



UNDRR

UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction



BRIEFING PAPER

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ABOUT THE UNDRR:

The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) works towards the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses to ensure a sustainable future.



UNDRR (formerly known as UNISDR) is the focal point of the United Nations system for disaster risk reduction and the custodian of the Sendai Framework, supporting countries and societies in its implementation, monitoring, and review of progress.

THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK:

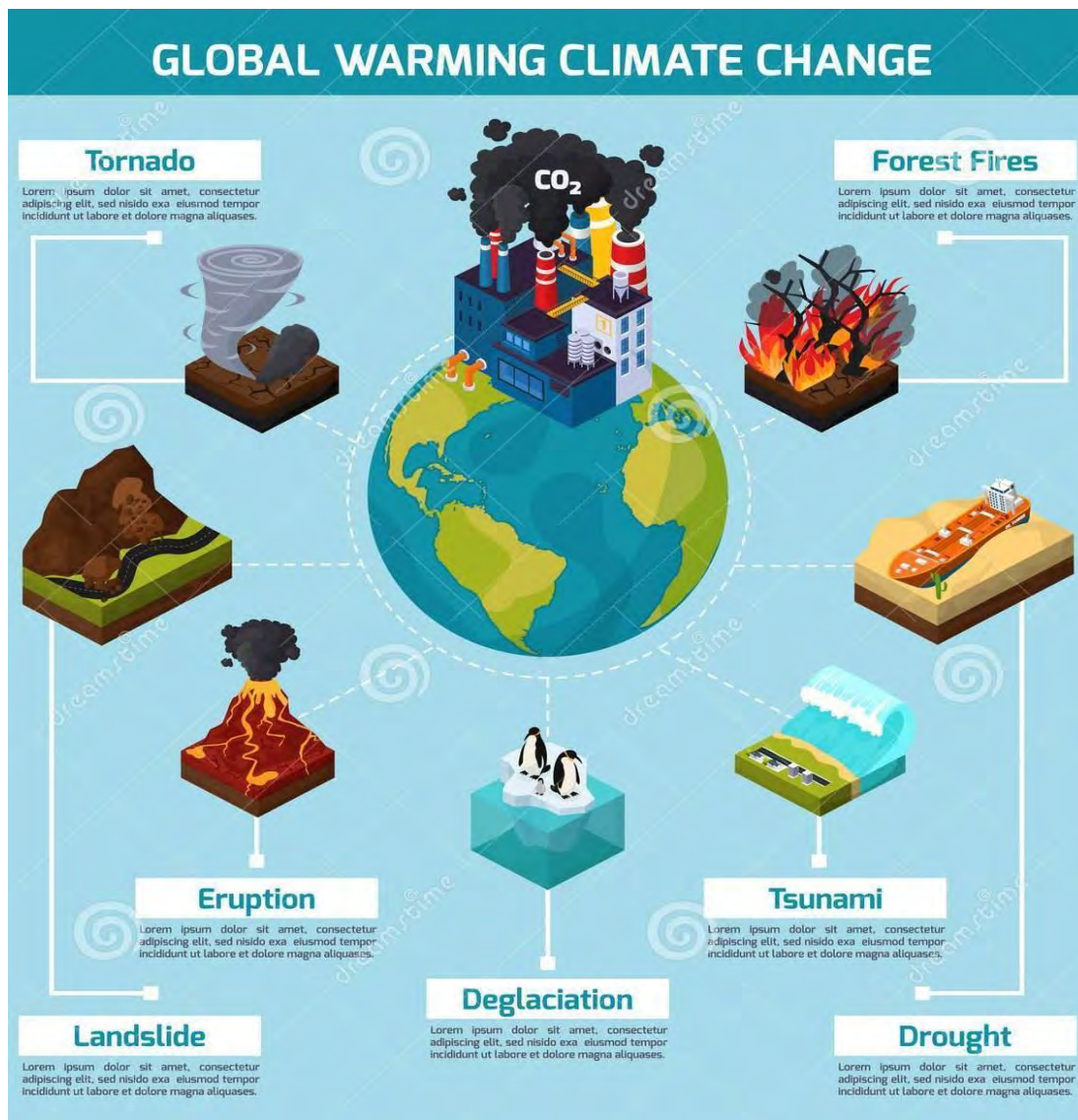
	Reduce	Increase
7 GLOBAL TARGETS	Mortality/ global population 2020-2030 Average << 2005-2015 Average	Countries with national & local DRR strategies 2020 Value >> 2015 Value
	Affected people/ global population 2020-2030 Average << 2005-2015 Average	International cooperation to developing countries 2030 Value >> 2015 Value
	Economic loss/ global GDP 2030 Ratio << 2015 Ratio	Availability and access to multi-hazard early warning systems & disaster risk information and assessments 2030 Values >> 2015 Values
	Damage to critical infrastructure & disruption of basic services 2030 Values << 2015 Values	

The Sendai Framework is the main body of disaster relief in the UNDRR. Its targets include:

- Substantially reducing global mortality by 2030, aiming to lower average per 100,000 global mortalities between 2020-2030 compared to 2005-2015.
- Substantially reducing the number of people affected globally by disasters by 2030, aiming to lower average per 100,000 people affected between 2020-2030 compared to 2005-2015.
- Reduce direct disaster economic loss in relation to global domestic product (GDP) by 2030.
- Substantially reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services, among them health and educational facilities, by doing things such as developing their resilience, by 2030.
- Substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020.
- Substantially enhance international co-operation to developing countries through adequate and sustainable support to complement their national actions for implementation of this framework by 2030.
- Substantially increase the availability of and access to multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster risk information and assessments to people by 2030.



INTRODUCTION:



Disasters are inevitable, especially when dealing with a place as weird and wonderful as our earth. Every year we encounter different disasters across the world, each with their own individual impacts and problems

These disasters are fiercely linked with the climate of the globe. As our climate changes, we see devastating effects on the disasters threatening our planet. Natural Disasters already plague our planet, but with the destruction of our natural world these disasters are only going to be more devastating than before, and come at greater costs.



WHAT IS DISASTER RISK REDUCTION?

There is no such thing as a **'natural' disaster, only natural hazards. Disaster risk reduction** aims to reduce the damage caused by natural hazards like earthquakes, floods, droughts and cyclones, through an ethic of prevention.

Disasters often follow natural hazards. A disaster's severity depends on how much impact a hazard has on society and the environment. The scale of the impact in turn depends on the choices we make for our lives and for our environment. These choices relate to how we grow our food, where and how we build our homes, what kind of government we have, how our financial system works and even what we teach in schools. Each decision and action makes us more vulnerable to disasters - or more resilient to them.

Disaster risk reduction is about choices. Disaster risk reduction is the concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and reduce the causal factors of disasters. Reducing exposure to hazards, lessening vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improving preparedness and early warning for adverse events are all examples of disaster risk reduction.



2010 HAITI EARTHQUAKE:



Perhaps one of the clearest examples of the significance of disaster prevention is the Haiti earthquake in 2010.

Haiti is located in the Greater Antilles archipelago of the Caribbean Sea, to the east of Cuba and Jamaica and to the south of the Bahamas. The earthquake occurred on January 12th 2010, the epicentre was 25 kilometres west of the capital city Port-au-Prince, with a magnitude of 7.0. By January 24th, at least 52 aftershocks of magnitude 4.5 or greater had been recorded.

An estimated three million people were affected by the quake. The death toll estimates range from 100,000 to about 160,000 with the Haitian government estimating from 220,000 to 316,000. Over 250,000 residential buildings and 30,000 **commercial buildings had collapsed or were severely damaged. The nation's** history of national debt, prejudicial trade policies and foreign intervention into national affairs, contributed to the existing poverty and poor housing conditions **that increased the death toll from the disaster. Many of Haiti's residents live in** slums and other improper housing that was susceptible to the earthquake, leading to excessive, preventable deaths.



Many countries responded to appeals for humanitarian aid, pledging funds and dispatching rescue and medical teams, engineers and support personnel. Communication systems, air, land, and sea transport facilities, hospitals, and electrical networks had been damaged by the earthquake, which hampered rescue and aid efforts; confusion over who was in charge, air traffic congestion, and problems with prioritizing flights further complicated early relief work. Port-au-Prince's morgues were overwhelmed with tens of thousands of bodies. These had to be buried in mass graves.

As rescues tailed off, supplies, medical care and sanitation became priorities. Delays in aid distribution led to angry appeals from aid workers and survivors, and looting and sporadic violence were observed. On 22 January, the United Nations noted that the emergency phase of the relief operation was drawing to a close, and on the following day, the Haitian government officially called off the search for survivors.

What else could have been done to prevent the severity of the disaster, or to mitigate the effects of it?



HOW DOES CLIMATE CHANGE INFLUENCE DISASTERS?

Climate hazards are natural events in weather cycles. We've always had hurricanes and droughts, flooding and high winds. However, we are currently witnessing a scale of destruction and devastation that is new and terrifying.

2017 alone has seen a series of devastating climate disasters in various parts of the world, extreme weather events such as Hurricane Irma, deadly heat waves in India, Europe and elsewhere, and flooding in south-east Asia. From Houston to Mumbai, millions of homes are underwater or blown over, and millions of people are homeless and impoverished.

Simply put, changes in the global climate exacerbate climate hazards and amplify the risk of extreme weather disasters. Increase of air and water temperatures leads to rising sea levels, supercharged storms and higher wind speeds, more intense and prolonged droughts, heavier precipitation and flooding. The evidence is overwhelming:

- **Currently, we see an average of 400 “extreme weather events” every year.**
- Since June 2017, roughly 41 million people have been affected by flooding.
- More than 150 million people live on land that will be below sea level or regular flood levels by the end of the century.
- Growing storm surges and tsunamis threaten nearly a quarter of the **world's population.**

THE DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT ON THE WORLD'S POOREST:

Extreme weather disasters affect all countries, rich and poor. But as we face a future with enhanced risks, it is critical to face the reality of those who bear the burden of our changing climate. This is an issue of justice: those living in poverty are the hardest hit by climate change despite being the least responsible for the crisis.

Climate change is forcing people from their homes, bringing poverty on top of poverty and increasing hunger. People in poorer countries are at least five times more likely to be displaced by extreme weather than people in rich countries.



AUSTRALIAS 2019/20 BUSHFIRE SEASON:



The 2019-20 Australian bushfire season has burned an estimated 6,300,000 hectares destroyed over 2,500 buildings (including over 1,300 houses) and killed at least 24 people, with a further six missing in the state of Victoria (as of January 2020). The bushfires are regarded by some as one of the worst bushfire seasons in memory.

In December 2019, the New South Wales Government declared a state of emergency in New South Wales after record-breaking temperatures and prolonged drought exacerbated the bushfires. Furthermore, it was estimated that close to half a billion animals were killed in the ongoing fires, and it is speculated that over $\frac{1}{3}$ of the population of Koala Bears in New South Wales has been wiped out.

Some environmentalists suggest that global warming is leading to an increase in **the number of “megafires”**.

However, if the current climate change models are correct, there will only be an increase in average annual temperatures of between 2 and 4 degrees over the next 100 years. The effect of this on bushfire behavior, by itself, will be trivial. Fire intensity is far more significantly affected by fuel quantity, fuel dryness and wind strength, than it is by temperature.

Some climate change computer models also suggest a significant reduction in rainfall, leading to increased fuel drying and increased fuel availability at lower temperatures. This is the same effect as that of drought, a phenomenon which is common in Australia.



Questions to consider:

- You should consider ways in which your delegation specifically can prevent disasters in your country.
- You should consider ways in which your delegation specifically can help mitigate the effects disasters have in your country.
- You should consider the environmental footprint your delegation has and the effects this may have on disasters around the world.
- You should consider ways in which you can help to reduce the dangers that come with environmental instabilities in your country.
- You should consider what you wish to accomplish in the council, what opinions can you raise to help locally/globally.

