



International Strategy for Disaster Reduction



International Day for Disaster Reduction

Wednesday 10 October



The frequency and severity of the impact of recent floods and drought in different continents and the earthquake in Peru strongly remind the world that more needs to be done to ensure people's safety and economic gains.

The International Day for Disaster Reduction aims to raise general awareness of disaster risk reduction. As ISDR secretariat, together with ISDR partners, launched the 2006-2007 world campaign under the theme of *Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School* in 2006, events planned by governments and ISDR partners have focused on safer schools and disaster risk reduction education.

The World Disaster Reduction Campaign 2006-2007 has been under way for a year. Various initiatives, such as making schools safer, developing educational materials, educating disaster risk reduction at schools, developing training manuals, have been carried out worldwide since the campaign was launched in 2006.

Some of the initiatives made immediate impact; others laid the foundations for future successes. But all helped in particular school children fulfil a role envisioned for them: to serve as agents of disaster risk reduction and to become agents for sustainable development.

Such a role played by the children could not be thought of a few years ago. Children were - and still are - among the most vulnerable groups in society to disasters; they were - and still generally are - perceived as "passive victims". But, the successful stories in the current campaign have shown that children can play an active part in disaster risk reduction.

The publication, entitled *Towards a Culture of Prevention: Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School - Good Practices and Lessons Learned*, highlights many good practices where school children played a role, an important role for creating a culture of prevention and safety, together with teachers and communities.

Importantly, such a change may also prompt bigger changes. This is simply because it conveys the following signal - a very strong signal: if children can do it, then every one can do it.

If children can do it, then youths can do it. If children can do it, then adults can do it. If children can do it, then elderly people can do it.

Teaching our children today is empowering the next generation to address disaster risk more effectively tomorrow.

Sálvano Briceño
Director, UN/ISDR secretariat

2006-2007

The World Disaster Reduction Campaign

Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School

The World Disaster Reduction Campaign 2006-2007 was launched in Paris in June 2006 by UN/ISDR secretariat and UNESCO, with support from the French Government. Its theme is: “Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School”.

This theme was chosen because: (1) it is in line with the Priority 3 of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: “Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels”; and (2) schools are the best venues for forging durable collective values; therefore they are suitable for building a culture of prevention and disaster resilience.

The World Campaign focuses on promoting the safety of school buildings and the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction (DRR) into school curricula or at least school activities. In other words, the World Campaign seeks to promote disaster resilience in schools and through schools.

The World Campaign has now entered its second year. Various activities were undertaken worldwide during its first year: both on the occasion of the International Disaster Reduction Day (IDRR) on 12 October 2006 and as programmes, projects or initiatives coming under the theme of the Campaign itself. The present summary focuses on a selection of initiatives carried out as part of the ongoing Campaign.

www.unisdr.org/wdrc-2006-2007

Overview

Information available to the UN/ISDR secretariat shows that more than 55 countries participated actively in the World Campaign through awareness-raising or capacity building activities. Such a number is low compared to the 168 Governments which adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action at the January 2005 World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR). Two factors may help understand this: (1) the WCDR was held a few weeks after the December 2004 Asian tsunami disaster and the heightened attention of the international community was conducive to the massive adoption of the Hyogo Framework (HFA); (2) some follow-up was needed to help implement the HFA and such a follow-up was easier in countries with established National Platforms for DRR.

The same is also true of countries that carried out school-oriented programmes, projects or initiatives independently of the IDRR, activities that have focused on raising awareness, building or developing capacity, making school buildings safer and seeking to mainstream DRR into school curricula. Their number is even lower than that of the IDRR participating countries. Information available shows that 22 countries have achieved highly visible successes in school-oriented DRR initiatives.

Also, in some cases, school-oriented DRR initiatives may be more relevant qualitatively than quantitatively. As another signal to be sent to the community at large is “if children can do it, then every one can do it” (every one meaning youths, adults, people with disabilities and elderly people), the highly visible success of a few school-oriented initiatives can sometimes have more impact than the less visible success of a larger number of initiatives.

2007 and Beyond

The World Campaign is on its second year and time has come to devise the way forward - based on the progress made. It is clear that that first year was mostly the year of pilot, pioneering or “foundation-laying” initiatives. Therefore, more concrete results are expected in this second year (2007), especially in the area of mainstreaming DRR into school curricula – as most of the ongoing activities are oriented toward this objective.

Nonetheless, the results achieved so far cannot be overlooked. They are “seeds” without which no harvest can be expected. As such, they need to be nurtured, reinforced and sustained not only during this second year but also beyond. As building a culture of prevention and disaster resilience in schools and through schools takes more than two years (the duration of the World Campaign), what matters first and foremost is commitment and initial actions to build such a culture, then perseverance.



Photo by Christopher R. Wigginton

Africa

In **Africa**, where DRR is a relatively new subject, 14 countries carried out DRR-related activities on the occasion of the IDDR: Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, the Republic of Congo, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Seychelles and South Africa. Most of these countries have ISDR National Platforms for DRR and the remaining few have some relative experience in DRR. Most of the IDDR activities focused on raising awareness on DRR in schools; others on conducting disaster preparedness drills or initiating a process for mainstreaming DRR into school curricula. Regarding activities carried out as programmes, projects or initiatives independently of the IDDR, efforts were made to mainstream DRR into school curricula or at least school activities, but only one country (Madagascar) managed to do so. Nonetheless, other countries such as Burundi, Cape Verde, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Tanzania have taken steps toward mainstreaming DRR into school curricula, including developing DRR textbooks, displaying DRR messages on school stationery and organizing school competitions or disaster preparedness drills.

The Americas

In the **Americas**, where DRR has a longer history compared to Africa, the International Disaster Reduction Day (IDDR) was marked in 2006 in the following 18 countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, the United States and Venezuela. And DRR initiatives focusing on school communities - but independently of the IDDR - were taken in El Salvador, Haiti, Jamaica, Panama and Paraguay, among others. Most of the activities focused on raising awareness among school communities; others were on improving DRR knowledge and access to DRR knowledge among school students and also on developing school protection plans. As part of this effort, two regional Disaster Preparedness, European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) (DIPECHO) projects have been initiated in Central America to strengthen the capacities of Education Ministries and Civil Protection Departments, and to reinforce community development efforts in six local governments of Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras and Panama. Furthering this effort, a cooperative initiative was taken in which a fun and creative action plan was developed to focus children's interest directly on the theme of the Campaign; which resulted in a "Disaster Risk Reduction Begins in School Art Contest and Awareness Campaign". It is to be noted that this particular effort was facilitated by the countries' local government authorities, which has resulted in a very successful awareness campaign. Partner organizations are DIPECHO, UNICEF, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and Plan International. The "Art Contest and Awareness Campaign" is in its final phase and will culminate in an award ceremony and press conference scheduled for the International Day for Disaster Reduction on 10 October 2007 in these countries.

Asia and the Pacific

In **Asia and the Pacific**, the IDDR was marked in the following 17 countries: Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Nepal, Niue, Papua New Guinea (PNG), the Philippines, Singapore, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tuvalu and Viet Nam. DRR initiatives not linked to the IDDR but targeting school communities are under way in countries such as Iran, India, Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines. Some activities have reached a relatively advanced stage. For instance in Iran, the "8th National Drill", conducted under the country's "Annual School Earthquake & Safety Initiative", covered all primary, secondary and high schools (over 130,000 schools) in 2006, joined by over 14 million school students. Some initiatives in other Asian countries are not less important. In Nepal, DRR-trained school students have become "risk reduction ambassadors". In the Philippines, some school students managed to assess their own vulnerabilities and prepared "risk reduction plans. In India, a single programme helped some 100,000 students and 2,500 teachers in 200 schools develop school disaster management plans. Also in the region, some efforts were made to make school buildings safer, especially in earthquake-prone countries.

Europe

In **Europe**, a number of countries also marked the International Disaster Reduction Day, and DRR initiatives focusing on school communities have been carried out in a number of countries such as France - where one particular initiative won a trophy from the French Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development - and Armenia where a single few-month training project helped turn 375 school students, teachers and school principals into qualified DRR trainers.



Major Events around the World

New York, USA, 9 October 2007	The launch of the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction The IFRC will organize an event to launch the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction for vulnerable communities on 9 October in New York. This Alliance will scale up IFRC's efforts in reducing disaster losses in the most vulnerable communities where national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies operate. In working to achieve this objective, the IFRC will also be consistent with the priorities of the HFA, and so will play its part in meeting these global outcomes.	Focal point: Kenneth Westgate IFRC kenneth.westgate@ifrc.org
Brussels, Belgium 9 October 2007 (from 14.00 -15.00)	Policy Change Dialogue: Making Your Constituencies "Disaster Proof" In preparation for the International Day for Disaster Reduction, the UN/ISDR secretariat and the Global Legislators Organisation for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE) parliamentarians' network will co-organize a roundtable discussion entitled "Policy Change Dialogue: Making Your Constituencies 'Disaster Proof'" at the European Commission in Brussels. As emphasized by EU Environmental Commissioner Mr Stavros Dimas at the launching of a public debate on climate change-related options for EU actions, adaptation to climate change may be a matter of survival. The proposed Policy Change Dialogue seeks to link disaster risk reduction with ongoing efforts in climate change adaptation and environmental protection. The dialogue will also allow participants to discuss how disaster risk reduction can be integrated into EU policies.	Focal point: Andrei Iatsenia UN/ISDR secretariat, Geneva iatsenia@un.org
Geneva, Switzerland 10 October 2007	Roundtable Discussion on "Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School: Next steps for the ISDR Biennial World Disaster Reduction Campaign 2006-2008" To build on the gains made in the ISDR Biennial World Campaign, the UN/ISDR secretariat is organizing a roundtable discussion to review the progress made and identify further actions to facilitate the implementation of school safety and education on disaster risk reduction on the International Day for Disaster Reduction on 10 October 2007. More than 60 participants will be expected to attend, including: representatives of Member States, UN agencies, international/regional organizations, civil society; and academics and media, NGO and private sector experts involved in disaster risk reduction. The Roundtable Discussion will be followed by the UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction Ceremony.	Focal point: Brigitte Leoni UN/ISDR secretariat, Geneva leoni@un.org
Kobe, Japan 14 October 2007	A major awareness-raising event The UN/ISDR secretariat, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Human Security Unit and the Hyogo Prefecture Government, together with other partners, will co-organize a major awareness-raising event in Kobe, Japan. On the occasion of the opening of a joint photo exhibition under the theme "Human Security" - that includes a disaster risk reduction perspective, a dialogue event for public awareness will be held, moderated by Ms Charmine Koda of United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Tokyo. Panel members will include Hyogo Governor Mr Toshizo Ido, UN/ISDR secretariat Director Mr Sálvamo Briceño and Japanese actress Ms Norika Fujiwara. On the same day, the UN/ISDR secretariat will open the UN/ISDR Hyogo Office in Kobe in a ceremony held with the support of the Hyogo Prefecture Government, the Asia Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) and other partners.	Focal point: Yuki Matsuoka UN/ISDR secretariat, Geneva matsuoka@un.org
Bangkok, Thailand 8-10 October 2007	Asia-Pacific Regional workshop on School Education and Disaster Risk reduction Jointly organized by UNESCO, UNICEF, UNCRD, UN/ISDR Asia and Pacific, with support from UNESCAP, ASEAN, IFRC, ADRC, ADPC and Asia Broadcast Bureau, an "Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on School Education and Disaster Risk Reduction" will take place from 8 to 10 October 2007, including a technical segment on the first two days. The technical discussions will bring together education experts and representatives from the disaster risk reduction (DRR) community to review and exchange successful national and local experiences, and identify major obstacles and challenges in integrating disaster risk reduction into the education sector.	Focal point: Christel Rose UN/ISDR secretariat, Asia and The Pacific rosec@un.org
Central Asia, Tajikistan	Media activities A number of media activities have been planned in Central Asia to mark the International Day for Disaster Reduction. The UN/ISDR secretariat "Everybody's Business" film will be broadcast on national channels and/or a TV station broadcasting for Central Asia. A number of debates and talk shows among university students will be also organized in cooperation with the Swiss Development Corporation (SDC)-supported Competence Center for Disaster Reduction (CCDR). In June 2007, the UN/ISDR launched a campaign focusing on children, published a collection of cross-word puzzles and organized a contest through the local newspaper "Aladdin".	Focal point: Goulsara Pulatova UN/ISDR secretariat, Dushanbe secretariatgoulsara.pulatova @undp.org
Central America, Panama	Art Contest and Awareness Campaign Awards Ceremony The UN/ISDR Panama office will organize an "Art Contest and Awareness Campaign Awards Ceremony" to mark the International Day. The Awareness Campaign seeks to sensitize about disaster risk reduction issues and empower local communities against disaster risks throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. The event will be organized by the UN/ISDR secretariat, Disaster Preparedness, European Community Humanitarian Office (DIPECHO), UNICEF, IFRC and Plan International, and followed by a press conference on 11 October 2007 in Panama City.	Focal point: Margarita Vallalobos UN/ISDR secretariat, Panama margarita.vallalobos@ eird.org

For more information visit www.unisdr.org/iddr-2007

ISDR On-line Video Game

www.stopdisastersgame.org

The UN/ISDR secretariat is launching an online video game in English, French, Spanish, Chinese and Russian to engage children aged 9 to 16 in and teach them how to protect urban areas and villages against natural hazards through disaster risk planning and management. The online video game is one of the educational material produced to consolidate the gains made in the ongoing World Disaster Reduction Campaign 2006-2007 focusing on schools, and to move the disaster risk reduction momentum forward in the years to come.

The UN/ISDR secretariat developed the online video game based on the great success of the board game called "Riskland" for children aged 6 to 9, which was developed jointly with UNICEF. The Riskland game has been widely used worldwide in different languages, including local languages.

The new on line game called "Stop Disasters" aims at sensitizing children on basic notions of disaster risk reduction in a fun and entertaining manner. Its main objective is to raise awareness about the issue but does not pretend to educate children on all the aspects of disaster risk reduction issues. The game is also supported by a website offering more information and teacher guides on natural hazards.

The online game includes five natural hazard scenarios (flooding, tsunami, wildfire, hurricane and earthquake) set in



five different geographic environments with three different levels of difficulty that require critical decision-making and strategic planning.

In each scenario, the player has a specific mission to fulfill within a budget and limit time. Then a natural hazard strikes after which the player assesses damage and receives his/her score. The player who has protected the most people and their livelihoods (property and resources) wins the game.

"We hope that the on line game will help children to know more about disaster risk reduction policies and understand the benefit of disaster risk reduction policies to advert the impact of disasters."

"Children will be one day the mayors, the architects and the decision makers of the world of tomorrow. If we teach them what they can do from the early age they will build a safer world."

"Games are only one way to get to children but the impact of the game will not be useful without a complementary approach at school. Education can save lives and it is why it is imperative to integrate disaster risk reduction in the school curricula of all children not only in schools located in prone disasters area."

*Salvano Briceño
Director, UN/ISDR secretariat*

The UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction

The United Nations Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction is one of three prestigious prizes established in 1986 by Mr Ryoichi Sasakawa, founding chairman of the Sasakawa Foundation (later renamed Nippon Foundation). The two other awards are the WHO (World Health Organization) Sasakawa Health Prize and the UNEP (UN Environment Programme) Sasakawa Environment Prize.

Every year, the UN Sasakawa Award Jury, composed of representatives from different continents, get together to select the Laureate of the Sasakawa Award, three recipients of the Certificate of Distinction and three recipients of the Certificate of Merit, among candidates that have done an outstanding action on activities recognized as essential in promoting disaster risk reduction.

The Award provides a unique opportunity for sharing experience, highlighting good practices in disaster reduction and promoting global commitment to reducing risk from and vulnerability to disasters.

From 2006, the Sasakawa Award has changed from every year to every two years. The Award ceremony for 2006-2007 will take place in Geneva on 10 October 2007 this year, on the occasion of the International Day for Disaster Reduction.

Towards a Culture of Prevention: Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School

Good Practices and Lessons Learned

This publication is part of ongoing efforts made under the theme "Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School", a theme selected for the World Disaster Reduction Campaign 2006-2007 coordinated by the UN/ISDR secretariat in cooperation with the UNESCO.

Schools are the best venues for sowing collective values, the World Campaign, therefore, promotes two major initiatives: (1) making school buildings safer; and (2) mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into school curricula.

To facilitate the Campaign, UN/ISDR secretariat produced an information kit. The Thematic Platform on Knowledge and Education and its partners launched the publication entitled *"Let Our Children Teach Us! - A review of the Role of Education and Knowledge in Disaster Risk Reduction"*. This review, prepared by Professor Ben Wisner, examined good practices to reduce disaster risk through education, knowledge and innovation.

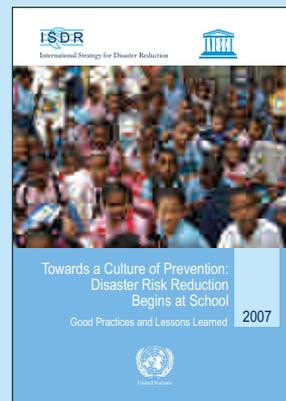
Since the Campaign was launched in June 2006, many activities have been carried out in all parts of the world: some as part of some established practice, others as pioneering initiatives; but all with some impact – nationally or locally, immediate and less immediate. It is gratifying to remark that many of the activities illustrated in this publication are part of longstanding projects initiated before the Campaign.

The present Good Practices provide an indication of the major successes achieved so far and, therefore, an idea of what could be achieved in the future. Indeed, they have been selected primarily for their potential for replication. But attention was also paid to geographical balance.

The following good practices are arranged under the issues of: 1) raising awareness within school communities; 2) building a culture of prevention; and 3) making school building safer. But they all involve school children, teachers and non-academic staff and, in some cases, the surrounding communities.

For ease of reference, an abstract is provided at the beginning of each good practice and each is presented in a reader-friendly way based on straightforward answers to questionnaires sent to (and, in some instances, interviews with) institutions and organizations participating in the World Campaign. Brief contact details are given at the end of each case study for any further information.

We hope that this publication helps draw the attention of all current and potential disaster risk reduction actors and stakeholders - including community mobilizers, community leaders, parents, school teachers and school administrators - on the utmost importance of disaster resilience in schools and through schools.



www.unisdr.org/education-good-practices



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