

The Hyogo Framework for Action and the International Federation

Introduction

The overall numbers of people killed by disasters are decreasing, however, the number of disaster events and those affected by them is rising rapidly – from around 70 million per year in the 1970s to around 213 million per year in the 1990s.¹ Moreover, in the past ten years, some \$663.7 billion of damage was caused by disasters, with over half of it in Asia alone. With the growing impact of climate change on the severity and frequency of weather related disasters, this alarming trend is set to continue long into the 21st Century.

The International Federation believes that disasters are a humanitarian and a development concern. Not only is there a growing body of evidence that countries of ‘low human development’ are disproportionately affected by the occurrence and impact of disasters but that people’s vulnerability to hazards has increased through failed development. Moreover, disasters threaten to undo development gains and prevent the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

Hyogo Framework for Action

The World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) convened in Kobe, Japan in 2005 identified five priorities in its action plan – the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA):

- Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation;
- Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning;
- Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels;
- Reduce the underlying risk factors;
- Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

¹ World Disasters Report, International Federation 2004

The International Federation’s contribution

The International Federation’s mission is “to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity”. It believes that disasters undermine development by contributing to persistent poverty and that the poor are usually those hardest hit by disasters. The International Federation’s strategy, therefore, is to reduce disaster risk by responding to local vulnerability; it does this through its four core areas of work outlined in its ten year strategy, ‘Strategy 2010’:

1. Promotion of the Movements fundamental principles and humanitarian values;
2. Disaster response;
3. Disaster preparedness;
4. Health and care in the community.

At the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, National Societies together with States adopted ‘*The Agenda for Humanitarian Action*’, that specifically “acknowledged the importance of disaster risk reduction and to undertake measures to minimise the impact of disasters on vulnerable populations”.

The International Federation, therefore, fully supports the outcomes of the WCDR and while it urges States to follow through on commitments made at the conference, it will continue to work through its member National Societies and in partnership with the UN, governments, donors and civil society, to meet the objectives of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

The International Federation hosts the Provention Consortium – a global partnership of governments, international organisations, academic institutions, the private sector and civil society dedicated to increasing the safety of vulnerable communities and to reducing the impacts of disasters in developing countries.



The following table provides some examples of how the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies can help to achieve this:

HFA Priorities for Action	Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Role	Examples of recent/current initiatives
Disaster risk reduction (DRR) is a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis	Advocate to include DRR in national development plans	Cambodia: the Red Cross advocated for DRR to be addressed through the national Poverty Reduction Strategy
	Advocate for, and play role in, national platforms and strategies	Andean countries: States have developed a regional strategy – that includes Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies – to establish national platforms to follow-up HFA
	Advocate for legal preparedness by promoting legal and policy frameworks that foster effective, speedy and accountable international humanitarian relief to disasters	Global: IDRL Project (International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles)
	Support community based initiatives/ programmes through local Red Cross and Red Crescent network	Swaziland: food security project to address risk/vulnerability related to drought and HIV/AIDS
Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning	Contribute to monitoring disaster data locally and globally	The Federation web-based DMIS (Disaster Management Information System)
	Assist in national level risk assessments	Red Cross cooperation with UNDP for country risk assessments in post Tsunami context
	Implement hazard, vulnerability and capacity assessment at local level	Kazakhstan: short term winter assistance programme to assist most vulnerable
	Facilitate local level multi-hazard early warning	Bangladesh: Cyclone preparedness programme
Use knowledge, innovation and education to build culture of safety and resilience	Support local level awareness raising through Red Cross and Red Crescent youth, schools and volunteers	Vietnam: School based flood awareness project
	Share good practice locally and globally	World Disasters Report (International Federation)
	Engage in national, regional and global policy forums	The Federation co-supported conference on DRR and Climate Change
	Promote and improve dialogue and cooperation on disaster risk reduction	DFID supported Disaster Reduction programme with National Societies in Southern Africa and South Asia
Reduce the underlying risk factors	Support non-structural small-scale risk reduction projects	Vietnam: Mangrove plantations for flood protection and livelihood diversification
Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels	Build preparedness for response capacity at local level with national, regional and global support	Caribbean: Community teams supported by national teams and Emergency Response Units were developed and subsequently utilised during Hurricane Ivan

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