



# 2011 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction

## Revealing Risk, Redefining Development

### ANNOUNCEMENT

#### 2011 Global Assessment Report (GAR) on Disaster Risk Reduction Launched May 10, 2011

The 2011 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction (GAR11) – *Revealing Risk, Redefining Development* – launched in Geneva, Switzerland on the opening day of the Third Session of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction (10 May, 2011). This landmark publication is a major initiative of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) that contributes to the achievement of the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) through monitoring risk patterns, trends and progress in disaster risk reduction, while offering guidance and suggestions to governments and non-governmental actors alike, on how they can, together, reduce disaster risk.

Building on and moving beyond the analysis provided by the inaugural 2009 Global Assessment Report (GAR09), this edition explores why the welcomed global decline in mortality risk for weather-related hazards is matched by a continuing rise in the cost of disaster-related economic loss and damage. Governments report successes in strengthening their capacities to prepare for and respond to disasters, but admit having difficulty addressing the factors that contribute to increased risk. Many countries have yet to find a clear political and economic path to invest today for a safer tomorrow.

GAR09 provided compelling evidence to show how certain drivers such as badly planned and managed urban and regional development, degraded ecosystems, and poverty increase disaster risk. GAR 09 also highlighted how disaster losses can lead to deteriorating levels of health and education and broader, deeper poverty. Reducing disaster risk is critical to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and addressing underlying risk drivers is also vital to climate change adaptation, especially in the short and medium term. Any further progress in reducing disaster risk and adapting to climate change depends on clearly identifying incentives for investing in disaster risk management while strengthening necessary risk governance capacities..

GAR11 delves deeper into these challenges. It highlights the need for systematic accounting of disaster losses and impacts as well as a comprehensive assessment of risks a particular country faces. It examines innovative approaches that are emerging in areas such as public investment planning and social protection. A new risk governance paradigm that reflects the political and economic importance of disaster risk reduction and builds on creative partnerships between civil society and government is explored. GAR11 suggests how reformed institutional and legislative policies and procedures, coupled with realistic approaches to decentralisation can strengthen accountability and local participation and lead to more effective disaster risk management.

#### **What's New in GAR11?**

**Risk trends by region and income group:** An updated version of the powerful global risk model developed for GAR09 has been used to analyse trends in mortality and economic loss risk for major weather-related hazards such as tropical cyclones and floods. This information is complemented by fresh data which measures and compares the capacity of different countries to address underlying risk drivers identified. GAR11 also outlines a range of emerging, very low-probability and hard-to-measure risks, which countries should begin to anticipate and prepare for.

**More representative geographical coverage:** All the national disaster databases used to analyse extensive risk in GAR09 have been updated for GAR11. In addition, there has been significant progress in building disaster loss databases, for example in Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, Indonesia, Jordan, Mozambique, Panama, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, providing a more compelling analysis of extensive risk with a more representative geographical coverage. New case studies also provide further insight into underlying risk drivers.

### **Disaster impacts on child welfare and displacement**

GAR11 expands on previous analyses of the interactions between disaster risk and poverty through a comprehensive study of how disasters impact child welfare and development and the implications of this on DRM policy. Additional case study material also indicates how disasters cause internal displacement.

### **Drought risk**

GAR11 includes a specific focus on drought risk, one that is poorly understood and receives inadequate attention both nationally and internationally. A set of country case studies examines the development drivers that translate meteorological drought into losses and impacts in agriculture and other sectors. It also points to the adoption of standards for measuring drought risk in an effort to improve its identification and management.

### **The 2009–2011 HFA progress review**

Currently, 133 countries are reviewing their progress towards the objectives and goals of the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) for 2009-2011. By the close of first quarter 2011, some 82 countries and territories had submitted progress reports that provide unique insight into how governments themselves view disaster risk management. The 2009–2011 HFA Progress Review has already assembled the most important global references currently available on disaster risk management at the national level.

### **Assessing the costs and benefits of DRM**

Case studies from Colombia, Mexico and Nepal apply an innovative approach to risk modelling. By measuring and stratifying the full spectrum of extensive and intensive risks, they illustrate the real magnitude of recurrent, and future, maximum disaster losses faced by governments. This enables the visualization of the political and economic trade-offs, costs and benefits internalized in different risk management strategies, paving the way for truly informed decision-making.

### **Innovation in development practice**

GAR11 reviews how governments are scaling up disaster risk management by adapting existing development instruments, such as national planning, public investment systems, and social protection mechanisms. It also critically examines other instruments where significant barriers still exist, such as land use planning, building codes and ecosystem management, and identifies where new approaches based on partnerships with affected populations and civil society need to be adopted.

### **Risk governance capacities**

Finally, GAR11 has undertaken a critical review of the institutional and legislative arrangements for DRM at national and local levels and includes a discussion of key issues including political authority, decentralization and accountability, in an effort to provide guidance on how governments can adopt effective governance related to disaster risk management.

### **GAR11 online edition**

In addition to the print edition, GAR11 has also been designed as an interactive electronic report, structured around a set of background papers and databases provided by many institutional and individual contributors. This provides authoritative evidence for the findings and recommendations, and interactive applications allow users to explore this data for themselves.

### **Regional launches**

Following the Global Platform, an extensive series of regional and country launches will begin, reaching out to, inter alia national/local governments, UN/non-governmental organizations and academic institutions.

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