

Outline

for national reporting and information on disaster reduction for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (Kobe-Hyogo, Japan, 18-22 January 2005)

Background

The Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action was adopted at the World Conference on Natural Disasters, held in 1994 as a mid-review of the progress during the International Decade on Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR, 1990-1999).

As the successor of the IDNDR, the Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) coordinated a global review of disaster reduction initiatives, "Living with Risk", published in 2002.

National authorities and platforms on disaster reduction are invited to provide information for the preparatory process for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005. This information will be used to identify needs and future policy recommendations to be adopted at the Conference.

The preparation of this information provides an opportunity to bring together national stakeholders from Government, academic and other sectors dealing with disaster risk reduction. **Therefore we encourage consultations with institutions specializing in disaster management, environmental planning, education, meteorological services, key NGOs and other key domains.**

If a national platform or network for disaster reduction does not already exist in your country, this might be the time to call for such a mechanism (ad-hoc or formalized). For more information on national platforms for disaster reduction, contact Mr. Haris Sanahuja at the ISDR Secretariat (sanahuja@un.org).

Deadline for receiving input at UN/ISDR: **15 June 2004**. Later submissions will also be made available at the Conference, but will not form part of the proposed policy recommendations.

Information provided will be utilized by ISDR for various information products, including in the website as country information. Therefore, please indicate if any information is of restricted nature.

How to use these guidelines to prepare your national information

The information should be provided under the following headings (please indicate N/A, if no information is available). For each section please indicate *current status*, *main difficulties* or *gaps* encountered, and *challenges for the future*:

1. ***Political Commitment and Institutional Aspects*** (see Annex, Component 1)
2. ***Risk Identification (including early warning)*** (see Annex, Component 2)
3. ***Knowledge Management (education, research, information, public awareness)*** (see Annex, Component 3)
4. ***Risk Management Applications/Instruments (technical, social, financial, environmental)*** (see Annex, Component 4)
5. ***Preparedness and Contingency Planning*** (see Annex, Component 5)
6. ***Good practices in disaster risk management*** (see Annex, Component 6)
7. ***Priorities to address at WCDR*** (see Annex, Component 7)

Use the explanations and questions for each heading provided below as a guide for your contribution. If no information is available, leave the questions unanswered marked as N/A. Short answers and analyses are encouraged. When applicable, please indicate any relevant documentation or other sources of information on the subject.

(For additional details, see the "Framework for Guiding and Monitoring Disaster Risk Reduction" <http://www.unisdr.org/dialogue/basicdocument.htm>) or contact the ISDR Secretariat.

Please provide your information if possible by electronic means to the ISDR Secretariat c/o Mr. Haris Sanahuja (sanahuja@un.org, tel: +41-22-917 2808) and Ms. Christel Rose (rosec@un.org, tel: +41-22-9172786)

or by fax to: ISDR Secretariat, United Nations, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva, Switzerland

In Africa, please contact the UN/ISDR Office in Nairobi, Kenya, for more information: Tel.: +254 20 62 45 68 - Fax: +254 20 62 47 26 - E-mail <ISDR-Africa@unep.org>

In Latin America and the Caribbean, please contact the UN/ISDR Office in San José, Costa Rica, for more information: Tel.: +506 224 11 86 - Fax: +506 224 77 58 - E-mail <eird@eird.org>

Information on national contact and provider of info:

Name: _____

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Was the information provided consulted with other institutions? YES NO

If yes, please list these organizations here-below:

Component 1 Political Commitment and Institutional Aspects

Political commitment, strong institutions, and good governance are expected to elevate disaster risk reduction as a policy priority, allocate the necessary resources for it, enforce its implementation and assign accountability for failures, as well as facilitate participation from civil society to the private sector. Due to its multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral nature, disaster reduction falls into the agenda of many diverse institutions which, for effective implementation, require clear assignment of roles and assumption of responsibilities as well as coordination of activities.

1.1-Are there national policy, strategy and legislation addressing disaster risk reduction?

If yes, please describe to what extent current national efforts and main priority areas of the policy, and mechanisms to enforce the implementation of the policy and legislation are applied.

In the United Kingdom

- The UK Government is committed to improving the UK's resilience to disruptive challenges however caused. This includes measures to identify and assess risks as well as active steps to prevent and mitigate disasters. Disaster risk reduction policy is co-ordinated by the Cabinet Office, Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS). The Secretariat was established in July 2001 to improve the UK's resilience against disruptive challenges through working with others to anticipate, assess, prevent, prepare, respond and recover. Resilience is defined as the ability at every level - national, regional and local - to detect, prevent and, if necessary, handle disruptive challenges. These could range from floods, through to outbreaks of human or animal disease, to terrorist attacks.
- The Civil Contingencies Bill, currently going through the UK Parliament and expected to take effect next year, will replace legislation introduced in the first half of the last century with a new statutory framework that will, for the first time, set out in legislation the arrangements for a co-ordinated and systematic approach to planning for disasters, as well as providing access to emergency powers that might be needed to manage the effects of a major disaster. When it becomes law it will create effective legislation for emergency management. Along with accompanying regulations and guidance it will:
 - ensure consistency of activity across and between tiers of government, delivering improvements in performance and communication;
 - set out clear expectations and responsibilities for front line responders at the local level, to ensure that they can deal with the full range of emergencies from localised major incidents through to catastrophic emergencies;
 - provide a framework for robust performance management of civil protection activity at all levels (local, regional and central) to ensure operational effectiveness and financial efficiency;
 - support an enhanced regional civil protection tier, drawing together activity already organised on a regional basis and providing a strong bridge between the centre and local areas; and
 - modernise the legislative tools available to government to deal with the most serious emergencies, providing for greater flexibility, proportionality, deployability and robustness.
- In addition to the Civil Contingencies Bill, there is a wide range of legislation that regulates activity with the aim of reducing the risks of disaster. They include Planning Laws to restrict building in high risk areas, Building Regulations to ensure that structures are able to withstand severe weather, and Health and Safety Regulations on hazardous substances, including radioactive substances. In all cases there are effective mechanisms for enforcement through the courts on the back of prosecutions brought by the relevant inspectorate.
- The UK is fortunate in that it experiences few climate extremes or tropical storms, has no active volcanoes and is not in a high risk area for earthquakes. However, the response to a disaster is fundamentally the same, irrespective of cause. Planning therefore focuses on developing a generic response building on the day-to-day experience of the emergency services and government agencies. Where specific risks have been identified and a dedicated response plan is appropriate, a nominated government department takes the lead. For example, the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and its agencies (in particular, the Environment Agency and the Marine and Coastguard Agency) manage national policies on the environment, including flooding.

- The Meteorological Office is responsible for the Public Meteorology Service, which exists to ensure the protection and safety of life and property in the UK. There are well-developed links with other UK government departments and agencies for communicating safety information and advice to the public. This includes the National Severe Weather Warnings Service (NSWWS). In addition, a wider range of environmental services, including Air Quality (AQ) monitoring and forecasting, health forecasts and warnings, climate change work and global capacity building activities are carried out.

Overseas

- The UK Government's policy on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is reflected in the 1997 White Paper and our Public Service Agreements. The Public Service Agreement (PSA) is a short statement of the outcomes that DFID will focus on and it confirms our aim as the elimination of poverty in poorer countries, in particular through achievement by 2015 of the Millennium Development Goals. PSAs set out objectives and targets to track progress in achieving this. The PSAs reflect our overall approach as set out in the White Papers on International Development and, in particular, their focus on the International Development Targets. Service Delivery Agreements then focus on the processes we will support to ensure that the targets in the PSAs are met. Our Service Delivery Agreement (2003-2006) objectives, relating to DRR are:
 - to protect and rebuild livelihoods and communities;
 - reduce vulnerability to future disasters; and
 - to ensure that disaster preparedness and prevention is an integral part of our development co-operation programme.
- Examples of regional strategy work at DFID:
 - DFID Central Asia, South Caucasus & Moldova has launched a Regional Action Plan recognising natural disasters as a development risk.
 - Review on Disaster Preparedness and Response Capacity in Central Asia.
- DFID Conflict and Humanitarian Department (CHAD) is working to integrate DRR into development work by building an understanding of the key issues involved. A Scoping Study, which is underway, will inform a DFID policy paper on DRR to be produced by April 2005. CHAD supports a number of programmes and projects designed to reduce the risk posed by disasters. The current commitment consists of:
 - Overseas Development Institute - Dissemination of Report "Economic And Financial Impacts Of Natural Disasters: An Assessment Of Their Effects And Options For Their Mitigation".
 - Coventry University - Stock-taking Exercise of Civil Society's Input into the UK Contribution to the Yokohama Review.
 - Pan-American Health Organisation - Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Relief Coordination Programme.
 - International Federation of the Red Cross - Secretariat to the ProVention Consortium (see below at 2.1) .
 - Overseas Development Group (ODG) - Scoping Study on Disaster Risk and Development.
 - UN International Strategy Disaster Reduction – focal point in the UN system for the coordination of disaster reduction including support for World Conference for Disaster Reduction, Kobe, January 2005.

1.2- Is there a national body for multi-sectoral coordination and collaboration in disaster risk reduction, which includes ministries in charge of water resource management, agriculture/land use and planning, health, environment, education, development planning and finance? If yes, please give detailed information (name, structure and functions).

In the United Kingdom

- National co-ordination of activities around disaster reduction is carried out by the Cabinet Office, Civil Contingencies Secretariat. The Secretariat is organised into three parts:

- Assessments, Commitments and Legislation which is responsible for identifying and assessing potential disruptive challenges drawing on information from sources across government, the wider public sector and elsewhere. Where necessary, it also co-ordinates the Government's response;
- The Capabilities Programme aims to build the UK's capacity to respond to disasters by working with departments to build up 17 generic capabilities, including for example, handling mass casualties or fatalities, or managing large-scale evacuations;
- The Emergency Planning College based in North Yorkshire provides training in emergency planning and management for staff at all levels across the public sector.
- The work of the Cabinet Office is supplemented by Resilience Teams within Regional Government Offices in England and corresponding arrangements in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.
- The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC www.dec.org.uk) is an umbrella organisation which launches and co-ordinates the UK's National Appeal in response to major disasters overseas. The SPHERE standards as well as Red Cross Code of Conduct have been very valuable in setting operational standards and accountability. The Disasters Emergency Committee is an example of co-ordination in funding and performance review amongst relief INGOs based in the UK. An example of the positive use of these standards came when DEC evaluated UK assistance following the Gujarat earthquake in 2001. The authors of this evaluation decide to use the Red Cross Code of Conduct as the basis for the evaluation since all the agencies involved in the programme had signed the Code of Conduct.

1.3-Are there sectoral plans or initiatives that incorporate risk reduction concepts into each respective development area (such as water resource management, poverty alleviation, climate change adaptation, education and development planning)? If yes, please indicate some examples and challenges/limitations encountered. If no, does your government have any plans for integrating disaster risk reduction into development sectors? If no, please also specify the major difficulties.

In the United Kingdom

- Government departments and agencies identify and consider risks as part of the policy development process. For example, work to address the housing shortage in south-east England has taken into account environmental concerns such as the impact of additional traffic and the adequacy of water supplies in arriving at individual planning targets for local authorities across the region.

Overseas

- DFID's Global Environmental Assets Team (GEA) works on integrating climate change risks into development planning (adaptation). It also works to integrate development perspectives in international climate change policy. These are the current key areas of work:
 - developing ways to work with DFID country offices to improve the response capability of developing countries to this emerging challenge
 - working with other UK government departments, and with the EU, to explore options for a greenhouse gas limitation regime, involving the larger developing countries
- GEA Challenges:
 - Data on projected climate change trends is uncertain, patchy or non-existent for certain regions of the world, e.g. Africa. The challenge is to see how well climate risks are being managed today, and whether better solutions are available to manage this risk.
 - Climate change is a long-term problem that requires a longer-term planning horizon than political cycles. Infrastructure projects have lifetimes of 25+ years, within the timeframes expected for climate change impacts, so policy guidance is needed now.

- Climate change will cut across almost all sectors and government policies impacting on food security, water security, health and infrastructure development. Reinforces and adds urgency to need for cross-sectoral policies and dialogue.
- Cost-effective response to current and increasing climate variability (e.g. water availability and prevention of flooding) may require regional responses to water management.
- DFID's Overseas Territories Department (OTD) policy framework for disaster risk reduction is conditioned by the three key development objectives for the Overseas Territories (OTs):
 - to maximise economic growth and self sufficiency through sensible economic and financial management;
 - to ensure that basic needs are met, including the provision of essential infrastructure; and
 - to support good governance of the territories, including the proper management of contingent liabilities and the fulfilment of the UK's international obligations.
- References to disaster management in the OTs, in the White Paper concerning post-facto disaster and emergency responses, pledging 'a firm commitment from the UK to help the territories develop economically and to assist them in emergencies'.
- The 2004 draft strategy for the OTs, 'DFID engagement, resourcing and management', specifically points out that the OTs can ill afford, cope or recover from external shocks and calls for more disaster preparedness to mitigate the risk of natural catastrophes.
- Further strategic impetus to DRR has been given by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's in the Americas and the Overseas Territories directorate objectives. One is to encourage all inhabited OTs to prepare contingency plans and allocate resources to security measures, including maritime and aviation safety, in order to deal with disasters.
- Meteorology and climate are factors that fundamentally impact on poverty alleviation. The livelihoods of the poorest are at greatest risk from climate variability, weather related disasters and, in the longer term, the effects of climate change. With this in mind, the Met Office has a major Corporate Programme focused on Disaster Management and Mitigation. This programme provides support to the Met Office's work on poverty alleviation, climate change and the capacity building activities that form part of its work with the World Meteorological Organisation's (WMO) Voluntary Contribution Programme.

1.4-Is disaster risk reduction incorporated into your national plan for the implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), National Adaptation Plans of Action, National Environmental Action Plans and WSSD (World Summit on Sustainable Development) Johannesburg Plan of Implementation? If yes to any of these, who are the main contacts for these initiatives.

- DFID recognises that a reduction in the impact of natural and man-made disasters is an essential precondition for poverty reduction in many countries, and for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This is reflected in our 1997 White Paper, our Service Delivery Agreement (2003-2006), and several of the DFID Target Strategy Papers (e.g. the Water, Halving World Poverty and Sustainability TSPs).
- DFID is currently reviewing the new guidance for Country Assistance Plans and is committed to include instructions on how to consider Disaster Risk Reduction in development work.
- The World Bank and the IMF provide assistance to countries to design their own Poverty Reduction Strategies, which become the basis for donor support. The PRS process, in the medium and long term, presents a real opportunity for countries to develop policies that ensure sustainable poverty reduction, including attention to environmental sustainability. Disaster Risk Reduction considerations have proved to be a part of this process. Examples include Bolivia, Burkina, Ethiopia, Nicaragua and Vietnam.
- The Met Office works closely and directly with other National Hydrological and Meteorological Services (NHMSs) around the world in support of the MDGs.

1.5- Does your country have building codes of practice and standards in place, which takes into account seismic risk? If yes, since when. Which are the main difficulties in keeping with the compliances of the codes.

- The UK has long-standing and well established building codes of practice and standards in place to ensure all buildings are constructed to a high standard and able to withstand all reasonable risks, including seismic shocks.
- The Overseas Territories Department are increasingly ensuring Disaster Risk Reduction is mainstreamed. For example, advice on the proposed design for a new hospital considered whether the building was suitably resilient to earthquake or hurricane occurrence.
- All new construction in Monserrat has to comply with the Montserrat draft Building Codes based on the Caribbean Uniform Building Codes, which deal with both Hurricane and Earthquake forces.
- A key role is being played by UK civil and structural engineers in earthquake resistant construction and by UK based contractors in building. Post-colonial links continue to provide strong global links for such activities.

1.6- Do you have an annual budget for disaster risk reduction? If yes, is this commitment represented as part of the national budget or project based? Through which institution/s? If not, what other financing mechanisms for risk reduction initiatives are available?

In the United Kingdom

- There is no specific national budget allocated to disaster risk reduction, as risk reduction activity and associated funding is integrated into the planning and delivery of public services. For example, the Environment Agency has a budget for flood prevention activity, local authorities enforce building and planning regulations, while the utility companies clear trees near to power lines to reduce the risk of power cuts.

Overseas

- Preventative work includes addressing the scale of the hazard, reducing the community's vulnerability and strengthening its capacity to deal with disasters. Much of this preventative work is integrated into wider development programmes so it is difficult to itemise all prevention expenditure. £3million is provided annually to international bodies working on prevention.
- DFID works with our international partners to improve their capacity to assist developing countries to better manage disaster risk. Assessing exactly what percentage of our development spend is devoted to this is extremely difficult given the huge range of work which help reduce risk – from incorporation of earthquake resistant construction of school buildings, to reduction in corruption of local government officials.
- The Conflict & Humanitarian Affairs Department (CHAD) is working to agree concrete suggestions for a new DFID strategy designed to strengthen DFID efforts in this field.
- DFID is helping poor countries that are prone to natural disasters to take account of this in their development planning.
- DFID is increasingly seeking to integrate disaster preparedness and mitigation measures into its longer term development programmes.
- DFID's humanitarian assistance policy not only endeavours to save lives and relieve suffering, but also seeks to protect and rebuild livelihoods and communities, reducing vulnerability to future disasters.
- The most effective assistance in the event of a natural disaster is usually that provided locally. DFID pays particular attention to supporting efforts to strengthen local, national and sub-regional capacities to cope and respond effectively.

- The UK response to identified needs is noted internationally for its speed, appropriateness and flexibility.
- DFID is working to strengthen and improve international disaster response and the United Nations is the only body that can take on this central co-ordinating role.
- DFID seeks to build a stronger international system both for disaster reduction and response, but accepts that there will remain a role for capable Governments such as the UK to contribute through direct bilateral assistance.
- DFID maintains an extensive capacity to respond to disasters internationally, including through its Operations Team, other call down arrangements and liaison with other Government Departments.

1.7- Are the private sector, civil society, NGOs, academia and media participating in disaster risk reduction efforts? If yes, how? Indicate existing coordination or joint programming between government and civil society efforts in disaster risk reduction, or major difficulties or constraints for this to be effective.

United Kingdom

- There are a wide range of voluntary sector organisations participating in disaster risk reduction efforts. For example, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution provides sea rescue services around the coastline of the UK, while organisations such as the Red Cross, Salvation Army and Women's Royal Voluntary Service provide support to the emergency services and victims in the response to an emergency. Much of this work is co-ordinated through the work of local and regional resilience forums which bring together representatives of organisations from across the public, private and voluntary sectors with an interest in risk reduction and emergency management to ensure a co-ordinated approach that maximises the efforts of all concerned.
- The Meteorological Office works with other Government Departments and a wide range of partners in both the Public and Private Sector. The Met Office is regularly involved in projects supported by the UNDP, the EC, WMO, ESA (European Space Agency), World Bank, the European Investment Bank and others in its work on Disaster Risk Reduction. A recent example was the Mozambique floods, where the Met Office provided operational forecasts in the country to support the local air rescue operations.

Overseas

- A report was commissioned, by DFID in 2004, which examined UK activities domestically and overseas, which were undertaken by the private and non-government sectors (including Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), International Non-Government Organisations (INGOs), Academia and private enterprise) and did not include activities undertaken by HMG agencies. The report looks only at the last 5 years and coming 5 years. Part of the results can be seen throughout this report.
- Relief, recovery and reconstruction activities form part of the INGO response to major disasters overseas and are directed at providing immediate relief and aid to affected populations and to longer term recovery, reconstruction and are increasingly linked with continuing risk reduction and mitigation activities.
- Food Security Studies are well covered in agencies particularly Oxfam, Action Aid and save the Children. Good progress has been made in the development of social and economic indicators of impending crisis conditions to allow early corrective action to be planned and undertaken. Perhaps the best source for this (internationally) is Tom Downing at the Stockholm Environmental Institute in Oxford.
- Developing partnerships between donors, developed country INGOs, governments, national NGOs in developing countries and communities is an imperative and is a frequent activity among INGOs and Governments.
- This non-Governmental sector work has excluded emergent or spontaneous association or the aggregation of individuals for specific purposes. However, there is growing importance of this form of association. Emergent groups are well accepted in the disaster management literature and often in practice as a key element in effective disaster management activity within countries. A recent phenomenon, however, is the emergence of unplanned and voluntary associations of expatriates

who repatriate significant funds to the communities they have left behind overseas. Local communities affected by the earthquake in Gujarat in 2001 received substantial financial assistance from Gujarati communities in the UK.

Component 2 Risk Identification

Identification of risks is a relatively well-defined area with a significant knowledge base on methods for disaster impact and hazard assessment. Systematic assessment of losses, social and economic impact of disasters, and particularly mapping of risks are fundamental to understand where to take action. Consideration of disaster risks in environmental impact assessments is still to become routine practice. Early warning is increasingly defined as a means to inform public and authorities on impending risks, hence essential for timely actions to reduce their impact.

2.1- Has your country carried out hazard mapping/assessment? If yes, please describe for which hazards, when they were updated and for what geographical scale they exist. Do they include characteristics, impacts, historical data, multi-hazards approach? Which institutions are using the results of the hazard assessment? To whom are they available?

In the United Kingdom

- As already noted, the UK is fortunate in that it is not prone to natural disasters. However, the Meteorological Office has developed SWIM, a Severe Weather Impacts Model, which is able to demonstrate the impact of severe weather on the population, the economy, and elements of the national infrastructure. In addition, the Met Office's archive of historic global weather data can be used to create tailored weather-related hazard maps. And the Environment Agency maintains maps showing areas at risk of river or coastal flooding, including information on the number and type of properties at risk. DEFRA monitors plant health risks, including Pest Risk Assessment in accordance with international standards. This involves assessment of the likelihood that a pest/disease will enter the country and for those pests/diseases deemed to be a potential threat, an analysis of their likely impact.
- The Environment Agency places considerable emphasis on the control of gas migration from landfill sites. The Agency, its predecessors and local authorities have worked together in identifying closed landfill sites that may have gas generation potential. Local authorities in Britain are under a duty to inspect their areas and identify contaminated land as defined in Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This includes land where there may be an unacceptable risk from landfill gas, for example a risk to the occupants of nearby homes or other buildings.

Overseas

- Hazard mapping/assessment is not undertaken by DFID. However, an Environment Screening process, which starts during the design phase of an intervention, is standard practice in DFID project proposals. This is an ongoing process that takes place throughout a project or programme cycle. Environmental issues are to be taken into consideration during identification, design and appraisal, and also during implementation, review and evaluation.
- If there are ongoing disasters, then monitoring will be carried out by CHAD Operations Team (see 5.3). Sources of information include UN agencies, other donors, operational partners in the region, government sources, international organisations, UK embassies and news channels. This monitoring may include deploying people to the affected area, if there are not enough sources of information in the country. This would include contacting other donors, operational partners in the region, the UN, government sources, and international organisations.
- DFID supports the ProVention Consortium. The 'Identification and Analysis of Global Disaster Risk Hotspots' project is one of a number of ProVention supported projects. It undertakes the quantitative identification of geographic areas of high global disaster risk potential. The aim being to provide a rigorous analytical basis for identifying those parts of the world which are most disaster prone and hence where natural disaster risk management is most crucial.
- The Flood Hazard Research Centre at Middlesex University conducts research on flooding. Non-Governmental Research activity includes a broad range that address better understanding of hazards, a clearer assessment of risk, assessment of vulnerability and capacity and ways in which

these can be measured, assessed and, in the case of vulnerability, reduced and for capacity, increased

- Urban Risk Management is an area of growing concern with the growth in size and number of mega cities and the imminence of the world's population being urban dwellers rather than (as historical) rural dwellers. Two bodies have been particularly effective in this area. The International Institute for Environment and Development (David Satterwaite) and CARE international (David Sanderson). In addition Mark Pelling at King's College London and Roger Zetter and Mohamed Hamza have conducted research at Oxford Brookes University.
- Community risk assessment activities includes sponsored and supported activities (usually by INGOs) in helping local communities to identify, assess and in some cases manage the risks to which they are exposed.

2.2-Has your country carried out vulnerability and capacity assessments? If yes, please describe the methods used and major social, economic, physical, environmental, political and cultural factors considered in the assessment(s). Who are the main contacts for these Assessments?

United Kingdom

- As part of the Capabilities Programme led by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office, there has been a systematic assessment of all risks to the UK, their potential consequences, and the capacity of the existing national response. As a result, planning assumptions have been developed to inform the development and prioritisation of specific capabilities.
- The programme consists of a total of 17 capability 'work-streams', which fall into three groups:
 - three structural work-streams dealing respectively with the central (national), regional and local response capabilities;
 - five which are concerned with the maintenance of essential services (food, water, fuel, transport, health, financial services, etc); and
 - nine functional work-streams, dealing respectively with the assessment of risks and consequences; chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) resilience; infectious diseases - human; infectious diseases - animal and plant; mass casualties; mass fatalities; mass evacuation; site clearance; and warning and informing the public.
- The Met Office is regularly involved in carrying out capacity audits on behalf of other Met Services to advise on enhancing capabilities to better integrate with the disaster management community. Recent examples include support to the Met Services in Algeria (following the Nov 2001 floods) and in Bangladesh (following the 1998 and recent flood events). The Met Office has also worked on capability assessments in Mexico, Thailand, Romania, Poland, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Overseas

- Developing countries are invited to design their own Poverty Reduction Strategies and these are written up into a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper which becomes the basis for donor support. (See 1.4 above).
- Vulnerability and Capacity assessment has been promoted by the IFRC and in the UK by Oxfam, Tear Fund and Action Aid. There are a considerable number of academics in the UK working in the area including Katrina Allen, Philip Buckle, Terry Cannon, Ian Davis and Mark Pelling. Adaptation to hazards is a growing field of research and is being developed by the people above and by the Tyndall Centre, including Neil Adger and Nick Brooks. Ed Clay and Charlotte Benson are acknowledged as key researchers in the field of economic studies of vulnerability.
- Non-Governmental Organisations have been involved in some development of local capacity, linked to community risk assessment. This moves beyond risk assessment to develop local and sectoral (for example women) capacity to reduce risk by increasing resilience and capacity. Capacity development may span a range of activities.

2.3- Does your country have any mechanisms for risk monitoring and risk mapping? If yes, who is responsible?

In the United Kingdom

- The Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office monitors all natural risks to the UK, working closely with lead government departments and agencies. For example, the Met Office has a remit to continuously monitor the risk of severe weather impacting the UK, and by using information exchanged regularly with other weather services, has the capability at a coarser scale to do the same for severe weather across the globe.

Overseas

- DFID maintains that it is a task of the United Nations to monitor and map disaster risks. DFID exerts influence at the UN through the UN agencies that it contributes to (e.g. OCHA and WFP).
- The UK Government is often made aware of the onset of disasters via its embassies around the world and views such disasters in the context of the Millennium Development Goals. Notification may also come from the UN or EU.
- ISDR works to promote risk monitoring and mapping, and DFID supports this work (see 1.1).
- DFID's Overseas Territories Department has run a project, with an annual budget of approximately £350,000, providing for the establishment of NEMOT, the Network of Emergency Managers for the Overseas Territories and for the appointment of a DFID OTD Disaster Management Adviser (DMA - the first DFID regional desk to have such an adviser). The purpose of both NEMOT and the DMA being to promote, and contribute to reaching, appropriate standards of risk reduction in all the OTs, by facilitating the development of Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM). The objectives are:
 - to facilitate information exchange and mutual assistance between the OTs, in order to strengthen OT capacities (and National Disaster Offices in particular) for CDM;
 - to develop and maintain a strategy to attain acceptable standards of CDM in all OTs that informs and offers direction to OT National Disaster Co-ordinators, OT Governments, UK agencies and international agencies (the desired standards accord with many of the components of the ISDR questionnaire);
 - to contribute to the definition and consistent application of the UK Government's policies and practice for the OTs in disaster management, promoting the inclusion of CDM in the guidance and facilitation given to the OTs by the UK Government's agencies;
 - to strengthen OT representation and inclusion, collectively and individually, with CDM programmes and initiatives of regional and international agencies. By so doing to consolidate the role of international and regional agencies in assisting and responding to OT disaster management requirements; and
 - to prioritise and directly assist National Disaster Offices so that they reach acceptable standards of CDM in their respective territories (e.g. national disaster management strategies, hazard and vulnerability assessments, national disaster office work plans, etc).
- The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has made considerable strides to improve their capabilities to co-ordinate a response to a disaster/emergency in an OT. FCO OTD has a disaster management co-ordinator, there is a new disaster oversight committee and a manual prepared explaining how an FCO response would function.
- FCO has supported a good governance fund disaster management project (£55,000 per annum) for specific risk reduction capacity building in the OTs. The project is managed by DFID's DMA.
- Governors can exercise influence to advance risk reduction in the OTs. Governors, as chairpersons of OT disaster management institutions, increasingly take an active role in prompting OT governments to recognise the importance of risk management and to adopt many of the instruments for disaster risk reduction and preparedness outlined in the ISDR questionnaire.

2.4-Is there a systematic socio-economic and environmental impact and loss analysis in your country after each major disaster? If yes, are the results available?

- The UK Government, through the lead government department, would normally carry out a review to analyse what happened and identify lessons for the future, or a more wide-ranging public inquiry might be commissioned. For example, after the 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak a number of reviews were conducted to assess the impact of the crisis and to recommend how future outbreaks should be managed. These included:
 - an inquiry into lessons learnt from the FMD outbreak in 2001 (chaired by Professor Iain Anderson), <http://cabinet-office.gov.uk/fmd/nav/report.htm>;
 - a scientific review by the Royal Society (chaired by Sir Brian Follett), <http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk/inquiry/index.html>; and
 - a review by the National Audit Office, http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/01-02/0102939.pdf.
- DEFRA have also commissioned a cost benefit analysis to provide enhanced information on the costs of eradicating FMD, taking into account different disease control policies. It will take into account the economic consequences, not just to farmers, but also on wider rural communities, such as damage to tourism and footpath closures.
- The Met Office's Severe Weather Impacts Model can be used to carry out such assessments. In addition, the Met Office provides case study assessments of all major weather events, or emergencies influenced by the weather, in the UK. On occasion the Met Office has also produced similar case studies for significant international weather situations upon request.

2.5-Are there early warning systems in place? If yes, for what hazards and for what geographical scope. Do you have any example when the system was activated lately? Which are the main institutions involved? Please indicate any relevant lessons learnt from the use, and public reaction to early warnings issued.

- Yes, co-ordinated by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat which undertakes horizon scanning and risk assessment. In addition, there are specific arrangements in place to address particular risks. For example:
 - The Department of Health has well established national systems of health surveillance, reporting and analysis in place to provide early warning and information regarding abnormal patterns of illness including scanning for emerging infectious diseases. Monitoring and reporting is provided through general medical practitioners, the National Health Service telephone help-line, the Health Protection Agency, and other health service sources. The system is in daily use and includes provision for specific emergency alerts to the medical community from the Chief Medical Officer.
 - The Environment Agency maintains a Flood Warning System. Around 5 million people, in 2 million properties, live in flood risk areas in England and Wales. The Agency has powers to issue Flood Warnings and its Flood Warning system, which covers England & Wales, aims to give 2 hours warning to those identified to be at risk. It is activated on a regular basis. Main institutions involved in the response comprise the Emergency Services, Local Authorities and voluntary sector as well as the Environment Agency.
 - For plant health, DEFRA's Central Science Laboratory (CSL) undertakes ongoing monitoring of global developments to try and detect emerging threats with potential implications for the UK. This is in addition to monitoring inspections undertaken by DEFRA's Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate, which are targeted against trades and commodities deemed, on the basis of CSL's advice and experience of previous problems, to pose the highest threats.
 - DEFRA's International Animal Health Division (IAHD) monitors outbreaks in European Union member states, countries bordering the EU and the UK's trading partners. It also notes disease in countries near to trading partners and new epidemiological developments that may give an early warning of emerging threats to the UK.

- The State Veterinary Service (SVS) also has an e-mail based system of early warning notifications for suspect exotic disease outbreaks. This is based around agreed scale of suspicion from 0 (low risk) to 4 (high risk).
- The Environment Agency, in its periodic inspections, check gas migration and take relevant steps in cases where it is necessary, including instructing landfill operators to take remedial action.
- The Met Office has a primary responsibility for delivering the UK's Public Met Service. Part of this responsibility includes the National Severe Weather Warning Service, described earlier in 1.1. Warnings are regularly issued by the Met Office through a variety of different dissemination routes, which include the TV, radio and the media, and direct services to agencies involved in managing the impacts. Example agencies include the Environment Agency for river flooding, the Highways Agency for adverse road conditions and the Police for civil contingency related warnings.

Component 3 Knowledge Management

Information management and communication, education and training, public awareness and research are all parts of improving and managing knowledge on disaster risks and their reduction. Inclusion of disaster reduction at all levels of education, effective public awareness and information campaigns, media involvement in advocacy and dissemination, availability of training for communities at risk and professional staff, and targeted research are the ingredients to support the knowledge base for effective disaster reduction.

3.1-Does your country have disaster risk information management systems (governmental and/or non-governmental)? If yes, what kind of information on disaster reduction is available, how is it collected, how is the information disseminated and who are the main users? (Indicate relevant sources of information, if applicable.)

- Arrangements are in place to address specific risks, for example:
- The Department of Health has systems for routinely sharing information and good practice in health emergency preparedness matters through the Health Protection Agency and between health organisations.
- Risk reduction to plant health is focused on excluding pest and diseases known to pose a threat. In the context of a European Community regime, where commodities are not subject to a total prohibition, consignments must be accompanied by official phytosanitary certificates issued in the country of origin confirming that EU conditions of import have been met.
- DEFRA has published on its web-site, guidance and instruction for both farmers and local veterinary surgeons on how to identify the symptoms of any exotic animal disease, and how to take action on the occasion that disease is suspected.
- The Met Office retains an electronic archive of both global historical weather data and weather prediction model records. The Met Office's web-site carries a range of useful advice for the general public and professional users and is updated regularly for severe weather forecasts. Warnings can be accessed at <http://www.metoffice.com/weather/europe/uk/warnings.html>.

3.2-Are the academic and research communities in the country linked to national or local institutions dealing with disaster reduction? If yes, please describe the mechanisms for information sharing and indicate any example of usefulness and effectiveness. Which are the main research and academic institutions dealing with disaster reduction related issues (please list, if available, and indicate how their research work is related to the country's disaster risk reduction needs.)

- Yes. The Emergency Planning College has close links with a wide range of academic institutions specialising in disaster reduction. Similar links exist looking at specific risks. For example, the Met Office has well developed relationships both within the UK and overseas, which have been built up over many years of collaboration. In particular in the UK the Met Office has several Joint Centres with the Natural Environment Research Council's (NERC) Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH), the National Centre for Atmospheric Science (NCAS), and the UK University's Weather Research

Network (UWERN). All of these collaborations have an element of work associated with the mitigation of severe weather impacts.

- The UK is a global centre for academic research and INGO action in disaster risk reduction and emergency relief. The parallel capacity in other development pressures such as urbanisation, conflict, epidemic disease and political-economy of development makes the UK research community well placed to contribute to the changing character of vulnerability, hazard and risk. The United Kingdom has a large pool of knowledge and expertise in risk, vulnerability and capacity assessment as it has also in security, food security and water management. The UK is also in the forefront of research on climate change and food security.

3.3-Are there educational programmes related to disaster risk reduction in your public school system? If yes, for what age-range? Do you have any educational material developed to support the teachers in this area? (Please attach any relevant documentation.)

- There is currently no formal disaster risk reduction education programme in the public school system in England. However, a range of government departments and agencies provide information to schools, colleges and the public in general to raise risk awareness and mitigation measures. For example, the Met Office provides educational material to all school ranges on the weather and the effects of severe weather. In addition, professional training is provided at the Met Office's own training college, which is recognised as a regional training centre for the UN's World Meteorological Organisation (WMO).

3.4-Are there any training programmes available? If yes, please list (if available indicate scope and target audiences of the courses). Do you have any indication on how these courses have been useful to change any practices at local or national scale?

- There are a wide range of multi and uni-disciplinary courses available in the UK and through professional associations for organisations and their staff. Some provide general information on emergency preparedness, whilst others are aimed at specific aspects but each is also intended to raise awareness and strengthen planning.
- The FCO, with assistance from DFID DMA, has held disaster management awareness raising sessions at Governor's conferences. There is also a whole day given over to disaster management and contingency planning in the FCO training course for Governors designate and Governor's Office staff.
- Support to and empowerment of local people and local communities often known as Community Based Disaster Management (CBDM) as opposed to a 'top-down' approach was a common and strongly held theme in the work of non-Government sectors.

3.5-What kind of traditional indigenous knowledge and wisdom is used in disaster-related practices or training programmes on disaster risk reduction in your country?

- N/A

3.6- Do you have any national public awareness programmes or campaigns on disaster risk reduction? If available, who are the main players for raising public awareness? How are the mass media and schools involved? Who are the targeted groups and how do you evaluate the programmes?

- There have been a number of government-led public information campaigns recently involving different forms of media, and centred on public web-sites. For example: www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk
- The Met Office and the Environment Agency pro-actively co-operate in the delivery of the Flood Watch service to raise public awareness of the potential risk from flooding. Well-established links

exist with the media (TV/Radio) that allow schedules to be interrupted for the broadcast of severe weather advice.

Component 4 Risk Management Applications/Instruments

For effective disaster risk reduction, synergies are needed between sustainable development and disaster risk management practices. Moving from analyzing of and knowing about risks, to taking concrete actions to reduce their impacts is a demanding step. Ideas and practices coming from different disciplinary areas will complement what is already practiced in disaster risk management. For example, instruments for risk management have proliferated especially with the recognition of environmental management, poverty reduction and financial management.

Environmental and natural resource management is among the best-known applications to reduce flood risks, control landslides (through reforestation) and control droughts (through ecosystem conservation). Physical and technical measures, such as flood control techniques, soil conservation practices, retrofitting of buildings or land use planning, are effective in hazard control. Financial instruments in the form of insurance, calamity funds, and catastrophe bonds are useful to lessen the impact of disasters.

4.1- Are there any good examples of linking environmental management and risk reduction practices in your country (key areas of environmental management may include coastal zone, wetland and watershed management, reforestation and agricultural practices, amongst others). If yes, please indicate in what areas. (Attach any relevant documentation or references)

In the United Kingdom

- Met Office provides surge tide forecasts to the Environment Agency (EA) and inputs to river flood models for the EA to assist in mitigation of flood impact. Other products and services are available to allow better informed decisions relating to civil protection. In addition, washlands and natural floodplains are used to manage the impact and risk of flooding as part of the England Flood Management Programme.

Overseas

- Nura-Ishim River Basin Management Project, Kazakhstan. In the past, poor governance in Central Asia has contributed to huge disasters such as at the Aral Sea Disaster and massive mercury pollution in rivers. DFID is supporting an Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) project in Kazakhstan.
- The Nura-Ishim River Basin Management Project initially focused on the Nura-Ishim River basins but with rollover to other River Basin organisations. This project is led by the Ministry of Agriculture and carried out by a consortium of British Consulting firms including JacobsGibb Ltd and Halcrow Group Ltd. Kazgiprovodkhoz of Kazakhstan is also involved.
- Recognising that capacity building was needed in all areas of water resource management, the primary outputs were:
 - A strategy for development of River Basin Organisations;
 - Recommendations and development assistance for the new Water Code;
 - Drafting of regulations and by-laws in support of the articles of the new Water Code;
 - The establishment of Integrated Water Resources Planning and Management which has seen the development of Decision Support Systems, River Basin Plans and a push to replicate the model throughout Kazakhstan;
 - Development of a methodology for increasing public participation through social surveys;
 - Recommendations for monitoring the water environment;
 - A strategy for the improvement of water quality;
 - An explanation of environmental and social elements of water resources management which must be considered in the planning and management process.

- The choice of Balkash-Alakol was based on several factors. One is its importance as the most populous river basin in the country, with significant irrigated agricultural and industrial development. Another driver was environment concern over the future of Lake Balkash itself. Careful planning and management will be needed to ensure that lake levels and water quality standards are maintained to avert another disaster as has occurred in the Aral Sea.

4.2- Are financial instruments utilised in your country as a measure to reduce the impact of disasters (e.g. insurance/reinsurance, calamity funds, catastrophe bonds, micro-credit finance, community funds, etc.)? If yes, please describe what these instruments are and when they were established, who manages them and who are eligible to them.

- The UK is home to one of the largest insurance markets in the world with UK based companies providing cover across the globe. Domestically, most households and businesses take out insurance to reduce the financial impact of natural disasters. The UK pattern of insurance for dwellings now reflects flood risk in insurance premiums. This may provide an important incentive for house purchasers to think carefully before commissioning a new building or purchasing a home in an area subject to extreme flood risk.
- Some specialist products are emerging. For example, weather derivatives are rapidly replacing traditional insurance approaches as a means of reducing the impact of severe weather events. In response to this the Met Office has established a JV partnership with the financial markets to provide financial tools for weather risk management. The World Bank are now proposing the use of these types of derivative structures as a method of reducing the impact of losses from weather disasters, particularly in relation to the damage of crops in countries such as Africa and India.
- The research into Non-Governmental sectors found that the private sector could to be more fully engaged in disaster risk reduction. The insurance sector has limited involvement in promoting disaster resistant construction. There remains great scope for increased engagement from UK companies involved in overseas ventures to promote disaster prevention and preparedness through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR activities). At home the private sector is involved in charitable funding of emergency response and relief and there remains scope for a more holistic engagement through the promotion of disaster risk reduction as an arm of CSR.

4.3- Please identify specific examples of technical measures or programmes on disaster risk reduction that have been carried out in your country (see below, case studies).

- The risk of exotic diseases entering the UK through the importation of live animals or animal products through legal or illegal imports is minimized as:
 - Live animals and animal products may only be imported from third countries approved by the European Commission, and only from approved establishments in those countries.
 - They must have an official veterinary certificate guaranteeing their health status and may only enter the EU via an approved border inspection post at the port or airport of entry. There, comprehensive veterinary checks are carried out to make sure all the import conditions specified in Community law are met. Only then will they be released for import.
 - Furthermore, if a disease outbreak occurs in a Member State, exports are not permitted from that country.
- The Met Office's National Meteorological Programme (NMP) brings together a range of government departments to provide planning and financial support to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place to underpin the forecast and warning capabilities. Met Office also provides support to regular emergency training exercises organised by differing government departments and co-ordinated through the Met Office's Emergency Response Centre (EMARC).

Component 5 Preparedness and Contingency Planning

Preparedness and emergency management has been used as a means for reducing life losses from direct and indirect effects of disasters. A well-prepared system is expected to be effectively informed by early warning, endowed with regularly rehearsed national and local contingency and evacuation plans, fitted with communications and coordination systems, as well as adequate logistical infrastructures and

emergency funds. Local-level preparedness, particularly at community level, including training, deserves special attention as the most effective way of reducing life and livelihood losses.

5.1- Do you have disaster contingency plans in place? Are they prepared for both national and community levels? If yes, please describe their main components, who is responsible for activating the plan(s)? Are the plan(s) updated on an annual basis? Have you ever used the contingency plan(s) that was or were developed? If yes, what was the result?

- Yes. Comprehensive plans are in place to respond to a wide range of emergencies. These include generic plans that have been developed by local authority planners, in consultation with other key responders, based on national doctrine and guidance that emphasise the need for flexibility and a multi-agency approach. These contingency arrangements have been implemented in response to a range of major incidents and have generally enabled responders to manage the incident satisfactorily. There are also specific plans to address key risks. All plans are updated and tested regularly.

5.2- Has your government established emergency funds for disaster response and are there national or community storage facilities for emergency relief items – mainly food, medicine, tents/shelters? If yes, please provide some details.

In the United Kingdom

- There is no standing emergency fund for disaster response. Although arrangements are in place, for example, through the Bellwin Scheme, to channel financial assistance to local authorities and other public services in an emergency. Some stocks are held of medicines and other key items, but most items would be obtained when they were required from commercial stocks.

Overseas

- As far as possible DFID encourages organisations it supports to purchase items locally or regionally as this is quicker, cheaper and benefits the local economy. In case this is not possible, DFID maintains stockpiles of essential relief items including tents, plastic sheeting, blankets, essential vehicles and communications equipment.
- DFID has agreed procedures with the UK MOD for the use, when appropriate, of military logistics assets. This is usually when it becomes apparent that the scale of the crisis is such that there is insufficient capacity amongst humanitarian organisations to deliver the necessary assistance in a timely manner and that those in need will suffer if we do nothing.
- As part of Europe & Central Asia Department's Rural Livelihood programme we are currently supporting the development of local Disaster Preparedness Plans (DPPs). Wide consultation and participation at community level, combined with real action on the ground (e.g. village seed funds) and shared responsibility between regional government and communities, are vital tools to reduce vulnerability and coordinate preparedness in a cost efficient way. This work is embedded in a wider rural poverty development programme, and wider linkages and lesson sharing is promoted through Inter-Ministerial Steering Groups.

5.3- Who is responsible for the coordination of disaster response preparedness and is the coordination body equipped with enough human and financial resources for the job? Please comment on the effectiveness of the coordination work done so far.

- The Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office is responsible for arrangements in the UK.
- The CHAD Operations Team is the quick response part of DFID for overseas emergencies, with a mandate for crisis monitoring and emergency response, among other things, and gives advice on disaster risk reduction policy.

Component 6 Call for good practices in disaster risk management

Based on the above analysis and information provided, please provide at least two examples of any successful implementation of disaster reduction activities in your country (could be of local, national or regional scale). Any project or community based experience, national policy, interaction between sectors, etc, would be welcome. Provide a maximum of one page on each example, indicating the area of work, institutions and actors involved, duration, impact of the activities, lessons learnt and if the example has been replicated. You may also kindly direct us to relevant web-based information/organization.

- **Example 1 - successful containment of the UK's first potato ring rot outbreak:**

- EU member states are required to carry out annual surveys for potato ring rot. During the 2003 UK survey, samples of potatoes were taken by DEFRA's Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate between the 28th of August and the 17th of October from a store at a farm in mid-Wales. The samples were tested at DEFRA's Central Science Laboratory and ring rot was confirmed on the 7th of November.
- DEFRA's contingency plan (<http://defra.gov.uk/planth/ring.pdf>) was implemented with immediate effect. The programme resulted in the testing of over 165,000 tubers in the UK and over 19,000 tubers in the Netherlands.
- Two stocks (on the outbreak farm) were confirmed to be contaminated and disposal was required in line with the options available under the contingency plan. A further 24 stocks (21 on the outbreak farm) were also disposed of in accordance with contingency plan provisions. These stocks had tested negative for ring rot, but remained under restriction on a precautionary basis because of their links to the outbreak farm.
- The outbreak was confirmed as contained on the 23rd of February 2004.
- A full Report and further details about the outbreak are available at <http://defra.gov.uk/planth/ring/repfinal.htm>

- **Example 2 - Volcano Disaster Preparedness, Montserrat:**

- Montserrat has suffered from the effects of volcanic eruptions since 1994 resulting in the evacuation of approximately two thirds of the island and the permanent displacement of half the population to the UK and other Caribbean islands. Substantial investment has been necessary to develop the infrastructure in the remaining northern third of the island that is relatively safe. Due to the wide range of activity of the volcano and the constant need to allow the inhabitants to occupy as much of the island in safety as possible, constant monitoring of the volcano is essential.
- DFID have funded the construction of a purpose built Volcano Observatory, the provision of a permanent team of highly qualified volcanologists, the installation of appropriate seismic, GPS, remote camera and gas monitoring devices, and the use of a helicopter for observation and equipment maintenance flights.
- DFID have also funded the provision of a fully manned Emergency Command Centre, a warehouse full of hurricane emergency equipment, a set of island wide hurricane warning sirens and fully equipped emergency shelters. As the activity of the volcano has fluctuated in intensity it has been necessary to evacuate residents from some areas, often for some months, until it is safe to return. The hurricane shelters and the warning sirens have then been deployed to assist with volcanic emergencies, making good use of the facilities provided.

Component 7 Priorities you want addressed at World Conference on Disaster Reduction

What do you think are the priority topics to be agreed upon at the World Conference to enhance and strengthen national policy and practice to reduce risk and vulnerability to natural and technological hazards? Please list any other thematic areas or specific topics of discussion that you consider of importance to increase the effectiveness of disaster risk reduction for your country. Please also indicate any particular experience or project that your country would like to exhibit or present at the Conference.

- Core UK Government objectives are to achieve an outcome that commits donors and developing countries to implement effective, measurable and cost efficient measures to reduce the impact of disasters, especially in vulnerable areas of developing countries. In particular:

- To seek agreement to a review of disaster risk issues in the 2005 review of the MDGs. (Disaster Risk Reduction could be included in the identified core policy area of climate change).
- Identify and reinforce the links between climate change and the increase in natural disasters in order to guide international policy and development planning.
- Promulgate key messages from DFID-funded research and gather support from donors and developing countries for the implementation of cost effective disaster risk reduction measures from that research.
- Priorities raised during the compilation of this report by various departments:
 - Consider how to ensure linkages and lesson learning between local level and central government, and to consider how DRR should be addressed as part of broader national government development policies and plans.
 - Development of national action plans to help countries consider the degree to which a) disasters are purely a natural phenomenon, or b) the likelihood of disasters is increased as a result of poor management of the natural and physical environment, influencing the type of action required. Where a) mainly applies, then preparedness and response would seem the more important aspect to address; but where b) is a significant factor, then better management of natural and physical environments to reduce the risk would also be required.
 - Increased emphasis on capacity building and promoting accountability of local institutions with responsibilities for ensuring safe design and construction of public buildings.
 - To encourage disaster management practitioners and experts to renew their efforts to convince other disciplines to automatically consider hazard risk implications and measures to reduce them.
 - In relation to post-event reconstruction and poverty alleviation- to make effective use of the many existing operational centres and resources to support a co-ordinated response, and look to tools like weather derivatives to provide governments and at risk groups with mechanisms to protect against financial losses.
- Priorities raised during the compilation of this report by various private and Non-Governmental Organisations:
 - Coordination of activities between Governments, agencies and NGOs should be improved. In particular a robust international institutional framework could be established to promote and coordinate research.
 - Information sharing – inter-agency information sharing needs to be improved between governments, agencies, NGOs and research institutions. This applies to academic research being made available to local people. Funding arrangements for research need to be improved. However for information sharing to occur, ways need to be devised to minimise competition between agencies and between research groups for project funds.
 - Integrated management plans needs to be developed involving local to national/international agencies.
 - Culture of prevention, mitigation and development – needs to be developed that incorporates all agencies/stakeholders and so it influences development policy. A proactive rather than reactive perspective needs to be encouraged.
 - Proper governance and accountability need to be developed as effective contributors to risk reduction, nationally and locally, to include work on legislation and the operationalisation of legal demands. International governance for risk reduction, multi-lateral agencies and donors to include disaster risk assessment in policy and project assessments.
 - Standards and targets should be set for disaster risk reduction – these can be used to assess progress towards achieving programme goals and also to provide input to policy making on which goals should be targeted.

- Development in hazardous areas (particularly the UK) – there should be restrictions on the development of land exposed to hazards, floods in particular in the UK - or appropriate design to live with flooding e.g. raising houses etc. The UK can learn from the global South in this regard.
- Disaster mitigation –needs to be given a higher priority (particularly given its cost-effectiveness) and it needs to be mainstreamed with other activities, especially those linked to community priorities and the interests and capabilities of the private sector. Particular alliances could be formed with poverty reduction programmes, national investment and development policies.
- Insurance – needs to be encouraged and employed as an effective mitigation and recovery activity. The opportunities offered by micro-finance (particularly in urban areas) and of government emergency funds should be explored.
- Developing decision-making support for disaster risk reduction. Two approaches need evaluation and development. 1) A human rights approach, based on the right to be free from losses caused by preventable disaster. Linked to existing human rights entitlements. Supports a presumption for development to be precautionary. 2) Establishing cost effectiveness of mitigation and preparedness activities and comparing this c/e with that of response activities. A proper framework to integrate mitigation at local to national/international levels is needed emphasis on disaster control may detract from mitigation and recovery.
- Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment tools – need to be refined and made more accessible to local communities. This includes tools for assessing community risk. They must be oriented towards building local capacity (not just local capability but also enhancing entitlements to external resources).