



What is the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)?

The International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) declared by the United Nations for the decade 1990-1999 provoked the recognition that disaster reduction was a social and economic imperative that would take long time to fulfil.

As the successor to IDNDR in 2000, the *International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)* was designed to foster this need by proceeding from the previous emphasis of protection against hazards to a process involving awareness, assessment and management of risk.

This development highlights the integration of disaster risk reduction into the broader context of sustainable development and related environmental considerations. By means of this *Global Review of Disaster Reduction Initiatives*, ISDR seeks to further multidisciplinary advocacy for wider professional understanding of disaster risk reduction practices which can be achieved by working through political, professional, institutional and public collaboration.

ISDR in a nutshell

The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) is a global framework established within the United Nations for the promotion of action to reduce social vulnerability and risks of natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters.

Its main purpose is to facilitate, in an inter-agency effort Governments and communities in disaster-prone areas in integrating the management of risk into their development policies, programmes and projects. The long-term goal is to enable communities to become resilient to disasters saving lives as well as social, economic, and environmental assets.

By working through a network of international organisations, scientific and expert institutions, civil society, private sector interests and government officials, the ISDR aims to increase public awareness about disaster reduction, to motivate commitment from public authorities, and to stimulate inter-disciplinary and inter-sectoral partnerships that can improve the scientific knowledge on natural hazards and the causes of disasters.

Governments are requested to establish or strengthen national platforms or focal points for disaster reduction with a multisectoral and inter-disciplinary approach, with the support of two international mechanisms:

- an Inter-Agency Secretariat, in Geneva, Switzerland (*14 persons staff in Geneva, with one outpost office for Latin America and the Caribbean in San Jose, Costa Rica, and as of September 2002, one outpost office in Nairobi, Kenya, for Africa*), and
- an Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, that represents 25 agencies and organizations from the UN, regional bodies and civil society.

For more information, see: www.unisdr.org