



International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

The link between Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and disaster risk reduction

The UN Millennium Summit gathered in New York in September 2000. A total of 189 world leaders met and adopted the *UN Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*. Under "Protecting our common environment" the declaration "adopt in all our environmental action a new ethic of conservation and stewardship and, as first steps, resolves...to intensify cooperation to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters" [paragraph 23]."

Strategies linked to ISDR for moving ahead on this goal were outlined in the *Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (Secretary-General Report to GA A/56/326)*, which included:

- developing early warning systems, vulnerability mapping, technological transfer and training;
- supporting interdisciplinary and intersectoral partnerships, improved scientific research on the causes of natural disasters and better international cooperation to reduce the impact of climate variables, such as El Niño and La Niña;
- encouraging governments to address the problems created by megacities, the location of settlements in high-risk areas and other manmade determinants of disasters;
- encouraging governments to incorporate disaster risk reduction into national planning processes, including building codes.

Eight targets, known as the *Millennium Development Goals* were also established in this Roadmap, providing guidance for achieving development for the international community, national governments and, in particular, the United Nations.

All of these targets touch upon areas which are closely linked to vulnerability to natural hazards, such as eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality, ensuring environmental stability and partnerships for development. For example, the goal of improving the lives of thousands of slum dwellers around the world living in high-risk areas by 2020, involves poverty eradication, proper land use planning and the improved understanding of vulnerability to disasters in densely populated areas.

The UN Millennium Project, an independent advisory body to the UN Secretary-General Kofi Anna, led by Jeffrey Sachs, presented its report *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals* in 2005. It reflects the status, achievements (or lack of achievements), challenges and options for scaling up the country-level process towards fulfilling the goals. As part of *chapter 11: Investment priorities for reaching the Goals in other regions*. It also contains a section *Countries vulnerable to natural hazards*.



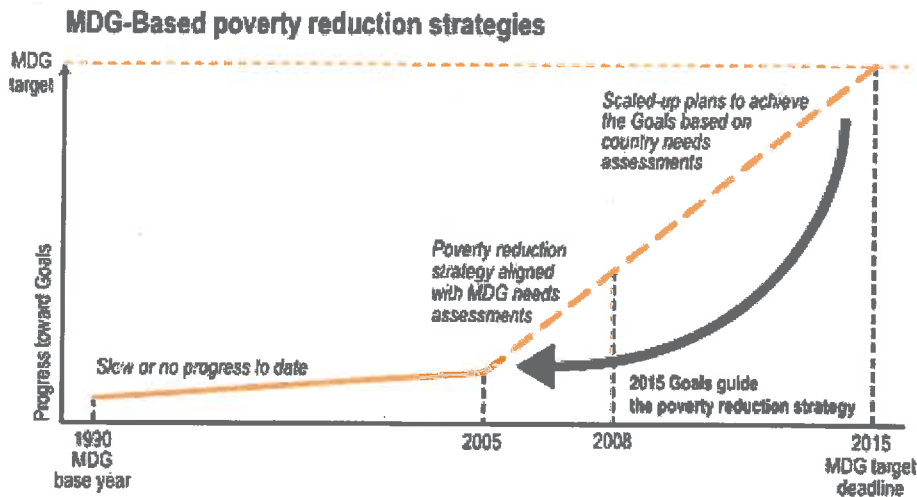
The UN Secretary-General report *In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all (A/59/2005)* of 21 March 2005, includes a section on *Other priorities for global action* in chapter II. Section E., in which natural disasters have been identified as an obstacle to achieve the development goals.

Natural disasters

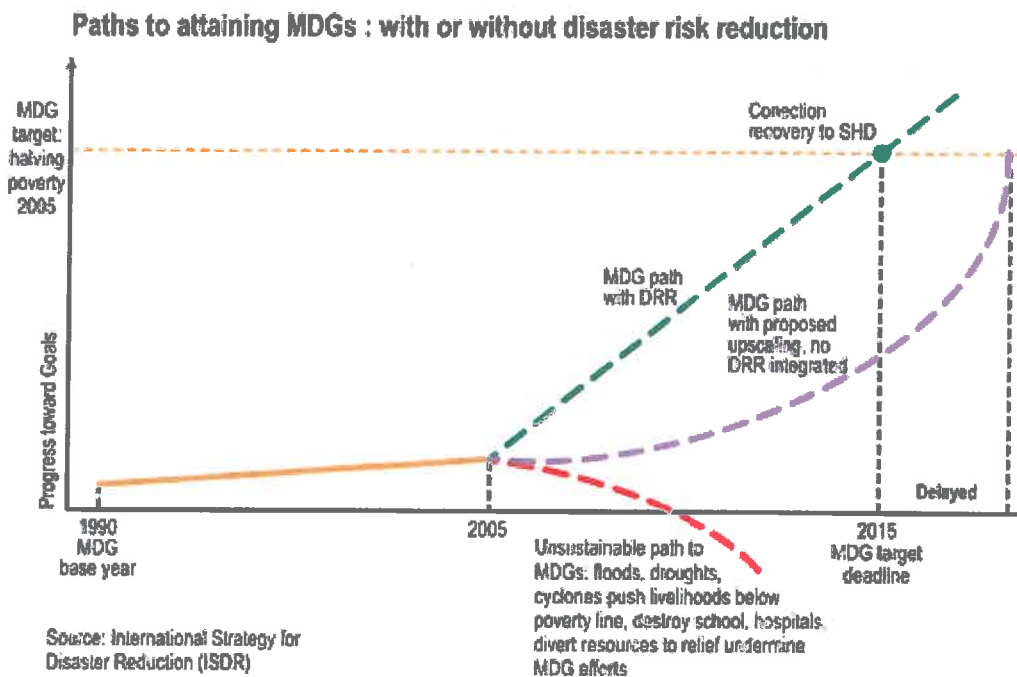
65. The devastating impact of the Indian Ocean tsunami has reminded us all of the vulnerability of human life to natural disasters, and also of the disproportionate effect they have on poor people. Unless more determined efforts are made to address the loss of lives, livelihoods and infrastructure, disasters will become an increasingly serious obstacle to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in early 2005, adopted the [Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015](#), which identifies strategic objectives and priority areas to reduce disaster risk in the next 10 years. We must proceed with its implementation.

66. The countries of the Indian Ocean region, with the help of the United Nations and others, are now taking steps to establish a regional tsunami early warning system. Let us not forget, however, the other hazards that people in all regions of the world are exposed to, including storms, floods, droughts, landslides, heat waves and volcanic eruptions. **To complement broader disaster preparedness and mitigation initiatives, I recommend the establishment of a worldwide early warning system for all natural hazards, building on existing national and regional capacity.** To assist in its establishment, I shall be requesting the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat to coordinate a survey of existing capacities and gaps, in cooperation with all United Nations system entities concerned, and I look forward to receiving its findings and recommendations. When disasters strike, we also need improved rapid response arrangements for immediate humanitarian relief, which are considered in section V below.

Failure to incorporate Disaster Risk Reduction measures into strategies for achieving the MDG's will lead to instability as demonstrated by the following graphic:



Source: UN Millennium Project. 2005. *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*. New York. Figure 4.1. An MDG-based poverty reduction strategy, page 57.



Source: International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)

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