

Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience

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World Vision Australia's
Public Policy Position

World Vision Australia's position on disaster risk reduction and resilience¹

World Vision Australia affirms that disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience provide a comprehensive approach to help communities absorb, adapt and transform the realities that keeps them marginalised and at risk.² World Vision Australia considers disaster risk reduction and resilience:

- as a critical means of protecting lives before, during and after emergencies and as a critical means to safeguard development gains and improve children's wellbeing in the long term³
- as integral to normal development practice.

In development and humanitarian programs around the world, the World Vision partnership is committed to working with communities to reduce vulnerabilities, mitigate the impact of hazards and help communities develop adaptive capacities.⁴

World Vision Australia advocates, both individually and in partnership with other agencies, that the well-being of children should be the first priority in reducing disaster risk and building resilience.

World Vision's mandate to advocate for DRR and resilience

Since 2005, the World Vision partnership has been working to adapt its approach to reducing risks and building resilience across all development programs.⁵ World Vision Australia and the broader partnership are committed to reducing risk through:

- development and humanitarian programming,
- improving organisational capacities; and
- local, national and international risk reduction and resilience advocacy.⁶

World Vision's programs focus its resilience work on the household and family level, understanding that this is the primary area for change to occur to bring about child wellbeing.⁷ World Vision's programs work to help build community resilience by:

1. Reducing vulnerabilities through addressing the physical, social, economic and environmental factors, processes or systems that may increase the vulnerability of a community.
2. Mitigating the impact of natural, or man-made situations, that have the potential to adversely impact upon communities.

3. Developing and enhancing the capacities of individuals, communities and institutions to reduce risk and build resilience in a rapid changing climate.
4. Promoting DRR and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and advocating for children and youth as important DRR Actors.

The World Vision partnership, at all levels, was an active participant in the major international negotiations around the Hyogo and Sendai frameworks and continues to contribute to the implementation of these frameworks.

World Vision Australia's policy recommendations for change⁸

World Vision Australia calls on the Australian Government to:

1. ensure that all aid investments integrate DRR and climate risk considerations, in line with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) commitments under the 2016 Humanitarian Strategy;
2. advocate for DRR in global and regional processes and encourage the prioritisation of disaster risk reduction in regional discussions (for example, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Pacific Island Forum);
3. support partner governments to implement DRR legislation, policies and programs, with particular attention to countries with high vulnerability and low capacities, in line with DFAT commitments under the 2016 DFAT Humanitarian Strategy; and develop mechanisms to calculate the amount of Australian ODA spent on DRR programs, and increase the percentage of DRR program expenditure year on year, particularly in countries with high vulnerability to natural hazards.⁹

World Vision calls on all actors, including INGOs to:

1. adopt and integrate risk reduction and resilience approaches to all development policies and programs, ensuring that children's voices and perspectives are reflected and included;
2. ensure the integration of DRR principles and practice into the education sector;
3. ensure access to quality healthcare and education services to minimise community vulnerability to shocks and stresses; and
4. develop strong accountability mechanisms at national, sub-national and local levels to agreed risk related policies, supported by legislation and joint monitoring with civil society;¹⁰ and advocate to National Governments to ensure DRR integration in all programs and sectors.

World Vision calls on partner Governments to:

1. support the implementation and resourcing of disaster management policies at local, national and international levels. Ensure that the views and insights of children and young people are included in all policy processes, project implementation and monitoring and evaluation;

2. strengthen investment in community-level resilience capacity to disasters, through supporting age appropriate and child-centred approaches to DRR;
3. strengthen information and knowledge systems to ensure that early warnings are translated into actions for communities;
4. adopt and implement the Comprehensive School Safety Framework to ensure that schools are safe from disasters; and
5. establish or strengthen existing child protection legislation and systems to ensure children affected by shocks and stresses are protected from family separation and know what to do in emergencies, so that the number of children living outside family care as a result of shocks and stresses is reduced.

Background

Naturally occurring hazards¹¹ can be geophysical (earthquakes, volcanos, landslides, tsunamis), meteorological (storms, typhoons, extreme temperatures), hydrological (floods, storm surges), climactic events (droughts, wildfires) or biological (epidemics, infestations).¹² These hazards turn into disasters when they exceed the ability of the affected community to cope using its own resources.¹³

The risk¹⁴ of a hazard turning into a disaster is linked to a community's exposure to hazards, the existing vulnerabilities that make communities more susceptible to the impact of these hazards, and the adaptive capacities that enable a community to be resilient in the face of hazards and other shocks.¹⁵ Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is therefore, the combination of activities that build community resilience by:

1. **Analysing risks:** supporting a vulnerable community to understand the risks they face
2. **Managing risks:** addressing the conditions that make communities susceptible to hazards and shocks
3. **Reducing Vulnerability:** helping communities address the potential of hazards turning into disasters.
4. **Building Capacity:** building capacity of individuals, communities and institutions to reduce risk and build greater resilience.

World Vision understands resilience as the "capacity of a system, community or society potentially exposed to risks to adapt, by changing or resisting in order to reach and maintain acceptable levels of functioning and structure."¹⁶

The cost of disasters is significant, both in terms of spending on relief and rehabilitation and in terms of lost GDP. While the cost benefit ratio of DRR varies depending on context and type of measures used, numerous studies have shown that appropriate DRR saves lives and money. Savings in avoided or reduced disaster response and recovery costs have ranged from USD2 to as much as USD80, for every dollar invested in evidence-based DRR.¹⁷

Beyond the economic cost of disasters, repetitive disasters and shocks reduce the fabric of individuals and society's resilience. The psychosocial repercussion of disasters can be long lasting, and may undermine well-being and threaten peace and human rights.¹⁸ Preparing individuals and families to psychologically cope with crises, increases their sense of agency and efficacy; and may influence communities to invest more in disaster preparedness and mitigation.¹⁹

The Asia-Pacific region is one of the most disaster prone regions of the world, making DRR and resilience particularly important. In 2015, half of all reported global disasters occurred in the Asia-Pacific and over 51 million people were affected.²⁰ While many regional disasters are large scale (i.e. Nepal Earthquake, Pakistan Floods) since the 1970s most regional disasters have had fewer than 100 fatalities but have cumulatively affected 2.2 billion people and caused over

USD400 billion worth of damage.²¹ Pre-existing geographic vulnerabilities have intensified as the region has struggled to address underlying risk factors exacerbating hazards, including rapid and poorly managed urbanization, natural resource exploitation and increasing social inequalities.²² Regional leaders in both Asia and the Pacific have recognised these challenges, and demonstrated strong commitment to reduce disaster risk and achieve resilient and sustainable development.²³

International context

In 1999, the United Nations General Assembly established the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. The strategy reflected a major conceptual shift away from a sole focus on disaster response towards holistic disaster reduction and sought to enable communities to become resilient to hazards, and to better management of risk through integrating risk prevention strategies in development activities.²⁴

In 2005, the 168 states attending the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action.²⁵ Ten years later, in March 2015, the third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Building on the lessons of the Hyogo Framework, the Sendai Framework seeks to 'prevent new and reduce existing disaster risk through the implementation of integrated and inclusive ... measures that prevent and reduce hazard exposure and vulnerability to disaster, increase preparedness for response and recovery, and thus strengthen resilience.' The framework sets seven global targets to reach this goal and outlines four priorities for action: understanding disaster risk, strengthening disaster risk governance, investing in DRR for resilience and enhancing preparedness for effective responses.²⁶ The Sendai framework is currently the main international policy framework for DRR policy and programs, and its implementation, follow-up and review is supported by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR).²⁷

DRR is also reflected within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the global community committing to significantly reducing the number of deaths, people affected, and decreasing the economic losses as a result of disasters.²⁸ Across 10 of the 17 goals, there are 25 targets related to DRR.²⁹

Australian Government Context (Political)

Building resilience and reducing disaster risk is a priority area of Australia's aid program.³⁰ Australia has committed to working with partner governments to identify risks and hazards, promote and support the integration of DRR into national legislative, policy and planning frameworks, and to increase disaster resilient investments. In 2009, AusAID developed a policy framework to guide Australia's work in DRR.³¹ Since the integration of AusAID into DFAT, the status of this document is unclear although there has been recent discussion of the development of a DRR Guidance Note under the Humanitarian Strategy.

Australia has also been actively involved in negotiations and a firm advocate for the principals and approach of the Sendai Framework.

In September 2016, the Australian Government announced a four year, AUD300 million package of support to manage climate change and improve resilience in the Pacific. This funding includes a AUD75 million commitment to disaster preparedness and risk management.³² It is not yet clear how this will be spent.

Australian NGOs have been supported to implement DRR programs through the Humanitarian Partnership Agreement (HPA), of which World Vision has been a partner.³³ The successor mechanism to the HPA, the Australian Humanitarian partnership (AHP) has committed to significantly increase the investment in community risk reduction and resilience building, focused primarily on the Pacific region.

In FY 16-17, DFAT has budgeted AUD52.7 million to DRR and protracted conflicts, although there has been little clarity on the proposed expenditure within this budget line.³⁴ While Australian NGOs have called for DRR funding to make up at least 3 per cent of the aid budget, this proposed expenditure falls significantly short at just 1.4 per cent.³⁵ As all programs are encouraged to include DRR components, it is possible that actual Australian investment in DRR may be higher.

Key resources & references

Key resources

WVI Position [in draft] + WVI Brief for World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction
 Sendai Framework for DRR
 Children in a Changing Climate Resources
 World Disasters Report
 UNISDR
 CRED

References

¹ World Vision International Policy Position on Resilience (in draft), available at: T:\4 - Public Policy\4 - Projects\WVA Policy Positions\Sources for positions\DRR.

² Elizabeth Carabine, Maggie Ibrahim and Richard Rumsey, 'Institutionalising resilience: the World Vision story,' *World Vision and ODI*, December 2014, p.8, available at: <http://wvi.org/disaster-risk-reduction-and-community-resilience/publication/institutionalising-resilience-world>

³ World Vision International Policy Position on DRAFT I: A resilient Future for Children – what they want, [For Internal Use Only] Available at: T:\4 - Public Policy\4 - Projects\WVA Policy Positions\Sources for positions\DRR\Resilience_HEA PolicyPaper_revised.docx

⁴ WVI, 'Disaster Risk Reduction,' available at: <http://www.wvi.org/disaster-risk-reduction>

⁵ Elizabeth Carabine, Maggie Ibrahim and Richard Rumsey, 'Institutionalising resilience: the World Vision story,' December 2014, World Vision and ODI, available at: <http://wvi.org/disaster-risk-reduction-and-community-resilience/publication/institutionalising-resilience-world>

⁶ World Vision International, 'Committing to Child-Centred Disaster Risk Reduction: An opportunity at the World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction,' 9 March 2015, p.4, available at: <http://wvi.org/united-nations-and-global-engagement/publication/committing-child-centred-disaster-risk-reduction>

⁷ Elizabeth Carabine, Maggie Ibrahim and Richard Rumsey, 'Institutionalising resilience: the World Vision story,' *World Vision and ODI*, December 2014, , p.8, available at: <http://wvi.org/disaster-risk-reduction-and-community-resilience/publication/institutionalising-resilience-world>

⁸ These recommendations are in line with: World Vision International Policy Positions on A Guide for Staff 2013, June 2013, [internal document] available at: <https://www.wvcentral.org/advocacy/Advocacy%20Learning%20Library/World%20Vision%20Public%20Policy%20Positions%202013.pdf#search=World%20Vision%20Public%20policy%20positions>) and World Vision recommendations to the United Nation World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (World Vision International, 'Committing to Child-Centred Disaster Risk Reduction: An opportunity at the World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction,' 9 March 2015, available at: <http://wvi.org/united-nations-and-global-engagement/publication/committing-child-centred-disaster-risk-reduction>)

⁹ The sector's 2014 Humanitarian Action for Results policy paper recommended maintaining DRR funding at least 3% of overall ODA and steadily grow this investment overtime. The call for 3% investment has not been used by ACFID (who in 16-17 asked for 5%) or World Vision (who in 16-17 only asked for an increase) in the previous two budget

submissions. In FY16-17 DRR expenditure is 1.3% of the Federal Budget.

¹⁰ In line with commitments under the Sendai Framework for Action (Paragraph 27 (e) and (g))

¹¹ A natural hazard is defined as a 'process or phenomenon that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, loss of livelihoods and services, social and economic disruption, or environmental damage.' United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), 'Terminology,' 30 August 2007, available at: <https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/terminology>

¹² Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED), 'General Classification' Emergency Events Database (Em-DAT), available at: <http://www.emdat.be/classification>

¹³ United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), 'Terminology,' 30 August 2007, available at: <https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/terminology>

¹⁴ A risk is 'the combination of the probability of an event and its negative consequences. United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), 'Terminology,' 30 August 2007, available at: <https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/terminology>

¹⁵ World Vision International, 'Disaster Risk Reduction and Community Resilience: Key concepts and practices' [*Internal Document Only*], available at: <https://www.wvcentral.org/community/RL/Resources/DRR%20for%20dummies%20fact%20sheet%20V5.pdf#search=DRR%20for%20Dummies>

¹⁶ World Vision International, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, available at: <http://www.wvi.org/disaster-risk-reduction>

¹⁷ Cabot Venton, 'Cost Benefit Analysis for Community Based Climate and Disaster Risk management', 2010, Tearfund and Oxfam America, available at: http://www.preventionweb.net/files/15116_FinalCBASynthesisReportAugust2010pl.pdf; and Kelman, I. and C.M. Shreve (eds.), *Disaster Mitigation Saves*, 2013, available at: <http://www.ilankelman.org/miscellany/MitigationSaves.doc>

¹⁸ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), *World Disasters Report 2016*, p. 133, available at: http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Documents/Secretariat/201610/WDR%202016-FINAL_web.pdf

¹⁹ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), *World Disasters Report*, 2016, p. 142

²⁰ 152 disasters were reported in Asia, and 22 in Oceania. See, UNISDR, USAID and CRED, *2015 disasters in numbers*, 2015, available at: http://cred.be/sites/default/files/2015_DisastersInNumbers.pdf

²¹ UNESCAP, *Disasters without Borders: Regional Resilience for Sustainable Development – Asia Pacific Disaster Report 2015*, 2016, p. XXII.

²² United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), *Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, 5 November 2016, available at: http://www.unisdr.org/files/50912_finalasiaregionalplanforimplementat.pdf

²³ United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), *Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, 5 November 2016, available at: http://www.unisdr.org/files/50912_finalasiaregionalplanforimplementat.pdf; Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, *Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific 2017-2030*, 11 September 2016, available at: <http://www.forumsec.org/pages.cfm/strategic-partnerships-coordination/framework-for-pacific-regionalism/>

²⁴ PreventionWeb, *UNISDR History*, available at:

<http://www.preventionweb.net/english/hyogo/isdr/history/>

²⁵ Over a ten year period, the Hyogo Framework sought to substantially reduce disaster losses in lives and assets of communities and countries, through the integration of DRR into policies and planning, the development and strengthening of institutions and capacities to build resilience from hazards, and the incorporation of risk reduction approaches into emergency preparedness, response and recovery. United Nations, *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters*, 2005, available at: <http://www.preventionweb.net/publications/view/1037>

²⁶ United Nations, *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, 2015, available at: <http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/43291>

²⁷ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), *Our Mandate*, available at: <http://www.unisdr.org/who-we-are/mandate>

²⁸ General Assembly Resolution 70/1 (2015) A/RES/70/1, Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

²⁹ United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), 'Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,' October 2015, available at: http://www.unisdr.org/files/46052_disasteriskreductioninthe2030agend.pdf

³⁰ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), 'Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability,' 18 June 2014, available at: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/australian-aid-promoting-prosperity-reducing-poverty-enhancing-stability.aspx>; Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), 'Humanitarian Strategy,' May 2016, available at: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/dfat-humanitarian-strategy.pdf>.

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³² Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), *Australia's Commitment on Climate Change Action in the Pacific*, September 2016, available at: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/australias-commitment-on-climate-change-in-the-pacific.pdf>

³³ Through the life of the HPA (2011-2016), HPA Partners received annual funding allocation of \$50 million to support Disaster Risk reduction and Disaster Risk Management activities.

³⁴ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), *Australian Aid Budget Summary: 2016-17*, May 2016, available at: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/corporate/portfolio-budget-statements/Documents/2016-17-australian-aid-budget-summary.pdf>

³⁵ Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), *ACFID Analysis of the 2016-16 Federal Budget*, 4 May 2016, p. 3-4, available at: <https://acfid.asn.au/sites/site.acfid/files/ACFID%20FY2016-17%20Budget%20Analysis%20%28FINAL%29.pdf>