

PART I OF DOCUMENT TO SUPPORT DISCUSSION OF TOPIC 1 15-25 June 2004: Overall goals, objectives and priorities for action

Possible overall goals

The following overall goals are suggested as necessary to take more systematic and concerted action to address disaster risks, in the context of sustainable development.

1. The substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries.
2. The integration of disaster risk considerations into national development planning and programmes in order to improve sustainable development outcomes.
3. The development of stronger institutions, mechanisms and community capacities that can systematically build resilience to natural hazards and disasters.

Objectives, priorities and targeted actions

Stemming from of the WCDR preparatory process and the results of the review of the Yokohama Strategy, keeping in mind the Framework for Monitoring and Guiding Disaster Reduction that is described in the review, the following objectives and priorities for action are suggested in pursuing the overall goals.

1. Ensure disaster risk reduction is a national policy with a strong organizational basis for implementation

Priorities for action .

- i. Establish national policies and institutional frameworks for planning and coordinating action on disaster risk to maintain a broad-based dialogue and awareness of public responsibilities among the relevant sectors, public agencies and civil society (such mechanisms are often referred to as a “national platforms”.)
- ii. Adopt or modify legislation to support disaster reduction, including regulations and mechanisms to enforce compliance where required and the designation of a senior public officer or organization for overseeing its implementation.
- iii. Identify and allocate decentralized responsibilities for implementing disaster risk management and risk reduction to sub-national authorities and local communities.
- iv. Encourage and empower local communities to participate in disaster reduction and contribute to related decision-making processes.
- v. Integrate risk management and risk reduction into development policy and planning and into sector policy and plans.
- vi. Allocate necessary resources for disaster risk management and risk reduction in the relevant sections of the national budget and local administrative budgets.

2. Identify, assess and monitor risks and enhance early warning

Priorities for action .

- i. Complete, regularly update, and widely disseminate risk maps relating to the main natural hazards, including information on the vulnerabilities of communities and infrastructure to specific hazards.
- ii. Analyse and report on the impact of natural hazards and disasters on social conditions, including public health, the displacement of people and the maintenance of livelihoods.
- iii. Analyse and report on long-term changes and emerging issues that might raise risks or weaken the capacities of authorities and communities to respond, such as climate change, technology growth, emerging diseases, land use change and social change.
- iv. Establish national systems to record, summarize and disseminate statistical information on disaster risks and disaster impact and losses.
- v. Cooperate regionally to generate assessments of regional risks such as drought and floods in shared river basins.
- vi. Support the infrastructure and mechanisms needed to observe, analyse and predict physical hazards, including, *inter alia*, severe weather, floods, droughts, wild fire, tsunami and volcanic eruptions.
- vii. Implement integrated, people-centered early warning systems whose warnings are timely and understandable to those at risk, and which encompass guidance on how to act upon warnings.

3. Use knowledge and education to build a culture of resilience

Priorities for action .

- i. Provide readily understood information on disaster risks and protection options to citizens, especially in high-risk areas, that recognizes gender, age, poverty and other social factors and that incorporates relevant traditional and indigenous knowledge.
- ii. Include education on disaster risk reduction in relevant curricula at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education, and implement community and school-based programmes for local risk assessment and reduction.
- iii. Implement risk management training for civil servants and local leaders who are responsible for risk reduction and response and community welfare.
- iv. Develop a knowledge base and cadre of experts through support for research and advanced education in disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction, and networks among disaster experts and disaster managers across different sectors and different regions.

- v. Make use of information and communication technology to more effectively support disaster risk management, particularly for sharing and disseminating information.
- vi. Develop improved methods and knowledge on predictive risk assessments and cost benefit assessments at the regional, national and local levels and on how to incorporate these into decision-making processes.
- vii. Undertake regular public information campaigns at all levels of society to develop a culture of disaster prevention and strong community involvement.

4. Reduce the underlying risk factors

Priorities for action

- i. Enhance the control of land use changes and development activities that can result in increases of disaster risk, such as deforestation and the destruction of wetlands and other eco-systems.
- ii. Implement integrated resource management approaches that incorporate disaster risk reduction, such as integrated flood management.
- iii. Include disaster risk assessments in urban development and management plans, in particular in all mega -cities at risk, and including the identification of available land zones that are safe for human settlement.
- iv. Include disaster risk as a factor to be considered in planning approval processes for infrastructure, industries and other major projects.
- v. Protect and improve critical public facilities, particularly schools, clinics, hospitals, communications and transport lifelines, and private housing and buildings, through proper design, retrofitting and re -building.
- vi. Promote adaptation to climate variability and change, by methods including the routine application of environmental and climatological information by planners, engineers, managers, and other decision makers.
- vii. Develop financial risk-sharing mechanisms, particularly insurance and reinsurance for vulnerable countries and communities such as small-island developing states.
- viii. Strengthen the implementation of social safety net mechanisms to support the recovery of the poor affected by disasters.
- ix. Systematically incorporate disaster risk reduction activities into post-disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation processes.

5. Strengthen disaster preparedness, contingency planning and community involvement in risk reduction

Priorities for action

- i. Prepare or review and update national disaster preparedness plans, and strengthen disaster preparedness plans for local authorities and communities in high-risk areas.
- ii. Establish a national emergency fund, with percentages earmarked for annual expenditure on preparedness activities.
- iii. Develop specific mechanisms, such as community-based disaster management, to engage the active participation of communities in disaster risk management.
- iv. Establish and regularly test and maintain information systems necessary for response, and undertake regular disaster preparedness exercises, including evacuation drills, as appropriate to local needs.
- v. Develop regional mechanisms and regional communication systems for preparing for and responding to disasters that span borders, especially drought and floods.
- vi. Develop and disseminate best practices, including more advanced methods for simulation of evacuation from high risk zones.
- vii. Promote dialogue and cooperative activities between emergency management personnel and disaster risk reduction personnel