

FAST FACTS

United Nations Development Programme



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery

More than 90 percent of disaster fatalities occur in developing countries. It is the poor who live in the most vulnerable and least prepared countries, who suffer most when catastrophe occurs.

Over the past two decades, disasters have killed more than 1.3 million people, affected more than 4.4 billion and cost the global economy at least US\$2 trillion. It is estimated that each year, earthquakes, hurricanes and cyclones cost more than US\$180 billion.

Disasters put hard won development gains at risk, reversing economic growth and progress towards the elimination of poverty.

UNDP's approach

UNDP's goal is to protect development gains by empowering communities and nations to be more resilient to catastrophe.

UNDP helps its partners to **understand and communicate risk** by enabling them to identify existing vulnerabilities and hazards through such measures as hazard maps, damage and loss databases efforts to learn from past experiences, as well as share knowledge and best practices.

To help translate risk awareness into action, UNDP helps strengthen early warning systems and develop contingency plans and support systems.

Reducing disaster risk includes advocating for governments to allocate resources to preventing and responding to disasters, as well as providing support to draft and amend policies, laws, and governance arrangements for emergencies caused by natural hazards.

Despite the best efforts, it is not possible to completely eliminate disaster risk. UNDP helps countries **manage and mitigate this remaining risk** through preparedness measures and pre-disaster recovery planning. Particular focus is placed on ensuring that systems for emergency relief, response and recovery are in place.

UNDP spends an average of US\$ 150 million annually to increase resilience to natural hazards. In 2012, this number increased to US\$ 200 million, on track with UNDP's goal to double its disaster risk reduction portfolio in five years.

With UNDP support:

- At least 25 countries have established or strengthened early warning systems;
- Risk assessments and hazard maps have been drawn up in 57 countries; and
- National disaster management agencies have been established in 45 high-risk countries.

UNDP in Action

Communicating Risk

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Bhutan, where in 1994 a glacial flood released 20 million cubic meters of water and killed 22 people, UNDP is helping the government to monitor glacial lakes that are at risk of bursting and flooding downstream communities.



Bhutan landscape. Photo: UN Gill Fickling

In response to seismic risk and rapid urbanization, UNDP **Jordan** carried out risk assessments in the city of Aqaba to inform land allocation for housing projects. Aqaba has been recognized by UNISDR as the first Model City for disaster risk reduction in the Arab States.

In **Uzbekistan** and **the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, UNDP has helped disaster management agencies and academic institutions to develop mobile phone apps that provide updates on local hazards. Through an interactive map, users can access updates and receive warnings on areas to avoid.

Reducing Risk

In the **Cook Islands**, UNDP supported the government in revising the National Sustainable Development Plan (2011-2015), which includes a section dedicated to enhancing the resilience of communities to climate change. Disaster risk reduction is now routinely incorporated in the country's annual development budget.

In **Pakistan**, a country prone to earthquakes, a safer construction programme and better building codes have led to the completion of over 500,000 earthquake resistant houses – protecting millions of people.



Villages in Pakistan who have been granted accommodation through a UNDP scheme.
Photo: UNDP/Satomi Kato

In **Peru**, UNDP helped the government draft a state policy that permanently integrates disaster risk reduction into development projects. So far, 157 municipalities and 7 million people have benefited from hazard maps.

Managing the Remaining Risk

In the **Dominican Republic**, UNDP worked with authorities to strengthen preparedness and response capacity in 60 of the most vulnerable communities in the north east of the country.

Because airports often serve as vital hubs during a disaster, UNDP, together with Deutsche Post DHL, has trained staff in 22 airports in **Armenia, Bangladesh, El Salvador, Honduras, Indonesia, Lebanon, Panama, Peru, the Philippines** and **Turkey** to manage the large influx of relief goods and personnel when an emergency occurs and to facilitate the response and recovery.

When disasters occur, UNDP supports early and long-term recovery programmes. Most recently, in **the Philippines**, where as part of the response to Typhoon Haiyan, UNDP has helped to create at least 40,000 temporary jobs in debris removal, clearing the way to schools and hospitals.

Comprehensive long-term change

In **Armenia**, 15 years of UNDP support has reduced disaster risk, allowing people to benefit from such improvements as drainage systems that reduce the risk of flooding. In 2011, UNDP helped the Ministry of Emergency Situations to create a public disaster risk E-Library that will help planners understand the risk present in different geographic locations.

In **Indonesia**, since 2007, UNDP has been working with the government to reduce the human, economic, and social impact of disasters by establishing disaster risk management agencies and integrating disaster risk reduction into the national five-year development plan. Disaster risk reduction has since been incorporated into the school curriculum, for example to teach students what to do during an earthquake.

Mozambique shows how long-term investment in disaster risk reduction can help save lives. For more than three decades, UNDP has supported the government in disaster planning, early warning systems, shelter construction, and establishing regional emergency centres. In 2010, those affected and killed by flooding had fallen by more than 90 percent compared to the previous decade.

UNDP and the Hyogo Framework

The 10-year Hyogo Framework for Action, launched in 2005, is a tool through which national governments direct their risk reduction initiatives. UNDP has been working with national and international partners to put the framework into practice.

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April 2014



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