

Disaster reduction in
AFRICA

UNISDR INFORMS

2010-mid 2011 Issue



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Regional Office for Africa

Africa Informs

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Africa Informs is a publication produced by UNISDR Africa. We share updates, ongoing campaigns, national platform activities, lessons learnt, and general news information on disaster risk reduction in the Sub Saharan Africa region.

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ISDR Informs

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Acronyms

ACMAD	African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development
AMCEN	Africa Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AUC	African Union Commission
AWG	Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction
CMDRR	Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction
CORDAID	Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid
CSCDRR	Civil Society Coalition on Disaster Risk Reduction
COP15	15th Session of the Conference of the Parties
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of Western African States
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
ICPAC	IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
IPCC	International panel on climate change
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NAPA	National Adaptation Programmes of Action
NASRDA	National Space Research and Development Agency
NDMA	National Disaster Management Agency
NDMC	National Disaster Management Council
NEPAD NPCA	The New Partnership for Africa's Development Planning and Coordinating Agency
NMHS	National meteorological and hydrological services
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
REGLAP	Regional Livelihoods Advocacy Project
RCM	Regional Coordination Mechanism
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UN	United Nations
UNCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP BCPR	United Nations Development Programme Crisis Prevention and Recovery
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WB GFDRR	World Bank Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery
WDR	World Disasters Report
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

Foreword

Disasters in sub-Saharan Africa and their associated impacts are posing a great threat to Africa's ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and sustainable development. Evidently, a single disaster in Africa, can wash away overnight decades of development efforts.

Low income, poverty, food insecurity and the need for domestic source of energy play a major role in land and environmental degradation, as the poor and hungry are forced to over-exploit natural resources to meet their immediate needs for survival. Water, weather and climate hazards dominate the disaster profile in sub-Saharan Africa, affecting, on average, around 12.5 million people per year.

The latest Global Assessment Report (GAR 2011) reveals that the mortality risk of all weather-related hazards continues to be concentrated in countries with weak governance, and mortality is still increasing in these countries.

This publication focuses on the need for good governance in order to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015 and articulate action to integrate disaster risk reduction (DRR) across all levels. The recently published HFA 2005-2015 Mid-term review stresses the need for a principle where accountability can rest for setting and implementing DRR policies. The endorsement of the report of the Second African Ministerial Conference DRR by the Africa Union Commission (AUC) Executive Council thus demonstrated that Africa has generated political momentum for DRR.

The revision of the Programme of Action was undertaken to accommodate the emerging disaster trends and challenges such as strong linkages between climate change and DRR, the concepts of risk transfer and local investments in DRR. The time-frame of the Programme of Action was extended to 2015 to align it to the implementation period of the HFA. The Extended Programme of Action (2006 - 2015) was adopted at the Second Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Nairobi in April 2010, jointly organized by the AUC and UNISDR Africa.

Following the recommendations of the Ministerial Declaration in March 2011, the AUC in collaboration with UNISDR reconstituted the African Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction (AWGDRR) in order to guide and coordinate the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy and its Programme of Action.

The Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction provided the African region with an opportunity to present the Africa Report. The Report outlines Africa's position and high-level commitments towards the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy and extended Programme of Action as well as the progress on the implementation of the HFA.

UNISDR Africa continues to strengthen partnerships in the region and collaborate with partners including regional and sub-regional intergovernmental organizations such as the AUC, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS), Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Community (EAC), regional and sub-regional specialised institutions, the National Platforms and coordinating mechanisms for DRR, government entities, academia, private sector, UN agencies and civil society. Notably, in June 2011, UNISDR Africa led an inter-agency consultative meeting with key United Nations partners and relevant government institutions. The inter-agency group was formed to respond to the increasing demand within the United Nations family to have a dialogue and consult internally on disaster risk reduction initiatives and programmes to ensure the "One UN Approach".

The AUC, UNISDR and other development partners bear the obligation to sustain the efforts of information and knowledge management to push forward the DRR agenda from policy to grass-root level. Africa Informs will continue to provide an advocacy platform, targeting regional and sub-regional fora, in order to increase the understanding and knowledge of DRR.

I would like to thank all those who contributed to the production of this particular Africa Informs publication. Although too numerous to cite, we are particularly grateful to contributors representing partner organizations which draw their long association with UNISDR and financial resources generously by our development partners. We would also like to acknowledge the UNISDR Africa staff and resource persons who compiled and edited the issue. UNISDR invites your articles, suggestions and feedback to matters pertaining and relevant to DRR in Africa for next issue of UNISDR Africa Informs.

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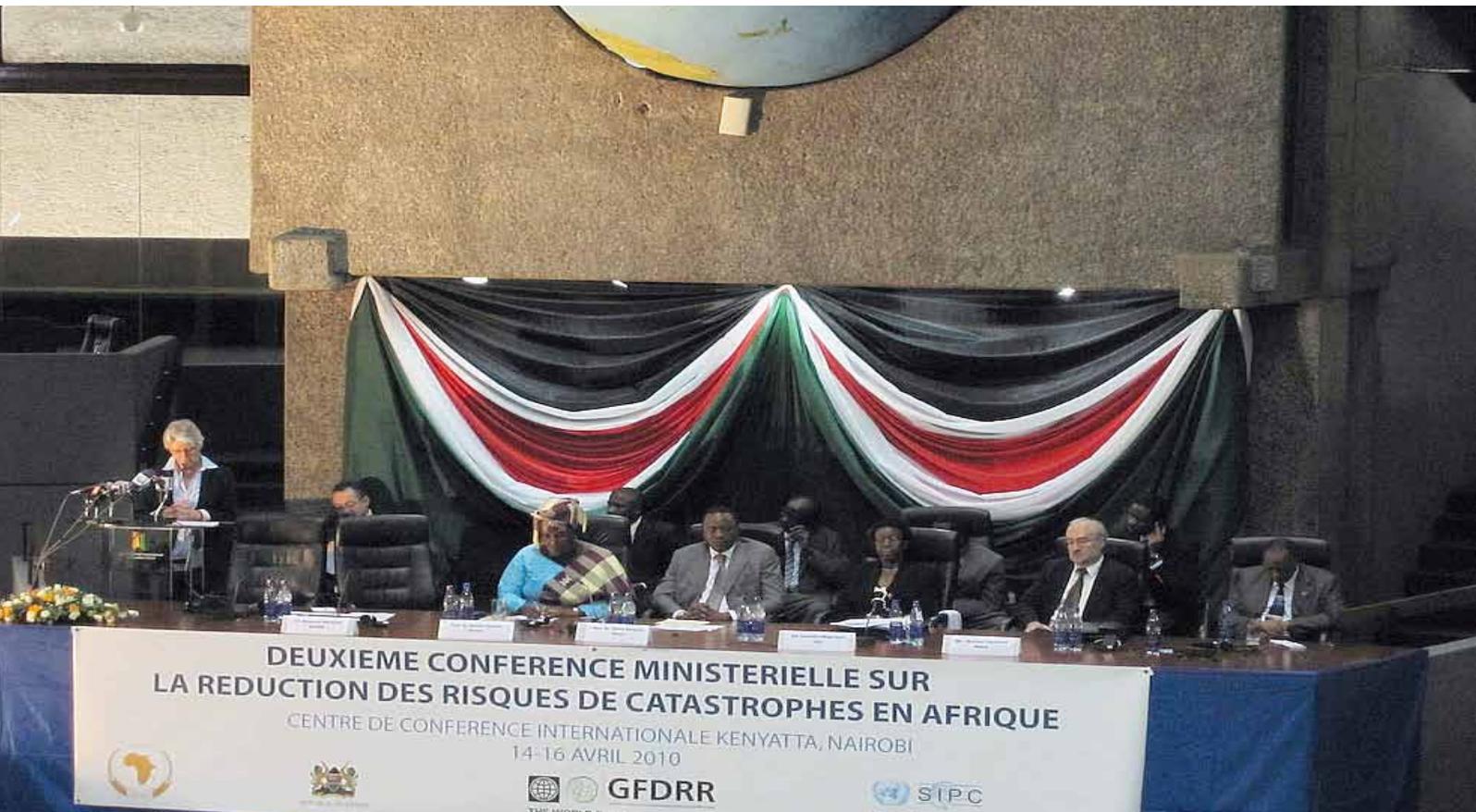


(Photo courtesy of IRIN news)

Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa

Regional Level

African agrees on an extended Programme of Action for DRR until 2015



Forty-two African ministers adopted the extended Africa Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for DRR 2006-2015. The ministers were among more than 250 participants who gathered at the Second Ministerial Conference on DRR that took place from 14 - 16 April 2010 in Nairobi

The African Union (AU) Executive Council endorsed the report of the second African Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). This was done at the 16th African Union Summit, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 25-31 January 2011. The report includes the extended Programme of Action for the implementation of the Africa Strategy for DRR (2006-2015) and the recommendations of the second African Ministerial Declaration on DRR which was held in Nairobi in April 2010.

The overall goal of the extended Programme of Action (2006 to 2015) is a substantial reduction of the social, economic and environmental impacts of disasters on African people and economies, thereby facilitating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other development aims in Africa.

"The endorsement of the report of the second African Ministerial Conference on DRR is a great milestone that shows Africa's political commitment for disaster risk reduction, said Pedro Basabe, Head, UNISDR Regional Office for Africa.

Commenting on the endorsement, Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, commended the move.

"The extended Programme of Action is a welcome sign that governments and regional cooperation mechanisms are moving concretely towards a common position – one that recognizes that we can mitigate and limit the effects of natural hazards through well thought out combinations of prevention, insurance, and sensible coping mechanisms. The tangible actions in support of this will save many lives."

The programme covers emerging trends and challenges, making links between disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation. It also touches on the importance of increasing investments in DRR.

Inaugural meeting of the reconstituted African Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction (AWGDRR)

Following the recommendations made by the Second Ministerial Conference on DRR, the inaugural meeting of the reconstituted African Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction (AWGDRR) was held in Nairobi, Kenya in March 2011, with delegates agreeing to accelerate the launch of the extended programme of action for the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2006-2015), in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015.

Attending the event was Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture at the Africa Union Commission, and Mohamed Ali, Assistant Minister of State for Special Programmes, who accentuated the importance of AWGDRR as a coordinating body.

The AWGDRR forum also provided for the formal launch Making Cities Resilient Campaign, of which four cities, Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), Kampala (Uganda) and Yaoundé (Cameroon) and Narok (Kenya) signed up to the global campaign. By signing up to the campaign, participating mayors and local government officials commit to "Ten Essentials" to make their cities resilient against disasters. (See story on page 40).

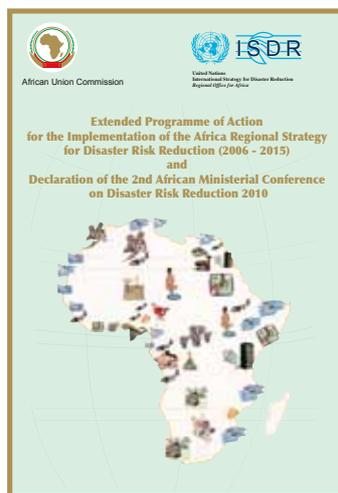
The meeting which was organised jointly by the AUC and UNISDR agreed on the terms of reference for the AWGDRR, and discussed the Africa Report which was presented during the Third Session of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction 8-13 May 2011 in Geneva, Switzerland. Africa now has the regional framework in place to move Disaster Risk Reduction forward.

Background

During the Second Africa Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) meeting in Nairobi, 5-7 May 2009, organized jointly by the UNISDR Africa and the AUC, participants agreed on a revised version of the Africa Programme of Action for the implementation of the Africa strategy for DRR to cover the period until 2015 with some modification, in line with the HFA.

As a result, 42 African ministers adopted the extended Africa Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for DRR 2006-2015. The ministers were among more than 250 participants who gathered at the Second Ministerial Conference on DRR that took place from 14 - 16 April 2010 in Nairobi in parallel to the First Ministerial Conference of Ministers Responsible for Meteorology in Africa.

The ministerial conference was organized by the AUC, the Government of Kenya, and UNISDR in collaboration with the World Bank Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR). The conference was officially opened by Hon. Uhuru Kenyatta, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Kenya, in the presence of Ms. Margareta Wahlström, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General for DRR and H.E. Ms. Tumusiime Rhoda-Peace, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, AUC, delegates representing Regional Economic Communities, National Platforms and focal points for DRR, institutions, donors, experts, academia, UN agencies and NGO's were also present. Participants discussed and agreed on clear recommendations for action, operational mechanisms and requests to countries to allocate resources, along with the Extended Africa Programme of Action for DRR 2006-2015, and the Draft Decision to be submitted to the AU Summit.



The report includes the extended Programme of Action for the implementation of the Africa Strategy for DRR (2006-2015) and the recommendations of the second African Ministerial Declaration on DRR which was held in Nairobi in April 2010.

The extended Africa Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2006-2015 is available on: [http://www.unisdr.org/preventionweb/files/13655_POAinEnglishadoptedinNairobi16April\[1\].pdf](http://www.unisdr.org/preventionweb/files/13655_POAinEnglishadoptedinNairobi16April[1].pdf)



A girl walks along a flooded street in the Pikine department of Senegal's capital Dakar. (Photo courtesy of IRIN news)

Decision on the Report of the Second Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

The Executive Council,

- 1. TAKES NOTE** of the Report of the Second Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 14 to 16 April 2010, and **ENDORSES** the recommendations contained therein;
- 2. FURTHER ENDORSES** the Extended Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2006-2015);
- 3. URGES** all Member States and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to take the necessary measures to implement the Extended Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2006-2015);
- 4. FURTHER URGES** Member States, considering other related African Ministerial resolutions, to increase their investments in disaster risk reduction through the allocation of a certain percentage of their national budgets and other revenues dedicated to disaster risk reduction;
- 5. REQUESTS** the Commission and the NPCA to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of the Decision consistent with the recommendation of the Second Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction;
- 6. FURTHER REQUESTS** the Commission to accelerate action on the feasibility study to create an AU-led, African owned Pan-African Disaster Risk Pool that would allow Member States to share risk across regions, and to put in place, the necessary administrative arrangements, pending the completion of the feasibility study;
- 7. CALLS UPON** the relevant development partners, including the relevant United Nations Agencies, regional and global financial institutions, bilateral and multilateral agencies, to provide the required technical and financial support to Member States, the Commission, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) and RECs to ensure the effective implementation of this Decision;
- 8. REQUESTS** the Commission to report at the next Ordinary Session of the Council in June 2011 on the implementation of this Decision.

By UNISDR Africa and AUC

The recommendations made by the 42 African member states to the Africa Union Executive Council

1. To request the African Union Commission to continue mobilising political support, and to advocate for international community, institutions and development partners to support Member States to **institutionalise multi-sectoral National Platforms for disaster risk reduction**, or similar coordinating mechanisms, that integrate disaster and climate risk management, emphasising the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction in planning and finance, the health, education, urban development, infrastructure, energy, water and sanitation, industry, agriculture and food security sectors, among other national priorities;
2. To call on the African Union Commission to **reconstitute the Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction** to provide coordination and technical support to Member States for the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and its Programme of Action;
3. To call upon the African Union Commission, NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States to **create a network of capacity development institutions** for training, research, and information management and exchange at country, sub-regional and regional levels in collaboration with international and regional partners;
4. To request African Union Commission, NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency, regional and sub-regional organisations and Member States to **continuously monitor the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and its Programme of Action in line with the HFA** and to assess and report biennially on the progress made;
5. To request Member States to **decentralize and implement local and community-based disaster risk reduction strategies and programmes**, supported by adequate, realistic and predictable funding mechanisms, with an enhanced role for local governments and empower local and regional NGOs, including volunteers;
6. To strongly call upon Member States to **incorporate gender equity and empowerment** considerations in implementing the Programme of Action;
7. To strongly urge Member States to **increase their investments in disaster risk reduction** through the allocation of a certain percentage of their national budgets and other revenue dedicated to disaster risk reduction and report to the next Ministerial Conference, considering other related African Ministerial resolutions;
8. To call upon **development and humanitarian partners to ensure that disbursement of one percent (1%) of development assistance and ten percent (10%) of humanitarian assistance, in line with the Chair's Summary of the Second Session of the Global Platform, supports disaster risk reduction, preparedness and recovery, including from violent conflicts and/or severe economic difficulties;**
9. To call upon Member States, under the auspices of the African Union Commission, to explore the feasibility of continental financial risk pooling in working towards the creation of an **African-owned Pan-African disaster risk pool**, building on existing and emerging tools and mechanisms for financing disaster risk reduction;
10. To call for a study into the establishment of a **regional funding mechanism for disaster risk reduction** which allows Member States to access existing, and future, regional and global funds for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction;
11. To make disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation **a national education priority, through their integration into the educational system**, including the development of curricula, and the training of teachers;
12. To call upon Member States to **undertake vulnerability assessments of schools, health facilities and urban centres**, and develop and implement plans to ensure their safety and resilience;
13. To encourage the **development of capacities of, and partnerships among, Member States** to access and utilise existing traditional knowledge, space-based and other technologies for disaster risk reduction;
14. To call on the **African Union Commission and the Regional Economic Communities to establish and/or strengthen**, within their organisational structures, functional, sustainable, affordable and dedicated **disaster risk reduction units for coordination and monitoring;**
15. To call on the **Regional Economic Communities to enhance the implementation of their roles and responsibilities as stated in the Africa Strategy and Programme of Action;**
16. To call upon the Member States to **adopt the revised Programme of Action for the Implementation of the African Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2006-2015)** and to monitor progress;
17. To invite the **United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and partners** to engage with African Union Commission, Regional Economic Communities and African countries to **support the implementation of this Declaration, as appropriate; and**
18. To request the **African Union Commission to take note of this Ministerial Declaration, and to submit to the African Union**



The Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), which was attended by approximately 3,000 participants, including representatives from over 170 governments, 20 ministers and 30 mayors, and 100 non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Participants met in high-level plenary sessions, roundtables on preparedness, nuclear emergencies, local action and wildfire risk, as well as a dialogue with parliamentarians and mayors and a briefing on the 2011 Global Assessment Report. (UNISDR)

Africa Report to the Global Platform outlines high-level commitment for DRR

The Third Session of the Global Platform convened 8-13 May 2011 brought together the broadest ever cross-section of people committed to building resilience to disasters—over 2,600 delegates representing 168 Governments, 25 inter-governmental organizations, 65 non-governmental organizations, parliamentarians, private sector, local governments, academic institutions, civil society and international organizations were in attendance. From the African continent, 40 governments were represented, along with the African Union Commission, several African Regional Economic Communities, expert organizations, and NGOs, among others. The Global Platform was honoured by the presence of the Vice President of The Gambia H.E. Dr Ajaratou Isatou-Njie Saidy.

The Platform recognized that disaster risk reduction is at the centre of the development, environmental and humanitarian work of the United Nations, and the need for the UNISDR Secretariat to engage with all relevant stakeholders within the UN system, the third session was chaired by the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Asha-Rose Migiro.

The overall theme for the Global Platform 2011 was: Invest Today for a Safer Tomorrow – Increased Investment in Local Action. A key feature of the Third Session was the inclusion of the World Reconstruction Conference (hosted by the World Bank – www.wrc-2011.org).

Several specific stakeholder groups or “actors of change” attended the Platform and issued statements of commitments.

More than 30 Mayors renewed their commitment to the Ten Essentials of the “My City is Getting Ready” Campaign. The private sector participants agreed on Five Essentials for Business and issued a statement of commitment for disaster prevention, resilience and risk reduction. A joint statement called for scaling-up community health forces as vital for disaster reduction. A group of young people came together to advance a five point charter on children and disaster reduction. Regional organizations reaffirmed their commitment to implementing regional strategies agreed to in ministerial meetings worldwide.

The Third Session provided a platform to discuss the Mid-Term Review of the Hyogo Framework for Action. The Platform recognized that significant progress has been made in the implementation of the HFA and that its principles have been firmly established and endorsed. Furthermore, the discussions at the Platform demonstrated that we now possess the knowledge, the means and the commitment to make disaster risk reduction a national, local and international priority. There is a sense of urgency and clear political and economic imperatives to invest in disaster risk reduction.

The outcome of the Global Platform is captured in the Chair's summary, which also identifies 15 critical steps. The Chair's Summary is found on the following link: www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2011/

The day before the official opening of the Global Platform a preparatory meeting for all African Delegations was held. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Koffi Portuphy, National Coordinator of the National Disaster Management Organization, Ghana, and Chairperson of the elected Bureau of the second African Ministerial Conference on DRR accompanied by H.E. Rhoda Peace, AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture and Dr. Perdo Basabe, Head of the UNISDR Regional Office for Africa. The Delegations agreed on the Africa report to the Global Platform, which was later presented in Plenary by the African Union Commission, H.E. Rhoda Peace, AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture

The Africa Report to the Global Platform outlines the Africa Position and high-level commitments towards the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy and Programme of Action for Disaster Risk Reduction 2010-2015 as well as the progress on the implementation on regional, sub-regional (ECOWAS, ECCAS, SADC, IGAD and EAC regions) and country levels in the five Priorities for Action of the HFA. The report also spells out the following specific challenges:

- Get support from partners and resources to systematically implement the Africa Strategy and Programme of Action for DRR and to operationalise the Africa Working Group.
- In some regions such as ECCAS lack an effective leadership of the ECCAS in coordination, facilitation and support remains the major challenge due to low institutional and human capacity, coupled with the traditional economic difficulties.
- Central Africa is the only REC where priority countries on DRR are practically inexistent as far as projects funded by donors are concerned. Advocacy is thus required with partners and donors for a fresh look at their current commitment to DRR in Central Africa.
- There are difficulties particularly in ECCAS of collaboration with other sub-regional institutions to implement joint DRR projects with partners, for example the ACP/EU Facility for Natural Disaster managed by the

The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction is now the world's foremost gathering of stakeholders committed to reducing disaster risk and building the resilience of communities and nations. The Global Platform for Disaster Reduction was established in 2007 as a biennial forum for information exchange, discussion of latest development and knowledge and partnership building across sectors, with the goal to improve implementation of disaster risk reduction through better communication and coordination amongst stakeholders. The Global Platform is managed by the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

Commitments at the Second Session of the Global Platform in 2009

By 2011, **national assessments of the safety of existing education and health facilities** should be undertaken.

By 2015, concrete action **plans for safer schools and hospitals** should be developed and implemented in all disaster prone countries.

Disaster risk reduction should be included in all school curricula by the same year.

By 2015, **all major cities in disaster-prone areas should include and enforce disaster risk reduction measures in their building and land use codes.**

Targets also proposed for: **national risk assessments, municipal disaster recovery plans, early warning systems, water risks and the enforcement of building codes.**

The UN Secretary-General called for a target to **halve the losses of lives from disasters by 2015, when the term of the Hyogo Framework for Action ends.**

10 per cent of humanitarian relief funds to disaster risk reduction work.

10 per cent as a target share of post-disaster reconstruction and recovery projects and national preparedness and response plans.

At least 1 per cent of all national development funding and all development assistance funding to be allocated to risk reduction measures, with due regard for quality of impact.

Economic and Currency Community for Central Africa (CEMAC) and co-managed by the ECCAS.

- Many countries have yet to develop national legislation, policies, and/or plans for mainstreaming DRR into national development frameworks and sectoral programmes.
- Investment in disaster risk reduction remains low and little understood.
- Further strengthening of national and regional early warning systems is needed in order to enhance the exchange and sharing data and information to reduce risks and improve preparedness.
- The capacities of several sub-regional institutions that provide vital services for risk assessment need to be strengthened and their output made more people-centered.
- Some countries lack central facilities for coordination, command and control of response interventions during emergencies.
- In many countries and in a few RECs there are no functioning and effective national/sub-regional platforms or multi-sectoral coordination and collaboration mechanisms for DRR.
- Harmonization among NGOs and overall civil society through basic standards for early warning, livelihood approaches and DRM training are challenges which need to be addressed.
- Appropriate resources at local level needs to be ensured for DRR local investment including in urban settings.
- Dialogue and partnership between climate organization like ACMAD and related sub regional centres and Disaster risk managers needs to be enhanced to improve the use of climate services by disaster risk managers in the benefit of vulnerable people and populations at risk.

Finally, the Africa Report to the Third Session of the Global Platform highlights the following points as the Way Forward:

1. Increase political commitment to disaster risk reduction, through:

Continuous engagement of all stakeholders, and coordination to enhance the implementation of the Africa Strategy and Programme for DRR, with increased focus on joint actions and support for the work of the African Working Group on DRR.

Leadership at regional and sub-regional levels by the AUC and RECs for the adoption and implementation of regional mechanisms and strategies on DRR and Climate Change Adaptation through the promotion of partnership with development partners.

Strengthening existing DRR National Platforms in Africa with increased recognition and support from the highest political levels, in order to make them functional and promote information sharing (exchange of good practice) and trans-boundary DRR programmes by multiple Member States. In addition, National Platforms need to mobilize substantive resources to support capacity building on DRR

in collaboration with regional and international partners.

Increased focus by Member States on the development strategies and programmes integrating Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation and their mainstreaming into national development agendas with NAPAs, PRSPs, development plans and partner institutions.

Support to RECs and Member States that have not been working on DRR nor established Regional and National Platforms to consider DRR into policies, mechanisms and programmes for sustainable development.

Incentives to insurance companies to engage in risk-transfer business in order to lessen the impacts of disasters on communities and cooperate more with the private sector.

2. Improve identification and assessment of disaster risk, through:

Enhancement of risk identification and creation of a DRR database at the AUC, RECs and Member States level and inventory of Regional Centres of Excellence in the sub-regions.

Finalisation, adoption and application of data sharing protocols on DRR to enhance information and data exchange, forecast hazardous events, plan disaster preparedness and contingency planning

Promotion of more investment in national meteorological services and emphasizing strong linkages between climate change, disaster risk reduction and urban planning by mainstreaming them into their development planning and sectoral policies, strategies and programmes.

3. Increase public awareness and capacity develop for disaster risk reduction, through:

Greater advocacy for increased political commitment to investing in disaster risk reduction by Governments. Existing Cost-Benefit studies such as the recent report "Natural Hazards and UnNatural Disasters, The Economics of Effective Prevention" should be used as advocacy tools to foster increased investments in DRR.

Knowledge development for hazards, vulnerability, capacity and risk assessment, HFA monitoring, early warning to better address the sub-regional framework policy and strategy.

Increased mainstreaming of DRR into the educational system and increased advocacy efforts to introduce DRR in the school curricula system in Member States;

Promotion of research and greater engagement of academic institutions and networks to train critical mass of regional resource persons to implement disaster risk reduction programmes.



Seasonal rains in Africa often come with a risk of flash floods (Photo courtesy of IRIN News)

4. Improve governance of DRR institutions and reduce underlying risk factors, through:

Building partnerships between regional climate institutions and disaster risk management organisation to support government efforts for climate risk management and climate change adaptation.

Greater encouragement and facilitation of women and youth to actively play a role in DRR, capacity development and in decision-making processes.

Increased efforts at addressing urban risk through advocacy and participation in Campaigns for “Making Resilient Cities” and to develop DRR programmes to address urban risk.

5. Integrate DRR into preparedness plans, disaster management and recovery, through:

Promotion of unified strategies between DRR and humanitarian actions.

The world conference on recovery and reconstruction organised by the WB, which provides a timely opportunity to deploy more efforts in integrating DRR into humanitarian policy and intervention. Contingency planning should give greater priority to help people affected by disaster to recover their livelihood as quickly as possible and to repair or reconstruct their houses in way that increases their resilience to similar hazards in the future.

DRR-oriented recovery and reconstruction programmes centred on community needs, constituting the link between disaster response and disaster risk reduction and ensuring the continuum between humanitarian action and development.

Promotion of sub-regional collaboration to enhance the exchange of climate related data and information in addition to the existing stand-alone bilateral collaboration.

6. Support overall coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Africa Strategy and Programme of Action for DRR, through:

Operationalisation of the Africa Working Group for DRR as a mechanism to support overall coordination, provide guidance and support implementation of the Africa strategy and Programme of action for DRR.

Collaboration among IGOs, PNs, UN and non UN partners to accelerate the implement of the Africa Strategy and Programme of Action for DRR in line with the HFA and report progress made.

Based on the Africa Position presented to the Third Session of the Global Platform for DRR



Photo courtesy of IRIN news

Drought Risk Reduction project in the Horn of Africa

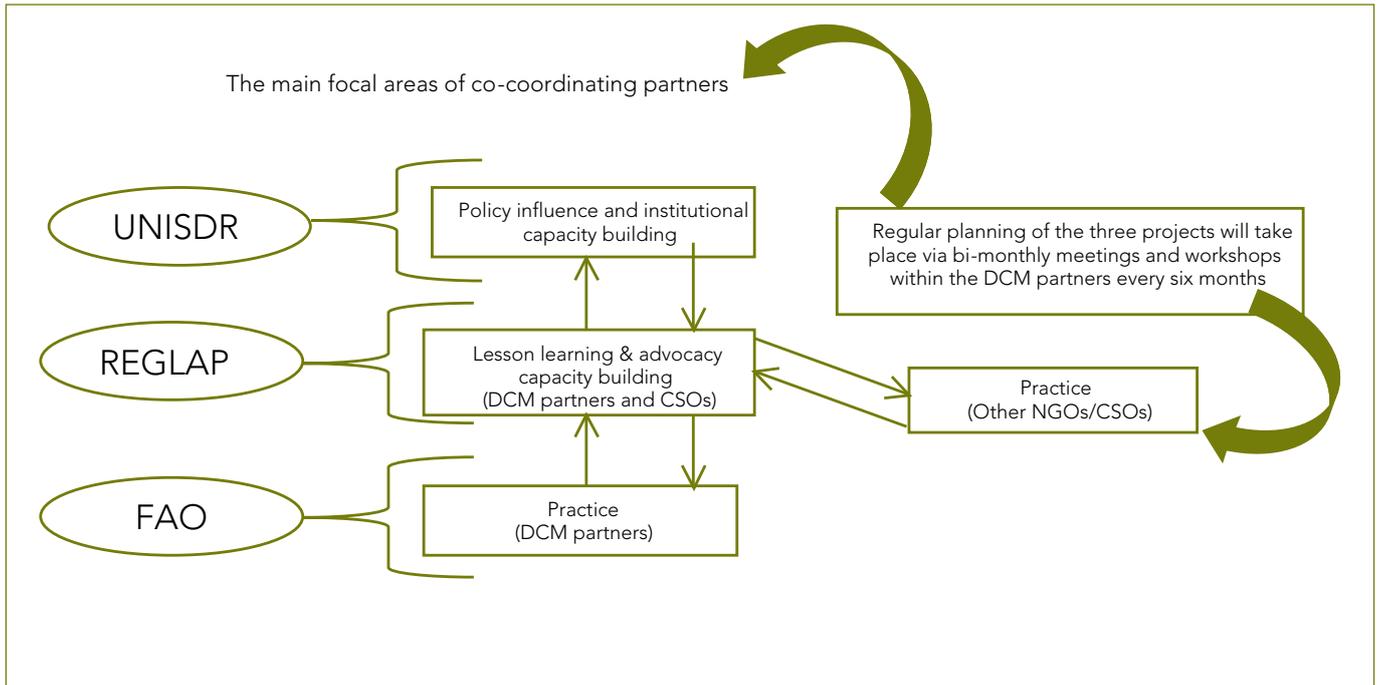
(UNISDR, FAO and REGLAP with the support of ECHO)

Countries in the Horn of Africa have been facing drought and food crisis in a cyclic manner, such as the 2011 drought situation. Indeed the region receives about 40 per cent of the total global food relief due to this chronic drought conditions. The underlying determinants of drought vulnerabilities in this region as well as the drought risk mitigation measures required to offset them are well known. However, much of drought and disaster management which has been applied so far has emphasised relief and response strategies with limited activities undertaken towards the development of critical institutional and strategic measures for resilience building. The current drought situation in the region is evidence of this existing trend.

Considering this trend, the ECHO Drought Cycle Management (DCM) decision was designed to strengthen preparedness and response to drought in the Horn and East Africa. The third phase of this decision is supporting, in 2011, the UNISDR, FAO and REGLAP as a consortium of NGOs to implement disaster risk management interventions at national and community level in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, and to liaise with national and regional level in the Horn of Africa.

This multi-stakeholder project is a good example of coordination and cooperation of individual and complementary undertakings. To facilitate this task, a coordination framework is being used by the three entities to linking technical support, field level implementation, capturing lessons learnt and translating them into policy and practices on the ground. (see conceptual framework next page)

More specifically, the joint project is being implemented with the National Platforms and partners for disaster risk reduction in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia as well as in the field in Northern Kenya, Southern Ethiopia and North eastern Uganda (Karamoja region) with the principal objective to raise awareness, improve capacities for drought risk reduction, influence policy development and planning, undertake concrete action at community level, document good practices, develop an online knowledge management tool and identify complementary action for further implementation. This project is therefore contributing to the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and the Africa Regional Strategy and Programme of Action (2006 – 2015).



So far the main achievements of the project are:

The Natural Disaster Losses Inventory Database (DesInventar) trainings have been conducted successfully in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.

The key ministries with the support of the UN Volunteers have embarked on data collection that will build the envisaged disaster data base.

An assessment of the technical and infrastructure needs of the Kenya Meteorological Services has been conducted with the aim to improve the capacities for Early Warning.

In Uganda, a rapid and critical assessment on the drought early warning system was conducted to provide a critical analysis of its effectiveness in the Karamoja region. The assessment was conducted in all the seven districts in Karamoja. The assessment report is available.

In addition, the EAC and IGAD have greatly benefited from this project through the ongoing institutionalization of DRR, strengthening capacities at regional level and National Platforms for DRR in East Africa.

The two regional entities have DRR Advisors in place to oversee this process. In the EAC for example, a comprehensive DRR conceptual framework has been finalised to be discussed by the Ministers in charge of Environment from the Partner State of the EAC for adoption. DRR is now deeply imbedded in the EAC Climate Change strategy and master plan as a result of this support.

The Uganda Parliamentarian Forum for DRR was officially launched on 17 August 2011 to strongly engage parliamentarians in reducing disaster risks in Uganda.

In August 2011, UNISDR organized a Regional Drought Decision (RDD) implementing partners forum, in which main results and tools used under the decision were critically reviewed across the project countries and action points outlined to address gaps which were identified. The review included existing drought contingency plans, drought early warning bulletins as well as DRR training tools and application of HFA at local level.

In October, the UNISDR and UNDP Drylands Development Center DDC are organising the 4th Africa Drought and Adaptation Forum to share information and knowledge, map out practical solutions and strengthen partnership and cooperation to reduce the impact of drought in Africa.

The UNISDR recognizes the need for a multi-dimensional approach to addressing the drought risk management in the project area that integrates humanitarian issues, conflict prevention (including peace building, post-crisis governance and state-building), crisis recovery (including early recovery and emphasizing livelihood enhancement and transformation and economic recovery) and long-term sustainable and inclusive development with climate, disaster and natural resource risk reduction orientation.

To address these emerging observations, the UNISDR is focusing on promoting the packaging and uptake of weather and climate products, targeted capacity development and programme for updating drought contingency planning process to make them workable and effective jointly with partners.

Some early observations emerging from this project indicates the need to;

Effectively utilize early warning information generated by the national meteorological services for drought planning and preparedness.

Continue developing national level capacity of DRR Practitioners in utilization of climate predictions/forecasts and translating climate information into relevant easy understandable messages for communities.

Harmonize the structures of contingency plans and contingency planning process that are used by various implementing agencies to make them more effective.

Continue updating existing DRR tools such as trainings, information, education and communication tools in order to have a common approach of addressing the drought problem in the region.

On completion of an ongoing Institutional Needs Assessment of the National Platforms for DRR, the UNISDR looks forward to building the capacity of the platform to support it deliver DRR not only at the national level but also at the grassroots. This will include supporting advocacy efforts to implement DM policies, where they are already finalized to guide the coordination and building of the capacity of county and community level DRR institutions.

UNISDR will continue working with key ministries involved in disaster data collection to scale up the development of national disaster loss databases exercise to regional and local level sources of information to achieve a comprehensive data base and create awareness on its usefulness in development planning and decision making. As well as with the Meteorological department, other scientific institutions, DM Managers and Communities to fine tune Early Warning information bulletins to facilitate effective early recovery.

By UNISDR Africa



Dr. Asha Migiro, the Deputy Secretary General of the UN and Dr. Pedro Basabe, Head UNISDR Africa during the 11 RCM-Africa meeting in Addis Ababa which successfully concluded deliberations on finding the best approaches to coordinating their efforts toward supporting the African Union and its NEPAD Program

11th RCM Africa: UN Agencies in Africa to strengthen efforts to 'deliver as one' for the AU and its NEPAD Programmes

The RCM-Africa was established as part of a UN reform to improve coherence, promote synergy and coordination among UN agencies and organisations and strengthen their collective response in addressing Africa's priority needs at regional level and sub-regional levels in relation to the implementation of the AU and its NEPAD programme. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) is the strategic coordinator.

The 11th Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa (RCM-Africa) meeting held in Addis Ababa, November 14-15, 2010 concluded deliberations on finding the best approaches to coordinating their efforts toward supporting the African Union and its NEPAD Programme.

The goal of the RCM 11th Session was to discuss ways to strengthen coordination and coherence on how UN agencies in Africa should operate as one entity when supporting the AUC and its NEPAD programme. The Session was opened by Dr. Asha-Rosa Migiro, the Deputy Secretary-General of the UN; H.E. Dr. Jean Ping, Chairperson of the AU Commission; Mr. Abdoulaye Janneh, ECA Executive Secretary, Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer CEO, NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA); and a representative of H.E. Mr. Sha Zukang, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs.

The working sessions were co-chaired by Dr. Asha-Rosa Migiro, the Deputy Secretary-General of the UN and the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union, H.E. Mr. Erastus Mwencha, under the following three main themes: Reports of the nine clusters and Progress report of the Sub-Regional Coordination Mechanism (SRCM), which summary information is considered in the RCM-Africa progress report; The Rio+20 Earth Summit: progress, challenges and regional preparations; and The Ten-Years Capacity Building Programme for the AU: where we are now and the way forward.

Key presentations focused on the need of the RCM, cluster and sub-clusters to be more impact oriented. Clusters were requested to develop programmes in consultation with the AUC and RECs based on their priorities and programmes. The participants also recommended that more interaction be stimulated among the AU Departments and inter-cluster relation especially on some cross-cutting issues.

As a result of the deliberations several recommendations were proposed including:

The focus of the RCM, cluster and sub-clusters need to be more result and impact oriented. To this end, Clusters were requested to develop programmes in consultation with the AUC and RECs based on the latter's priorities and programmes, focusing in a limited number of projects and deliverables. The participants also recommended that more interaction is stimulated among the AU departments and inter-cluster relation especially on some cross-cutting issues.

Better alignment of Sub Regional Coordination Mechanisms (SRCM) with the priorities of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and to strengthen the relations with the Regional Director Teams (RDTs), as well as to clearly define roles.

SRCMs were established in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa. As part of the preparation and inputs to Rio+20, practical food practices should be documented, a bottom-up process should be engaged to address challenges and opportunities for sustainable development.

The Ten-Years Capacity Building Programme for the AU (TYCBP-AU) needs to be aligned with other capacity development frameworks and programmes in Africa. Every cluster should define a capacity development programme as part of the TYCBP-AU and a focal point.

More visibility and resource mobilisation are needed for the RCM-Africa secretariat, clusters/sub-clusters work. RCM secretariat should be strengthened to assist cluster in programming and support implementation.

RCM-Africa was established as part of a UN reform to improve coherence, promote synergy and coordination among UN agencies and organisations and strengthen their collective response in addressing Africa's priority needs at regional level and sub-regional levels in relation to the implementation of the AU and its NEPAD programme. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) is the strategic coordinator. The meetings are held annually to review the programmes of UN agencies in Africa and the support they render to the AU and its NEPAD programmes.

The RCM and its clusters are key UN/IGOs mechanisms to promote Disaster Risk Reduction and linkages with climate change adaptation. UNISDR-Africa endeavours to contribute to RCM and cluster planning/programming and in particular support implementation of AUC and NEPAD programme in relation to disaster risk reduction.

i) The annual reports of the nine RCM clusters were presented by the respective convenors, namely:

- Cluster 1: Infrastructure and development
- Cluster 2: Governance
- Cluster 3: Social and human development
- Cluster 4: Environment, population and urbanisation
- Cluster 5: Agriculture and food security
- Cluster 6: Science and technology
- Cluster 7: Advocacy and communication
- Cluster 8: Peace and security
- Cluster 9: Industry and Trade

The UNISDR, Regional Office for Africa and several UN agencies are members of cluster four on Environment, Population and Urbanisation, led by UNEP ROA. The report of cluster four includes inputs from clusters members and informs about the Africa regional Strategy and Programme of Action for Disaster Risk Reduction (2006-2015) and the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the 2nd African Ministerial Conference on DRR in Nairobi, April 2010.

By UNISDR Africa, UNECA and AUC

Highlights from the 13th African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) Bamako, Malawi

“Enhancing the interrelationship between climate change, biodiversity and desertification for sustainable development” was the main theme for the thirteenth session of AMCEN held on 20 - 25 June 2010. The conference aimed to advocate for strong integration of disaster risk reduction into high-level environment/climate change dialogues.

The focus of the Conference was to provide high-level political support for the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in Africa, in particular, the three Rio Conventions (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) by maximizing their synergies. The conference resulted into seven decisions and a high-level ministerial declaration “Bamako Declaration”.

The conference also strongly advocated for due consideration of the outcomes of the second African Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction for AMCEN’s discussion on climate change, biodiversity, desertification and other environmental issues.

In addition, during the group discussions, UNISDR made a presentation on the history and latest disaster risk reduction policy framework in Africa. Algeria, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Kenya and Mauritania strongly supported the needs of highlighting Disaster Risk Reduction for AMCEN with strong linkage with climate change. As a result, the draft Bamako Declaration was revised in accordance to the second African Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and to accelerate the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The ministerial dialogue during this 13th Session also directed to deliberate on and review, among others, progress made towards;

- (i) Africa’s development of a common negotiating position on a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012;
- (ii) The development of a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes
- (iii) Africa’s preparations for developing a common negotiating position on the international regime on Access and Benefit-sharing of genetic resources (ABS)

- (iv) Africa’s approach to continent-wide measures to combat desertification.

Regional Economic Communities (RECs), as the building blocks of the AU, are engaged in providing strategic guidance to their respective Member States, facilitating the implementation of the sub-regional as well as national DRR strategies and programmes. Most regional economic communities have disaster risk reduction policies and strategies based on the priorities of the HFA and the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and its Programme of Action.

UNISDR Africa maintains and strengthens partnerships in the region and collaborates with the RECs such as the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Background of AMCEN

The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was established in 1985 as a forum to strengthen co-operation on environmental issues between African governments. The Conference was established when African ministers met in Egypt and adopted the Cairo Programme for African co-operation, and it is convened every second year.

AMCEN is a permanent forum where African ministers of the environment discuss explore ways to reduce environmental degradation, food security and energy needs for Africa. For almost 22 years, AMCEN has facilitated the broadening of the political and public policy legitimacy of environmental concerns in Africa.

AMCEN’s mandate is to: provide information and advocacy for environmental protection in Africa; ensure that the basic human needs are met adequately and in a sustainable manner; ensure socio-economic development is realized at all levels; and ensure that agricultural activities and practices meets food



Regional launch of the Global Assessment Report as talks of a common voice on DRR fore

"Investment in risk management is long term, and in the end it is crucial for a country that hopes to achieve its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)," she stated." UN Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Ms. Margareta Wahlström

As the 17th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union wrapped up in Malabo, Guinea on 30 June 2011, talks of a common voice on sustainable development have continued to dominate agendas in Africa ahead of the UN climate talks to be held in Durban in December 2011. The need to address the issue of disasters and climate change continues to fore at various platforms of implementing the extended Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Various circles have urged African leaders to make strong commitments for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation to address the severe drought and resulting food shortages

Leading up to the African Union Assembly, the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Ms. Margareta Wahlström, stressed that effective disaster risk management implies political authority, realistic decentralization and a culture of partnership during the launch of the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Reduction (GAR 11) held on 20 June in Nairobi.

"Investment in risk management is long term, but in the end it is crucial for a country that hopes to achieve its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)," she stated. Ms. Wahlström also advocated for regional cooperation and practical collaboration to effectively address the challenges of disasters risks.

The launch was preceded by an inter-agency consultative meeting with key United Nations partners and relevant government institutions convened by the UNISDR Regional Office for Africa. The inter-agency group was formed to respond to the increasing demand within the United Nations family to have a dialogue and consult internally on disaster risk reduction initiatives and programmes to ensure the "One UN Approach". The progress of other working groups in supporting partnership and coordination in risk reduction was acknowledged along with the added-value of the inter-agency group.

Prior to the GAR11 launch, Ms. Wahlström attended the Annual General Meeting of the New Partnership for African Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (NEPARC). She asked the national societies which are the lead agencies in risk reduction to increase transparency in their activities to attract more development support.

The NEPARC brought together some 150 delegates from national and local bodies, and private sector as well as development partners to map out ways to increase the capacity of relief organizations to expand their revenue base in order to cover the growing needs caused by climate change.

By UNISDR Africa



"Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels" - Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015; Priority 5. (Photo courtesy of IRIN News)

Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa

Sub Regional Level



Inhabitants of Medina Gounass, one of the worst affected suburbs of the capital after Senegal's worst rains in two decades. Dakar, Senegal, 26 August 2005. (Photo courtesy of IRIN News)

Disaster Risk Reduction in the Regional Economic Communities

ECOWAS Disaster Risk Reduction policy/programme update

Progress on the implementation of the HFA in the ECOWAS Region

In West Africa, disasters triggered by natural hazard events have increased in occurrence and severity. Over the last decades impacts of disasters have resulted into high vulnerability of West African people and slowed down the process towards sustainable development to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the sub-region. Disasters are projected to worsen in many countries as a result of climate change and due to increasing the vulnerability of the people. ECOWAS countries have experienced the recurrence of torrential rainfall during the 2000 – 2010 period. Recent rainy seasons, between 2007 and 2010 were marked with heavy rainfall, that have caused flooding in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Niger, Senegal, Togo and The Gambia.

In the light of the above concern, the ECOWAS Commission, in collaboration with its international partners (UN and non-UN organisations) is putting a lot of effort to assist members states to cope with disasters in the sub-region and to build resilience of their populations in line with the ECOWAS Disaster Risk Reduction policy as well as the newly endorsed extended programme of action for the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster

Risk Reduction (2006-2015) and the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015).

1. Progress on HFA 1: Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation

The ECOWAS founding treaty was revised in 1993 and incorporated articles relevant to the strengthening of disaster management institutions, the establishment of hazard early warning systems, and the provision of food aid, within the ECOWAS poverty-reduction, security and sustainable development agenda.

Between 2003 and 2004, ECOWAS Ministers participated in the development of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction. They also established an ECOWAS Technical Committee on Disaster Management to recommend ways to operationalise a DRR strategy in the region. In 2006, following the recommendations of the Technical Committee and with the support of UNISDR, ECOWAS Department for Humanitarian Affairs produced a regional policy for DRR, which was subsequently adopted by the ECOWAS Heads of State in 2007. In order to fully engage in the implementation of regional DRR policy, a new Plan of Action (2010-2015) has been developed the ECOWAS Commission and adopted in October 2009 by Member States.

The first ECOWAS Ministerial Conference on DRR was held in May 2007 in Abidjan. The objective was to agree on major gaps, challenges and a priority programme of action to reduce disaster risks in West Africa within the framework of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction in general and the ECOWAS Policy for Disaster Reduction in particular. The Conference discussed how UNISDR, the World Bank, the AU, ECOWAS and other development partners can assist countries in the sub-region to mainstream and expand provision for disaster risk reduction into their policies (including their Poverty Reduction strategies).

Recognising the fact that many DRR National platforms in West Africa have difficulties to function effectively, the ECOWAS Commission has developed and adopted a new guideline for strengthening disaster risk reduction platforms in its member States. A pilot project on strengthening national platforms in six Member States (Benin, Guinea, The Gambia, Mali, Liberia and Sierra Leone) will be carried out in 2011. The outcomes and lesson learnt from the first phase of this pilot project will inform the ECOWAS Commission in the implementation of the second phase in other Member States in 2012.

2. Progress on HFA 2: Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning

In collaboration with UNISDR and the World Bank Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), The ECOWAS Commission jointly organised the first regional training workshop on risk assessment, risk identification in West Africa in November 2009. The main objective of this training workshop was to train West African DRR focal points on concepts of hazard assessment, risk analysis and vulnerability mapping in order to develop the understanding of the role of risk assessment within the national risk reduction process.

In collaboration with UNDP and through the UNDP/BCPR Global Risk Identification Program (GRIP) programme, the ECOWAS Commission has supported a training workshop and the implementation of Systematic Inventory and Evaluation for Risk Assessment (SIERA) methodologies. In the same line, and in collaboration with the World Bank/GFDRR, a study has been conducted on the impacts of trans-national floods in West Africa.

Regarding the early warning component, The Commission has put in place a very strong mechanism called ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN), which is an observation and monitoring tool for conflict prevention and decision-making. Initially set for conflict prevention in the sub-region the early warning system has recently developed indicators related to natural hazard monitoring.

3. Progress on HFA 3: Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all level

The Commission encourage its Member States to be fully engaged in development of knowledge and skills required for effective disaster risk reduction and dissemination of risk information in the sub-region. The ECOWAS Commission

encourage member States to development and strengthen national instruments for information sharing and exchange of best practices as well as other mechanisms to enhance coordination and collaboration among DRR stakeholders.

In collaboration with UNISDR and the WB/GFDRR, a hydro-climatic data sharing protocol agreement between ECOWAS Member States was adopted during the first consultative meeting held in Lomé, Togo in October 2010. In this regard, for 2011, the ECOWAS Commission will facilitate exchange of best practices on disaster risk reduction between Nigeria and Liberia and between Ghana and the Gambia as a pilot phase.

Capacity to provide technical assistance on disaster reduction and climate change adaptation of specialised regional institutions in West Africa is currently being assessed and reviewed by the ECOWAS Commission in collaboration with UNISDR and the WB/GFDRR. This assessment will recommend ways for more cooperation between technical institutions and Member States on implementing disaster risk reduction programmes and activities both at national and regional level.

4. Progress on HFA 4: Reduce the underlying risk factors

The Commission in collaboration with regional partners has recently developed a sub-regional programme to reduce vulnerability to climate change in West Africa in order to address climate challenges and reduce the social, economic and environmental impacts.

On the same hand, a regional framework for the adaptation of West African agriculture to climate change was also formulated as part of the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP).

Reducing underlying factors in West Africa requires lot of effort on combating poverty in the sub-region in order to reduce people's vulnerability. In this regards, ECOWAS has developed a regional strategy on poverty reduction in West Africa. The regional strategy seeks to refocus on poverty programmes to benefit the poor, improve the visibility and usefulness of such programmes and make them the catalyst in the fight against poverty. The programme will strengthen national and regional strategies focusing on the key sectors of macroeconomics, trade and infrastructure, among others.

5. Progress on HFA 5: Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels

The HFA Priority five has been given particular attention at the 33rd ordinary session of the ECOWAS Summit of Heads of State and Government held January 18, 2008 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The West African leaders discussed the security situation in the region and a memorandum recommending the establishment of the ECOWAS Emergency Response Team (EERT) was adopted. This team contributes to strengthening regional capacity for emergency response to disasters and enable ECOWAS to intervene in cases of complex humanitarian emergencies.

The EERT is currently doing a good job with Member States by assisting and building focal point's capacities on emergency response. Currently, a Regional Humanitarian Policy is under elaboration in order to enhance the capacities of ECOWAS Member States to effectively deal with humanitarian issues and secure the welfare of the people in the ECOWAS region.

An Emergency fund has been put in place in order to support ECOWAS Member States affected by natural disasters such as floods. Many countries in the sub-region have already benefited from that Emergency fund following the devastating floods that affected the region in 2009 and 2010.

*By Aliou Dia
ECOWAS Commission
Disaster Risk Reduction Advisor*

Central Africa endeavors to strengthen its DRR Policy and Programme

ECCAS plays a role in environmental coordination and harmonization of the actions of each of the institutions involved, within the region, to ensure coherence of action by both institutional and operational on the ground.

This is in line with uits mission to develop a sub-regional cooperation in Central Africa through the promotion, integration and harmonization of policies for socio-economic development, and in collaboration with the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) where necessary,

ECCAS environmental policy defines a general framework for cooperation in this matter between the member states of the community in order

- to harmonize policies and strategies for sustainable management of the environment,
- to promote cooperation with regional and international organizations in Central Africa and other sub-regions and regions of Africa and the world and the institutions of the UN system working in the same field,
- to develop human and institutional capacities of countries to manage the environment with the establishment of a central or regional laboratory of excellence in environmental matters,
- to adopt a concerted and convergent major environmental issues in the region, including the legal and institutional framework, management of urban and industrial environment, management of energy issues and transportation, management of pollution and nuisances, waste management, risk management of natural disasters, management of the consequences and impacts on climate change, etc,
- to monitor the implementation of international conventions.

Three of the twelve areas of focus of its policy on environmental and natural resource management are in fact dedicated to the conservation and sustainable management of forest resources in Central Africa, the fight against climate change, assessment and early warning in the management of natural and manmade disasters.

Strategic area of focus 11 on the assessment and early warning in the management of natural and manmade disasters requires:

At the state level, the implementation of:

- Mechanisms for early warning and response systems to cope with natural disasters, including national platforms, inventory risk areas and maps of areas at high risk;
- Units for disaster reduction;
- Policies in the long term risk reduction closely integrated with development policies through the training of health authorities on the tools of humanitarian supply management, training of firefighters on rescue

procedures, training of civil defense on emergency communications equipment and materials salvage, among others.

At the sub regional level, the development and implementation of a regional plan for natural disaster risks management.

Implementation

The partnership with the UNISDR has enabled the ECCAS to have for over a year expertise to supplement deficit in human resources in the sectors of Disaster Risk Reduction and CCA.

Thus:

- It is evident that DRR and Climate Change Adaptation have been intergrated into the decision making process at the sub-regional programmes;
- The concepts of disaster risk and adaptation to climate change are now more readable by other sub-regional stakeholders;
- The concepts of disaster risk and climate change adaptation are enrolled in a prospective vision through development of a sectoral policy, plan and program of action, other sectoral development measures and mechanisms for knowledge and mastering of disaster risks and factors aggravating hazards related to climate change.

Concrete activities

These actions are oriented towards an effective collaboration among ECCAS member states to achieve resilience at all levels. As a result the following have been achieved:

- Registration in the 2010 budget of projects for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation ;
- Preparation and signature of a MoU with UNISDR for technical assistance;
- Development of a draft Agreement with UNOCHA ;
- Humanitarian intervention in disaster areas;
- Regional Consultation on cross-border risks of hydro meteorological origin in partnership with UNISDR;
- Training and familiarization of the experts and National Focal Points on UNDAC system (UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination).

Constraints in the sub-region

Armed conflicts in seven of the ten member states from 1990 to 1997 that led to eight years of inactivity and a hard reboot;

- Insufficient financial resources;
- Capacity problems;
- Lack of coherent management systems;
- The usual economic difficulties.

Prospective actions and programme

The optimization of the DRR, the management of risks associated with variability and climate change and adaptation to climate change at the ECCAS follows a holistic approach instilled by the UNISDR technical assistance. Many joint projects with partners are provided in Central Africa in 2011 and include:

- Formulation of the 2011/2012 DRR programme ;
- Development of project proposals for the implementation of the policy of ECCAS in DRR for submission to donors;
- Organizing a second workshop on cross-border risks;
- Organizing a regional consultation on disasters;
- UNDAC staff training (Assessment and Coordination in emergency situations) for Central Africa;
- Adoption of a policy, a strategy and sectoral action programs;
- Risk, vulnerability and capacities assessment;

The following activities are also envisaged in the coming years:

- Establishment of a Sub-Regional Platform for DRR and CCA;
- Creating a regional institution for research on climate-related setbacks and disaster risk reduction;
- Creation of a Regional Risks Observatory;
- Development of regional early warning systems;
- Creation of a Sub Regional Training Centre for DRR and CC;
- Constitution of response team to major and border disasters;
- Creation of a regional emergency response fund;
- Design of regional response mechanisms.

The Africa Position presented to the Third session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction reported "Central Africa as the only REC where priority countries on DRR are practically inexistent as far as projects funded by development partners are concerned." The report recommended stakeholders to give fresh look at their current commitment to DRR in Central Africa.

*By Dominique Kuitsouc
ECCAS Commission
Disaster Risk Reduction Advisor*



Droughts and floods are the most frequent in the EAC region. (Photo courtesy by IRIN News)

DRR and climate change adaptation status in East Africa

East African Community joins venture with UNISDR

UNISDR has entered an agreement with the East Africa Community (EAC) in order to provide the framework within which DRR activities will be undertaken in the region. This includes the establishment of a Disaster Risk Management Unit within the EAC structure in order to ensure an effective coordination of DRR activities across different departments of the Secretariat and other EAC Institutions.

Most EAC member states have already made tremendous steps in establishing DRR National Platforms and coordination mechanisms including policy and plans for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework of Action.

The climate of East Africa is characterized by a great spatial variability, ranging from arid/semi-arid to sub-humid and humid conditions. Rainfall is highly variable yet it supports farming and environmental systems in the region. The greater part of the regional depends on rain fed agriculture particularly Kenya and Tanzania, which due to already perceivable climate change and variability has led to increased crop failure leading to food insecurity and loss of livestock.

The East Africa region is prone to natural disasters of such floods, droughts, landslides, strong winds, lightening and their secondary impacts of diseases and epidemics. Drought and floods are the most frequent hazards in the region. There has been notable shift in occurrences of diseases from where they normally occur to other localities

which is largely attributed to climate change. A good example of this is the highland malaria and the Rift Valley Fever (RVF) in livestock.

The EAC Development Strategy

The EAC Development Strategy document contains rich strategic directions for various sectors but the disaster risk reduction is not given the relevance it deserves. Small sections on disaster emergencies and response are mentioned in relations to the environment and natural resources. Strategic directions on peace and security also highlight the need for establishment of a regional mechanism for early warning, disaster preparedness, conflict management and resolution.

This is because the EAC Development Strategy had first to focus on the key pillars of East African integration which included the implementation of the Customs Union, establishing a Common Market, laying the foundation for establishing a Monetary Union, and laying the foundation for establishing a Political Federation.

EAC protocol on environment and natural resource management

In 2006, the EAC secretariat put into force a protocol on Environment and Natural resource. This document put forward the guiding principles towards regional environmental sustainability. Article 35 of this protocol particularly focuses on environmental disaster preparedness and management. Further still, the secretariat has also developed a common position on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

The EAC recognizes that every major social, economic and environmental sector is sensitive to climate variability and change, both of which are significant factors in each

sector's sustainable development. EAC is also cognisant of the changing climate and the need to put in place measures geared towards adaptation as well as mitigation of its adverse effects.

EAC Climate Change Policy - the Heads of State retreat on food security and climate change

The EAC directorate for productive and social sectors has developed a climate change policy and plans to establish a climate change fund that would help the partner states to adapt to climate change and to mitigate against its adverse effects.

Discussions which took place during the Heads of State retreat on food and climate change, Arusha, Tanzania on 3 December 2010, considered the EAC Climate Change Policy (EACCCP) and the EAC Food Security Action Plan 2010-2015 and the Ministerial Declaration on Food security and Climate Change that incorporate DRR.

They called for the immediate implementation of the EAC Food Security Action Plan and encouraged the development of a regional climate change policy that would include strategies aimed at determining how surplus food in one country can be shared in countries that are worst hit within the five-nations of East African Community (EAC). This is a major initiative addressing DRR in areas of drought and famine.

In view of the negative impacts associated with climate change and variability including the increase in the occurrence and severity of droughts and floods, there is a need for an integrated approach in policy formulation and programming for disaster risk reduction and climatic change adaptation and mitigation. With the EAC/UNISDR MOU in place, the EAC will move quickly and establish the necessary structures to ensure a full integration of DRR in all its planning and processes in line with the HFA priorities.

*By Julius N. Kabubi
EAC Secretariat - Disaster Risk Reduction Advisor*

EAC Profile

The East Africa Community (EAC) is a Regional Economic Commission comprising of five countries of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

Location: The headquarters of the EAC are located in Arusha, Tanzania.

Population: Together, the five East African countries cover an area of 1.85 million square kilometres and have a population of more than 120 million people who share history, language, culture and infrastructure. These advantages provide the Partner States with a unique framework for regional co-operation and integration.

GDP: The combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the five countries is US\$73 billion (*2009 figures).

Objectives

EAC broadly aims to strengthen the economic, social, cultural, political, technological and other ties between the member states and to address jointly issues of sustainable development, including the harmonization of measures for the sustainable utilization of the natural resources of the region and conservation of the environment against all measures of degradation and pollution arising from developmental activities including maintenance of the ecosystems.

EAC treaty

The Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community was signed on 30 November, 1999 and entered into force on 7 July, 2000, following its ratification by the three original Partner States, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Burundi and Rwanda acceded to this EAC Treaty and became full members of the Community in 1 July, 2007.

Developments

EAC is implementing the Custom Union Protocol and is transforming into a Common Market namely the commencement of the negotiations on the EAC Monetary Union which is expected to be undertaken over the next 12 months. It is important to note that this is the third step in the four-tire integration process. The fifth to be the establishment of the East Africa Federation projected in 2015. The treaty comprises of twenty nine chapters with specific articles touching on all areas of collaboration. Articles touching on areas of DRR interests are those addressing irrigation and water catchment management (article 109), food security (article 110), environmental issues and natural resources, and management of environment (Articles 111, 112 and 114).

DRR progress in Southern African Development Community (SADC)

Overview

SADC was one of the first Regional Economic Commissions in Africa to develop a disaster management strategy. The SADC Disaster Management Strategic Plan was developed in 2001, revised and approved as the SADC Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Strategic Plan 2006–2010 for implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy on DRR and its PoA. The Extended Programme of Action for the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy on DRR and its alignment on the HFA; and provides a framework and Plan of Action for cooperation and collaboration among member states in DRM.

The SADC DRR strategy is aligned to the regions development frameworks and vision of sustainable development and the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Programme (RISDP) and the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security (SIPO). Disaster Risk Management was established as a core SADC regional programme of action in 2008, with SADC DRR Unit set up at the Secretariat in 2009.

Progress and achievements

In addition to the above, other achievements in the SADC region include:

- Strengthening of Early Warning Systems at both national and regional levels, for example, hydro-met networks, and food early warning systems at national level; and Climate Services Centre, and specialized hydro-met regional centres in sub-region;
- Climate change adaptation studies and programmes at national level supported by UNDP, World Bank and others. At sub-regional level, a Secretariat establishing a regional CCA Programme. Secretariat, in collaboration with AUC, taking leading role in mobilizing SADC region for a common position in climate change negotiations;
- Strengthening sub-regional platform for DRR, through multi-sectoral regional consultative workshops and meetings. Parallel programmes at national level in the establishment and formalization of the National Platforms for DRR;
- Development and strengthening of national mechanisms for information sharing and exchange of best practices among countries and stakeholders;
- SADC Water Sector has developed a hydro-climatic data sharing protocol agreement for countries along the Zambezi river basin. Other data sharing protocols exist within the hydro-meteorological services and DRM units at national level;



While global, capacities in early warning and preparedness are reportedly higher now than two years ago, in several African countries, including Burkina Faso, Lesotho, Sierra Leone and Togo, governments still struggle with low levels of operational capacity, specifically for early warning systems. 2011 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction

- SADC is developing a framework for an Regional Agricultural Policy, that will also take into account CCA in agriculture;
- SADC Secretariat established an inter-Directorate, multi-disciplinary Disaster Emergency Response Team in 2008, to guide secretariat's response to trans-boundary disasters and humanitarian assistance.

Among SADC Member States many countries have made progress in developing policy and institutional mechanism for disaster risk reduction. Many countries have reviewed their policies to align them to disaster risk reduction platforms for instance Botswana, Mozambique, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland. South Africa DRR framework considers decentralization of disaster risk management. Some multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary national platforms for disaster risk reduction are replicated at provincial, district and local levels.

*By Kenneth Masamvu
Disaster Risk Reduction Advisor
SADC Secretariat*



People lined up for water at a natural source in the western Cameroon town of Mbouda. Facing a particularly long dry season Mbouda is seeing severe water shortages after a catchment area dried up. March 2009 (Photo courtesy of IRIN News)

Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa

National Level



Women with belongings on their heads taking part in a flood simulation exercise. Floods have cost hundreds of lives and millions of dollars in damages in recent years in parts of Caia, Mozambique, 2008 (Photo courtesy of IRIN News)

Local monitoring of the Hyogo Framework for Action

Búzi, Mozambique

The Mozambican National Institute for Disaster Management (INGC) and the Platform of Civil Society Organisations (G20) promote local multi-stakeholder dialogue for the implementation and monitoring of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

With support from UNISDR and UNDP, a multi-stakeholder dialogue involving a range of disaster risk reduction actors from the national to district level took place in the District of Búzi (Sofala Province) from 14-15, April 2011

The event that took place in Mozambique was part of a wider initiative that covered five countries around the world in collaboration with the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) for Disaster Reduction and funding from ECHO (European Commission – Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection). The other four countries that participated were Armenia, Indonesia, Nepal and Peru.

Why multi-stakeholder dialogue?

The purpose of the dialogue was mainly twofold: 1/ capture the learning of the existing dialogue mechanisms in place in the District of Búzi, that result in a wide participation of stakeholders and the development of joint action plans to manage the existing levels of risk posed by the proximity of the river Búzi and the cyclone-prone coastline; and 2/ establish a baseline for the monitoring of the progress towards the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action using a set of indicators taken from the UNISDR-developed Local HFA Monitor tool to be rolled-out in 2011.

The local HFA monitor is designed to complement the national level reporting that countries have committed to on a biennial basis. Mirroring the multi-stakeholder dialogue that takes place at the national level, the local-level

dialogue provides key information and an assessment of the situation from a local perspective.

Up until recently, the main process to capture information of progress at the local level was through the Global Network's Views from the Frontline participatory engagement tool, designed to monitor, review and report on critical aspects of "local governance" considered essential to building disaster resilient communities.

Why Búzi?

The District of Búzi was considered an ideal location for the purpose of this pilot initiative. Beyond the existing risk profile and recent history of disasters, the locality has demonstrated significant resilience and proactiveness in matters of risk reduction.

With the support of the German International Cooperation or GIZ (former GTZ), a multi-faceted Disaster Risk Management (DRM) programme was implemented in the district, and resulted in the establishment of a people-oriented inter-district early warning system for the catchment area of the River Búzi (SIDPABB). In addition, efforts were undertaken to integrate DRM into regular district development planning.

In addition, the district presents a number of characteristics that have potential for learning and replication to other local communities in the country.

The dialogue

To initiate the process, INGC, in collaboration with the Platform of CSOs (G20), approached the Provincial level and District Administration of Búzi to undertake such a dialogue. A two-day event was hosted with the patronage of the District Administrator and representatives of INGC,

including the Director of the National Emergency Operation Centre (CENOE), Dr. Dulce Chilundo.

The dialogue brought together over sixty participants, including a high number of female representatives. In addition to the local government officials and INGC, the following stakeholders were represented: Mozambican Red Cross, local NGOs, traditional and religious leaders, farmer groups, private sector and selected members of the different Local Disaster Management Committees.

Through focus group discussions relevant local HFA indicators were examined, and the findings were shared with all. The process highlighted the numerous successes, as well as the areas requiring further attention. The shortfall in equipment for effective response in the event of floods was identified. The lack of permanent district representation of the INGC was also felt as a limiting factor to sustain the efforts initiated. The participants also expressed their interest in re-iterating the same process, but want to do so in conjunction with representatives of other districts included in the SIDPABB.

The dialogue has been documented both in a report and video footage, and the main findings will be presented at the national level to the Technical Council for Disaster Management (CTGC), where the relevance and feasibility of the replication of such a pilot will be considered with the key national stakeholders.

*By Edward Turvill
UNISDR DRR Advisor*

Nigerian platform reviews national strategies on disaster risk reduction

In order to increase collaboration and coordination among stakeholders in Nigeria, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the national platform for disaster risk reduction held a multi-stakeholder workshop on 13 -14 July 2010 on Disaster Risk Reduction. The 105 workshop participants were drawn from 46 organizations including government, academicians, non-governmental organizations and the civil society. The forum also targeted to boost the commitment of the different stakeholders including academicians and policy makers in supporting vulnerable communities in addressing disaster risk reduction.

The expected output of the workshop was to review and expand the National Action Plans on DRR from 2010-2015; link Climate Change Adaptation to DRR; to identify the roles of each stakeholder in DRR and to make follow up plans in various sectors.

UNISDR has encouraged every country to establish the National Platforms to address Disaster Risk Reduction across all sectors of the economy. The National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction is a forum for informed decision making, providing a framework for systematic thought and commitment to priority actions across sectors and territory in Nigeria. The National Action Plan for DRR is a vital national document in charting appropriate direction for Disaster Management and overall nation's development. The existing Action Plan has already addressed many of the action points, while there are identified gaps in its development and implementation, hence the need to review the existing National Action Plan for DRR.

The workshop was entirely brainstorming, educative, refreshing and interactive. Participants were divided in groups of which were given an opportunity to report on progress in the area of Disaster Risk Reduction since 2006. Other presentations were on Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) adopted Guidelines on Disaster Risk Management and the Mid Term Review of Hyogo Framework of Action.

The participants were also focused on identification of Hazard sector plan of action for 2010-2015 on DRR and continuing working groups. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) was established to manage disasters in Nigeria. Therefore, from inception, NEMA has been tackling disaster related issues through the establishment of concrete structures and measures that enable it detect, respond and combat disasters in a timely manner. With continuous over-whelming support from the Federal Government and other stakeholders in Disaster Management, NEMA will continue to improve in its capability and effectiveness to discharge its duties ardently.

*By Kayode Fagbemi
National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NEMA)*

The case of Cape Verde

Disaster risk reduction is ultimately the greatest challenge to sustainable development in developing countries, and specifically in small islands such as Cape Verde. Natural hazards in Cape Verde have continued to manifest differently depending on the physical characteristics of different islands. The combined effects of the physical configuration and intensity of some climate phenomena has accentuated disaster risks.

Therefore, it is crucial for the country to develop and implement a National Development Management Plan on disaster risk reduction and management as a key instrument in facilitating Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRR/DRM). Since DRR and DRM is a crosscutting issue, the development of the National Development Management involves a broad range of stakeholders to cooperate and coordinate their activities in order to effectively reduce disaster risks. Several West African countries have successfully launched National Platforms for disaster risk reduction in line with the concerns of UNISDR, African Union (AU) and ECOWAS, who have encouraged countries to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015.

The Government of Cape Verde, through the National Service of Civil Protection (NSCP) is setting up the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), to enable Cape Verde to include the DRR network in the process of building its capacity in research, training, experiences sharing, technical and material support, humanitarian operations, intervention forces and joint action plans in the region. Cape Verde, in the process of developing a National Development Management Plan on disaster risk reduction is engaging all relevant DRR/M sectors, governments, institutions and civil society in a consultative and participatory process.

In the process of preparing the National Development plan, a situation analysis was presented as good practices in implementing the priorities of the HFA in Cape Verde, these include:

- existing laws on the civil protection
- operational national platform and focal for DRR
- existence of a dynamic structure (NSPC) with the capacity to mobilize municipalities and communities an established national contingency plan for disaster reduction;
- municipal emergency plans developed
- production of advocacy and training booklets on DRR
- existing emergency communication network
- existing bilateral and multilateral scientific and technical cooperation

Measures to be implemented

For mitigation and preparedness against natural hazards in Cape Verde, the options to be implemented are as follows:

Structural: Structural measures in urban areas to reduce risks include improving drainage systems, retaining dikes, construction of a rain water pumping station, protection of slopes. Structural measures in coastal areas and tourist

expansion to implement 'Buffer Zones' to reduce the risks associated with climate change and marine invasion, and to protect environmental areas (wetlands and protected areas).

Non-structural: Elaboration of major hazards mapping, GIS Municipal; mapping areas of urban development and tourism attractions, implementation of sustainable development plans of municipalities; early warning systems and civil protection plans in highly susceptible zones.

Recommendations

Implementation of the municipal risk cartography as a framework in municipal planning and development plan;

Use municipal risk cartography as an essential tool in emergency planning.

Lessons Learned and the way forward

1. Sustained effort must be made in the on-going analysis of vulnerabilities in situations of risk;
2. Focus is to be stressed on information management and capacity building to raise awareness and influence behaviour change among all stakeholders;
3. Risk assessment studies should be strengthened in respect to risk characterization and degree of risk in different Municipalities / Islands; a detailed classification of risks in terms of a dynamic review of the municipal plans and emergency planning.
4. Three areas are fundamental for the reduction and management of natural hazards in Cape Verde:
 - a. Implement and strengthen the early warning system at national, municipal and community levels, using the existing observation and Monitoring Network (seismometers, volcanology, climatology, oceanography, sectorial GIS);
 - b. Map the major risks in the areas most vulnerable to planning strategic responses in terms of reception and shelter of populations affected by disasters;
 - c. Increase the participatory engagement at a community level, using a systematic approach of experience sharing; capacity building on "Hazard and Vulnerability Mapping", taking into account the natural environment, livelihood, knowledge and traditional techniques.

*By Charles Yvon Rocha
Senior Consultant / Environment Specialist*

Ghana: Building a gender responsive culture in DRR

The National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change adaptation was inaugurated in Ghana in October 2009. This occasion drove up the involvement of several stakeholders, including civil society organizations, NGOs, educational institutions and other organizations in the disaster risk reduction process. The essence of the Platform was to make disaster risk reduction 'everybody's businesses'. As an effort to sensitize and empower the capacity of women in DRR, the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) in collaboration with ABANTU for Development, with the support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organized regional forums under the theme "Promoting Gender Responsiveness in Disaster Risk Management/Reduction". These Forums were organized in 2009 in all the ten regions of Ghana with the objectives to:

- increase participants' understanding of gender concerns and needs in disaster risk reduction
- develop participants' capacities in addressing gender issues in disaster risk reduction
- strengthen participants' ability to urge the government to take action to integrate gender perspectives into disaster risk reduction legislation, policies and programmes for sustainable development

The forum employed a participatory approach in the form of presentations by various facilitators with expertise in gender and disaster management. The participants were drawn from several institutions including the security services, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community based organisations (CBOs) and other institutions that addressed disaster management and risk reduction services.

Recommendation

While the NADMO/ABANTU Disaster Risk Reduction Project on promoting gender responsiveness was an insight to the participants, more needs to be done in ensuring that women's inclusion into the mainstream of DRR is realised. As such the forum reached the following recommendations:

- UN agencies, regional organizations and national institutions should increase genuine political accountability and financial resources for global advocacy and action on mainstreaming gender
- The conceptual and practical understanding of the linkages between gender and disaster risk reduction particularly at the national level be improved
- Enforce implementation of DRR measures and assign accountability for failure
- Facilitate participation of civil society, especially women's groups in DRR
- Make policy planning inclusive of all stakeholders
- Structure legal and regulatory frameworks on DRR that are responsive to gender
- Policies should provide a multi-sectoral framework for DRR and institutions for coordination for government agencies and other relevant stakeholders
- Establish administrative structures that promote the implementation disaster risk reduction polices

- Establish local institutions with the capacity for decentralization planning, decision-making and implementation of disaster risk management programmes
- Create forums for government, civil society, NGOs, to promote sector and community participation.

Community and individuals

- Create a favorable political environment that supports and promotes gender responsiveness and participatory practices which provide specific opportunities for women to be involved in decision making in order to implement viable disaster risk activities
- Build institutional and individual capacity to enhance gender responsiveness in disaster risk reduction
- Training should permeate into the districts level in order to raise more awareness on DRR among the grassroots people
- NADMO should regularly conduct monitoring and evaluate exercises among participants to measure the levels of impact of their forums
- Effective advocacy campaigns should be carried at community level using media tools such as radio dramas, town-hall discussions among others
- Tap on the indigenous knowledge especially among women
- More women need to be trained to act as ambassadors on DRR and climate change

NADMO in partnership with UNDP have also prepared a DRR programme proposal for Ghana following the indicators for the five pillars of the HFA 2005-2015. Some the action plans, include: to review the draft law for Disaster Management and Climate Change Adaptation concepts where most effective, develop a specific tool for disaster/climate risk assessment for the Ghana context (in collaboration with ECOWAS regional project). NADMO also plans to roll-out a strategy for national public awareness on DRR/CCA which will include an effective use of media.

*By National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO)
National Platform, Ghana*

Natural hazards training package launched to strengthen disaster management in Kenya

Recent events in Kenya have shown that the country is increasingly becoming predisposed to hazards such as floods, droughts, landslides, fire and other consequences of climate change. This continues to threaten both sustainable development and poverty-reduction initiatives. The key drawback in the government's efforts to initiate disaster risk reduction programmes and activities to address dangers posed these hazards, are little understood and have not been given the needed attention.

Against this background the UNISDR Regional Office for Africa held a pilot workshop on "Training of Trainers" in the Rift Valley Province, Kenya to test a toolkit to "train trainers" in disaster risk reduction in Nakuru – on the 25-26 August 2010.

"The outcome of this training will create a super highway for spreading hazard and disaster risk reduction information to local communities, thereby increasing their knowledgebase and consequently their resilience to natural disasters," said Pedro Basabe, Head of the UNISDR Regional Office for Africa. "It is also projected that the pilot training in Kenya will help the participants to fine tune their own approaches to disaster risk reduction, as they apply the lessons from elsewhere on the continent."

In attendance were over 40 disaster risk reduction platform members from various provinces, and five regional participants from Burundi, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Kenya, along with representatives from other governments and the United Nations.

Also available is a factsheet developed by UNISDR – at the request of the Kenya National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction – called "Natural Hazard Factsheets for Kenya," targeted at disaster risk managers, disaster emergency responders and others in order to mitigate and prepare for disasters more effectively. The factsheets are designed to help practitioners in disaster risk reduction to identify vulnerabilities unique to different parts of the country, depending on the types of natural hazards that each part is most likely to face.

The draft Training of Trainers toolkit teaches practitioners to use the Natural Hazard Factsheet when training actors at the grassroots level on actions to take on disaster risk reduction. Communities will be trained on the various aspects of hazards and how to use local means and resources to adapt, mitigate and cope with these hazards so they do not turn into disasters. District Disaster Management Committees (DDMC) are also likely to find the fact sheets useful in their mitigation, prevention and preparedness

Industrialized countries can sustain economic losses resulting from disasters, and loss of life is usually very low because of effective forecasting and warning systems. However, in developing countries, disasters tend to result in heavy loss of life and livelihood, because a majority of people have too little disaster knowledge.

With extreme weather events becoming more intense and frequent, the Kenyan government is recognizing the need to understand and prepare for disasters. Several institutions of higher learning are now running undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses in disaster management. The government has also started to institute various legal and institutions mechanisms for disaster preparedness, response and mitigation.

In addition, community vulnerability to disasters is an important – and often overlooked – dimension of poverty, which can have significant adverse effects on social and economic development. Community training and awareness can contribute to reducing such vulnerability.

The natural hazards training package also known as the training toolkit was developed by the Kenya National Disaster risk reduction (DRR) Platform through the Ministry of State for Special programmes (MoSSP) with technical and financial support from UNISDR, Regional Office for Africa and the Government of Germany.

The reviewers include Mr. Julius Kabubi [Consultant, UNISDR (Africa)], Beatrice Teya (UNDP, Kenya), Mr. Thomas Nyambane (UN OCHA, Kenya), Matioli Ministry (MoSSP) and Dr. J. Obiri of Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. Rhea Katsanakis from UNISDR Regional Office provided the technical inputs and guidance of the development of this toolkit by which laid the foundation of this manual. The manual is developed by Nicodemus Nyandiko, a disaster risk reduction specialist.

The training package also benefited immensely from the inputs and feedback received from the participants during the workshop and stakeholders.

*By Julius N. Kabubi
DRR Advisor*

Monrovia, Liberia

Delegates adopt a resolution at the DRR advocacy workshop

High level participants drawn from government agencies, NGOs and civic organizations adopted a resolution to protect present and future generations in Liberia from disasters. The resolution was made during the "Disaster risk reduction advocacy and sensitization" workshop that took place in Monrovia from 12-13 May 2010. The aim of the workshop was to advocate, sensitize and advance the course of DRR and development to protect the Liberian population from disaster risk reduction.

During the deliberations, the participants agreed that there is an urgent need to mainstream and integrate DRR activities into national planning and development to avoid future catastrophes in all manifestations for present and future generations in Liberia. The participants also established that there is inevitability for a holistic approach in national development planning and implementation at all levels and all sections of the country for an effective coordination of management mechanism;

Resolution adopted by the participants at the disaster risk reduction advocacy and sensitization workshop

We the Representatives of women groups, youth organizations, local and national government officials, civil society organizations, NGOs, the private sector, with support from the Government of Liberia and the UNDP;

HAVING met to advocate, sensitize ourselves and advance the course of DRR and development and the Liberia populace about disaster risk reduction at the Cape Hotel in Mamba Point, Monrovia from 12 – 13 May 2010;

RECOGNIZING the urgent need to mainstream and integrate disaster risk reduction activities into national planning and development to avoid future catastrophes in all manifestations for present and future generations and to save this one patrimony known as Liberia;

CONSIDERING that a holistic approach is needed for national development planning and implementation at all levels and all sections of the country for orderly coordination of management mechanism;

NOW THEREFORE, RESOLVED as follows:

1. Acknowledge and recognize the support and commitment of the Government of Liberia as evidenced by the presence of the Vice President of the Republic of Liberia at the workshop;
2. That disaster risk reduction, prevention, management and response require the highest political commitment and support for policy planning and implementation to enhance material and financial support to prevent the unnecessary massive financial and human losses that may arise as a result of disasters.

3. That synergy among all stakeholders be encouraged and promoted at all levels and sectors of the society to enhance sustainability of gains made from DRR interventions
4. That a National Action Plan (NAP) incorporating best practices on disaster risk reduction be established immediately, adopted and ratified by the Government as a guiding tool for implementation of DRR at all levels;
5. That we recognize the ongoing process for establishment of national disaster management policy and seek the indulgence of our political leaders to speed up the process of adoption and ratification of the necessary legal instruments to enhance the implementation of the DRR and disaster management in general
6. That regional cooperation on disaster risk reduction be encouraged within the Mano River Union, ECOWAS and AU; including but not limited to activities such as resource and information sharing and training for joint programming across the borders of our countries as may be determined and appropriate to enhance regional collaboration and development

In Witness Whereof, we the participants do hereby set our hands on this document this 13th Day of May 2010 in the City of Monrovia, Montserrado County, Republic of Liberia.

The DRR sensitization workshop was facilitated by UNISDR in collaboration with UNDP/BCPR. The workshop had representatives of women groups, youth organizations, local and national government officials, civil society organizations, NGOs, the private sector, with support from the Government of Liberia and the UNDP.

*By Aliou Dia
ECOWAS DRR Advisor*

Namibia

Progress in disaster risk management

The national disaster management system established in Namibia in 1994 continues to enjoy support and leadership from the highest offices: the State House, the Office of the Prime Minister, sector ministries, the Regional Councils, constituencies, the development partners and the Namibia Red Cross Society.

After realising the increased strain on government caused by droughts, floods, wild fires, disease outbreaks, the Cabinet saw it fit to establish a disaster management system to coordinate the response to these external shocks. This was in the era of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) 1990-1999. The focus of the millennium was to address disaster mitigation. Namibia established the National Emergency Management System (NMS), a multi-stakeholder disaster management structure in 1994. The NMS has structures at national, regional (sub-national), constituency and settlement/village levels.

In response to the call for a paradigm shift from the disaster response to disaster risk reduction, the Namibia disaster management has since 2005 adopted the disaster risk reduction approach. The need to systematically reduce the increased impact of disasters is steadily gaining recognition and commitment among public and private decision makers.

The major milestones in disaster risk management in Namibia are chronicled below:

- **1994:** The establishment of a permanent disaster management institution in the Office of the Prime Minister to coordinate the development of disaster management policies, disaster preparedness and response.
- **1998:** The National Disaster Plan; “The objective of this disaster preparedness action plan and policy document is to ensure that in times of disaster, appropriate response systems, procedures and resources are in place to assist the victims of a disaster and enable them to help themselves”.
- **2005:** A capacity needs assessment (CNA) was conducted for Namibia with support from UNDP. A comprehensive report Capacity Needs Assessment for Disaster Risk Management. Country Report. November 2005 was compiled. The report provided a review of the Namibia disaster management system, an inventory and review of national capacity building initiatives in disaster risk reduction and National Action Plan (NAP). The CNA and NAP were a departure from the traditional disaster management approach and an introduction to disaster risk reduction.
- **2006:** With support from UNPD/BCPR, two International United Nations Volunteers (IUNVs) were recruited to support the enhancement of disaster risk management in Namibia. One IUNV was seconded to the then Directorate Disaster Risk Management while the other was in the Resident Coordinator’s Office. The task for the IUNVs was to support the implementation of the NAP.

- **2008-2009:** The development, approval and endorsement of the National Disaster Risk Management Policy. The endorsement of the DRM policy was a commitment by Government to disaster risk reduction as enunciated in the HFA 2005-2015.
- The Right Honourable Prime Minister officially commissioned the development of the draft DRM policy in November 2006. (which can be found at <http://www.newera.com.na/article.php?db=oldarchive&articleid=13890>) and set the agenda for disaster risk management in Namibia.
- **2009-2010:** The DRM policy provided a framework for the development of the Draft Disaster Risk Management Bill which was approved by Cabinet in August 2010 and is currently awaiting promulgation.
- Much progress was made in **2010**, Namibia launched the National Platform for Disaster Reduction. UNISDR Africa supported the launch at which national stakeholders reviewed progress in disaster risk management and provided recommendations to accelerate the implementation of the HFA 2005-2015 Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters <http://www.unisdr.org/eng/hfa/docs/HFA-brochure-English.pdf>.
- **In June 2010**, UNISDR Africa supported the development of Disaster Risk Management Training kit targeting sub-national and local authorities staff and community leaders; UNISDR further supported the development of an Annual workplan for the National Platform for Disaster Reduction;
- August 2010: Namibia completed the online HFA monitor that showed the progress made in implementation of the HFA. This will be the first time Namibia has submitted its HFA progress report.
- **In September 2010**, additional support was provided in the development of a National Strategy for Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into the National Development Plan and Macroeconomic Frameworks.
- Finally with support from UNISDR, UNOCHA and national stakeholders, Namibia conducted a disaster risk reduction project mapping. The mapping exercise was designed to improve
 - (i) information sharing on past, ongoing, and planned DRR initiatives;
 - (ii) coordination and program planning by national stakeholders;
 - (iii) the use of resources; (iv) the level of duplication;
 - (v) the sharing of lessons learned;
 - (vi) the identification of gaps in national DRR efforts. The mapping exercise is however yet to be completed through development of maps.
- **2010:** A website for Directorate Disaster Risk Management (DDRM) was developed (Available at <http://www.ddrm.gov.na/>.) The website that is still under development provides some key documents and publication on disaster risk management in Namibia.
- Between 2008 to 2010 records show an increased impacts of flood disasters. The period witnessed the highest numbers of people affected by floods and substantial damages as shown in the table below.

Year	Number affected	Estimated damage and losses US\$
2008	215,257	81,619,583
2009	677,542	136,400,000
2010	28,230	0
Total	921,029	218,019,583

Source: Office of the Prime Minister Directorate Disaster Risk Management 2008 and 2010 and Post Disaster Needs Assessment 2009.

This period marked the increased participation of the international community. United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC), EU Civil Protection, World Bank, UNDP specialized UN agencies (UNOSAT and UNSPIDER) and civil society organizations that played a critical role in rapid assessments, provision of humanitarian assistance and guidance in early recovery.

Success stories

- Improved disaster response coordination;
- Participation of national stakeholders and international community in Post Disaster Needs Assessment using standard tools for damage and loss assess the Economic Commission For Latin America and Caribbean (ECLAC);

- Increased participation of the international community and specialised organizations for early warning (UNSPIDER, UNOSAT)
- Conducting lessons learned following the disasters;
- Increased capacity for resource mobilization (preparation of Flash appeals), compiling post disaster reports and early recovery frameworks
- Development of policy and legislative frameworks that provided guidance in implementation of disaster risk reduction activities;
- Effective consultation that provided opportunities for increased knowledge and advocacy for DRR and
- Increased political commitment to disaster risk reduction.

Conclusion

The progress in disaster risk management in Namibia was a combined effort from national stakeholders that included government ministries and departments, the regional councils, UN agencies both resident and non-resident, Namibia Red Cross Society, USAID and international organizations. The civil society organizations, private sector and individuals made their contributions in several ways particularly in emergency response.

*By MacDonald Kadzatsa
on behalf of Office of the Prime Minister -
Directorate Disaster Risk Management.*



Boys in the Dabondy neighbourhood of Guinea's capital Conakry fill sacks with sand and gravel. The area sees flooding every rainy season. (Photo courtesy of IRIN news)

Building Resilience and Reducing Vulnerability in Africa



Making Cities Resilient

My City is Getting Ready!



**Sign up
today** to make
your **city** resilient
to disasters



International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
Regional Office for Africa





Cities are becoming progressively more, generators of new risks: failed infrastructure and services, environmental urban degradation and increasing informal settlements. Photo credit of IRIN News

Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa

World Disaster Reduction Campaign

Is your city getting ready?

Cities are becoming progressively more, generators of new risks: failed infrastructure and services, environmental urban degradation and increasing informal settlements. Citizens have never been at so much risk. Even more when combined with the impact of extreme climate events and increased poverty –the increased crowding of more people are settling in potential danger zones such as on unstable hills, flood plains, coastal areas, volcanic flanks and earthquake faults. With weather patterns becoming more unpredictable and extreme, costs of this magnitude may become commonplace in all parts of the world unless citizens and governments anticipate the consequences of the economic and social development, and to ensure that risk assessments become a routine part of planning.

It is against this background that four cities : Addis Ababa, Kampala, Narok and Yaoundé, joined the Making Cities Resilience campaign after their mayors took part in a debate on city resilience on Tuesday, 29 March, moderated by top Kenyan journalist Yvonne Okwara. A representative from ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, an association of over 1,220 local government officials from over 70 countries, was also part of the panel.

Panelists pointed to poor planning, corruption, and negative attitudes as elements that could erode city resilience. They said the way to advance disaster risk reduction was to raise public awareness, stimulate stronger political commitment and to cultivate partnerships for cities to learn from each

other and improve the awareness on urban disaster risk and solutions.

“The challenges faced by my city and other cities in Africa include high poverty and rapid urbanization, which puts pressure on existing infrastructure and informal settlements. Often, other priorities are addressed at the expense of disaster preparedness,” said Samuel Okello the Mayor of Kisumu (Kenya).

“We will now review our strategic plan for the city to include disaster risk reduction and the ten essentials of the campaign. But we also need a system to monitor progress on how we perform,” added, Mr. Okello.

City officials suggested that the “Making Cities Resilient” campaign be used to raise the awareness of both politicians and the public, so that its “ten essential actions” are incorporated into city planning and budgeting processes throughout the continent. National authorities dealing with local and urban development should also be involved in recruiting cities to join the campaign, they added.

Panelists also stressed the importance of transparency and the need to combat corruption.

“One of the biggest impediments in addressing urban sustainability is corruption and the general lack of political buy-in,” said Ms. Allen Kisige, representing Kampala City Council.

UNISDR together with its partners are promoting for commitment for sustainable development practices that will reduce disaster risk and increase the wellbeing and safety of citizens - to invest today for a better tomorrow. The Making Cities Resilient Campaign builds on previous campaigns focusing on education and the safety of schools and hospitals. The campaign also seeks to convince city leaders and local governments to commit to a checklist of Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient and to work alongside local activists, grassroots networks and national authorities.

UNISDR and its partners have developed this checklist as a starting point for all those who want to join in the campaign. Equally important is that commitment to these Ten Essentials (see box below)

UNISDR will empower local governments and other agencies to implement the HFA 2005-2015, adopted by 168 governments in 2005. Good urban and local governance is the key to this resilience! Urban risk reduction delivers many benefits. When successfully applied as part of sustainable urbanization, resilient cities help reduce poverty, provide for growth and employment, and deliver greater social equity, fresh business opportunities, more balanced ecosystems, better health and improved education.

Targets

My city is getting ready! Mayors and their local governments are both the key targets and drivers of the campaign.

Rapid urbanization can bring prosperity and opens up opportunities to many people. This is the case where cities are well planned and well governed, keeping up with needed expansion in infrastructure and services. There are many rapidly growing cities where vulnerability has been reduced or controlled by good governance.

Overall objective

The overall target of the 2010-2011 World Disaster Reduction Campaign is to get as many local governments ready as possible, to span a global network of fully engaged cities of different sizes, characteristics, risk profiles and locations. The campaign is focusing on raising political commitment to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation among local governments and mayors; including through high profile media and public awareness activities, and will develop specific technical tools that cater for capacity development opportunities.

A city's commitment to resilience can bring many benefits including, innovation to save lives and livelihood through proper planning and preparedness, sustainable urbanization with broad based participation, and social, environmental and economic gains. Many governments, even with the best of intentions, cannot keep up with the enormous growth and pressure on infrastructure.

More than 800 cities have already joined the UNISDR World Disaster Reduction Campaign and are committed to complying with one or more of the Ten Essentials.

UNISDR works closely with UN agencies such as UNHABITAT, whose own campaign promotes sustainable urbanization (World Urban Campaign); WHO and UNICEF, on hospital and school safety; NEPAD; the African Union (AU); city associations; and organizations such as the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability and CityNet.

Beyond Crises; Opportunities and Actions

Maputo and Overstrand join the campaign

Maputo (Mozambique) and Overstrand Municipality (South Africa) were one of the local governments to roll out the World Disaster Reduction Campaign "Making Cities Resilient - My city is getting ready!"

The signing ceremony of two local governments took place at the campaign launch held by UNISDR with its partners UNHABITAT at the Planning Africa 2010 conference, in Durban, South Africa. The conference, whose theme was Beyond Crisis; Opportunities and Actions, was held against a backdrop of extreme climate events that recently triggered floods in Burkina Faso, Kenya and Niger, and landslides in Tanzania and Uganda. Floods and landslides have caused widespread damage in urban areas.

"Overstrand is full of natural beauty and rich in marine life. We are therefore signing up to preserve our environment," said Theo Beyleveldt, Mayor of Overstrand Municipality, located within the Overberg District Municipality in South Africa's Western Cape province.

"A resilient city and its citizens can benefit greatly from the opportunities presented by urban risk reduction actions" said Helena Molin Valdes, Deputy Director of UNISDR who was present at the launch. "We are inviting people to take an active role in the campaign so that our cities and urban centres can become safer today and for generations to come."

Ms. Valdés said that extreme climate conditions were among the major contributors to risk, as seen with the recent floods that had caused enormous loss of lives and livelihoods hit Pakistan. With cities becoming more prone to climate-triggered disasters, local governments will face a greater challenge in strengthening the public's readiness to reduce disaster impacts.

Mayor of St. Louis, Senegal, named Campaign Champion



UNISDR names Mayor of Saint Louis, Senegal (centre), Champion of the Making Cities Resilient Campaign in recognition of his achievements in advancing DRR and CCA in his City.

UNISDR has named Cheikh Mamadou Abiboulaye Dieye, Mayor of Saint Louis, Senegal, champion of the "Making Cities Resilient" campaign, in recognition of his achievements in advancing disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in Saint Louis City. To mark the occasion, UNISDR held an award ceremony at the "African Cities Commit" regional conference on climate change and local governance. Participants at the conference included mayors from various countries including, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Senegal and Namibia. So far, over 25 African local governments have signed up to the Campaign. The World Disaster Campaign was officially launched in Africa during the African Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction (AWGDRR) held in Nairobi in March 2011.

Nairobi City joins the World Disaster Reduction Campaign

Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya joined the World Disaster Reduction Campaign during a signing ceremony that was held within the celebrations of International Day for Disaster Reduction, 13 October 2010 at the Korogocho informal settlements. The signing ceremony was led by Esther Murugi, Minister of State for Special Programmes and the Pedro Basabe, Head of the UNISDR Africa. (See story on 2010 International Day for Disaster Reduction)

"When I think of what our cities present-- the diverse culture, tourism attractions sites and development opportunities, I am encouraged to organize, coordinate, plan, as well as budget for financial incentives to build safe structures and building, create more awareness and reduce risk," said Geoffrey Majiwa the former mayor of Nairobi.

Almost half of the Kenya's capital city Nairobi's population lives in over 100 informal settlements within the city. Nairobi has some of the most dense, unsanitary and insecure informal settlements in the world, according to the UNHabitat.

Kisumu City, Kenya

Meanwhile, Kisumu, the third largest city in Kenya and the leading communication and trading centre for countries of the Great Lakes Region including Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, joined the campaign at a ceremony held on 8 December 2010. Like many cities in Africa, Kisumu is vulnerable to risks brought by climate change, which coupled with rapid urban growth will pose mounting challenges for the local government as it seeks to protect citizens from disaster.

"Investing in disaster management is one of the Kisumu Municipal Council's top priorities as the city expands and develops," said Mayor Samuel Okello, telling UNISDR that the flood-prone city has become increasingly affected by heavy rain.

The city is also vulnerable to man-made hazards, since it harbours a petroleum container depot -- which carries the risk of potential fires and spillage. As a member of the campaign, Kisumu commits to the checklist of ten essential actions that call for improved urban planning, infrastructure and building safety.

The checklist also calls on cities to reinforce drainage systems to reduce flood, storm and health threats, promotes the installation of early warning systems and public preparedness drills, and suggests measures to adapt to the increasing impacts of climate change.

The signing ceremony took place at a disaster risk reduction/ climate change adaptation conference organized by the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre in Collaboration (ICPAC) on 8 December in Kisumu. (See story on page 50)



The former mayor of Nairobi, Geoffrey Majiwa signs up in the presence of Esther Murugi, Minister of State for Special Programmes and the Pedro Basabe, Head of the UNISDR Africa.

46th ISOCARP Congress highlights urban challenges

The Congress was the first ever to be held in Sub-Saharan Africa.



Kenya Prime Minister , Raila Odinga speaking during the 46th ISOCARP Congress held under the theme of Sustainable City/ Developing World

Under the theme of Sustainable City / Developing World, the 2010 ISOCARP Congress focused on the agenda of sustainable urbanisation. The Congress brought together planners from 81 countries, articulating an active dialogue towards harnessing the benefits and mitigating the negative impacts of urbanisation.

ISOCARP's 46th Congress was the first ever to be held in Sub-Saharan Africa. The host city was in Kenya's capital, Nairobi, a metropolis of pan-African stature and emerging global significance. The Government of Kenya, through the Ministries of Local Government, Lands, Housing and Nairobi Metropolitan Development, and the city government of Nairobi, have expressed their endorsement and support of the event.

Focusing on the World Disaster Campaign, Making Cities Resilient, Helena Molin Valdes, Deputy Director of UNISDR discussed with planners and UN-HABITAT on disaster management and post-disaster plans in cities. The Deputy Mayor of Kabul -- whose city has signed on to the Making cities resilient campaign highlighted his city's challenges in the face of rapid urbanization.

The Delegates explored ideas around the reviewed the role of spatial planning and urban design for sustainability; tensions between environmental sustainability, economic efficiency and social equity. They also reviewed the concept of sustainable cities and the complex dynamics that make sustainable cities achievable.

Some innovations shared at the 46th ISOCARP Congress included energy efficiency and low carbon cities, integrated urban eco-systems, and a sustainable urbanization Score Card, which is actually a good practice presented by representatives of the Ministry of Lands in Kenya.

Delegates did note that for nations to achieve sustainable city development, governments must be willing and committed to the process. Such commitment builds on transparency and encourages participation and partnerships from the urban planning professionals. It is also important to create a dynamic information base for the process and install sound legal and policy frameworks critical for development of sustainable cities.

ISOCARP was formed in 1965. The Congress theme 'Sustainable Cities Developing World' falls directly in line with the ideals of Kenya's Vision 2030 and is particularly relevant as Kenya's urban population is growing extremely rapidly.

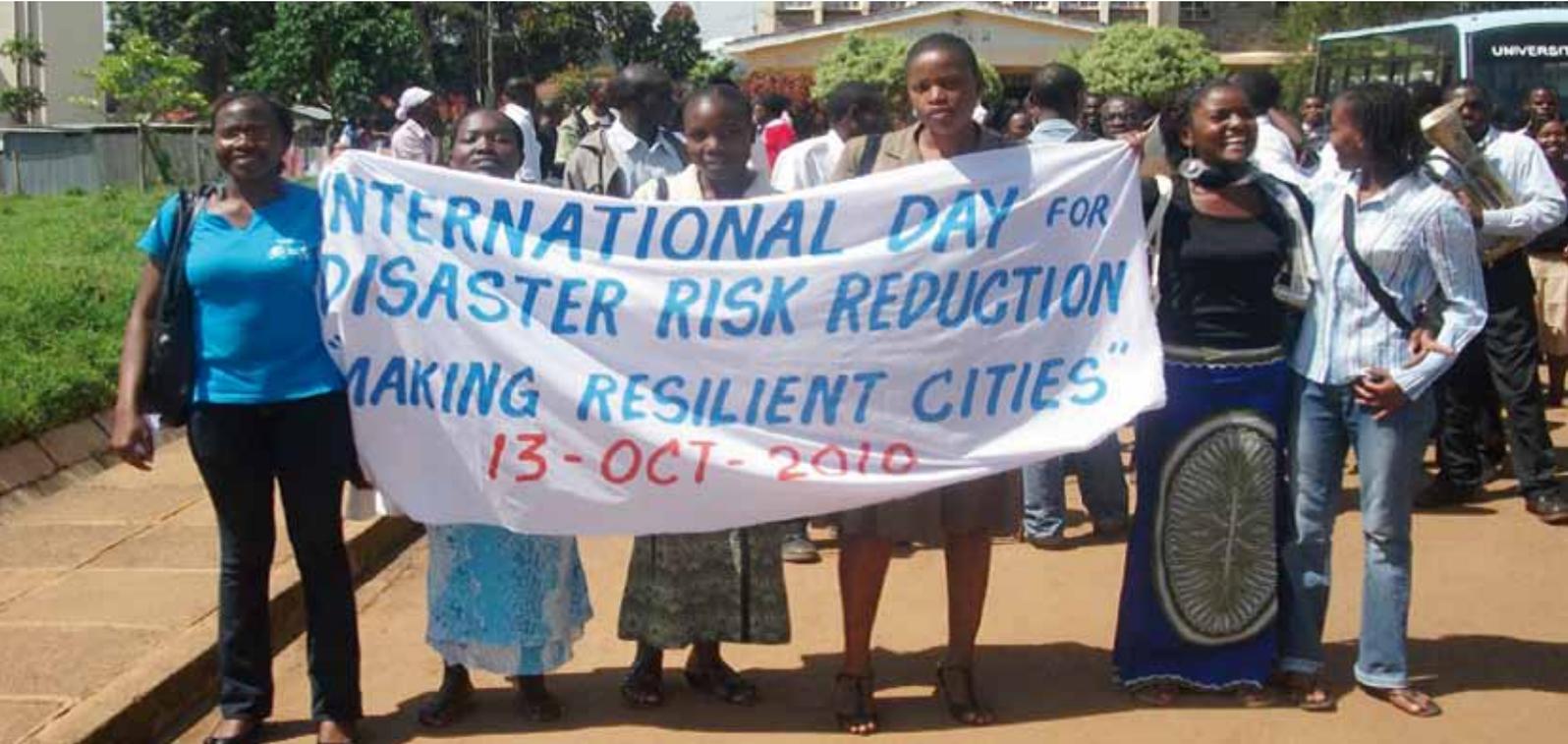
The country's urbanization challenges are evidenced by worsening urban poverty due to high unemployment among urban youth, unregulated urban growth evidenced by informal settlements (slums), shortage of decent low income housing, poor infrastructure and a strained transport system. However, Kenya has recently enacted a new constitution and the stipulations regarding land, its use and the environment have been clearly outlined in the new document. Renewed investor confidence and a projected economic growth rate of 5.8 per cent per annum have seen increased international focus on the country. By hosting this Congress, urban planning professionals in Kenya hope to gain global expertise as the country prepares to enforce reforms and regulations in its legal framework. These reforms will include changes in the urban planning sector.

The conference overlapped with the global launch of the World Disasters Report 2010, in Nairobi. The report was published by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). UNISDR was part of the editorial advisory board of the report whose focus on urban risk coincides with the theme of the World Disaster Reduction Campaign "Making cities resilient- My city is getting ready!"

The Congress was hosted by the Architectural Association of Kenya (AAK), through its Town Planning Chapter. Among the co-hosts for the Congress were UN-Habitat, UNISDR, the ministries of Lands, Housing, Nairobi Metropolitan Development, Local Government and the City Council of Nairobi. Other partner ministries include the ministries of Public Works and Tourism.

*Additional source: ISOCARP
www.unisdr.org/campaign*

2010 International Day for Disaster Reduction



The International Day was also marked in Kakamega, in western Kenya. The focus was on increasing awareness on disaster risk reduction through fire fighting drills and a demo on basic first aid techniques. (Photo courtesy CDMHA)

To mark the International Day for Disaster Reduction 2010, the UNISDR secretariat is calling on its partners to play a more active role to protect cities against disasters. Many cities have been disrupted this year by disasters: earthquakes in Haiti, Chile and New Zealand; floods and heavy rainfalls in Pakistan, Eastern Europe, Mozambique and other parts of Africa; forest fires in Russia; and volcanic eruptions in Indonesia and Iceland. All have caused huge human suffering and economic damage.

Nairobi, Kenya

The 2010 International Day for Disaster reduction was commemorated across Africa and the rest of the world on 13 October 2010. The International Day theme is in support of the 2010-2011 World Disaster Reduction Campaign "Making Cities Resilient". The campaign addresses issues of local governance and urban risk while drawing upon previous ISDR Campaigns on safer schools and hospitals, as well as on the sustainable urbanizations principles developed in the UN-Habitat World Urban Campaign 2009-2013. UNISDR will encourage more mayors and local governments to join the over 800 cities that have already signed up to the international "Making Cities Resilient" campaign.

The 2010 International Day celebrations in Nairobi was organized by UNISDR, Ministry of State for Special Programmes, UNHABITAT, UNOCHA, Kenya Red Cross, St. Johns Ambulance, medics 24, national Disaster Operations Centre, Centre for Disease Control among others. Several

stakeholders participated including the Nairobi City Council which joined the World Disaster Reduction Campaign during the event.

The signing in ceremony was led by Pedro Basabe, Head of the UNISDR Regional Office for Africa and it took place on 13 October during the celebration of International Day for Disaster Reduction at the Korogocho informal settlements. The event was attended by the Hon. Esther Murugi, Minister of State for Special Programmes, Andrew Mondoh, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of State for Special Programmes Alfredo Teixeira, UN Deputy Country Director, Col (Rtd.) V.L. Anami, Director of National Disaster Operations Centre, Dr. James Kisia, Deputy Secretary General, Kenya Red Cross, and representation from UNHabitat and UNOCHA.

"We must press on, invest more, build more capacity and create awareness to protect those who have put us in the position of change," said Hon. Esther Murugi.

The Kenya government through the Ministry of State for Special Programmes developed the National Policy for Disaster Management in Kenya and National Disaster Response Plan to guide disaster risk reduction.

By UNISDR Africa

Kakamega, Kenya

Kakamega is the administrative headquarter of western province in Kenya. It has a population of over 70,000 people most of whom dwell in the urban centre. The town is confronted by various hazards including but not limited to: fires, urban floods, transport accidents, disease and environmental degradation. These events pose a risk to lives, property, infrastructure and livelihoods predominantly. Evidently, this necessitates for disaster risk reduction initiatives at local level, scaling down from other initiatives at international, regional and national ranks.

Risk reduction initiatives:

One of the main strategies in reducing disaster risk is involving partners engaged in disaster management both locally and regionally. Hyogo Framework of Action in priorities one and three stipulates action points of ensuring risk reduction is a national and local priority and that strengthening capacity is integrated at all level of administrative management.

This prompted the Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs-CDMHA- of Masinde Muliro University in collaboration with the Municipal Council, Kenya Red Cross, the fire department and students in disaster management to gather during the International Day for Disaster Reduction. This day focused on increasing awareness on disaster risk reduction through fire fighting drills and a demo on basic first aid techniques.

The key objectives of the event was to demystify disaster risk reduction at the local level

Lessons learnt during the event

- More campaigns geared towards disaster risk reduction are necessary especially in the urban centres.
- The fire drill made it evident that a larger fire fighting engine was needed. This was from the recommendation of the members of the public present,
- More stakeholders and partners are required in the campaign geared towards risk reduction in the Town.
- Documentation of Risk, Hazards and Disaster is necessary.
- More advocacy and public education on DRR/DRM needed.

*By Magoma Shalom
The Center for Disaster Management and
Humanitarian Assistance (CDMHA) of Masinde
Muliro University of Science and Technology.*



IDDR banner displayed

Zanzibar disaster management department promotes DRR

As one of the small islands seated on the coastline of Indian Ocean, Zanzibar is prone and vulnerable to numerous hazards and disasters such as Tsunami, floods, epidemics, strong winds, droughts, man-made calamities, earthquakes and pest infestations. Against this, reducing vulnerability and strengthening risk management capacity are crucial elements of sustainable development strategies; and thus require the Zanzibar community to be well informed on preparedness, response and mitigation to limit disaster risk.

And even in the face of the looming challenges of the 2010 Zanzibar presidential elections, the Zanzibar government through the department of disaster management observed the International Disaster Risk Reduction in order to raise awareness on issues related to disaster risk reduction. The celebrations were also held with the goal to boost Zanzibar's resilience

Through the United Nations Joint Programme (JP 6.2), the Disaster Management department conducted various activities including training workshops and media interviews in recognition of the International Day under this year's theme Making Cities Resilient – My City is getting ready".

The Disaster Management department conducted two-day workshops that were held in Zanzibar's two main islands, Unguja and Pemba. The trainings had a turnout of over 100 students from various local higher learning institutions and different study backgrounds. The objective of the workshops was based on the HFA priority for action (3) recommending the use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels. The students from different study fields participated in the event to be better with DRR knowledge in their respective fields

The first workshop was held in Pemba from 6-7 October while the second one was held in Unguja from 9-10 October 2010. The workshop in Pemba involved 50 participants of whom 45% were female; and Unguja workshop also involved 50 participants (48% were female).

The organizers of the workshops also anticipated that the students would be well-appointed into DRR ambassadors, advocating the importance of disaster management and integrating it in all levels of the education sector.

The workshop began by introducing the participants to the DRR concept including, terminologies, components, stakeholders, risk assessment and management, risk transfer, vulnerability and the Hyogo Framework for Action; Priorities for action.

The workshop also sensitized on the concept of climate change impacts, the Millennium Development Goals as well as actions to mitigate climate change.

In line with the current World Disaster Campaign, Making Cities Resilient, My City is Getting Ready, various presentations focused on challenges related to urbanization including: Concept of urbanization, Urbanization process and Disaster risks, Settlement patterns, Urban Context, Emerging issues for Zanzibar Urban, Major Urban disaster in Zanzibar.

The workshop also gave an overview of the concept of Incident command system and coordination as applied to disaster environment. The topic illustrated the difference between incidents and events with their respective characteristics, disaster concept, command and coordination with the modalities to perform these functions.

At the end of the workshop the students posed questions and gave feedback, which showed that they had understood the general concepts and grasped the relevance of disaster risk reduction and management.

DRR discussions on TV and Radio

Disaster Management department organized different TV and radio programmes to campaign for DRR and announce the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The one hour live TV discussions engaged officers from Disaster Management Department (DMD), Fire and Rescue Department and Department of Urban Planning and Surveys.

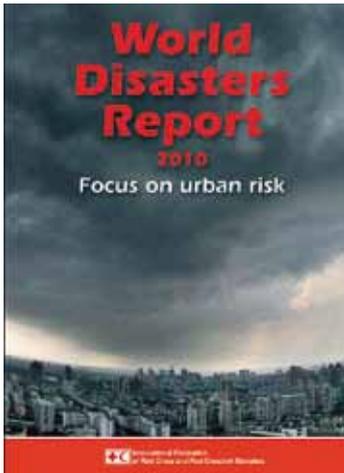
On 12 and 13 October 2010, The Minister of State Chief Minister's Office, Mr. Hamza Hassan Juma delivered a public statement through Television and Radio Zanzibar announcing the commemoration of International Day.

DMD also organized a theatrical performance by a popular group in Zanzibar "Vituko vya Mashaka". The play was aired on Television Zanzibar more than five times during the two weeks of the International celebration commemoration. The drama intended to demystify to different members of the community's their roles towards resilience.

Like many African cities, Zanzibar towns are growing rapidly in terms of infrastructure and population. This has given rise to a number of unplanned settlements which point to a multiple or risks including climate-change and man-made risks.

The activities that were executed during this year International Day have led to different concepts for pushing forward the DRR agenda in Zanzibar. One proposal is to have such activities conducted not only on International Days but on a regular basis in order use to build a culture of safety and resilience in Zanzibar.

*The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar
The Second Vice President Office*



The 2010 World Disasters Report (WDR) focuses on urban risk in the context of a world which is urbanizing rapidly, where over half the world's population now live in cities for the first time and more people than ever before live in slums. Urban poverty and disaster risk are often closely intertwined and the links between urban poverty and disaster risk will be increased by climate change.

Pretoria, South Africa

"In the years that I have worked in this country in the humanitarian sector, this is the first gathering where we see the Government, academia, youth, civil society and the private sector discussing a common issue – community vulnerability. It just feels so right!" These were the sentiments expressed by one of the delegates attending the South African Red Cross (SARCS) launch of the 2010 World Disasters Report (WDR) in Pretoria on 13 October 2010.

A special feature of this launch was the convergence of the global and local contexts, where the WDR was being launched alongside the report of a local survey into the vulnerability of people in the urban and peri-urban areas of Johannesburg. Also included in the day's proceedings was a report on the ground covered by the Government of South Africa, in implementing the UNISDR's "Making Cities Resilient" campaign. These fitted very well with the theme of WDR 2010: Urban Risk.

The event graced by the presence of H.E. the Ambassador of the Netherlands. Mr. R G .De Vos, Head of ICRC Regional Delegation, Mr. Gerardo Pontradolfi, Chief Directors from the Departments of International Relations & Cooperation and that of Social Development, was officially opened by the Society's Vice President, Mrs. Dalmari Steward.

The Vice President painted a clear picture of why the Red Cross could not be left out of the disaster reduction debate, as it works continuously with communities-at-risk, before, during and after disasters. She drew the clear line linking poverty, ill health, unemployment and general disenfranchisement to disaster vulnerability, and urged governments to put more effort and resources into the reduction of disaster impacts.

She also pledged the Society's support to the "safe cities" campaign of the UNISDR, urging all local authorities to heed its "Ten Essentials" that will make our cities more resilient. Bringing the reality of community risks and vulnerabilities, she concluded, "The Vulnerability Survey carried out by the Forced Migration Studies Programme (MFSP) of the University of the Witwatersrand in areas previously exposed to what was termed "urban violence" in 2008, is a clear call for us to study and understand the various factors that render people vulnerable to many

conditions: Gender, place or location, age, and many other considerations come into play."

The Federations Acting Director for Africa, Stephen Omollo, highlighting the risks faced by people in informal settlements worldwide, quoted the experiences of world leaders, whose lives had been somehow touched by urban risk, including the effects of floods on the life of Brazil's President, as stated in the WDR.

"We need to separate good urbanization, where resources are applied effectively for improved living conditions and economies, from bad, unplanned and rapid urbanization, where communities are rendered vulnerable to many conditions.

Other speakers included the Director of the FMSP, Dr. Loren Landau, who tabled the findings and recommendations of the survey, carried out after the 2008 Urban Violence, targeting local and non-South African communities in Alexandra and Central Johannesburg. He emphasized the fact that such research needs to be expanded, and its outcomes used in the planning of proactive interventions by both government and civil society.

The Government's Mmaphaka Tau presented the outline of the "safe cities" campaign, which aims at ensuring that communities are protected from the drastic effects of urban risk: structurally, building materials used, as well as people-centred planning in urban areas. The National Disaster Management Centre, he said, are seeking partners across the spectrum, to support local government in ensuring that all cities are part of the campaign.

The delegates went into two commissions – Government and Civil Society, and the broad recommendations from these included:

- More research, to gather more data;
- Partnerships among the Government, Private sector, civil society and communities-at-risk;
- Advocacy – to ensure that the basic rights of even the informal settlers/landless are protected and respected;
- The need to address population movement and its inherent challenges;
- Public education on social inclusion and tolerance
- Well coordinated monitoring, evaluation and allocation of roles and responsibilities.

By: Mandisa Kalako-Williams, SARCS Secretary General

Ghana hosts a press conference to commemorate the International Day



(Photo courtesy by NADMO)

The National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) Ghana, in collaboration with the Local Government Service on the 13 October 2010, held a press conference at the Conference Hall of the Ministry of Information and National Orientation to launch the World Disaster Day 2010 Campaign.

The Chairman for the press conference, Hon. John Tia Akologo, Minister of Information welcomed the panel and the press to the function. The panel members included:

- The Deputy Minister of Interior, Hon. Dr. Apea-Kubi
- The Chairman of the National Platform, Rev. Dr. Nii Amoo-Darku
- The National Co-ordinator of NADMO, Mr. Kofi Portuphy
- The U.N. Resident Co-ordinator, Madam Ruby Sandhu Rojan
- The Deputy Co-ordinator of NADMO, Mr. P.K. Abonnie .

Mr. Kofi Portuphy in his welcome address said the "campaign does not focus only on the cities but also on other urban areas where slums have cropped."

The United Nations Resident Co-ordinator, Madam Ruby Sandhu Rojan, delivered a message on behalf of the UN Secretary General, Ban ki Moon. Referring to the rains in the Northern Ghana, resulting in severe flooding around the White and Black Volta basin, she said, the day was an opportunity to focus their attention on work that had been done and could still be done to make communities around the world safer from disasters.

She also mentioned the destruction of lives and properties around the Ashaiman in the Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions as a result of floods experienced this year.

Madam Ruby stressed that the UN System in Ghana provides support to NADMO, in preparing the National Contingency Plan and also to undertake detailed assessment including early recovery. She also said that the UN system was playing a leading role to reinforce existing practices and capacities in terms of preparing Disaster Risk Reduction initiatives. Madam Ruby Sandhu urged all

media practitioners, civil societies, Government institutions, public sector and international bodies to collaborate with NADMO and other emergency agencies.

"Reducing disaster risks is everyone's business and it needs everybody's participation and investments". She added that, decision making should be inclusive and participatory and also city planners must tackle the hazards in urban areas.

The Deputy Minister of the Interior, Dr. Kwasi Apea-Kubi, gave the keynote address. He said, increased population densities, environmental degradation, rapid urbanization and global warming due to climate change make the impact of disasters very severe. Hon. Apea-Kubi said, the theme for the celebration "Making Cities Resilient: My City is Getting Ready" was a vital one in the search for solutions in numerous disasters such as perennial floods and fire outbreaks which continue to claim more lives, destruction of properties and infrastructure worth Millions of Cedis yearly. He also said the frequent movement of people from rural areas to cities in greater numbers in search of opportunities, or due to conflicts, environmental degradation, floods, and droughts also contribute to urbanization.

The Hon. Deputy Minister said, Ghana's World Disaster Campaign was to sensitize and mobilize their metropolitan, municipal, district chief executives, city planners and all stakeholders to put in place measures to reduce Disasters such as floods, fire outbreaks, outbreak of diseases and, above all to create a peaceful atmosphere for sustainable development.

He gave a sincere gratitude to the technical committee, the stakeholders, and the media for making the programme a successful one.

The Chairman of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation, Rev. Dr. Amoo-Darku, gave an insight into climate change and urged the media personnel to collaborate with the citizens in making the communities safe from disasters.

After the various addresses and the launch of the campaign by the Hon. Deputy Minister for the Interior, the floor was opened for questions from the media and other participants.

By the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO)Ghana



Photo Courtesy of IRIN News)

Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa

Local Level

ICPAC meeting emphasizes on community action to reduce disaster risk and adapt to climate change



Indigenous people in western Kenya have relied on the mystical abilities of the Nganyi rainmakers to predict the weather for Mombasa. Participants during the workshop made a field visit to the community (Photo/Courtesy)

In a part of the world struggling with climate-related hazards such as drought and flood, experts are meeting to discuss ways for Africa to cope with disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

Addressing participants at the opening of the International Conference on Community-based Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation, Abbas Gullet, Secretary-General of the Kenya Red Cross Society, said that climate-related hazards had far-reaching impacts on the Kenyan economy.

"The country is going through one of the worst droughts, which has had negative impacts on our livestock," said Mr. Gullet. "Climate change adaptation projects are a good opportunity to improve significantly coping capacities of vulnerable farmers, such as the one developed by the Kenya Red Cross Society in the country's eastern region."

Youcef Ait Chellouche from the UNISDR Regional Office for Africa also called on participants to share knowledge and experience to improve the implementation of Africa's disaster risk reduction strategy. He stressed the need to integrate climate-resilient strategies into sustainable development policies and related planning processes.

Responding to the call, Benson Omondi, the deputy mayor of Kisumu where the conference is taking place, said his city was working to strengthen disaster preparedness, response and mitigation strategies to tackle both man-made and natural hazards.

Conference participants spent the last two days of the meeting drafting a plan of action towards developing a climate risk management programme in countries throughout the East African region. The participants agreed to strengthen the

partnership between climate change scientists, hydrologists and disaster risk managers to help address climate-related disasters in Africa, such as drought, floods, cholera and malaria.

Francis Muraya from the World Bank pointed at the possibility of the Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery programme to support such partnerships and to support countries that face adverse effects of climate change. In his closing remarks, Mr. Muraya advised participants to urge their governments to build standard infrastructure that is disaster resilient.

The International Conference on Community-based Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation, taking place from 6-10 December 2010, is organized by the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) in collaboration with the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) Regional Office for Africa. Participants included scientists, policymakers, climate change and disaster risk reduction experts as well as representatives from UN agencies, the private sector, NGOs, community-based organizations and academic institutions from across East Africa.

By UNISDR Africa and ICPAC

Nigeria CSCDRR

Nigeria launches Civil Society Coalition on Disaster Risk Reduction (CSCDRR)

In the effort to build local community resilience to disasters in Nigeria, a new coalition made up of civil society organizations across the country gathered in Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Center Abuja for the official inauguration.

The main purpose of the coalition is to form an effective network of civil society organizations working together to complement efforts in effectively combating and addressing disaster preparedness and management in the country.

The launching and inauguration of this coalition led to the birth of a new organization in Nigeria known as Civil Society Coalition on Disaster Risk Reduction (CSCDRR) with its action plans to deliver its mandates.

CSCDRR Action Plan

1. Roundtable stakeholders meeting to assess Nigeria vulnerability to "Earthquake" based on the recent report by experts that Nigeria is vulnerable to Earthquake and Tsunami.
2. Roundtable expert stakeholders meeting on Lake Nyos, as a follow up to past efforts, initiatives, including available information, state of preparedness and mitigation plan as well as road maps.
3. Mid-Term Review of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action to independently assess the progress of Nigeria in reducing risk midway through the period 2005 – 2015, what are the information available, road maps,

4. A meeting of stakeholders in the frontline states of Niger-Delta to review the activities of oil exploration in the region and its impacts on environmental disasters.
5. The development partners and stakeholders in attendance pledged their support to nurture and ensure the survival of CSCDRR as a coalition that is set to reduce risk in Nigeria.

*By Badanga Ahmed Lamidi
Founder/National Co-ordinator CSCDRR*

German Red Cross Regional Office for Eastern Africa

Disaster Risk Reduction takes root in the Coastal Communities in Kenya

The Coastal Communities of Kenya are vulnerable to unique and diverse disaster Risks and Hazards. The 2004 Tsunami opened the eyes of many in this part of the country to the great and unknown devastation the sea can bring with it a part from the many benefits.

Quite a number of communities in this region also experience droughts, flooding and water related epidemics from time to time. The threat of sea level rise owing to climate change has not dawned on most communities in the area. Poverty levels in some communities in the region are quite high and only exacerbate their vulnerability to disasters. These threats and challenges require both structural and non-structural measures at the community and government level to effectively deal with.

There are also the unspoken about, 'small' day-to-day challenges that may in the long run have a negative bearing on the lives of the coastal communities. These include regular sea accidents in which lives are lost due to drowning or capsizing of traditional sea vessels. Public holidays are marked by a sea of humanity that throngs the coastal beaches from as far as Nairobi to enjoy the beauty of the sea. Most of these beaches users lack the skills to swim or save drowning cases on such occasions. Yet the most unlikely source of concern would be the many cases of unattended or lost children who are left on the beaches by their parents out of the confusion that comes with such busy occasions.

Other challenges experienced by the coastal communities include the spread of HIV/ AIDS and Drug Abuse out of multicultural interactions and tourism activities. Environment degradation, the wide spread harvesting of mangroves and unplanned settlements in most of the urban centres are some of the other challenges. The establishment of high risk dwellings, some in environmentally sensitive areas is quite rampant especially in the urban centres like Mombasa.

Over the past 5 years, German Red Cross in Collaboration with Kenya Red Cross has been working with Coastal Communities and other Stakeholders to address the root causes of these risks and challenges. Through this joint initiative and together with the government's provincial

administration, community based disaster management and early warning structures have been instituted. Disaster Committees have been established/ revived and trained to address disaster risks and to channel early warning information to communities at the District, Division and Location levels in Mombasa, Kwale and Kilifi. These committees are supported and encouraged to conduct risk/ vulnerability assessments and to put in place warning mechanisms (bill boards and sign posts) for communities. Out of such surveys they are able to draw and implement community based risk reduction strategies.

Communities in Kisauni in Mombasa for instance are now working towards elimination of drainage problems within their residences through construction of surface runoff soak pits with support from local funding institutions. Others in Kwale and Kilifi are addressing the long standing food insecurity problems through adoption of high yield promoting technologies that are able to take advantage of short rains.

Disaster committees continue to conduct awareness raising campaigns on potential hazards/ risks to the general public. Issues discussed at such forums include causes of disaster, local coping mechanisms and possible community based mitigation measures. Other mitigation measures that are beginning to take root within these communities include reforestation of the mangroves and rehabilitation of fragile environments like open quarries and riverines especially in Kwale and Kilifi. The project is also working towards promotion of livelihoods of some of the most poor and vulnerable communities in Kilifi and Kwale to improve their resilience towards droughts and floods among other challenges.

Rescue centres have been introduced at some of the busiest beaches in Mombasa, Kwale, and Kilifi. These are manned by trained volunteers who are able to rescue and provide first aid on the beach in the case of an emergency. They are also equipped with basic communication equipment to receive and provide early warning information to beach users on any impending sea related risks.

As the project nears completion, it is interesting to see communities begin to take charge in addressing their challenges through the structures that are now in place and with funds and resources raised locally from such institutions like the Constituency Development Fund.

It can now be seen that the root causes of vulnerability like environment degradation, poverty, unplanned urban settlements and ignorance are beginning to be addressed through awareness creation and advocacy among other initiatives.

It is now the hope of German and Kenya Red Cross Societies that an institution based foundation has been established within these communities to systematically and steadily push the agenda of disaster risk reduction into the future. It is also hoped that some of the good lessons learnt within these communities in advancing DRR will be replicated to other needy areas within Kenya and in the East African Region.

*Contact: Moses Mung'oni and Christoph Mueller
German Red Cross Regional Office for Eastern Africa*



Resident Adam Mustafa says recent floods near Kemisse in Ethiopia's Amhara's region are the worst in his lifetime. (Photo Courtesy of IRIN News)

Community managed disaster risk reduction in a river basin community

Case Study in Dire Dawa

Flash floods occurred in urban Dire Dawa in Ethiopia in 1945, 1977, 1981, 1997, 2001, 2004, 2005, and 2006. During the most recent flash flood in 2006, 256 people were killed, 244 disappeared and 10,000 were displaced. There was an enormous destruction of houses, infrastructure and livelihoods. After the flood of 2006, first relief was provided and after that the CMDRR process was started. This process in Dire Dawa is described below with the help of quotes of the two community members presented in the next paragraphs.

'The hills are changed, we are changed, too': Abdella Muse

45 year old Abdella Muse has been participating in the CMDRR activities ever since JeCCDO began implementing the project in 2008. The father of six children was born and has been living ever since in the village of Genda Ada. This village is located at the foot of Gara Babu/Hill Babu on the suburbs of Dire Dawa City Administration Council.

Abdella: *'Gara Babu used to be a means of our livelihood when I was younger. But we mercilessly cut the trees on the mountain and sold the wood in the town. When we had finished cutting and selling all the trees, we dug out the stones from the hill and sold these, too. Then, the hill started taking revenge on us - the offenders. Our actions exacerbated the flooding problem of the villages as well as the entire flood prone areas in and around Dire Dawa.'*

CMDRR for me is God send': Safo Alisho

50 year old Safo Alisho lives in Genda Ada village in the upper stream of Dire Dawa town. The village is one of the four target communities of the CMDRR project. Safo: *'The devastating floods of August 5, 2006 that came at three o'clock midnight, spared my children but took away our farm which was our only means of livelihood. We had nothing to feed our children let alone send them to school. My husband could not endure seeing his children go hungry and so he disappeared. This worsened my problem, but I resolutely decided to remain with my children until death does us part. Then, I began to sell vegetables in the nearby market for other traders but the profit from this could not feed me let alone my seven children.'*

CMDRR at community level

The CMDRR process in Dire Dawa consisted of several activities. First, there was capacity building of riverine communities, consisting of training them in CMDRR and making a risk assessment and action plans with them. Through this process, the communities' attitude changed.

As Abdella Muse states, "We use to think that disasters are the results of the anger of God and cannot be prevented but now we have learnt that disasters can be the results of reckless human actions and can be prevented with knowledge, commitment and collective actions."

Efforts were undertaken to conserve the environment and saving groups of women were established to improve the economical resilience of the community. "Sofa, a CMDRR project helped us to organize ourselves into Self Help Groups (SHGs). In our saving group which has 20 members, we meet once a week, save money and take out loans." The hills were rehabilitated by the community, as Abdella describes: "With the money allocated by CORDAID through JeCCDO implementation, we built stone bund terraces and planted seedlings and transferred them to the

hill. And within two years, we managed to rehabilitate the hills that we had left ragged and barren. The terraces kept the water from running down the hills thereby preventing erosion and allowing water to percolate.”

The rehabilitation of the hills in its turn helped to diversify people’s livelihoods to make them more resilient to the floods.

Abdella adds that, “The hills began to look green again. We then approached JECCDO to give us loan to buy improved breed cows so that we can take advantage of the grass that has grown on the hill. Our proposal was accepted and we got cows on loan from Addis-Alem CBO which JECCDO had organized earlier.

Thirty of us were organized under a cooperative and we now have 20 cows. We sell the milk in the town to hotels and the town dwellers. We also grow vegetables and fruits such as oranges and pawpaw. We have a water point where members can collect water for drinking as well as for agricultural work. We charge minimal amount for the water the community collects from our water point.” He continues to say that Sofa, the CMDRR project gave him and 50 other victims of the flood an entrepreneurial training on how to boost their livelihoods from animal husbandry.

“We were trained on how to fatten up our sheep and goats and support our livelihood in the process. They also gave us four heads of sheep. I sold two of them for 1300 birr (around USD 77.97). With the money, I began to buy tomatoes in large boxes and sell at retail price right there in the market. I found this profitable; I managed to feed my children and pay their school fees too!”

Another risk reduction measure was the creation of a community based flood early warning system. This system consisted of mobile communication with upstream communities on information about rainfall or floods occurring upstream. Also, measures were taken to reduce the runoff water from the hills. The water was then diverted to farms.

The role of the government

Because the community now became more organized and more united, lobby with the government for support was more feasible. As Abdella says: “Nobody would have listened to us poor people: as individuals we are like sand in the flood. But organized as a group we have power.”

The government was invited and visited the areas in which the CMDRR process was going on to see how the communities had improved their situation through their own efforts. This motivated the government to discuss DRR plans and options with the community. The community leaders describe that the project has attracted the attention of many, including the local government that has now become a supporter.

“In July 2008, we invited the mayor of the town to visit our rehabilitation work on Gara Babu Hill and he was so amazed by what he saw,” says Abdella. Pointing to Gara Dalu, a hill in front of Gara Babu, the mayor asked us: ‘what about that hill?’ I said: ‘this is poor hill; it has no father.’ The mayor then replied, ‘the government is the father of the

poor’ and he later allocated a huge sum of money for the rehabilitation of Gara Dalu Hill. Stone bund terraces have now been built on the hill and it is beginning to look green again like Gara Babu standing in front of it. Though it is the local government that financed the rehabilitation of Gara Dalu, we are the one in charge of protecting it.’ Stone Bund constructed at Dima Hill.

This involvement of the municipality is a very strong point in this CMDRR process. For instance, the municipality supported the construction of a 420 m long flood retention wall to protect farms along the river. This was partly because of the lobby of the community, as Abdella says: ‘When the government built 6 kilometers retention wall (in Dechatu dry sand stream bank to prevent the flash flooding in Dire Dawa), we discovered that there are more areas that needed a retention wall. So we approached them as organized people and they listened to us. As a result of our lobby to city administration, 420 meters extra walls have now been built for us.’ Also, land allocated for the construction of houses along river was cancelled and left free, since the risk on a flood is too high in this area. This was a very important change in decision-making in the city administration.

Also on the regional level things were happening with regards to DRR and climate change adaptation. A regional conference on DRR and climate change adaptation with relevant regional Dire Dawa administration and four regions in the shared watershed area was organized. Further, a regional DRR/climate adaptation/environmental protection institution was legally established for interregional linkage in watershed area. This was done by community representatives and government officials. And last but not least, the approach used in Dire Dawa was considered by Ethiopian government as a useful model for the country as a whole.

Conclusions

Achievements and lessons learned of the CMDRR process in Dire Dawa are the following:

- During the flood in 2010 no lives were lost;
- Participation of a broad spectrum of members in risk assessment and action planning strengthens positive long term results;
- Bottom up planning/community led/strong leaders are needed for positive long term results;
- Demonstration of what is achieved is the best way to influence actors like the government;
- Cooperation with the municipality can bear great results;
- Regional forum was established that works with upstream as well as downstream communities.
-

CMDRR and climate change adaptation in Malawi

In Malawi, where the key hazards are related to climate change, Climate Change Adaptation is an integrated part of the Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) approach, while promoting stakeholder collaboration and advocacy are important components.

Malawi Programme 2008 – 2010

The overall goal of the CMDRR Programme is: to improve and expand the implementation of and knowledge on Disaster Risk Reduction best practices in disaster-prone communities in rural areas of all 7 dioceses of Malawi (Mzuzu, Lilongwe, Dedza, Mangochi, Zomba, Blantyre and Chikhwawa) by October, 2010.

Since 2005, CORDAID has been supporting the CMDRR Programme of the national partner organization Catholic Development Commission (CADECOM). During 2008 – 2010, the organization also supported the Catholic Health Commission and the Catholic Commission for Justice & Peace.

Specifically, the programme aims at obtaining the following:

- To increase the knowledge on CMDRR in 76 communities, and of approximately 25 staff in total of ECM (of three commissions), in all seven dioceses of Malawi.
- To mitigate disasters and improve the livelihood in 76 communities (for about 6840 households in total).
- To establish a national data bank for CMDRR monitoring, planning and documentation at partner level.

In the CMDRR Programme, climate change adaptation, gender equality, and integration of families affected by HIV and AIDS are actively promoted, in order to increase all people's resilience to disasters. Capacity building, empowerment, and a focus on livelihood security are key strategies. Thus, the programme will contribute to the Millennium Development Goals 1 (eradicate extreme hunger and poverty), 3 (promote gender equality and empower women), 6 (combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, other diseases) and 7 (ensure environmental sustainability).

CMDRR key activities and results

The direct beneficiaries of the CMDRR Programme are 6,840 households which are prone to disasters (90 households x 76 communities) in Malawi; this is about 41,040 persons (average of 6 members per household).

On objective 1, 'increase the knowledge on CMDRR of the population of 76 communities, and of approximately 25 staff in total of ECM (of three commissions), in all 7 dioceses of Malawi,

- some of the activities were:
- Training on CMDRR of 37 programme staff, about 6840 community members, and other stakeholders;
- Training of staff and community members on participatory monitoring and evaluation.
- From the analysis of the community managed disaster

- risk assessments, it appears that in Malawi the three key hazards mentioned by the communities are drought (including dry spells), floods, and epidemics.
- Activities which were done as part of the community managed disaster risk reduction action plans were:
- promotion of drought tolerant crops and crop diversification;
- promotion of small scale irrigation (in dry areas and in dry season);
- promotion of environmental rehabilitation and soil fertility interventions;
- promotion of livestock production;
- promotion of kitchen gardens (vegetable production);
- promotion of hygiene and sanitation through access to safe drinking water;
- promotion of seed banks and grain banks;
- Support to HIV and AIDS support groups;
- promotion of Village Savings and Loans;

At partner level (ECM national secretariat) 76 disaster risk assessments have been documented;

In July/August 2010 a community-to-community evaluation of the programme was done.

For example, a community in Dedza got support for the construction of an irrigation canal which improved the crop production of 900 households; in Lilongwe boreholes have been rehabilitated with 200 people using safe water now; in Blantyre 1,926 households were supported with certified seeds to improve their food production.

Documentation, networking and advocacy

ECM / CADECOM is, through their networking and documentation, now well known by government, funding partners and other stakeholders as a key partner in CMDRR.

E.g., for activities facilitated or organized by the Government's Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA), ECM / CADECOM is one of the first to be invited and contributes positively to the development of DRR national issues including the establishment of a National DRR Forum. Networking and documentation has also provided opportunities for lobby and advocacy:

- ECM / CADECOM contributed ideas for the development of National DRR documents (DRM handbook, roadmap to development of DRR policy, Terms of Reference for DRR policy development);
- ECM / CADECOM contributed to the development of a Declaration on Climate Change by faith leaders and government, during a meeting organized by Leadership for Environment and Development;
- ECM / CADECOM and CORDAID asked a consultants group (Bunda College and Center for Social Concern) to carry out an inventory research on DRR and Climate Change Adaptation in Malawi;
- ECM / CADECOM developed a CMDRR Best Practices Booklet in 2008; they developed eight CMDRR documentaries which were shown on television in 2009; in 2010 they are finalizing the production of a newsletter on ECM's work including CMDRR (describing two CMDRR best practices per diocese).

Lessons learned and way forward

Some of the lessons learned from the 2008 – 2010 CMDRR Programme are the following:

- Documentation of best practices facilitates scaling up of the CMDRR activities, as communities can learn from each other. It also publicizes the CMDRR work of ECM / CADECOM and the communities;
- Capacity building of communities and local leaders is key to change their mindset, through knowledge transfer in relation to climate change and disaster risk reduction. A well informed community will make better decisions regarding mitigation and prevention of disaster risks and improvement of livelihoods;
- Enhanced collaboration and networking between different stakeholders at national, district and local level is key to implementation of disaster risk reduction incl. climate change adaptation interventions;
- Mainstreaming of CMDRR and CCA into national development programmes requires networking and collaboration with other stakeholders in the country, and requires a National DRR Platform where all technical issues can be discussed.
- From the CMDRR Programme's experiences in Malawi so far, ECM / CADECOM recommends that the partners (government, donors, others) continue to fund community interventions aimed at mitigating the effects of hazards related to climate change, as Malawi is experiencing indirect effects of climate change. This will ensure the communities' increased resilience to disasters, and will improve the livelihood security of the communities.

*For more information please visit www.corcaid.nl
Contact person in Malawi: Margot Loof*

Highlighting the threat of changing land use to pastoralists in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda



One of the key determinants of resilience to drought is pastoralists' mobility and access to grazing areas. (Photo courtesy)

The Oxfam led Regional Learning and Advocacy Project (REGLAP) is a consortium project that aims to promote resilience among vulnerable dry land communities in Uganda, Ethiopia and Kenya through policy change and practice.

One of the key determinants of resilience to drought is pastoralists' mobility and access to grazing areas.

However, this is increasingly being undermined by the diversion of strategic communal grazing areas for other uses: principally agriculture, private grazing areas, settlements or wildlife reserves, either by local people or outsiders, including foreign investors.

Often this change in land use is being implemented without due procedure or adequate consultation or compensation of local people, sometimes with the collusion of local elites or national government officials who regard the dry lands as 'wastelands' and therefore available for alternative uses.

This change is exacerbated by weak mechanisms for the implementation of land tenure laws, ironically, often designed to protect communal land rights.

Although land grabbing by foreign and local interests is a problem throughout the developing world, the implications for pastoralists are often far more serious than for agriculturalists due to the extensive livestock production systems needed in the dry lands.

Often the land acquired is used for dry season grazing and is critical for the survival of many hundreds of households during drought, substantial numbers of whom do not permanently live in the vicinity.

Pastoral land use has developed over centuries to ensure environmental conservation and bio-diversity of very fragile eco-systems that are often undermined by other uses.

Arid and semi-arid areas are often not suitable for intensive agricultural production in the long term and may be detrimental to water quality and availability, and biodiversity.

The consequences of land fragmentation are likely to include: increased livestock deaths, environmental degradation and reduced productivity, conflict, increased reliance on women's alternative livelihood strategies e.g. petty trade, charcoal burning etc.

Strategies that could be otherwise used to cope with increased climate variability have already been exhausted and thus do not provide an option for adaptation e.g. move towards more resilient livestock types – camels and goats, use of hay and fodder reserves, alternative livelihoods etc.

In October 2010, an AU inter-ministerial meeting endorsed the AU Land Policy Framework to strengthen land rights, enhance productivity and secure livelihoods.

As part of this process, Oxfam GB commissioned a report on land grabbing in Africa, which was released at the same time. Oxfam GB is also running a global campaign on land grabbing and food justice.

However both initiatives lack evidence and examples from pastoral areas particularly in the Greater Horn of Africa region.

The aim of the study is to highlight the threat of changing land use to pastoralists' resilience to drought and ability to adapt to increased climatic variation. The study will pay particular attention to the gender impact of land fragmentation.

This will inform national and regional policy development and implementation as well as development practice for institutions working in pastoral areas.

Due to funding limitations, this study will be carried out in two parts:

Part 1: Literature review and key informant interviews;

Part 2: (If funds can be secured): Primary case study collection.

The consequences of land fragmentation are likely to include: increased livestock deaths, environmental degradation and reduced productivity, conflict, increased reliance on women's alternative livelihood strategies e.g. petty trade, charcoal burning...

"Pastoral land use has developed over centuries to ensure environmental conservation and bio-diversity of very fragile eco-systems that are often undermined by other uses. "

Aims of the study:

To raise awareness of development actors and the media on the change in land use in pastoral areas and its effect on resilience and gender roles;

To highlight the need to ensure the protection of communal grazing areas to reduce vulnerability and enhance adaptive capacity.

- To highlight any gaps in research to provide the evidence base.
- Provide recommendations for advocacy in terms of policy change and/or implementation and practice for development actors.

Content

1. Secondary data review: Overview of the key issues, extent and trends of change in land use in the main pastoral areas of Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia;
2. Overview of the legal and social context and examine how and why it is happening in these areas;
3. Highlight (from secondary data) at least two case studies per country of the most prominent types of land acquisition, including any available information on the impact on pastoral resilience and social and environmental consequences.
4. Provide recommendations in terms of policy advocacy and practice for governments, NGOs/CSOs.
5. Produce a maximum 2 page policy brief on the importance of protecting communal grazing areas for DRR and CCA practitioners working in pastoral areas.

Methodology

Literature review and key informant interviews.

Dissemination

The study and policy brief will be distributed to ECHO DCM partners and others via direct email, HOAPN Bulletin and website, as well as the DRR website and WISP bulletin.

The policy brief will be circulated to government staff, NGOs/CSOs working on land issues. Presentations will be made by the consultant and REGLAP members at various conferences and through publications.

The study will be carried out in consultation with ISDR and FAO to see if it can feed into their publications and advocacy. The study will be provided to Oxfam's economic justice campaign to ensure pastoral issues are well represented in their land grabbing campaigns.

By Oxfam REGLAP

Investors promote DRR in an entrepreneurial seminar



Philip Verges, Founder of the Small Equity Initiative and Founder and Chairman of NewMarket Technology. Mr. Verges has been working in the public market space for nearly 10 years and is a champion of increasing ease of access to financing for small businesses.

A group of investors in partnership with UNISDR held an Entrepreneurial Finance Seminar on 25 October, in Nairobi to provide Kenyan entrepreneurs with training on capital formation options available to entrepreneurs in East Africa through reverse mergers and PIPEs (Private Investment in Public Equity) in the over-the-counter market in the United States.

This partnership is part of UNISDR's effort to strengthen its partnership with the private sector to advocate for DRR. Kiki Lawal, the UNISDR Programme Officer - Business Partnerships and Pedro Basabe, Head, Regional Office for Africa made presentations on UNISDR activities to the participants. Together they encouraged the business community to pursue new enterprise opportunities that contribute to disaster risk reduction.

The seminar was part of a week-long trade mission to Kenya hosted by Savanna East Africa, company developing opportunities in Kenya to include initiatives in technology and systems integration services, utility support services,

affordable housing and health products manufacturing.

The investors including the Savanna East Africa, Small Equity Initiative, NewMarket Technology and Greenfield Partnership Program conducted the two-day seminar at the Nairobi Serena Hotel and closed at the Kenyatta International Conference Center.

On the second day, the Entrepreneurs had an opportunity to pitch their business plans to the private investors interested in investment opportunities in East Africa. Since then the Africa office has received proposals from the entrepreneurs in Kenya who are seeking support from UN to develop their business ideas.

The trade mission was led by Philip Verges, Founder of the Small Equity Initiative and Founder and Chairman of NewMarket Technology. Mr. Verges has been working in the public market space for nearly 10 years and is a champion of increasing ease of access to financing for small businesses. Mr. Verges is also acting as the interim Chief Executive Officer CEO of Savanna East Africa, after the untimely passing of the Company's previous CEO U.S. Major General Hugh G. Robinson. Major General Robinson keynoted last year's seminar in Kenya and spearheaded the start-up of Savanna East Africa.

The CEOs of NewMarket Technology, Greenfield partners, China Crescent Enterprises, NuMobile also joined the trade mission delegation along with professionals from the U.S. public investment market.

To learn more about Savanna East Africa and to sign up for company email alerts, please visit the corporate website at www.savannaea.com.

About Savanna East Africa, Inc. (www.savannaea.com)

Savanna East Africa, Inc. (pinksheets:NVAE) (otcqb:NVAE) launched an updated corporate strategy early 2010 to pursue several business lines in the growing economy of East Africa, initially in Kenya. Savanna has already begun several initiatives in the region to include initiatives in the Technology, Utility, Housing and Health products industries. The Company is also continuing to grow its existing oil and gas reclamation business with new management and business strategies.

By Savanna East Africa, Inc. and UNISDR Africa



International and local media organizations play a vital role in promoting DRR policies and programmes across all levels. (Photo courtesy by UNIC)

Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa

Views and reviews

Adjusting our reporting angles from 'consequences to causes'

UNISDR and Reuters hold media training on disaster reporting



In an era where information is availed hyper-fast by a click of a mouse or a touch on a keypad, the media continues to capitalise on its role in informing on and setting various agendas globally. Media has always been the vanguard of providing information in the event of disaster. The challenge posed is therefore: If the need to communicate is most pressing at a time of disaster, just how much more is it in preventing that very disaster?

Third in the five (5) priorities of the HFA is the "Use of knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels". Disaster risk reduction as opposed to disaster response evades unnecessary and costly loss of both lives and property. For this reason, DRR should be considered as an investment for any country, and the media can ascertain to this only if we change our manner of reporting disasters.

Greater public awareness can translate into greater government accountability (HFA Mid-Term Review 2010-2011). One of the surest ways of encouraging political will (and thus good governance) is through media advocacy.

The previous Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction (GAR) 2009 acknowledged the importance of good governance to encourage sustained efforts in disaster risk reduction.

There are a number of good examples and lessons learnt that the media can highlight to demonstrate the importance of investing in DRR and the role played in proper planning and preparedness. UNISDR acknowledges that international and local media organizations play a vital role in promoting DRR policies and programmes across all levels.

In this recognition, UNISDR together with Thomson Reuters Foundation and the European Commission's Directorate General Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, held a two-day media training from 8 to 9 May, 2011 in Geneva, Switzerland during the Global Platform on Disaster

Risk Reduction (9 - 13 May 2011). The training, themed "Towards a new approach to disasters from consequences to causes" was attended by media representatives and national platform representatives from Africa and Middle East countries. Africa office was represented by journalists/communication focal points from national platforms from selected countries including: Cameroon, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Uganda, South Africa,

"As a participant, I can say that it is quite exciting to have highly skilled resource persons as well as speakers addressing us on various topics from media coverage, media relations, crisis management and the new thinking on Disaster Risk Reduction," says Yushau Shuaib, who was representing the Nigerian National Platform for DRR during the media training.

Meanwhile, UNISDR launched a new media handbook to guide journalists covering issues related to disasters. The 190-page manual, titled "Disaster through a Different Lens," describes how climate change, environmental degradation, poverty and rapid urbanization expose more people to disasters, and discusses what media can do to convince more national and local governments to invest more in disaster risk reduction policies.

According to Arya Gunawan Usis, an advisor for Communication and Information at UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office, proper training for media specialists on how to report on disasters is crucial.

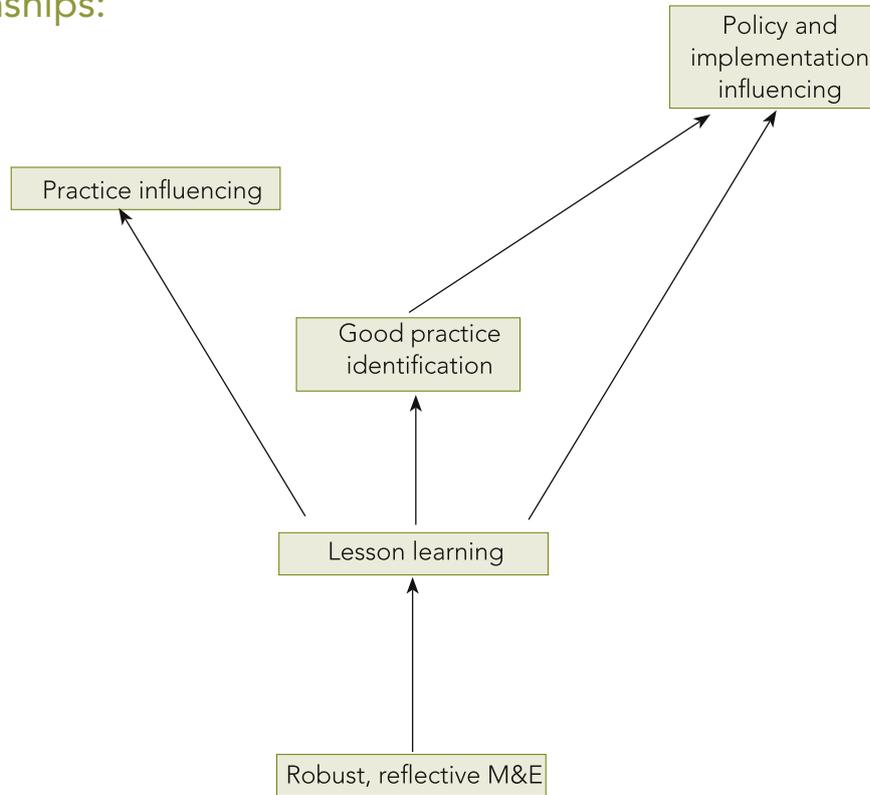
"The media should also give a reminder of the importance of coordination in the planning process and implementation of recovery programs, to avoid overlapping and waste of funds for irrelevant projects; something that usually appears in the post-disaster recovery."

The guide was written by Brigitte Leoni, UNISDR, Acting Head of Communications, in collaboration with Tim Radford, a former journalist with The Guardian, Mark Schulman, UNISDR Consultant in support from number of international journalists from Thomson Reuters' Alertnet, the BBC among others.

*By Sarah Wakasa,
Information Officer,
UNISDR Regional Officer for Africa*

Concepts: Good practice documentation, lesson learning and monitoring & evaluation

The relationships:



How to write a technical brief for good practice/lesson learning documentation¹

Why?

What constitutes good practice for programming in the dry lands is only just being defined due to a historical misunderstanding and neglect of dry lands issues, as well as their complexity and dynamism. However succinct and easily accessible evidence based good practice guides are still lacking and NGO implementation is generally inadequate. ECHO's third Drought Cycle Management (DCM) funding decision seeks to build up good practice/lessons learnt documentation through DCM partners and with the support of REGLAP and FAO.

Principles:

Brevity: Keep it short and to the point: 2-8 pages is all development practitioners will read! Refer to other documents if readers want more information.

Reflective: Analysing what did not work is as important as what did. Be honest – this is not a PR tool but a genuine attempt to improve programming for your own organisations and others. Learning cultures and practices in your organisations are important for this.²

Evidence based: Good practice needs proof that it worked, via solid evaluations or impact assessments³ that draw on the genuine opinions of community members and opinions of technical experts experienced in the contexts.

Disseminate: We all have a responsibility to improve practice for the communities we work with and use the knowledge we generate for their benefit so make sure you share your documentation within your own organisations and others who could use it to improve practice and policy. This includes

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² More information will be provided in the upcoming REGLAP MEL guide.

³ More information will be provided in the upcoming REGLAP MEL guide.

CSOs, NGOs, donors, governments and researchers. Ensure documentation is accessible: e.g. placed on relevant websites including: www.disasterriskreduction.net and is shared through presentations at workshops, communities of practice, newsletters etc. Dissemination will often generate informative feedback that will develop your own and your organisations' thinking.

What it should include:

1. The experience/approach/activity;
2. The context to which it was applied;
3. The actual or potential impact (based on strong evidence);
4. Key recommendations for the organisation and others to improve the approach;
5. An analysis of how replicable the experience is (including for government) and its potential relevance for other contexts;
6. Suggestions for policy or practice change to increase impact;
7. Refer to other documents for more information, making sure they are on the DRR or other websites.

How?

The simplest way to document lessons learnt/good practices is for someone intimately involved in the project to draft a document drawing on a range of information (e.g. community reviews, evaluation and expert review and staff reflection sessions etc.), and then share it with a range of people for their verification and additions. However, one person's opinion may dominate, thus organising a reflection session with a range of stakeholders may provide a more balanced view and promotes sharing of perspectives which is important in gaining consensus on how to move forward and gaining buy in from both front line field staff opinion and senior management.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Robust and reflective monitoring and evaluation approaches are critical for the identification of lessons learnt and good practice. Only by self-critical reflection and gathering real evidence on outcomes and impact can lessons learnt and good practice be validated. To understand the changes the activity/approach has influenced also requires a solid understanding of changing context and livelihood trends.

Lesson learning: Learning takes place constantly at an individual, group and organisational level. Some individuals are more analytical, questioning and reflective in what they do, however organisations can influence how much learning take place by giving the opportunity, the time and the motivation for its staff to learn⁴. Lesson learning documentation is where new and useful insights - based on both positive and negative experience - have been sufficiently verified to be documented and shared

with others. Lessons learnt from positive experiences may help in building good practice. Lessons can be collected by interviewing and reflection workshops with staff and community members, learning reviews including outsiders, reflective monitoring approaches and report writing⁵

Good practice: A good practice is an approach or process that is effective for achieving a particular outcome or objective in a given circumstance. The term 'good practice' is used rather than 'best practice' as the latter implies that there is a unique approach that is preferable in all contexts and is unchanging. The definition of good practice needs to be based on solid evaluation and peer review and therefore good practice documentation will only be applicable where a solid approach or methodology has been developed that is applicable to other circumstances/organisations.⁶

Policy and practice change: Good practice and lesson learning documentation can influence policy and practice if appropriately targeted and disseminated. Defining and knowing your audience and how best to reach them is key e.g. technical briefs, policy briefs, exchange visits, journal articles and presentations. Reaching out to poor practitioners may have more impact than those who maybe already using similar approaches.

By Oxfam REGLAP

4 Britton, B (2006) Organisational Learning in NGOs: Creating the Motive, Means and Opportunity, Praxis Paper No. 3, INTRAC, <http://www.intrac.org/resources.php?action=resource&id=398>

5 An example of an internal lessons learnt document: Commercial destocking in Degamew by Mercy Corps, www.elmt-relpa.org/HoAPN

6 An example of a good practice document: Technical brief on privatisation of vet services by VSF Suisse, www.elmt-relpa.org/HoAPN



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