

Background paper on Roundtable 1:

Joining forces: One unified approach to disaster risk reduction?

Frequently Asked Questions – paper prepared by UNDP and submitted by Round Table chair.

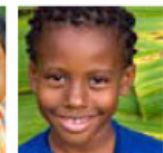
How UNDP, the World Bank's GFDRR and the ISDR Secretariat support disaster reduction:

Compared with the international disaster response community, which has achieved a degree of structure and cohesiveness through responding to hundreds of disasters over the past three decades, the international disaster risk management community is in an earlier state of formation. Two international processes for organizing the latter have been the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and the 2006 humanitarian review of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). Although the IASC is primarily a humanitarian body, the 2006 review led to the formation of the cluster system which includes the cluster working group on early recovery. The ISDR underwent a major reform in 2005-2006. These recent changes and the fact that many of the related processes are still on-going, can lead to lack of clarity as to how various initiatives supporting disaster reduction and recovery fit together. Although the situation is continuously evolving it is possible to discern some of the main contours of the emerging international disaster reduction system. The following are a few frequently asked questions about this system prepared by UNDP:

Among UNDP, the World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) Secretariat, who does what?

UNDP's work on disaster reduction officially dates to 1998, when the UN general assembly transferred responsibility for disaster reduction from OCHA to UNDP. This decision recognized that achieving long term success in reducing disaster-related losses would require addressing the root causes of natural disasters – societal exposure and vulnerability to natural hazards – through the development process. Over the intervening decade, UNDP has built up a large global disaster reduction program. In 2006 this program operated in over 50 countries with an annual budget of \$90 million. The program is supported by full time staff at the national, regional and global levels. By the end of 2009 UNDP will have eight full time senior regional disaster reduction advisor based in the field covering five regions, and approximately 25 full time national disaster reduction advisors in high risk countries. The latter are in addition to disaster reduction program officers and focal points that manage UNDP's country level programs. These professionals are backed by program, policy and full-time disaster reduction and recovery technical staff at UNDP headquarters. In 2007 UNDP proposed a four year strategy to its Executive Board that includes disaster reduction and early recovery among its major outcome areas. The strategy signifies that disaster reduction and recovery are seen by UNDP and its governing body as a corporate responsibility and priority.





The ISDR Secretariat was created in 2000 with a general assembly mandate to coordinate strategies and programmes for natural disaster reduction within the UN system, undertake advocacy campaigns, provide a clearing house for the dissemination and exchange of information and knowledge on disaster reduction strategies and to backstop the policy and advocacy activities of national committees for natural disaster reduction (A/54/136-E/1999/89 and A/RES/54/219). A series of evaluations of progress towards achieving these objectives led to a reform of the ISDR in 2005-2006. The ISDR is now seen as a system whose membership includes governments, UN agencies, International Finance Institutions, NGOs and other actors. The ISDR system is supported by the Secretariat.

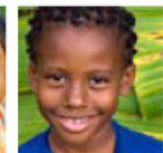
In 2006 the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Facility released an evaluation of the Bank's assistance related to natural disaster assistance. The evaluation compared the Bank's country strategies and lending to a global assessment of natural disaster hotspots that had been undertaken by researchers at the Bank, Columbia University and partner institutions in 2005. The evaluation concluded that the Bank needed to be more proactive on disaster reduction. The GFDRR was launched in 2006 to strengthen the Bank's work on disaster reduction as a contribution to the ISDR system. Since its formation the GFDRR has provided an annual grant to the ISDR Secretariat, mobilized grant funding for high risk countries. It also includes a financial facility through which donors are encouraged to channel grant funds for disaster recovery.

How does the work of UNDP, the World Bank's GFDRR and the ISDR Secretariat come together to support the ISDR system?

In 2005, following several evaluations of the ISDR, the ISDR Secretariat's Management Oversight Board requested UNDP to lead a process of strengthening the ISDR system, vice-chaired by the World Bank. The reform focused in defining and strengthening a clearer and more inclusive structure for the ISDR system. The reform placed a priority on the greater participation of governments and regional organizations in implementing the ISDR and its Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), the formation of thematic platforms and programs to support the HFA's five priority areas, the drafting of an integrated joint work plan for the ISDR system, and a reformed governance system. UNDP continues to contribute to the strengthening of the reformed ISDR system in four major ways: 1) through its operational disaster reduction program and policy level at the national level in over 50 high risk countries, 2) by leading or participating in four thematic programs and platforms – on risk identification, recovery, capacity development and urban risks, 3) by vice-chairing the ISDR Management Oversight Board on behalf of the UN Development Group, and 4) by supporting the ISDR Secretariat's coordination, advocacy and information sharing work through strong support for the ISDR system's flagship advocacy product, a biannual Global Assessment Report.

The ISDR Secretariat is responsible for coordinating the activities of the system and ensuring synergies through the ISDR joint work plan. The Global Assessment Report includes reports by high risk countries on the status of their efforts to achieve the goal and objectives of the HFA. The ISDR Secretariat has also launched Preventionweb, the main information portal of the ISDR system. The





ISDR Secretariat maintains a network of regional advisors who support coordination, information and advocacy at the regional level.

The GFDRR is a financial facility through which the World Bank seeks to mobilize donor funding to support a large non-lending (grant) program on disaster reduction. The grants provide flexibility to complement the World Bank's much larger lending portfolio on disaster reduction and recovery, which totaled \$26 billion from 1984-2005. The GFDRR is overseen by a consultative group of countries and donors. The Bank, with the assistance of the ISDR Secretariat, has positioned the GFDRR as a support mechanism for the larger ISDR system. To date UNDP has not had any involvement in the GFDRR nor its consultative group, however. It will be important to harmonize GFDRR-sponsored work in support of disaster reduction at the national level with UNDP's but as yet there is no systematic mechanism for doing so.

What are the roles of UNDP, the World Bank and the ISDR Secretariat in supporting recovery operations following disasters?

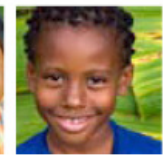
The Secretariat promotes coordination, information sharing and advocacy to strengthen disaster preparedness for more effective response. The officially-recognized vehicle for this is the International Recovery Platform (IRP), an ISDR thematic platform. The Secretariat does not have an operational role either in disaster recovery or in disaster reduction overall.

There has been extensive discussion between the World Bank and the UN (led by UNDP) on how the World Bank's Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, which is new, fits in with and complements existing and emerging arrangements for disaster recovery. The Global Facility documents state that the facility is a partnership with the UN. The facility provides a means for the World Bank to respond sooner to crises and to integrate work that the facility would enable the Bank to do on recovery with the Bank's longer-term, loan-based reconstruction programs.

The GFDRR is not a replacement for the UN nor an arbiter of the UN's work in the recovery area:

- Not all countries are eligible for the "callable fund" of the GFDRR Standby Recovery Financing Facility, nor do governments request World Bank recovery support in all cases.
- The callable fund does not actually have any funding in it, rather, it is an account into which funds can be deposited by donors to respond to particular disasters as they occur.
- The World Bank does not have the capacity to solely implement recovery programs. For instance, the international community establishes multi donor trust funds in recognition that other (national and international) capacities need to be accessed to assure rapid recovery programming, including the UN's.
- To the extent that the Global Facility's early recovery programs would be linked to the lending operations (which should be the case), the longer time frame needed to negotiate the lending package could affect the speed at which the Facility can operate, in the area of conducting assessments for example. On the other hand, the UN's early recovery





work is more closely linked with the humanitarian timeframe of UN agencies, meaning that the UN's early recovery assessments and program designs are initiated within days after a disaster occurs.

- The Global Facility also has a window for technical assistance capacity. The UN agencies also need to build their technical assistance capacity – it is neither effective nor institutionally viable for this capacity to be brokered by an external funding entity such as the World Bank.

Areas of recovery-related cooperation between UNDP and the GFDRR that have been identified include:

1. Joint development and adoption of Post-Disaster Needs Assessment methodology
2. Joint deployment of assessment teams to establish joint recovery frameworks
3. Joint recovery capacity development
4. Coordination of country- and disaster- specific recovery programs.
5. Early discussions are underway to develop a more systematic mechanism to take cooperation in these areas forward.

