the experience of South Africa's maturing democracy where there is a constant engagement between the state and civil society through the media, various courts of law and other channels, including challenges to the constitutionality of state decisions and actions. The debate surrounding the government's policy on HIV/AIDS and the rolling out of anti-retroviral drugs for people living with AIDS is a prominent example.

3.2.4. Resources

Resource mobilisation and allocation is perhaps the most concrete evidence of government commitment to disaster risk reduction. Good policies and plans may be in place, but without the necessary resources for implementation these will remain hollow commitments. Governments need to allocate financial, human and material resources to disaster risk management structures. Resource allocation poses a real challenge in situations where so many demands compete for limited resources. Insufficient capacity and weak governance structure, corruption and a weak national resource base may undermine development of innovative mechanisms for resource mobilisation and the providing of task incentives. However, if governments identify disaster risk reduction as a priority, and re-arrange their national development priorities, resources can be identified for disaster risk reduction. Poverty reduction strategies afford such an opportunity to re-order priorities. On the other hand, resource mobilisation is an area where regional and international institutions can play a critical role both in advocacy on behalf of poor countries or actually facilitating resource mobilisation. Governments need to plug in these networks and use these regional and international mechanisms.

3.3. LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND DECENTRALISATION

Local communities are often more conversant with both disaster risks experienced and the necessary resources and existing opportunities to identify and manage disaster risks. Disaster risk management at local level is a key element in any viable national disaster risk reduction strategy, and must be built on community networks and effective municipal and local government institutions. Decentralised structures, which provide opportunities for participation and involvement of all

segments of society, are thus critical. Local governance structures which serve communities provide an opportunity for effective disaster risk reduction measures through:

- more focused environment for more direct allocation of resources to risk reduction for local benefit;
- more precise targeting of public awareness programmes to address local needs;
- familiarity with local conditions and experiences of past events as resources for targeting activities; and
- motivation for assessing local risks and the allocation of professional and material resources to manage them.

Among the benefits from integrating disaster risk reduction into local government actions supported by adequate financial and human resources are:

- Vulnerability and risk analysis;
- Building local knowledge and institutional capabilities;
- Increasing public awareness and participation; and
- Protecting critical infrastructure and cultural heritage assets.

UGANDA

Uganda is committed to a system of decentralised governance with the enactment of the Local Government Act of 1997. The Act implements a provision of the Constitution of Uganda, which gives the right to communities to elect their representatives and establish local government councils at district, municipal division and sub-county levels. The Act provides for the establishment of local government structures and the devolution of social and economic power to local government structures. Local government councils are the highest political and executive authority in the districts and exercise quite an array of administrative and financial responsibilities delegated to them. District councils have responsibility for preparing comprehensive and integrated plans for lower levels of local government. The nature of these authorities covers a broad range of social and economic affairs touching the lives of their citizens.

Decentralisation is seen as a means of promoting good governance and participatory development regarded as critical for achieving national goals of poverty eradication as well as the Millennium Development Goals.

Governance at Community Level

Disaster risk reduction strategies and national developmental initiatives will only be successful when communities participate and have ownership as part and parcel of the decision-making, programming and implementation processes. At the community level, the primary goal must therefore be to create a favourable political environment that supports and promotes participatory practices, and offers specific opportunities for women to be involved in decision making in order to implement viable disaster reduction activities. Good governance, in this context, manifests itself through leadership roles and community relations in the planning process characterised by:

- Definition of objectives to be achieved by involving the community;
- Identification of areas in the planning process, where and when community should participate;
- Identification of relevant elements on community participation;
- Techniques to be used to obtain and facilitate community participation;
- Informations to be provided to community.

Communities, however, cannot implement disaster risk reduction programmes alone. Community planning and risk reduction need to be integrated into the overall governance structures and resource capabilities at the district, regional/provincial and national levels, with relevant levels of government assuming appropriate responsibility for elements of these programmes. Leadership plays an essential role in a number of areas:

- Securing commitment at individual and community level to accept values of change in behaviour towards a culture of prevention;
- Definition of objectives to be achieved by involving the community;
- Identification of areas in the planning process where and when the community should participate;

- Identification of relevant elements of the community whose participation is essential and techniques to be used to obtain and facilitate community participation;
- Sourcing information that is to be provided to the community;
- Building awareness of the community of the importance of risk reduction, for their wellbeing;
- Identification and imparting of essential skills to translate risk awareness into ideas and practices of sustained risk management, and developing activities that can strengthen community capabilities to identify and cope with hazards and to improve community livelihoods;
- Creating channels for the community for accessing technical and material resources; and
- Providing knowledge of practical low-cost methods which address likely local hazards and which is conveyed in understandable media through a wide variety of participatory forms.

Involving communities effectively requires building self-reliance and a sharing of resources and building partnerships consistent with the principles of community development, with human orientation focusing on the liberation of people from the deprivation trap, participation, empowerment, ownership, learning, adaptation capability and simplicity, collective action, need orientation, objective orientation and action at grassroots level in contrast to the traditional institutional approach characterised by top-down need identification, centralised planning and top-down control.

In every community, knowledge, professional abilities and experience fashioned by adversity can be found, but seldom are these resources called upon or fully utilised. A special effort is required to recall locally valued traditional coping mechanisms and strategies. Modern concepts can provide innovative approaches. Advantages of modern technology such as GIS or access to satellite weather forecasts need not diminish the values of traditional wisdom. Vietnamese villagers maintained irrigation channels and protective dykes for a reason, just as Pacific Islanders were guided in their choice of material and construction techniques in building their earlier disaster-resistant houses.

(Living With Risk, ISDR 2002, p144)

4. REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

4.1. REGIONAL ACTIONS

A review of progress in the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action concludes that regional as well as sub-regional institutional arrangements provide distinct advantages to motivate and sustain interest among countries that share a combination of similar cultural, historical and geographical and some political affinities. Institutionalised regional mechanisms provide and encourage wide dialogue around common problems and issues, and provide opportunities for information exchange and training resources and greater coherence and benefits of opportunities to share resources. Regional roles are highly useful in facilitating international and national-level dialogue or negotiation, as well as being instrumental in maintaining a momentum throughout the region. Regional institutions guiding disaster risk reduction can be effective historical forces or act to maintain momentum to build sustainability in both disaster reduction and development terms (UN/ISDR Inter-Agency Task Force, May 2004).

Regional and sub-regional institutions contribute towards improving governance for disaster risk reduction in a number of ways. Among these are:

- defining and shaping common regional risk level management policies, and advocacy of regional policy initiatives at global forums;
- supporting the development of national capacities through training, programme support, technical assistance and resource mobilisation to maintain national-level impetus in development and disaster risk reduction;
- sharing knowledge, information, documentation and comparative analysis of issues on regional and sub-regional basis between key agencies and individuals;
- addressing trans-boundary risk issues in areas where multiple countries are frequently affected by the same hazards such as floods and drought in southern Africa;
- provide a framework for the interaction of scientific and technical professionals with governmental and non-governmental structures.

Best Practice: Community Participation and the Urban Environment in Rufisque (Senegal)

Through community participation, nine low-income communities in the small Senegalese town of Rufisque have been able to break the cycle of local risk accumulation and turn a public nuisance into a public asset.

Risk stemmed from a lack of sanitation. Much residential land lies below sea level and groundwater sources of drinking water are easily polluted by sewage from pit latrines. Together with pollution of open spaces by excrement, dirty water and sewage had a devastating effect on the health of the population, especially children. Statistics prior to 1990 show high incidences of diarrhoea, dysentery and skin diseases.

Change began during the 1980s, when a government/NGO project was implemented to reinforce the coast and prevent loss of houses from coastal erosion. During this time, it became clear that the community was capable of joint action to improve their lot. Today, through community efforts aided by Environmental Development Action in the Third World (ENDA-Third World) and the Canadian Host Country Participation Fund, and in collaboration with Rufisque Local Authority, sanitation problems are well on their way to being solved. Horse-drawn carts collect rubbish and low-cost, narrow plumbing pipes dispose of water and sewage. Sewage, waste water and refuse all end up in a purification and recycling centre where young people treat and combine them to form compost for use in market gardens. The scheme is run by local management committees elected democratically. Local people handle technical aspects and women and young people are active at all levels. In addition, most of the funding comes from the community itself, and credit initially provided by international funding will soon no longer be necessary as it will be replaced by a local revolving credit fund.

The local community actively participates in the scheme and women are prominent in all of this. Along with other benefits, the project has enormously reduced the workload for women, compared to the situation before the scheme began. The safe disposal of rubbish, the elimination of excrement as a source of disease, the reduction of flies and mosquitoes and their accompanying diseases (such as malaria) have all improved both ecology and health. At the community level, the sanitation scheme reinforces the independence of the community, and increases citizenship through training and interaction with various groups.

Source: "Reducing Disaster Risk: A Challenge to Development" (UNDP 2004, p 60)

In partnership with UN/ISDR Africa, the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and the African Union (AU) have taken a lead in defining a regional disaster risk management strategy for the region. The Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Reduction aims to contribute to the attainment of sustainable development and poverty eradication by facilitating the integration of disaster risk reduction into development. The Strategy's objectives are to:

- increase political commitment to disaster risk reduction;
- improve identification and assessment of risk;
- enhance knowledge for disaster risk reduction;
- increase public awareness of disaster risk reduction;
- improve governance of disaster risk reduction institutions; and
- integrate disaster risk reduction in emergency response management.

Through the Strategy, the AU is playing an important role in providing leadership and direction for disaster risk reduction. It also plays an important advocacy role by urging National Governments, through their respective sub-regional institutions, to commit to disaster risk reduction, while at the same time acting as a representative and advocate for Africa in international forums.

Similar leadership roles are being played by sub-regional organisations in Southern Africa, East Africa and West Africa.

The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) demonstrates clear examples of promoting dialogue on common problems among member countries: Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. SADC has been at the forefront of the development of regional strategic frameworks for drought, disaster management and, more recently, the mobilising of the necessary political commitment to implementation. The development of an emerging disaster management strategy of integrated services and programmes for drought management in SADC serves as an illustration of the range of regional roles in disaster risk reduction.

The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is equally playing a significant role in promoting disaster risk reduction in its member

states in East and the Horn of Africa (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda). IGAD was established in 1986 with the member states' common objective of working together to mitigate the effects of drought and addressing more generally problems associated with desertification and food insecurity in the region. Established originally with only two technical departments, agriculture and food security and environment and natural resources, IGAD in 1996 expanded and adopted a broad approach to development objectives, with disaster management placed under a Humanitarian and Conflict Resolution Department, responding to sub-regional conditions at the time. Developments and elaboration in IGAD's approach to disaster management has now crystallised into a disaster management strategy based on a number of principles:

- strengthening essential policies, legal and institutional frameworks at national levels;
- improving early warning and information systems;
- building capacity and undertaking training in disaster management;
- increasing public education and raising awareness;
- establishing linkages between national systems and sub-regional capabilities;
- demonstrating functions that add value to sub-regional mechanisms; and integrating gender issues into sub-regional disaster management strategies.

In West Africa, efforts are also in progress to develop a comprehensive disaster risk management strategy for the 16 member countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

A notable element of regional and sub-regional mechanisms for disaster risk reduction in Africa is emphasis on political commitment and appropriate governance mechanisms for disaster risk reduction.

4.2. INTERNATIONAL ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

International support and intervention constitutes an important aspect of governance for disaster risk reduction. The United Nations, through its agencies and programmes, particularly the UN/ISDR Secretariat, have

played and continue to play a critical role in placing disaster risk reduction on the global agenda, and in mobilising the necessary political will and resources to support and strengthen structures at national and regional levels. At the international level, the key issues relating to governance and disaster risk reduction are the creation of an international economic and political environment for effective disaster risk reduction strategies. Key contributions of the international community and the United Nations in particular are:

- galvanising assistance from all concerned in the formulation or review or strengthening of policy and to devise strategies for implementing the instruments for an accelerated development in the sector;
- building of capacity at all levels for those involved in planning, and implementing programmes and projects;
- facilitating technology development, technology acquisition and technology transfer to promote industrial development and manufacturing in order to enhance employment creation and poverty reduction;
- providing development and technical assistance and encouraging cooperating partners to cooperate and collaborate more effectively in providing assistance to African countries in order to avoid the costly duplication of activities and waste;
- promoting regional cooperation and integration issues, including strengthening regional policy and institutional frameworks for disaster risk reduction; and
- providing finance for programmes dealing with poverty alleviation and employment creation where further financing to the existing programmes supported by development partners is required.

The international community has a great responsibility and indeed obligation to create the conditions for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. MDG 8 (Developing a global partnership for development) notes that “efforts to enhance sustainable development and reduce human vulnerability to natural hazards are hampered by national debt burdens, terms of international trade, the high price of key drugs, lack of access to new technology and new hazards associated with global climate change”. Clearly concerted action and commitment by rich countries in these areas is critical for the achievement of the MDGs, sustainable development and effective disaster risk reduction.

5. SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS: GOVERNANCE AS A GUARANTEE FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Governance is a key area for the success of disaster risk reduction. Key components of good governance are:

Policy and Planning: An important component of good governance for disaster risk reduction is the existence of a multi-sectoral policy on disaster risk reduction, which provides a framework for disaster risk reduction programmes and institutions for coordination of government agencies, participation of civil society and collaboration with private sector and all stakeholders.

Coordination and Institutional Framework: At the national level, the objectives will be to create institutions or increased coordination at national, local and regional levels, including the creation of global partnerships.

Legislation: Disaster legislation must give legal force for the implementation of disaster management policy and enforcement of disaster management and risk reduction regulations. Legislation usually defines the institutional arrangements to be implemented and give effect and powers to the relevant authorities to make resources available in order for government policies to be implemented. Regulations and building codes also need to have the force of law. Control and enforcement of these laws is a critical role of central government.

Key questions:

- Is there a policy that identifies disaster risk reduction as a priority? To what extent does the policy promote a clear understanding to policy makers and the general public of the potential disaster risks?
- Does the administrative system promote equality, efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability? Is it responsive to the needs of the population?
- To what extent does development planning integrate disaster risk reduction strategies?
- What structures exist for the management and coordination of disaster risk management? Do these structures facilitate the involvement and participation of a broad range of stakeholders?

- Does government promote participatory structures at local and community levels that focus on disaster risk reduction?

Governance at Local Level: At the local level, decentralised structures, which provide opportunities for participation and involvement of all segments of society, are critical. Disaster risk management, at the local level, is a key element in any viable national disaster risk reduction strategy, and must be built on community networks and effective municipal and local government institutions.

Key questions:

- Do decentralisation structures exist at local level with the necessary authority, capacity and resources to plan and implement disaster risk reduction strategies and programmes within a national framework?
- What mechanism exists for integrating all stakeholders at the local level in disaster risk reduction activities?
- What mechanisms exist for integrating centrally directed but locally designed and implemented programmes?

Governance at Community Level: Disaster risk reduction strategies and national development initiatives will only be successful when community participation, buy in and ownership are part and parcel of decision making, programming and implementation. Communities are a rich source of knowledge and resources that need to be tapped.

Key questions:

- Does a favourable political environment exist that promotes participatory practices that empower communities in decision making and give ownership over disaster risk reduction activities?
- How inclusive are these structures? Do they afford specific opportunities for women's involvement in decision making and implementation processes?
- How are community efforts integrated into overall governance structures and resource allocation at district, provincial and national levels?

THE SADC DISASTER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY: AN EXAMPLE OF REGIONAL INITIATIVE AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Following a number of initiatives dating to 1996, the SADC Council of Ministers created an Ad Hoc Working Group on Disaster Management in 1999 - composed of all heads of disaster management in individual SADC countries - to investigate the possibility of establishing a regional mechanism for disaster management. In April 2000, the U.S. Administration offered assistance to support the establishment of a disaster management unit in SADC.

In May 2000, the Working Group recommended to the SADC Secretariat to undertake a feasibility study to develop a conceptual framework and terms of reference for a southern African mechanism for disaster management. With support from UNDP and UN-OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), the joint SADC-UNDP-OCHA study was completed in early July 2000 and the findings were presented to the SADC Secretariat and the Working Group on 19 July 2000, and tabled to the Council of Ministers in Windhoek, Namibia, in August 2000. At this meeting, the Council of Ministers approved the establishment of a Regional Disaster Management Centre currently based in Gaborone, Botswana. The Council also transformed the Working Group into a full Technical Steering Committee on Disaster Management to oversee the establishment of the Centre.

In February 2001, the Council of Ministers further directed the Steering Committee to develop a regional policy and a Multi-Sectoral Disaster Management Strategy. In May-June 2001, another SADC, UNDP and UN-OCHA joint study was commissioned by the SADC Secretariat to develop and finalise the Multi-Sectoral Strategy in consultation with all stakeholders. The specific objective of the mission was to develop a better understanding of the capacities and plans of the SADC Sectors that have a bearing upon improving disaster management and mitigation in the region. The relevant SADC sectors the Strategy focuses on are health, water, environment and land management, food, agriculture and natural Resources, Drought Monitoring Centre, Regional

Early Warning Unit, Regional Remote Sensing Unit and the Meteorology Unit of the Southern African Transport and Communications Commission (SATCC).

The aim of the SADC Multi-Sectoral Disaster Management Strategy is to reduce vulnerability and the impact of disasters by providing a regional blueprint for coordinating disaster management related activities within the SADC states. The purpose is to bring together and harmonise the many regional and national policies, activities and plans which relate to disaster management, in order to create and strengthen capacity at the national and regional levels. The specific objectives are to integrate sectoral activities which relate to disaster management into a single SADC Disaster Management Mechanism; to identify priority programme areas and formulate a coordinated, sustainable and integrated plan of action aimed at strengthening capacity at national and regional levels for disaster management; and to provide institutional and implementation arrangements. The SADC disaster management strategy clearly provides a framework for disaster risk reduction in the Southern African region. It is also an example of partnership on regional initiatives supported by international institutions and bilateral development partners.

- What measures exist for building community capacity for planning and implementation?

International, Regional and Sub-Regional Roles: Regional and sub-regional institutional arrangements provide distinct advantages to motivate and sustain interest among countries that share a combination of similar cultural, historical, and geographical and some political affinities. Institutionalised regional mechanisms provide and encourage wide dialogue around common problems and issues and provide opportunities for information exchange and training resources and greater coherence and benefits of opportunities to share resources. Regional roles are highly useful in facilitating international and national-level dialogue or negotiation, as well as being instrumental in maintaining a momentum throughout the region. Key roles at international level are advocacy, resource mobilisation and global strategy.

Benefits of Good Governance for Disaster Risk Reduction: The critical importance of good governance is that it creates the favourable economic, political and administrative environments at international, regional, national and local levels that permit the generation of appropriate development plans and strategies that contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and disaster risk reduction.

Among the benefits of good governance for disaster risk reduction include:

- increased coordination of disaster risk reduction programmes at all levels;
- existence of multi-sectoral disaster risk management policies and strategies based on the broad involvement of all individuals, government, private sector and civil society institutions;
- allocation of appropriate resources at local and national levels to disaster risk reduction activities;
- greater participation of communities at risk in the design and implementation of disaster risk management programmes;
- greater sensitivity towards the poor and emphasis on poverty reduction policies and strategies;
- More effective national, regional and international partnerships;
- Greater and more effective disaster risk reduction advocacy role by sub-regional, regional and international institutions;
- Greater mobilisation and availability of resources from the international community for disaster risk management activities;
- Greater benefit of globalisation for low human development countries, through fair and equitable trade regimes, greater development assistance and promotion of environmentally sustainable development.

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International Strategy



The United Nations Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Within the United Nations system, the Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction is responsible for co-ordinating disaster reduction strategies and programmes.

Its mission is to help people withstand disasters by making them aware of the importance of disaster reduction measures and providing support to help reduce human, economic and social losses.

The Secretariat also provides backing for an Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction headed by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and comprising representatives of several United Nations agencies, regional institutions and non-governmental organisations.

Within the United Nations system, the Task Force is the chief body responsible for the design of disaster reduction policy.

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