



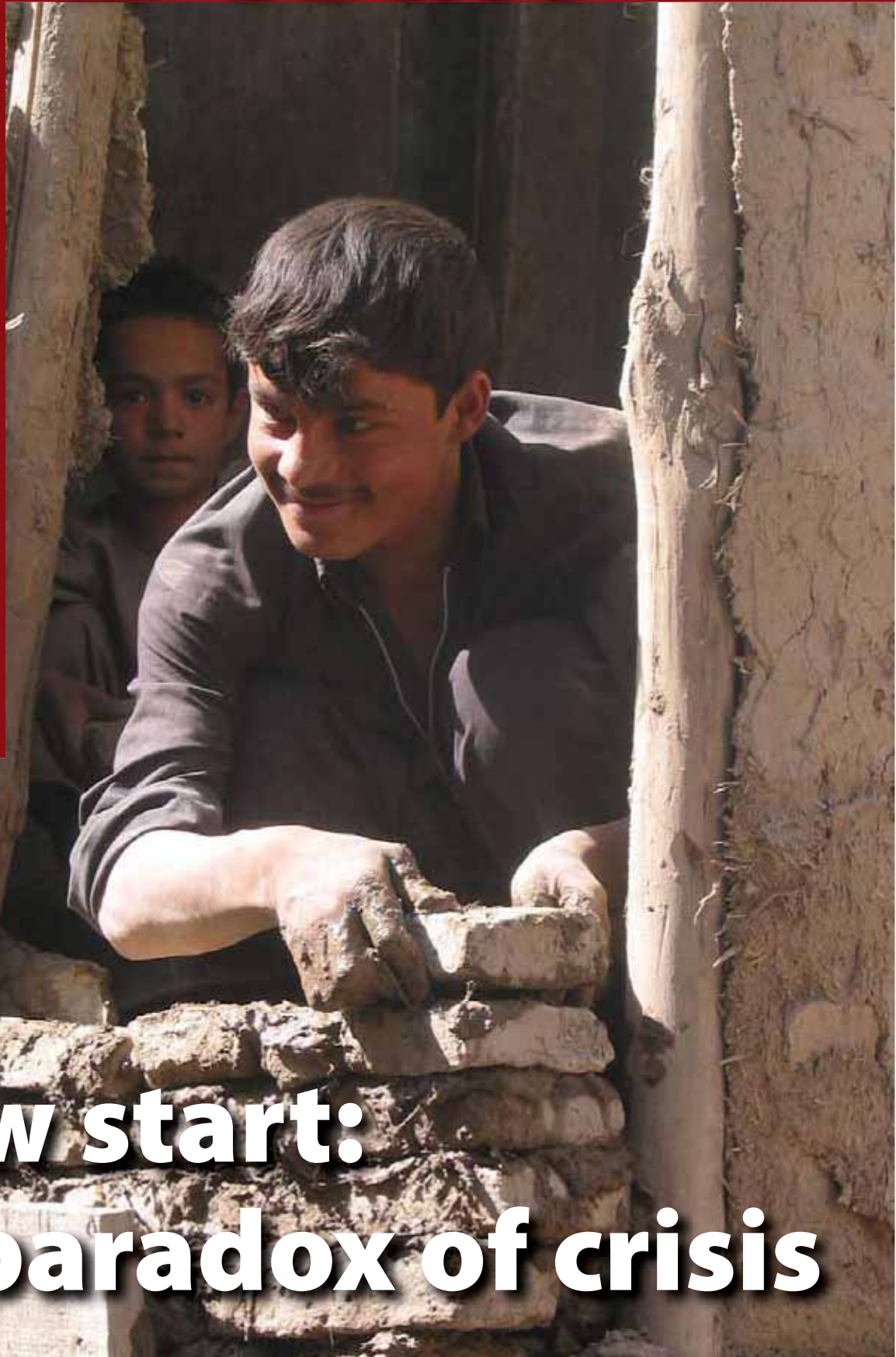
UN-HABITAT

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A new start: The paradox of crisis

A Message from the Executive Director

In 2006, the world witnessed a series of disasters that have resulted in the dramatic loss of human life and property and the displacement of entire communities. Countless thousands of survivors lost their homes, their belongings and their source of livelihood.

While the response of the international community has been generous and, in most cases, prompt, the scale of destruction has highlighted two key questions: how can we prevent such devastation in the future? And what can we do to help the victims restore their livelihoods and their homes in a sustainable manner?

The answer to both these questions lies in large part on sustainable human settlements planning and management. Prevention can be greatly enhanced through the adoption and enforcement of more appropriate land-use planning and building codes.

The rapid restoration of homes and livelihoods, on the other hand, is more complex and difficult to achieve. It requires that humanitarian relief operations be conceived from the very start as a bridge to development.

The number and plight of internally displaced persons living for months, sometimes years in situations of prolonged dependency argue in favour of more sustainable solutions that combine short-term emergency efforts with the longer-term development.

I have seen at first hand the suffering after earthquakes in Pakistan or Japan, floods and droughts in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, wars in the Balkans ... The list goes on, as the cries of orphaned and abandoned children or starving babies echo in the mind.

The experiences have shown me that there is a dire need for governments and the international community to adopt early warning systems for cities, towns and villages. Whether the disasters are natural or of our own making, we must be prepared for them so that we reduce their impact.

During post reconstruction, special attention should be paid to environment, women's secure tenure, rights to land and adequate housing among other issues. Always, the victims should be treated as assets

As we now move irreversibly into a new urban age with more than half the global population living in towns and cit-



ies, it is more urgent than ever that we take responsibility for shoring up our urban abodes against disasters.

Cities are responsible for 80 percent of the carbon emissions that cause climate change. Yet our urban centres continue spewing out more and more of the pollutants that cause climate change and thus contribute to increasing numbers of freak storms, floods, droughts and other disasters we are experiencing.

In a special message to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Nairobi, Kenya in November 2006, UN-HABITAT pointed out what may seem obvious:

The impact of climate change takes place in cities, towns and villages. As our climate changes things are getting worse, threatening more extreme weather. If sea levels rise by just one metre, many major coastal cities will be under threat: Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Los Angeles, New York, Lagos, and Cairo Karachi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Dhaka, Shanghai, Osaka-Kobe, and Tokyo. To cite just some, those are mega cities with populations of more than 10 million. Never mind the many more smaller cities and island nations. For example, under the same conditions, virtually the entire Maldives archipelago will disappear. [see map pages 12, 13]. One example – New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

Everywhere the urban poor live in places no-one else would dare set foot – along beaches vulnerable to flooding, by railway, on slopes prone to landslides, near

polluted grounds. They scratch out a living in shaky structures that would be flattened the instant a hurricane hit causing untold loss in lives and destruction.

In this new urban age, the mega-cities therefore loom as giant potential disaster traps. In sub-Saharan Africa, slum dwellers constitute over 70 percent of urban populations. In other parts of the developing world that figure is a shocking 50 percent. Ironically, as the climate change delegates met in Nairobi, drought refugees were migrating from the countryside to join the growing slum population.

In recognition of the agency's value-added, in April 2004, UN-HABITAT was invited to join the Executive Committee of Humanitarian Agencies (ECHA). This was quickly followed by invitations to participate in the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Groups in Geneva.

In recent months UN-HABITAT has worked actively with the IASC within the context of the Humanitarian Response Review. We are committed to assuming a stronger role and responsibility, under our mandate, in strengthening the UN collective response to shelter, land and property challenges in post-disaster situations and to further the implementation of paragraph 111 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome pertaining to internally displaced persons.

It is imperative that we should heed the final word in this issue of the magazine of Deputy Special Envoy for the Tsunami, Mr. Eric Schwartz. The deputy to former President Bill Clinton, he constantly urges the international community to build back better.

UN-HABITAT fully endorses this idea, and articulates this in our own Sustainable Relief and Reconstruction framework, the blueprint we use to support our partners and help develop and refine the practice of building back better, thereby exploiting this "paradox of crisis".



Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka
Executive Director



Cover Photo

Rebuilding after a bombing raid in Afghanistan.

Photo: © UN-HABITAT/S. Friccka

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The aftermath of natural disasters and conflict

THERE ARE NO EASY SOLUTIONS WHEN IT COMES TO DEALING WITH REBUILDING LIVES, HOMES, NEIGHBOURHOODS, AND CITIES AFTER A MAJOR DISASTER OR WAR. BUT THERE IS A WEALTH OF CAREFULLY DOCUMENTED EXPERIENCE AT OUR DISPOSAL, WRITES THE EDITOR, *ROMAN ROLLNICK*. THIS OVERVIEW DRAWS ON INSIGHT PROVIDED BY *DANIEL LEWIS*, CHIEF OF UN-HABITAT'S DISASTER, POST CONFLICT AND SAFETY SECTION, AND *JAANA MIOCH*, A HUMAN SETTLEMENTS OFFICER IN THE SAME DEPARTMENT.

The wealth of experience and knowledge in disaster management and mitigation can be traced to World War II, and still earlier to the California earthquake of 1906, or even the measurements taken of the biggest volcano blast in recorded history – the devastating explosion of the Indonesian island of Krakatoa in 1883.

We at UN-HABITAT and other agencies have learned is that it is important to incorporate proper long-term planning for sustainable development with the best protection against repeat disasters from the outset – indeed from the moment the humanitarian rescue operation begins.

As climate change threatens to change the face of the planet, mega-cities loom as giant potential flood or other disaster traps, especially for billions of the world's urban poor – always the most exposed and the most vulnerable.

Therefore, another important lesson on which we have plenty of experience is taking preventive action and planning ahead to offset the worst. The United Nations has calculated that one dollar invested in disaster reduction today, can save up to seven dollars tomorrow in relief and rehabilitation costs.

“Over the last 30 years, natural disasters have affected five times more people than they did only a generation ago,” said UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. Jan Egeland, in a paper published this month.

“The bad news is, things are getting worse as our climate changes, threatening more extreme weather and a potential explosion in human misery,” he said.

According to figures provided by his office, in 2006 alone, 117 million people around the world have suffered from some 300 natural disasters, including devastating droughts in China and Africa, and massive flooding in Asia and Africa, costing nearly \$15 billion in damages.

In the case of conflict, whether the world is unable to make more than limited progress to prevent genocide in Darfur, Sudan, or rebuilding Lebanon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Kosovo, Rwanda, Serbia, and Somalia –

all places where UN-HABITAT is active – this is another matter. We as human beings are responsible for conflict, and for environmental destruction.

“The good news is, we are far from powerless to reduce risks and protect ourselves from nature's wrath. But we must act today if we are to prevent calamity tomorrow. Indeed, we have no time to lose,” Mr. Egeland, said.

It was with a similar sense of urgency, that world governments, through the Habitat Agenda, mandated UN-HABITAT to take the lead in disaster prevention, mitigation, and preparedness, as well as post-disaster rehabilitation when it comes to human settlements – the growing towns and cities in which most of us live.

Indeed towns and cities are now home to half of humanity, whereas in 1950, two thirds of us were rural. In many cities, especially in developing countries, slum dwellers number more than 50 per cent of the population and have little or no access to shelter, water, and sanitation, education or health services.

Today some 1 billion people around the world live in slums, and they are most vulnerable when it comes to disasters. All too often, they live in places where no-one else would dare set foot – along beaches vulnerable to flooding (such as Dhaka, Mumbai), near sites prone to landfalls (Hong Kong, Tbilisi), near polluted grounds or shaky structures that would be destroyed the instant an earthquake hit. (Yerevan).

UN-HABITAT's Disaster Management Programme is thus tasked to fulfil this mandate by helping national governments, local authorities and communities strengthen their capacity against human-made and natural disasters. In short, it seeks to bridge the gap between relief and development by combining the technical expertise, normative understanding and lessons learned through UN-HABITAT field operations.

This applies to prevention, mitigation, and the rehabilitation of human settlements. As the agency for urban settlements around the world, UN-HABITAT also helps keep decision makers and com-

munities abreast of the latest thinking and working methods.

UN-HABITAT's Executive Director, Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka, said: "The need for governments and the international community to adopt early warning systems for cities, towns and villages to prepare and reduce the impact of disasters whether natural or man-made is paramount.

"This could contribute towards safeguarding livelihoods, human settlements and associated basic services, which are easily destroyed when such disasters strike. During post reconstruction special attention should be paid to women's secure tenure, rights to land and adequate housing among other issues. Property restitution must be gender sensitive," she said.

The right to adequate shelter is central to the mandate of UN-HABITAT, and even more important when addressing the needs of communities affected by disasters such as the tsunami.

Shelter is often the primary need in the post-disaster phase, but the delivery of immediate shelter needs must be undertaken within a long-term shelter strategy that puts the survivors at the centre of the recovery process. The same applies to the overall reconstruction and rehabilitation of other infrastructure and services. In parallel, the displacement of populations as a result of natural or human-made disasters is one of the key issues informing UN-HABITAT's disaster management strategy.

UN-HABITAT has helped build back better on safer land, and incorporate new urban planning to help offset the impact of such disasters. It also partnered with the Germany chemical company BASF in a unique arrangement that gave rise to an opportunity for private sector engagement in tsunami relief and reconstruction.

Re-establishing livelihoods, planning and management of settlements and basic services for these vulnerable groups is a key priority of UN-HABITAT's settlements crisis management programming. Likewise, taking into account the specific needs of refugees and internally displaced people, both in the areas to which they have been displaced – and in their communities of origin.

It has created strategic partnerships for resettlements, rehabilitation and housing for these people in every phase from emergency to local integration and reintegration, and beyond to security of housing, land and property tenure, and the development of productive economic activities.

Since the Iraq Settlements Rehabilitation Programme in 1997, for example, UN-



Destruction in Sri Lanka. The tsunami caused billions of dollars damage in many Indian ocean nations. Photo © UN

HABITAT continues to provide substantive backstopping in the areas of post-conflict reconstruction strategies, capacity building of local governments, urban planning and gender analysis.

In Kosovo, UN-HABITAT continues to support the UN Mission in Kosovo, and the Provisional Government, in four key areas – rehabilitating municipal administration, developing new spatial planning legislation and practice, the regularization of housing and property rights, and the restoration of property and land registries.

In Serbia, UN-HABITAT, with generous funding from the Italian Government, is implementing a social and housing integration programme for tens of thousands of war refugees and other vulnerable people.

On the other hand, in Sudan, UN-HABITAT programming in the north seeks to assist in the integration of thousands of internally displaced people into the urban fabric of Khartoum. In the south, it supports the Government of South Sudan in a range of human settlements recovery initiatives from road rehabilitation, to primary economic programming, to land use planning and tenure integrated in the 'Sustainable Settlements Recovery Programme for South Sudan'.

The examples of the agency's work with donors, governments, municipalities and the private sector around the world are too many to list here. But the experience has shown us that when a full-blown crisis erupts, the need for assistance frequently exceeds the ability of local governments to provide it. Responses have been typically ad-hoc, often without concern for the development objectives of countries in question.

Therefore, gaps between relief and development must be addressed. Piecemeal efforts which are not linked with the long-term development strategy can aggravate the precarious social conditions creating not only dependency on aid, but a critical waste of financial and human resources invested in short-sighted emergency relief plans.

UN-HABITAT's long experience in pre-, mid- and post-disaster planning and implementation proves that in many post-disaster scenarios it is most effective when interventions are designed to begin simultaneously. The consideration of the long-term impacts of short-term interventions can add value to the latter, and depth to the former. Furthermore, and ironically, the chaos following crises can present opportunities for the highest development gains in the shortest period, if planned and executed hand in hand with humanitarian actors.

Involvement as a supporting partner in the resettlement, shelter, infrastructure and governance sectors from the moment disaster strikes, places UN-HABITAT in a critical position as an institutional partner assisting and adding value to relevant humanitarian agencies, and planning early support for long-term objectives.

In two key areas, prevention can be greatly enhanced through the adoption and enforcement of more appropriate land-use planning and building codes. The rapid restoration of homes and livelihoods, on the other hand, is more complex and requires that humanitarian relief operations are conceived from the outset as a bridge to development.

- Additional reporting, Julia Scherer

Cities are getting more and more vulnerable

RAPID URBANISATION, THE WEIGHT OF ACCUMULATED FAILURES IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND INEFFECTIVENESS IN URBAN GOVERNANCE HAVE PLACED GROWING NUMBERS OF PEOPLE IN CITIES AT RISK, WRITES *MARK PELLING*, A SENIOR LECTURER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AT KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON, WHO EDITED THE UNDP'S DISASTER RISK INDEX.

These risk factors are a product of global as well as national economic and political processes. In the 1980s Amartya Sen argued that cities offered refuge from drought and famine. In the early 21st century cities are better portrayed as hotspots of risk.

When disaster strikes it can undo the development gains of households and cities exacerbating poverty and inequality. Ms. Norma Chavez from San Salvador who lost her house to an earthquake, put it this way:

"To think I have worked so much and so hard, and we have never been able to leave poverty. But this is like taking a big leap backward. We are going from poverty to misery... but we have to keep up the struggle."

Urban risk has for too long been a marginal policy concern. Rapid urbanisation makes this position untenable. More and more of humanity, and the majority of the physical assets that drive development, are located in cities at risk. This urban shift is demonstrated by UN-HABITAT's observation that between 2000-2010 for the first time in our history more people will live in urban than in rural settlements.

But urban population growth is not evenly distributed. By 2030, UN-HABITAT estimate that 27 countries will account for 75 per cent of the World's urban population – with all but seven in less developed countries. Most urban citizens live in settlements of 500,000 people or less with limited capacity to respond to disaster risk.

Larger cities – especially mega-cities with more than 10 million inhabitants like Manila, Shanghai, Dhaka, Karachi, Tokyo or Los Angeles – have more resources but depend on complex life support systems which can lead to small events triggering large scale disasters of potentially global significance. (*see map pp.12,13*)

Economic poverty and inequality are arguably the greatest immediate causes of vulnerability. Poverty limits choices for those at risk and in cities with limited finances. Worldwide, an estimated 1 billion people live in slums, according to UN-HABITAT. In many cities more than half the population lives in slums. This is the case in Kolkata, India, where 66 per cent of the city's 4.5 million inhabitants live in slums and squatter settlements at risk to flooding and cyclones.

Urbanisation modifies the hazard environment and creates vulnerability. Uncontrolled air pollution can reach disastrous levels with children most at risk. In coastal cities, the destruction of mangroves or draining of salt marshes takes away a protective barrier between the city and the sea, generating hazard. As cities grow in population and wealth, increased consumption is a motor for climate change compounding global and local insecurity.

Unregulated development deepens urban risk. Many of those who perished in Turkey's Marmara earthquake, in 1999, for example, were middle-income families living in *gececondos*, the high-rise flats built without regard to construction standards.

Elsewhere, the close proximity of residential, industrial and transport land-

uses can generate a cocktail of hazards. Reconstruction can be an opportunity to amend the planning failures that led to disaster. But, too often reconstruction leads either to the displacement of low-income families for urban development, or a simple return to pre-disaster conditions so that risk is built into the city once again.

Insecure land tenure compounds vulnerability, acting as a disincentive for families and city authorities to invest in basic services and secure construction. People living in informal settlements and those in rental accommodation are among those most at risk.

Access to clean water and sanitation is a basic need that around a quarter of urban households are denied. This undermines health and generates vulnerability. In inner-city and peripheral communities, overcrowding increases fire risk and makes the job of the emergency services more difficult. Following the Kobe earthquake in Japan new spaces were planned to provide access and refuge during an earthquake.

Disaster risk is possibly the greatest threat to urban sustainability we face today. Given the widespread experience of cities at risk from disaster, it might be tempting to resign ourselves to risk being part of the cost-benefit process of urbanisation.

But disasters, and the vulnerability that underlies them are not inevitable. They are an outcome of choices made locally, in the boardrooms of governments and businesses in the city, and also increasingly at international and national levels.

Cities become disaster traps when poor people live in danger zones like this in Monrovia. Photo © UN-HABITAT/A.Grimard



Cities at Risk: a case for better planning, management and policies

FILIPINOS ARE ALWAYS THE VICTIMS OF EARTHQUAKES, TYPHOONS, AND FLOODS. BUT BEFORE DISASTER HITS AGAIN, WRITE *GABRIELLE IGLESIAS*, AN INFORMATION AND NETWORKING COORDINATOR OF THE ASIAN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS CENTER IN BANGKOK, THAILAND AND *LOWIE ROSALES*, A UN-HABITAT HUMAN SETTLEMENTS OFFICER IN FUKUOKA JAPAN, NEW EFFORTS HAVE TO BE MADE AT CITY LEVEL TO REDUCE THE DANGERS OF SUCH CALAMITIES.

Many Filipinos do not really feel secure in their cities when it comes to natural disasters. Each time typhoons hit the country claiming hundreds of lives and cutting a trail of destruction, there are power outages, trees blocking roads, vehicles overturned, and renewed calls on the authorities to ban big advertising billboards. Too often, they go flying and kill people and crush cars and buildings when they slam back into the ground.

When the capital Manila was hit on 28 September 2006 by a typhoon that blew through 32 cities, local authorities declared a state of emergency. Millions of people were unable to go to school or work, sea, air and rail transport shut down. It took more than a week to start functioning again and caused many millions of dollars of destruction.

The disruption of power, water, transport, stock and currency trading has as much impact as the physical damage and casualties. However, these complex life support systems are part of the natural attraction and comparative advantage of cities vis-à-vis rural areas.

UN-HABITAT has developed a five-point strategy to back national governments, local authorities and communities by:

- *Developing techniques and tools for the management of disaster prevention, mitigation and rehabilitation;*
- *Designing and implementing training programmes, and supporting those of other agencies and field projects;*
- *Promoting horizontal cooperation by networking institutions, experts and experience on disaster related activities in human settlements;*
- *Designing, implementing and supporting projects at the local, national, regional and global level;*
- *Strengthening coordination and networking among communities, NGOs, governments and external support organizations in addressing disaster-related activities.*

Good urban governance is the key. Inclusion of the citizens is a must. There is a need for a city consultation process so that collectively agreed solutions can be put in place.

One example is the PROMISE project in Dagupan City. Located on Lingayen

Gulf on the island of Luzon, Dagupan has a population of 130,000 people.

The city's Disaster Coordinating Council, which normally meets only in response to emergencies, formed a technical task force to reduce disaster risk. July 16 has been declared a day of remembrance in Dagupan in commemoration of a devastating earthquake that hit the city in 1990.

The authorities arranged a series of community training workshops, and set up neighbourhood early warning centres in eight areas prone to floods. These areas now have special evacuation centers, hazard maps, evacuation plans, and problem area surveys. Citizens are helping monitor rising river water levels and relaying the results to a central city hall information office that uses the latest spaced-based geographic information system (GIS) technology.

The Dagupan early warning system constantly being updated and adapted to local requirements is a good example of how cities can work with their citizens to reduce the risk of disaster.



Mrs. Tibajuka surveys tsunami damage in Indonesia. Photo © S. Shankardass/UN-HABITAT

Getting the right approach to long-term post-crisis shelter strategies

POST-DISASTER SHELTER WORK MUST START IN CONSULTATION AND WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE COMMUNITIES INVOLVED. IT MUST ALSO BE FORGED IN A RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH, ARGUES IAN DAVIS, VISITING PROFESSOR TO CRANFIELD, COVENTRY AND KYOTO UNIVERSITIES.

Shelter must be regarded as an active process of protecting, sheltering, evacuating, staying with relatives, and housing. It must also be seen as a series of products involving the delivery of tents, plastic sheeting, tool kits, roofing, and transitional accommodation leading to permanent homes, and settlement.

There must be continuity from initial shelter following the collapse of a dwelling to a permanent house. This may be a two stage process from shelter to home, as adopted for example, after the Mexico City earthquake of 1985; or a much more expensive three-stage process from shelter to temporary house to permanent dwelling, as after the Kobe earthquake of 1995.

It is vital to recognise that this is a continuum when seen from the standpoint of the sheltering family. Where possible, the two-tier strategy is best because the money saved for temporary housing can be used for full reconstruction.

Besides providing a shelter or a house, an integrated approach can contribute to psycho-social, or bereavement therapy for disaster survivors after acute trauma and family losses.

It can also provide a unique opportunity to teach new building, financial management and contract management skills, offer a further unique opportunity to focus on safe building and disaster preparedness. An integrated approach can also be the source of family income and improved livelihood, thus contributing to the revitalisation of the battered local economy.

Not least, it can strengthen community solidarity.

All involved in post-crisis rebuilding must ensure that there are opportunities and mechanisms for full participation in decision making by affected communities. The benefit of ownership and achieving many of the above concerns is facilitated through active engagement of community.

There must also be an emphasis on building back better. But this can freeze actions while precious time is lost waiting for new building bylaws to be enacted, or for new land-use policies to be adopted to widen streets or evacuate from vulnerable sites.

In some cases the 'best of the worst' solutions may be the most sensible course of action since it is vital to move rapidly for two obvious reasons: Survivors may be facing acute hardship within inadequate shelter conditions; reconstruction has to be rapid to capitalise on the brief 'window of opportunity' when political concern and available funds exist.

When it comes to taking action, post-disaster shelter assessment is all too often a purely negative collection of data focussed on defining need by identifying damage. However, a more developmental approach is to review capacities. These range from recycling building debris, using local builders and craftsmen, consulting local leaders, local institutions, unoccupied, undamaged buildings, or community buildings that may offer temporary shelter.

The key to effective programmes lies in accurate initial assessment and continual monitoring of the situation. Skilled local people should be used to conduct rapid damage, shelter and capacity assessments and share the results widely. Shelter policy decision should not be taken these assessments are completed and carefully analysed.

Support must be used in cash and kind to help survivors moving in with host families. This voluntary exodus from the affected area is of great value since it reduces the immediate need for local shelter provision if sufficiently resourced.

Survivors must be kept informed by officials of their shelter entitlements. But any public offers of compensation for destroyed buildings must be avoided because they can lead to the destruction of repairable properties to claim compensation.

Safe rebuilding must start from day one, and preparedness planning must also be built into recovery programmes.

Relocation should only be considered as a last resort, such as where land has been lost in a landslide or where sites are dangerous.

If tents are necessary, families should be able to set them up alongside their own homes, rather than set up large institutional camp sites. This enables survivors to protect what property they have left.

Tips for the international humanitarian community

- Stop survivors and officials destroying building rubble, especially timber. It contains valuable recycling material.
- Give families tools, materials and building expertise to rebuild their homes.
- Provide cash as a highly effective shelter strategy where materials and tools can be purchased.
- Make skilled expertise available.
- The 'right' to safe shelter and decent housing should be paramount.
- Give emphasis to the role of the surviving community in meeting their own shelter needs.
- Require a range of supportive interventions by assisting groups.
- Insist that safety is a priority.

Post-crisis, long-term shelter response is vital

Failure to deal with the long-term aftermath of a disaster and bring development thinking into the humanitarian response at the outset usually leads to further trouble, argues Charles A. Setchell, a Shelter, Settlements, and Hazard Mitigation Advisor with the USAID Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA).

In the 1989 movie, *Dead Poets Society*, a teacher played by Robin Williams challenged his students with *carpe diem*, a Latin phrase commonly translated as “seize the day.” Although the phrase is heard to this day, few will recall that the teacher lost his job because he didn’t consider the long-term implications of his actions.

The teacher’s fate in the movie is not all that different from many humanitarian shelter responses: Not thinking long-term when acting short-term – or more specifically, not informing relief actions with developmental thinking – can get you into big trouble.

So how long is the long in the long-term? In a related vein, and given recent changes in the humanitarian community organizational landscape, how early is the early in early recovery? When do we start long and early?

Based on innumerable discussions I’ve had with people directly affected by disaster or crisis, often while standing amidst the rubble of their destroyed homes, the response would likely be now, tomorrow, or perhaps even yesterday.

No organization can be that responsive, of course. But a well-conceived recovery programme that links relief and reconstruction activities can have beneficial outcomes – or, at least, minimal harm – at significant scale to affected populations in the four- to eight-month time-frame common to most humanitarian shelter programmes.

Whether done well or not, and whether done knowingly or not, humanitarian assistance also initiates a much more complex process of addressing the need for shelter in a developmental context. This context features largely urban-based growth occurring on a massive scale well into the future, primarily in developing countries. Those engaged in humanitarian shelter, then, would be wise to know of this interplay of action, process, and context.

This is not a trivial matter, for it is not an understatement to claim that many recent conflicts have had their genesis in unresolved resource, social, and political issues. It is also not an understatement to claim that many recent disasters have had their genesis in development policies that have placed – and continue to place – people in harm’s way. One way of refuting these claims is changing humanitarian shelter assistance so that it more effectively contributes to, indeed jump-starts, efforts to address these large development issues.

Ian Davis provides us with guidance in this regard, and has done so quite clearly in his brief article. Additions to his list of self-evident truths could include the potential of shelter as a significant livelihood generator, and recognizing and learning more about the scale and mechanisms of remittance-driven shelter financed by affected populations.

These truths, together with some presented by Davis, suggest strongly that shelter assistance should focus less on “four-walls-and-a-roof” approaches, and more on the institutional require-

ments and strategic vision needed to promote a settlements-based approach to guide delivery of shelter at scale. Such a focus will require concerted humanitarian community engagement with development community actors so that long-term shelter strategies reduce the risk of future conflict and disaster.

Two truths mentioned by Davis, namely transitional shelter and “building back better,” merit further elaboration. Recent experience in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Indonesia, and elsewhere suggests that transitional shelter – emergency shelter that designed intentionally to jump-start recovery and reconstruction – appears a useful means of addressing short-term needs within a long-term framework, perhaps because it reflects the following:

- **Respect for the Past.** A common feature of transitional shelter is the emphasis on salvaging of building materials for reuse in post-crisis/disaster shelter programs. Davis even calls for a ban on destruction of salvageable building materials, in the name of efficiency. Much more importantly, however, reuse of these materials connects affected populations with the past in a tangible, respectful manner, and
- **Linkage to the Future.** Transitional shelter often requires new inputs, sometime from outside affected regions, to supplement salvaged materials. This merging of new and old materials, together with “building back better” measures, can serve as a model for shelter activity precisely because it links to the incremental, and thus long-term, housing delivery process present in most countries, which must be accessed to achieve meaningful impacts at scale.

“Building back better” is far more than measures to resolve communal violence, or promote seismic mitigation. This form of “thinking long, acting short” is an opportunity to re-acquaint development community actors with crises and disasters, enabling those actors to take measures that reduce vulnerability to hazards, both natural and human-caused, and mitigate the causes of conflict. Whenever and wherever possible, such opportunities should be recognized and exploited with *carpe diem* zeal. To do otherwise, is to put people back in harm’s way.

By the way, no sequel to *Dead Poets Society* was ever made. We’ll never know, then, whether the Williams character would have been able to resume his teaching career after heeding the message of “Think Long, Act Short” reflected above.

Had there been a sequel, and the message heeded, the humanitarian community would have had quite a story to guide its work.

Alas, we will have to craft our own story, with shelter the main character.

- Note: this article reflects solely the views of the author – not USAID or the US Government.

Alas, we will have to craft our own story, with shelter the main character.

Post-conflict housing, land and property rights

AS UNJUSTIFIED AND LEGALLY QUESTIONABLE AS THE RECENT DECIMATION OF MUCH OF LEBANON BY THE ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCES MAY BE, IN HISTORICAL TERMS IT IS SADLY JUST THE MOST RECENT CASE IN THE DEPRESSING, CENTURIES-LONG SAGA OF CIVILIANS, ALONG WITH THEIR HOMES AND LANDS, BEARING THE BRUNT OF VIOLENT ARMED CONFLICT, SAYS *SCOTT LECKIE*, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER OF THE CENTRE ON HOUSING RIGHTS AND EVICTIONS (COHRE).

All conflicts result in displacement, mass housing destruction, arbitrary confiscation of land, the secondary occupation of homes and lands, the decimation of the housing market and many other serious housing, land and property problems.

To cite some recent examples: the controversial US-led interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the international interventions in Kosovo and Haiti, state-to-state wars (Armenia & Azerbaijan, Ethiopia & Eritrea), multi-state conflict (DR Congo), wars of succession (Bougainville, Sri Lanka, Chechnya, S. Thailand), wars of liberation (South Africa, anti-colonial struggles), anti-occupation resistance (Palestine, East Timor) or civil wars (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Uganda, Iraq).

Most such conflicts result in the abuse of internationally recognised housing, land and property rights, and indeed, they might have started over struggles for these resources.

Yet the response of the international community falls well short of needs and expectations when it comes to restoring these rights in the aftermath of conflict.

Despite exceptions here like UN-HABITAT, and the Norwegian Refugee Council, most of the individuals and institutions involved in conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building have yet to fully incorporate solutions to housing, land and property problems. The wholly unique ways in which housing, land and property challenges manifest following all conflicts makes it difficult to apply all-embracing remedial policies. And thus they fall through

the institutional cracks of international responses.

How then can housing, land and property rights get the attention and funding they deserve in sustainable relief and reconstruction? I would like to propose an integral (all encompassing) approach. Rather than ad hoc or piecemeal approaches, this is justified on several grounds.

Firstly, because housing, land and property rights are widely recognised under all of the relevant international legal and normative frameworks such as international human rights law, international humanitarian law, and international criminal law. Legally housing, land and property rights must therefore be taken seriously with corresponding legal, policy and institutional responses. It is simply not tenable to take, for instance, the housing rights of Iraqis displaced by the regime of Saddam Hussein extremely seriously, while at the same time ignoring the housing rights of Sudanese who are internally displaced in their own country. An integral approach would lead to both groups being treated equitably, and to the reasonable expectation that their housing, land and property rights claims were deemed equally serious and worthy of concern.

Secondly, partial responses to the innumerable housing, land and property rights problems found in countries requiring relief and reconstruction will obviously yield only partial results. For instance, it is abundantly clear that the international community can never – and should never even try – to re-build all homes damaged or destroyed in conflict. This would be cost prohibitive and

more often than not would be carried out inappropriately without regard to the wishes of the local population. The danger of leaving the job half done can spark renewed conflict.

Finally, even though no post-conflict or post-disaster situation is ever the same, there is a clear and pressing need for the international community to at least have the institutional and technical capacity to address housing, land and property problems.

I would further argue that the next steps in achieving some sort of consolidated and diverse global response to tackling housing, land and property rights, in an integral way, would involve continuing the initial work that has already been carried out by a growing number of housing, land and property rights advocates in connection with a range of post-conflict settings over the past decade or two.

Were, for instance, the new UN Peacebuilding Commission to consider adopting a consistent approach to housing, land and property rights in the context of an agreed UN-wide policy response, such a policy could include specific measures to be taken during the following four phases of the post-conflict process:

- The Planning Phase (including a housing, land and property rights directorate to work with local actors);
- The Emergency Phase (reviewing the legal framework, rights-based approaches, developing restitution measures, etc);
- The Transitional Phase (developing a country-specific housing, land and property rights policy), and
- The Development Phase (planning for a better future by including human rights and the rule of law as foundations of a post-conflict society).

A new UN policy on housing, land and property rights in post conflict settings may act as a catalyst to change outdated and arbitrary approaches still often employed by the UN. In turn, it might lead to more effective responses by the international community to the housing, land and property crises of every war.

Rights can be destroyed as easily as homes in armed conflicts. To whom can this person in South Beirut turn for help? Photo © A. Grimard/UN-HABITAT.



Housing, land and property in sub-Saharan Africa

NOWHERE ARE THE PROBLEMS OF HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS MORE EVIDENT THAN IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, SAYS *CHRIS HUGGINS*, A RWANDA-BASED RESEARCHER FOR AN INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION.

Cruelly affected by civil war in recent decades, sub-Saharan Africa is perhaps the region the most in need of sustainable solutions to mass displacement, destruction of homes, and disputes over access to land.

The responses to these problems a piecemeal at best. Take Rwanda. The international response to the post-genocide return of refugees was politically circumscribed by the grave errors made by the international community during the horrors of 1994. In the late 1990s, a major international effort to provide housing for returnees became party to a government 'villagisation' policy, characterized in some areas by abuses such as forced relocation and the destruction of existing housing. International observers paid scant attention to a compulsory land-sharing exercise, which continues to be a source of controversy and acrimony.

And Burundi. The return of hundreds of thousands of refugees continues to generate great concern over the risk of land conflict. The UN peacekeeping mission in Burundi, has not taken on a systematic support role on land law reform,



Property rights up in smoke: A woman prepares porridge in a makeshift camp in a schoolyard in Kas town, South Darfur. Photo © UNHCR/K.McKinsey/July 2004

and strengthening of local mediation mechanisms.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the UN peacekeeping mission, has avoided addressing land issues, despite massive population displacement including ethnic cleansing.

"While the international community seems to be focused on creating a number of 'islands of stability' in Congo," Koen Vlassenroot, and Timothy Raeymaekers,

said in their report, *Conflict and Social Transformation in Eastern DR Congo* "the entire interior of the country risks being left behind in a general state of chaos, where historic land conflicts, border disputes, and communal resentment will continue to be exploited by political entrepreneurs in search of a local power base."

There are many other examples in the region. But the lesson is clear. Without a consistent, integrated, multi-agency approach to these challenges, there will be little progress.

Post-conflict responses based on Western models are not appropriate in places where the majority of people survive on less than a dollar per day. Surveying and registering land parcels may be beyond the budget of not just a poor family, but also the state. Seasonal land uses often have to be factored into post-conflict agreements on land access and economic development. This means that 'one-size-fits-all' solutions are unlikely to work.

But that is not to say problems should be simply written-off as too complicated. Instead, adequate time and resources should be made available, and specific expertise should be developed through training programmes, possibly in collaboration with the African Union, regional political blocs such as the East African Community, and other African institutions.

The task may seem daunting. But the alternative is far worse: ethnic cleansing may become a fait accompli, millions of displaced people across the continent will continue to live in misery, and festering land disputes could trigger further conflicts some years down the line.

Land and housing rights underpin livelihoods, and hence are the foundations for peace. Recent experience suggests that, unfortunately, post-conflict transition regimes often have too many political challenges to adequately respond to housing and land problems without external assistance.

The United Nations must face the challenge squarely to stop other investments – in support of peace negotiations, peace-keeping, and elections – becoming undermined by poverty and continued violence.

ORIGIN OF MAJOR REFUGEE POPULATIONS 2006

Origin	Main Countries of Asylum	Total*
Afghanistan	Pakistan / Iran / Germany / Netherlands / UK	1,908,100**
Sudan	Chad / Uganda / Kenya / Ethiopia / Central African Rep.	693,300
Burundi	Tanzania / DR Congo / Rwanda / South Africa / Zambia	438,700
DR Congo	Tanzania / Zambia / Congo / Rwanda / Uganda	430,600
Somalia	Kenya / Yemen / UK / USA / Ethiopia	394,800
Viet Nam	China / Germany / USA / France / Switzerland	358,200
Palestinians	Saudi Arabia / Egypt / Iraq / Libya / Algeria	349,700***
Iraq	Iran / Germany / Netherlands / Syria / UK	262,100
Azerbaijan	Armenia / Germany / USA / Netherlands / France	233,700
Liberia	Sierra Leone / Guinea / Côte d'Ivoire / Ghana / USA	231,100

Source: UNHCR

* This table includes UNHCR estimates for nationalities in industrialized countries on the basis of recent refugee arrivals and asylum-seeker recognition.

** UNHCR figures for Pakistan only include Afghans living in camps who are assisted by UNHCR. A 2005 government census of Afghans in Pakistan, and subsequent repatriation movements, suggest an additional 1.5 million Afghans – some of whom may be refugees – are living outside camps. The figure for Iran has been revised upwards since 1 January.

*** This figure does not include some 4.3 million Palestinian refugees who come under the separate mandate of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Cities at Risk

COASTAL EROSION, SALTWATER INTRUSION INTO FRESHWATER SUPPLIES, AND COASTAL STORMS ALL COMBINE TO THREATEN COASTAL CITIES. SEE: PUBLICATIONS, PAGE 21 FOR GRANTING HABITAT

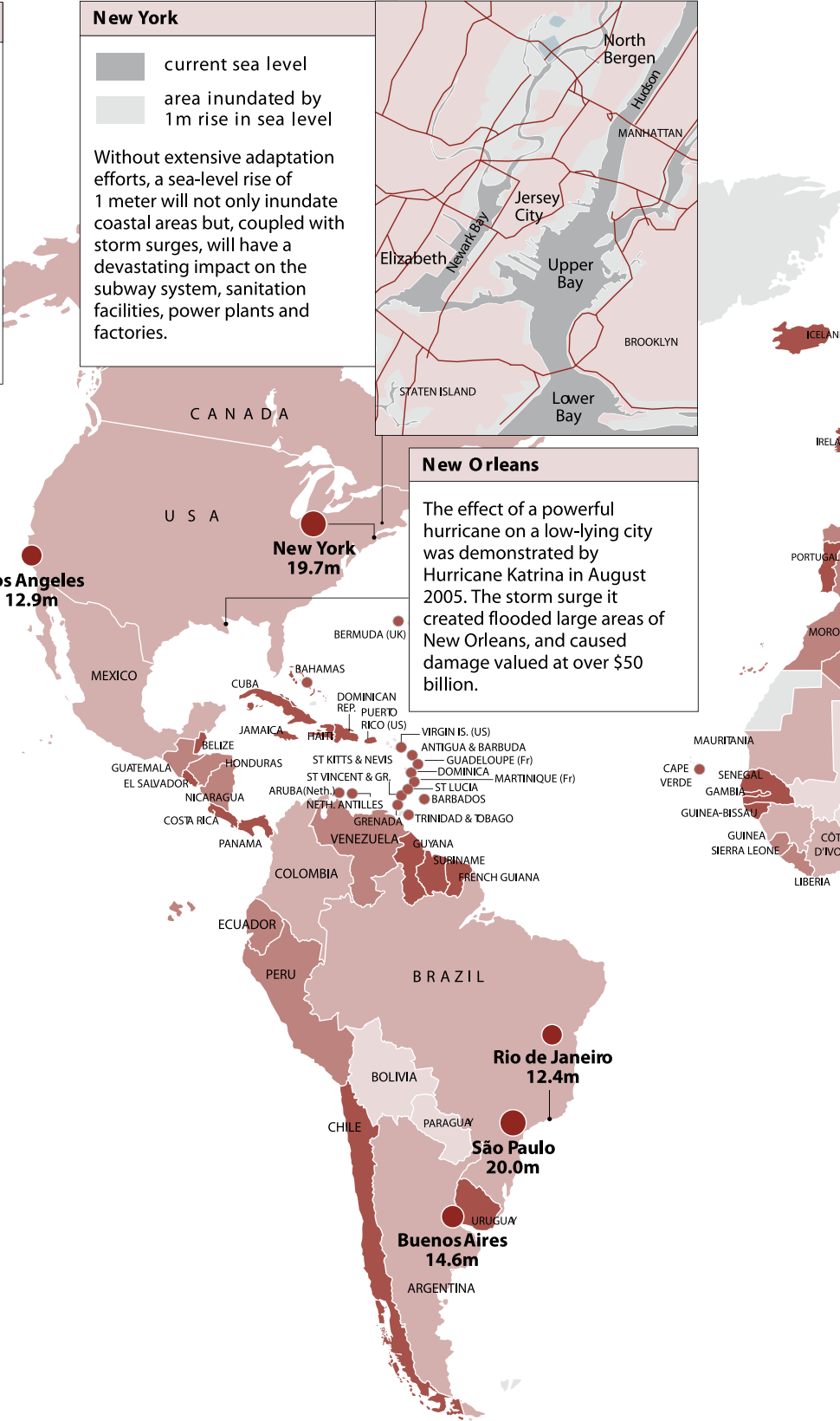
COASTAL POPULATIONS

Percentage of population living less than 60 miles (100 km) from coast 1995

 76% – 100%	 none
 51% – 75%	 no data
 1% – 50%	

Coastal megacities

city population 2015 projected in millions



Around 40 percent of the world's population lives less than 60 miles from the coast – within reach of severe-coastal storms. About 100 million people live less than one meter above mean sea level. More people are gravitating to these areas of fast-growing economic development, but coastal erosion, rising sea levels, saltwater contamination, and potentially more powerful storms, are expected to put these already threatened environments under increasing stress.

Some of these consequences of climate-change, such as the inundation of large delta areas, are potentially catastrophic. Others, such as the movement of saltwater upstream into freshwater rivers, will take their toll more slowly, as drinking and irrigation water becomes saline, river water becomes too corrosive to use for cooling in industrial processes and power plants, and changing coastal habitats affect wildlife.

While all coastal cities face such threats, the impact on those with over 10 million inhabitants will be most substantial. Water and sanitation systems may be placed under unbearable strain, and millions of poor people in shanty towns on the fringes of the cities may be at even greater risk from disease. Port facilities may no longer be viable, and government and financial services may be severely damaged, affecting the administration and economy of the entire country.

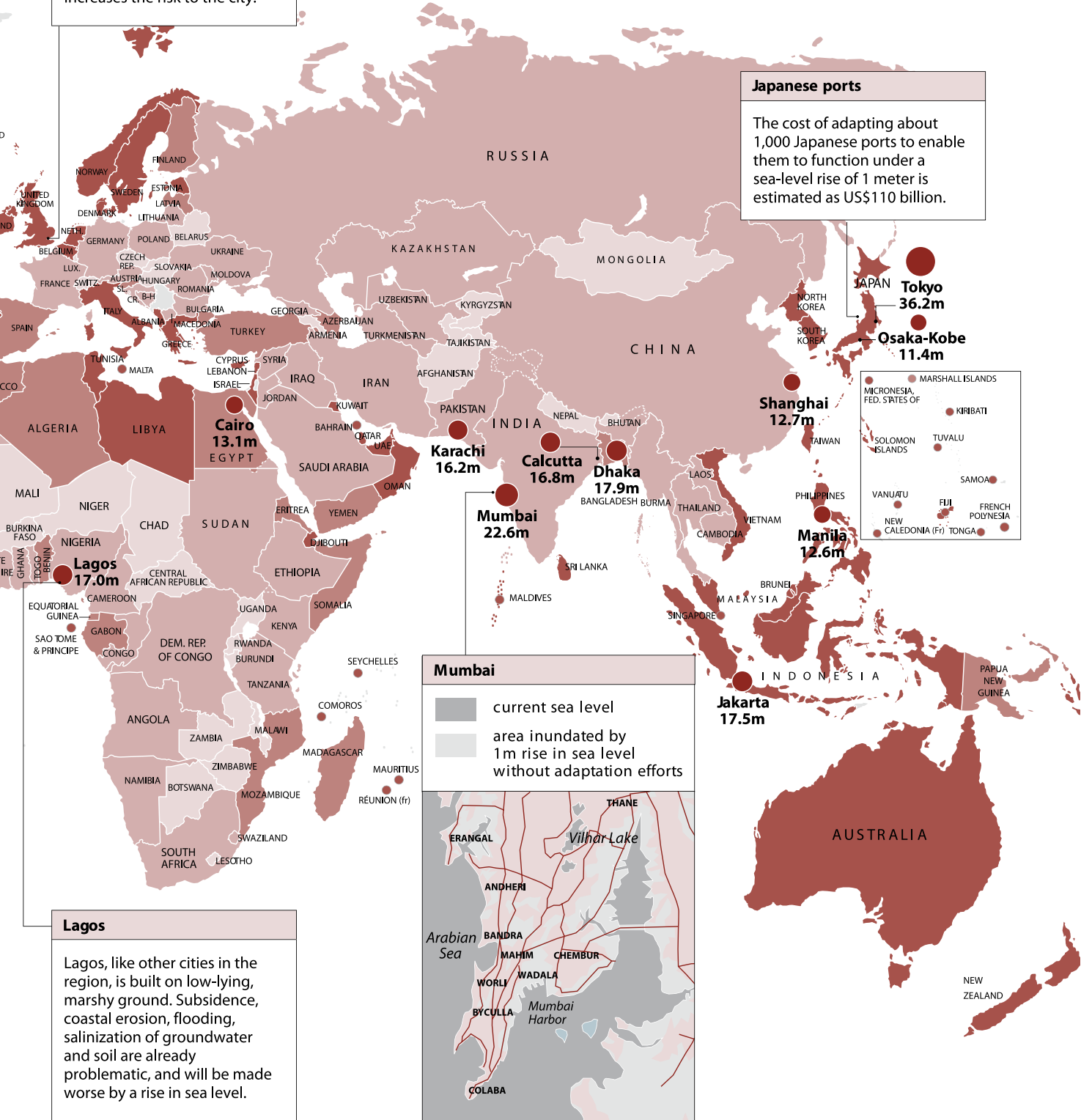
AREAS — OFTEN REGIONS OF HIGH POPULATION GROWTH AND INTENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. A SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS GO TO THE HABITAT DEBATE FOR DEBATING THE RIGHT TO PUBLISH THIS MAP.

London

London is protected from particularly high tides and storm surges by the Thames Barrier, but more frequent storms and the pressure of rising sea-level increases the risk to the city.

Japanese ports

The cost of adapting about 1,000 Japanese ports to enable them to function under a sea-level rise of 1 meter is estimated as US\$110 billion.



Lagos

Lagos, like other cities in the region, is built on low-lying, marshy ground. Subsidence, coastal erosion, flooding, salinization of groundwater and soil are already problematic, and will be made worse by a rise in sea level.

Building back better – post-crisis economic recovery and development

MARKET DEVELOPMENT, AND MAKING MARKETS WORK FOR THE POOR AFTER A DISASTER ARE KEY TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY, SAYS *KEVIN BILLING* OF THE BUSINESS SERVICES MARKET DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, A PROGRAMME OF THE OF THE UK DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (DfID).

The Asian tsunami killer wave, the Pakistan earthquake, and the post-conflict aftermath of Southern Sudan and Northern Somalia are all examples of recent disasters and conflicts that continue to affect markets and huge numbers of poor people.

Discussion group participants at the 2006 Private Sector Development Conference of the International Labour Organization in Chiang Mai, Thailand agreed that the two major challenges to stimulate early economic recovery are to “build it back better”, and to take full advantage of early opportunities for “linking relief to market development”.

If the biggest struggle facing development practitioners is finding ways to make markets work for the poor, then it is unforgivable for any organization operating in a post-conflict or post-disaster situation to ignore issues of market development.

Relief is often totally distorting and every attempt must be made to turn negative into positive impact or at least concentrate on keeping the distortion to the minimum.

In disaster situations donors often rush in with temporary shelter, prefab warehouses and at times inappropriate food aid. Forgetting that starting immediately on household repair and reconstruction using local artisans (who may only need their lost tools replaced) helps re-establish local business and gets the community involved from the outset.

All communities need storage and from day one every attempt should be made to identify locally owned facilities which can be hired, repaired, used, and improved so

that the process adds to long-term community capital formation.

Even in areas where there maybe a famine, there is still local food available either in the area or nearby, and every attempt should be made to carefully “buy local” and to make sure that food distribution activities support rather than distort existing markets for food

This requires relief and emergency organization to look closely at the existing (or pre-crisis) value chains and stop to understand existing systems and local support and coping mechanisms. The key thread in this thinking must be to realize that one of the most direct impacts of disaster and conflict is in the disruption of markets. To plan responsive interventions for communities affected by market disruption, it is perhaps important to first categorise affected groups. Generally they involve:

- Those with the capacity to manage development-focused activities immediately.
- The ‘situation-specific vulnerable’ who have the capacity, but have temporarily lost the ability or assets to respond.
- The extremely vulnerable or ultra-poor unable to cope with development focused activities.

The needs of all three groups differ, and programmes must include multiple elements to deal with this. The first group can cope with commercially focused interventions, while the second need short-term relief-focused activities like capital grants to replace tools or equipment. The last group

needs extended relief-type activities involving direct assistance.

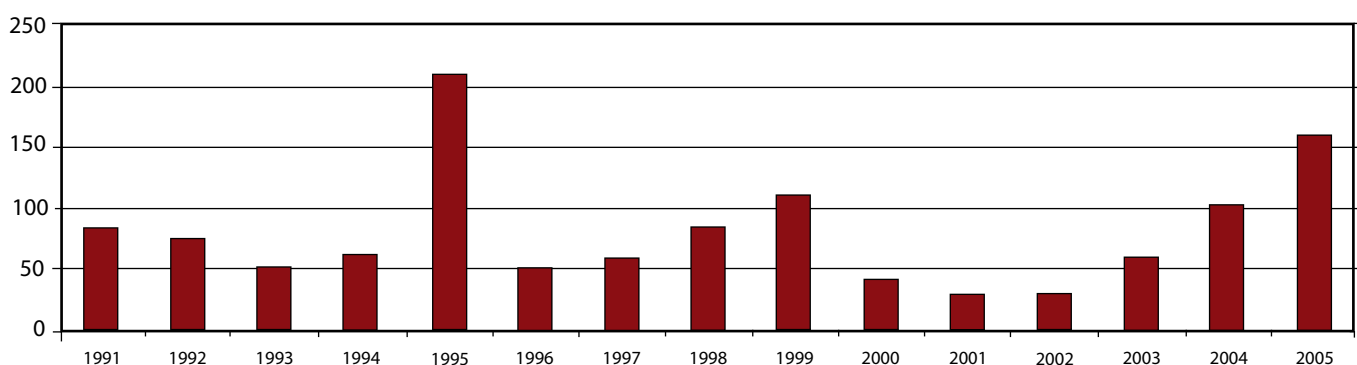
At the earliest stages of response, there are tool kits that enable a rapid assessment of what existed before, and what of that was working and not working. This enables organizations to develop an early recovery picture based on ‘build-it-back-better’ priorities.

One of the most useful immediate interventions is the early establishment or improved reestablishment of ‘foundation markets’. These are markets that deliver products and services that underpin the development of and participation of crisis-affected populations a number of markets and the wider economy.

These include: consumer and retail services, food value chains, feeder services and investment climate services. Soft finance or grants will enable entrepreneurs to replace assets and re-open stalls and shops. Enterprises that generated local services and employment opportunities such as building and carpentry should receive high priority. Re-construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure should contain a strong element of skills development and transfer by use of artisan leader training initiatives.

Private sector recovery and growth in post-crisis situations can be accelerated by early investment in developing foundation markets for all range of services. The best practice consensus overall approach to economic recovery and development in post-crisis situations is to “build it back better”. Are practitioners doing this? And are we sharing our experiences?

Total amount of reported economic damage: all natural disasters (in current US\$ billion)



Source of data: EM-DAT : The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database.
<http://www.em-dat.net>, UCL - Brussels, Belgium

Good governance makes sense for safer, cleaner cities

AS THE WORLD ENTERS A NEW URBAN AGE WITH HALF OF HUMANITY ALREADY LIVING IN TOWNS AND CITIES, THERE SHOULD BE NO DOUBT THAT CITIES ARE MOST VULNERABLE TO DISASTER, LIKE GIANT TRAPS. HERE *JAANA MIOCH* AND *JULIA SCHERER* OF UN-HABITAT ARGUE THAT CRISIS CAN BE AVERTED WITH GOOD GOVERNANCE.

Today's cities hold incredible potential as engines of growth and social development. But urban settlements are increasingly prone to natural, environmental and technological hazards.

While we debate whether natural disasters are really the result of our own human stupidity, Ms. Nicky Gavron, the Deputy Mayor of London, warned in an interview with *Habitat Debate* that whatever the answer, we as people nevertheless are responsible.

"By 2030, two-thirds of humanity will live in cities and half already do. Even now, cities consume three-quarters of the world's energy and are responsible for 80 percent of carbon dioxide emissions," she said. "We'll fail in our efforts to save the planet if the emissions trend in cities isn't reversed. We also have great economic opportunities through planning, transport and waste powers. We have concentrations of infrastructure and knowledge. Cities are often the drivers of entire national economies both in the developed and developing countries."

Ms. Gavron, speaking on the sidelines of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in November 2006, said that cities therefore had the potential to trail blaze emission reductions to ensure high global targets are met.

In London in 2005 the Large Cities Climate Leadership Group was created. Partnered with the Clinton Foundation, it comprises 30 of the world's largest and most polluting cities committed to cutting emissions with special projects tailored to each city's means and situation. Across the world, 670 municipalities have achieved substantial reductions through ICLEI's Cities for Climate Change Protection campaign. ICLEI, is working with the UN Environment Programme and UN-HABITAT on mitigation and adaptation at the local level in Africa.

In the United States, hundreds of mayors have pledged, independently of Washington, to meet or beat the Kyoto targets and help reduce pollution and offset future climate change disasters.

Inadequate planning and construction standards, weak urban management practices, environmental degradation, a lack of

infrastructure and services, congestion and unregulated population density, weak institutions, and risk-blind policies and development make cities dangerous places when it comes to disasters.

"Everywhere it is the urban poor who are most vulnerable when it comes to disasters. All too often, they live in places where no one else would dare set foot – along beaches vulnerable to flooding, near sites prone to landfalls, near polluted grounds or shaky structures that would be destroyed the instant a hurricane hit causing untold loss in lives and destruction," Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka, UN-HABITAT's Executive Director said in a statement at the conference.

"In this new urban age many mega-cities with populations of 10 million or more loom as giant potential flood and disaster traps. In sub-Saharan Africa, slum dwellers constitute over 70 percent of the urban populations. In other parts of the developing world that figure is a shocking 50 percent," she added.

The promotion of good governance serves therefore as a cornerstone of both disaster risk reduction and post-crisis recovery. Public awareness and inclusive decision-making, sound political support together with strong institutions and systems for policy implementation and enforcement are all significantly contributing to creating resilient and less vulnerable communities.

Cities are managed and communities interact at the local level. As disasters are largely local events, the role of local authorities and communities themselves has become increasingly important in risk reduction and recovery. No amount of planning or expertise will be effective in disaster risk reduction without commitment and participation of the community as whole, especially women. Disasters and conflict affect men and women differently. Thus a gendered perspective in disaster management is essential to help ensure that these differences are recognised and addressed. Only when all members of a society are engaged and considered, can disaster management be effective to reduce vulnerability and promote sustainable development.

Understanding the different problems that confront men and women in crisis makes for better post-crisis management. Improving inclusive governance that promotes gender equality will help make populations less vulnerable to disaster.

Recognising the different needs and priorities of men and women in shelter and the provision of basic services in post-crisis situation will help governments and support agencies in devising programmes that respond to the needs of all by promoting gender equality.



Kenya flood victims; Women and children are always the first victims of poor governance and erosion of rights, especially in disasters. Photo © Karin Frankhizen/UN-HABITAT.

Decentralizing both responsibilities and resources to local levels – to municipalities and communities – will not only enhance development of locally applicable measures for risk reduction but also ensure their ownership, implementation and sustainability for longer run.

Good governance promotes policies which make institutions more responsive, public-private partnerships more effective, livelihoods more secure, communities more sustainable and poverty less prevalent – that is, to enhance personal protection and urban resiliency of our town and cities.

Reducing disaster risk – what are we waiting for?

MORE PEOPLE ARE AFFECTED EACH YEAR BY NATURAL HAZARD THAN BY CONFLICT. AND THE POOREST ARE ALWAYS THE HARDEST HIT. HERE, *HELENA MOLIN VALDÉS*, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION, EXPLAINS HOW THE CONSEQUENCES AND TRAUMA OF LIVES LOST, HOMES AND PROPERTY DESTROYED OUTLASTS THE MEDIA ATTENTION SPAN OF A FEW DAYS, AND UNDOES PREVIOUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

Disaster risk reduction builds on practices that address ecosystem management, scientific endeavors and, most importantly, development practices such as urban development. It is anchored in a thorough understanding and assessment of risk, sound institutional policies, access to information, education and awareness, early warning capacities, technical, financial, economic and social solutions to address root-causes to reduce risk. Likewise, effective disaster management.

In January 2005, a month after the Indian Ocean tsunami killer wave struck, representatives of 168 countries gathered in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan and adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action. A global plan for disaster risk reduction over the next decade, it is intended to make the world better prepared for and less vulnerable to natural hazards.

The framework calls on governments to make disaster risk reduction a political priority and to institutionalize national and local risk assessments, early warning systems, public awareness and education, better urban planning, safer building construction codes and well-rehearsed evacuation plans.

National governments and local authorities are primarily responsible for protecting their citizens. The Hyogo framework calls on countries to establish national and local disaster risk reduction plans.

Much progress has been made over the last two years. More than 60 countries have already informed the secretariat of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction on progress. It is clear that they now understand the importance of tackling the root causes of people's vulnerability.

These countries include Bangladesh, Cuba, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Senegal and Uganda, among others. India has introduced stricter building codes in seismic hazard zones, and introduced lessons on disaster risk and preparedness in schools. African governments have adopted a regional disaster reduction action plan for the continent, as have the leaders of the Pacific Island States.

A main obstacle often cited is a lack of resources. The international community spends 5 to 6 billion dollars a year on

The Hyogo Framework is intended to:

- Focus Government interest and understanding of disaster risk reduction strategies into development planning, environmental management and humanitarian action.
- Influence decision makers at the regional, national and local level.
- Generate greater political commitment to up-scale the application of solutions and “disaster proof” development investments.
- Empower local people, provide leverage for NGOs, community-based leaders, medium-level officials in the quest for funding and support from decision makers.
- Build accountability through reporting to ensure that investments are made and risk levels evaluated.
- Integrate disaster risk reduction into sustainable development policies and planning.
- Develop and strengthen institutions, mechanisms and capacities to build resilience to hazards.
- Incorporate risk reduction into the implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes.

Priorities

- Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.
- Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.
- Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.
- Reduce the underlying risk factors.
- Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

More information: www.unisdr.org

humanitarian assistance. Yet there is still no tracking of investments in disaster risk reduction. The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction will therefore focus attention on this in coming years.

Major infrastructure projects to strengthen buildings against natural hazards can be costly. However, for new buildings, a sound design that takes into account seismic, wind and water pressures does not require extra resources and the returns are manifold. Less costly still is promoting risk awareness, better land use planning, and early warning systems.

In June 2006, the World Bank approved a new Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery. This new facility will support national capacity building to deal with the impact of natural hazards in 86 high risk countries. It is also intended

to speed up and streamline disaster recovery operations as part of the strengthening of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction system. The United Kingdom has introduced a policy to allocate an equivalent 10 per cent funding for disaster reduction for every investment in post disaster relief. These are initiatives that can inspire others.

We already possess the skills and knowledge to make the world safer and better prepared for natural hazards. We know what needs to be done and we have the necessary commitments and tools at hand. The life-saving and economic benefits are clear. Although we have achieved a lot already by working, we need to pool resources and report on progress. We must accelerate our efforts.

America's response to disaster

WHEN HURRICANES KATRINA AND RITA STRUCK THE LOUISIANA COAST ON AUGUST 29, AND SEPTEMBER 24, 2005 RESPECTIVELY, THE LEVEL OF DESTRUCTION WAS UNPRECEDENTED IN RECENT US DISASTER HISTORY. CLAIMING SOME 1,600 LIVES, DISPLACING HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE, AND LEAVING DAMAGES ESTIMATED AT CLOSE TO \$100 BILLION, THE HURRICANES HAVE SCARRED LIVES AND MEMORIES FOREVER. HERE *HEINZ KULL*, UN-HABITAT'S FORMER DISASTER MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR, LOOKS AT HOW THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL AND WEALTHY NATION HANDLED THE DISASTER.

The stumbling humanitarian aid provided during the first days and weeks after the disaster, closely witnessed in disbelief by the national and international community, was accompanied by conflicting and competing political statements by the Federal, State and local authorities.

In terms of operational focus, Louisiana's State Governor, Ms. Kathleen Blanco, concentrated right from the start on how to enable Louisiana's displaced population to return home or settle in other Louisiana towns and parishes. At the Federal level, President George W. Bush vowed to rebuild "a larger, more modern and better New Orleans".

At the heart of arguments among various public actors and party representatives were the performances of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Homeland Security Department, the National Guard and other federal and state agencies. A special White House report concluded that "inexperienced disaster response managers and a lack of planning, discipline and leadership contributed to vast federal failures during Hurricane Katrina".

The highly disputed report and similar studies undertaken by the House of Representatives, the press and other sources examined improving relief coordination between agencies, and closing disaster relief gaps such as insufficient stockpiling of supplies. It also looked at the establishment of a National Operations Centre to coordinate disaster response, and the Pentagon's disaster response.

On the ground it quickly became clear, that attempts made in the context of temporary and transitional housing provision for the evacuee population could not match demand. Its main instrument, the provision of equipped sites for trailers and mobile homes (supplementing immediate accommodation in private homes, hotels and cruise-ships) proved to be too slow in implementation.

The problems encountered by the time-consuming production of sites, equipment and trailers were aggravated by the fact that potential host communities were often not



Hurricane Katrina, the most catastrophic natural disaster in U.S. history. Photo © H.Kull

ready to accommodate concentrations of evacuees characterized by low-income, unemployment, lack of professional skills and training, within their jurisdiction, - or when ready to do so in principle, asked for compensation packages resulting in lengthy negotiations with State authorities.

With increasing insight into the complexity of temporary and transitional housing - to which a study group called the "State of Louisiana's Temporary Housing Effort" was created at the Governor's Office - the more it became evident that this type of housing was not a matter of weeks or months, but years. And that heavily depending on progress made in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of New Orleans and other coast towns.

The large-scale flooding of New Orleans, and subsequent recovery efforts, drew worldwide attention. The spectacular levee breach at its Industrial Canal, the many deaths and people reported missing, the devastation of inner-city areas and the appalling situation at its 9th Ward, brought desperate calls for help from Mayor Ray Nagin.

There was no doubt, however, that just like elsewhere in the world, the main contributor to rehabilitation and reconstruction has been the remaining and returning population. They have stuck it out despite disrupted gas and electricity supplies, poor transport, closed schools and medical facilities, an economy in a shambles, and rising crime.

There is indeed no doubt today, one year after Hurricane Katrina struck, that the newly revised disaster response mechanisms at the disposal of Federal and State

authorities for the 2006 hurricane season are certainly better than those in place before. Areas of concern such as communications, logistics and registration have been strengthened.

Strong efforts have been made, particularly by the State of Louisiana authorities, to understand the disaster as a chance to reduce the vulnerability of marginalized groups within the evacuee population. With the support of public and private institutions and local NGOs, special training facilities have been provided. Specific skills programmes, job provision and small-scale credit systems have been developed, resulting often in the integration of evacuees into their host communities or enabling them to contribute actively to rebuilding their former communities. Tax breaks for developers of low-income housing and those setting-up or reviving businesses aim at the same purpose.

On the other hand, in striking contrast to the somehow normalized situation in areas only slightly touched by the flooding, important parts of the New Orleans East neighbourhoods have not recovered yet and still look very much disaster-stricken.

The unsettled debate on practical risk reduction - such as ban on rebuilding in low-lying, exposed areas, versus strengthening of levees and other high-tech approaches - has de facto created a divided city characterized by a significant absence of investments and economic activities in these areas, with corresponding consequences for access to housing, jobs, income and good living conditions in general.

Putting disaster data into perspective

NATURAL DISASTERS ARE CLAIMING HUGE NUMBERS OF LIVES, CAUSING BILLIONS OF DOLLARS DAMAGE, AND AFFECTING MANY, MANY COUNTRIES. HERE *DR. DEBARATI GUBA-SAPIR*, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON THE EPIDEMIOLOGY OF DISASTERS (CRED) AT THE UNIVERSITÉ CATHOLIQUE DE LOUVAIN IN BELGIUM EXAMINES THE DATA IN HIS REPORT, *DISASTER DATA: A BALANCED PERSPECTIVE*.

Natural disasters in the first half of 2006

	2006 1st Semester	1996-2005 1st semester average
No. of disasters	174	155
No. of countries affected	68	75
No. of people killed	9,273	27,389
No. of people affected	28 million	139 million
Economic damages (US\$)	6.2 billion	15.2 billion

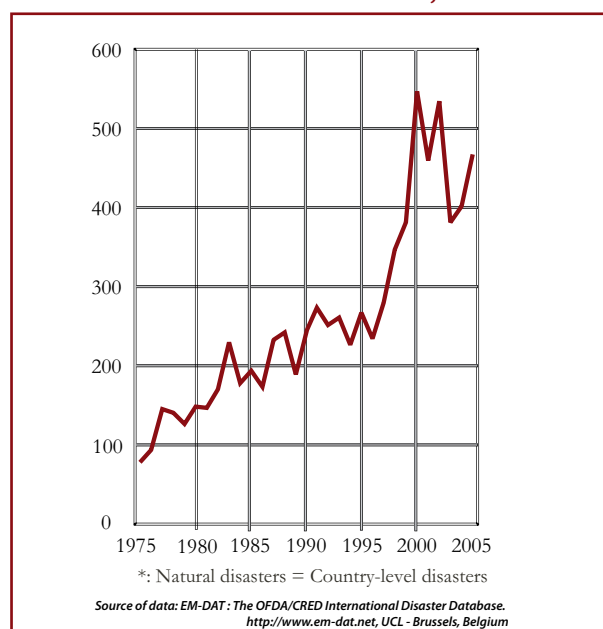
Southeast Asia once again topped the list of disaster impacts over the first 6 months of 2006: Eighty - five percent of deaths from natural disaster over this period occurred in southeast Asia.

There were 113 flood disasters representing all-time high of 65 percent of all natural disasters. The first semester average for the preceding 10 years was 58 floods, representing an average of only 36.5 percent of all natural disasters. In fact, floods constitute an increasingly large proportion of all disasters recorded in the EM-DAT database over the last 50 years.

Greater variations in precipitation due to climate change, together with an increase in the vulnerability of populations, highlights the need to shift our emphasis from disaster response to risk management.

Among extreme events, floods increasingly affect the livelihoods of rural people, setting back improvements in development in these areas by years. The upside of this situation is that floods are one of the disasters most amenable to prevention and mitigation. Time tested engineering techniques, many of which are low cost mechanisms and culturally appropriate, exist.

Time trend of natural disasters, 1975-2005*



Top 10 natural disasters - first semester of 2006 By the number of people reported killed

Disaster	Month	Country	No. of people Killed
Earthquake	May	Indonesia	5,778
Landslide	February	Philippines	1,112
Windstorm	May	Vietnam	241
Flood	June	Indonesia	236
Flood	January	Colombia	150
Flood	May/June	Thailand	116
Flood	May/June	China	104
Heat Wave	May	Pakistan	84
Landslide	January	Indonesia	75
Earthquake	March	Iran	63

By the number of people reported affected

Disaster	Month	Country	No. of people Affected
Flood	May/June	China	12 million
Flood	June	China	4.1 million
Earthquake	May	Indonesia	3.2 million
Flood	June	China	2.4 million
Flood	June	China	1.4 million
Windstorm	May	China	905,000
Flood	June	Bangladesh	500,000
Windstorm	June	Philippines	476,027
Flood	May	China	350,000
Flood	May/June	Thailand	342,895

By estimated economic damages

Disaster	Month	Country	Economic damages (US\$)
Earthquake	May	Indonesia	3.1 billion
Flood	May/June	China	957 million
Windstorm	June	Philippines	645 million
Flood	April	U.S.A	259 million
Windstorm	March	Australia	200 million
Flood	Janua	Guyana	165 million
Flood	June	China	130 million
Flood	June	Russia	125 million
Flood	June	Taiwan	116 million
Flood	April	China	100 million

Disaster data: an essential component to understanding risk

The systematic collection of information related to the frequency and impact of disasters provides an invaluable tool to governments and institutions in charge of relief and recovery activities, for the analysis of the cumulative impacts on development, and for the integration of risk analyses in disaster reduction initiatives.

As shown below, the desired evolution and use of disaster datasets is divided into three parts:

Stage I, during which data is compiled to assess losses, with the objectives being limited to relief, recovery and reconstruction.

Stage II, during which historical losses are systematically collected and detailed data compilation occurs within disaster management agencies. At this stage, the loss databases document cumulative losses to development and help assess impacts on poverty.

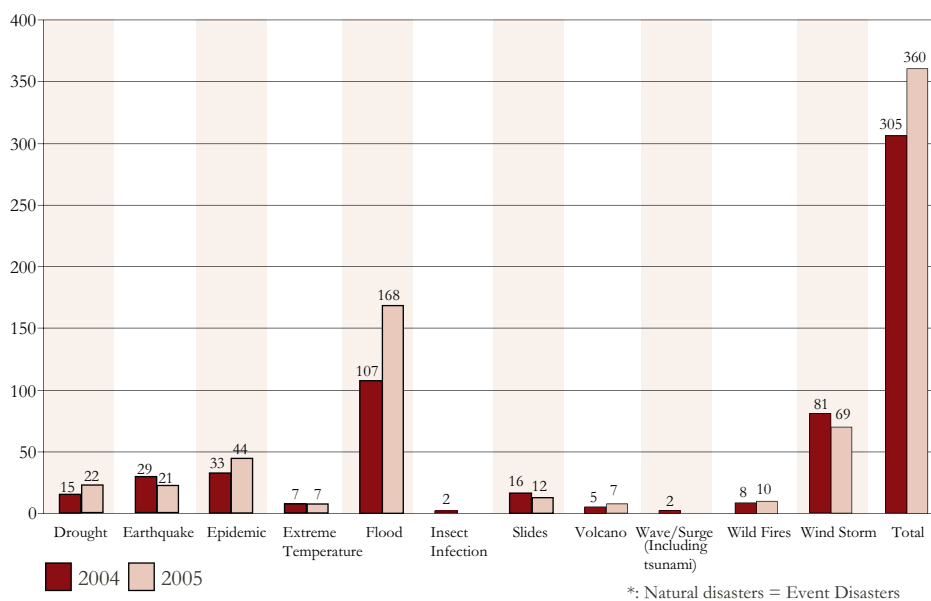
Stage III is reached when disaster datasets are included institutionally within the Disaster Risk Reduction national initiatives. Data analyses allow for the assessment of risks, hazard exposure and vulnerabilities that can then be used for contingency planning, risk reduction and risk transfer.

Though a number of national or regional disaster databases exist, very few of them have a transparent and systematic approach, and are fully integrated within the institutional disaster-risk reduction initiatives.

There is an urgent need for governments and other policymakers to embrace institutional and legislative systems for disaster reduction, including the methodical collection of data on disaster occurrence and impacts.

- More information: www.em-dat.net/links/disasterdbs.html, and www.unhabitat.org

Natural disaster occurrence by disaster type: comparison 2004-2005*



Source of data: EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database. <http://www.em-dat.net>, UCL - Brussels, Belgium

“Over the last 30 years, natural disasters have affected five times more people than they did only a generation ago. The bad news is, things are getting worse as our climate changes, threatening more extreme weather and a potential explosion in human misery. This year alone, 117 million people have suffered from some 300 natural disasters, including devastating droughts in China, and Africa and massive flooding throughout Asia and Africa, costing nearly \$15 billion in damages. The good news is, we are far from powerless to reduce risks and protect ourselves from nature’s wrath. But we must act today if we are to prevent calamity tomorrow. Indeed, we have no time to lose.”

– Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, **Jan Egeland**.



Sustainable relief and reconstruction – transforming disasters into opportunities for sustainable development

Every disaster is unique in the way it visits unexpected suffering upon affected populations, writes Eric Schwartz, who as the UN Secretary-General's Deputy Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, today serves with former US President Bill Clinton, in his capacity as Special Envoy.

The 26 December 2004 tsunami, which claimed up to 230,000 lives, destroyed some 430,000 homes, and threw the livelihoods of five million people into jeopardy in 24 hours, was precedent-setting in its impact and in the way the international community developed its response.

The tsunami inspired the largest and best funded humanitarian response in history. In the wake of this giant ocean wave, the homeless received shelter, the hungry were fed, and the outbreak of disease was prevented. But beyond this aid effort, the tsunami fuelled new thinking and approaches to disaster response. In part because the response was so well funded, it spurred many decision makers to approach – or at least conceive of – humanitarian assistance as not just a response to a tragic event, but also as an opportunity to promote empowered, more disaster resilient communities.

There have been several important lessons learned, or reaffirmed, in the tsunami humanitarian assistance and recovery effort.

First, whether it is short-term employment programmes, cash assistance, or the construction of durable transitional housing, recovery must begin well before the end of the humanitarian assistance phase.

Second, recovery efforts over time must incorporate disaster mitigation principles, such early warning systems, public education, and the construction of more disaster-resilient structures.

Third, the United Nations, international organizations and affected governments must organize themselves to manage the transition between relief, recovery and development more seamlessly.

And finally, to paraphrase the Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, President Clinton, we must all champion a new kind of recovery – one that seeks not only to restore what existed before the disaster, but which seizes the moral, political, and financial opportunities the crisis has offered governments to set the tsunami affected communities on a better and safer development path.

Building back better means a focus on equity, human rights and gender in relief and reconstruction programmes. It means recognising that local communities and households should lead in the recovery process. It means ensuring that disaster mitigation and prevention measures must become a standard part of all recovery activities. And, it also means early promotion of recovery “enablers,” such as access to credit and security of land tenure.

Mr. Clinton has sought to promote each of these critical objectives. In the late summer of 2006, the Office of the Special Envoy worked closely with the Office of the Recovery Coordinator in Aceh and Nias Island (Indonesia), and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to develop and implement an

emergency plan to action for transitional shelter – and thereby meet a critical relief to recovery gap.

At the time of writing, nearly all displaced people in Aceh proper are out of tents. In advancing the disaster risk reduction agenda, President Clinton has strongly promoted an inter-agency initiative to help Indian Ocean governments develop and strengthen their national plans for tsunami early warning and response. He has met with the key actors involved in the Indian Ocean early warning system and strongly urged governments to implement the disaster roadmap of the Hyogo Framework for Action. (See page 16).

As Special Envoy, President Clinton has also addressed equity concerns, encouraging a broader definition of “tsunami affected”. He has also advocated community-based participation and increased attention to human rights. He has supported efforts by environmental organizations to ensure that reconstruction is environmentally sustainable.

He has also promoted land titling as a way of creating a capital base for poor people, and encouraged NGOs to reflect on reforms needed to improve international response efforts.

While we can identify progress in each of these

areas, our experience with tsunami recovery also has revealed serious obstacles. These reflect the need for better organization and implementation of enlightened policy in the relief to development continuum.

For example, although we can take satisfaction in the recent movement of thousands of tent-dwellers to durable transitional housing in Aceh, the movement took place a year too late. Similarly, the UN's Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias has played an important role in managing – and seeking to integrate – humanitarian and recovery issues. However, he did not assume the job until September 2005, nearly a year after the tsunami.

Important innovations in risk mitigation in some locations, such as insurance schemes for new homes in India, have not been commonplace throughout the region. And we have yet to realise early expectations about the involvement of the private sector in recovery efforts throughout the region.

As the tsunami experience has shown, we are starting to understand better that relief, recovery, and development go hand in hand.

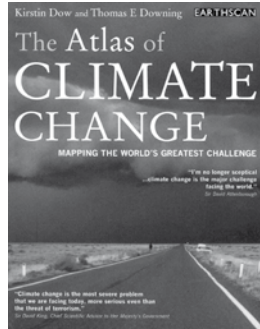
But we must do better in order to do right by the hundreds of thousands of tsunami survivors and those at risk from future disasters and crises throughout the world.

The United Nations, international organizations and affected governments must organize themselves to manage the transition between relief, recovery and development more seamlessly.

The Atlas of Climate Change

ISBN: 1-84407-376-9
 Language: English
 Publisher: Earthscan/Myriad Editions Ltd., UK

Today's headlines and recent disasters reflect the seriousness of climate change. Heatwaves, drought, and flooding are causing deaths among vulnerable populations, destroying livelihoods, and driving people from their homes. This work, using more than 50 full colour maps and innovative graphics, reviews the historic contributions to greenhouse gas levels, progress in meeting international commitments, and local efforts to meet the challenge of climate change. It covers a wide range of topics including warning signs, future scenarios, vulnerable populations, health impacts, urban impacts, renewable energy, emissions reduction, as well as personal and public action. It is important reading for the expert and amateur alike.



HIV/AIDS Checklist for Water and Sanitation Projects

ISBN: 92-1-131823-8
 HS Number: HS/827/06/E
 Language: English
 Price: \$5
 Publisher: UN-HABITAT

HIV/AIDS is one of the most devastating global pandemics the world has ever faced. In the water and sanitation sector, over half of those infected by AIDS develop serious and chronic diarrhoea and other water-borne infections. Access to reliable, affordable and safe water and sanitation can significantly mitigate against some impacts of the disease and improve the quality of life of those living with HIV/AIDS. The HIV/AIDS checklist for water and Sanitation projects is aimed at all professionals working within UN-HABITAT's, water and sanitation projects. This reference guide makes is essential reading for everyone working in the water and sanitation sector.



Gestion de l'Environnement Urbain, Programmes des Cités Durables

Language: French
 Publisher: UN-HABITAT

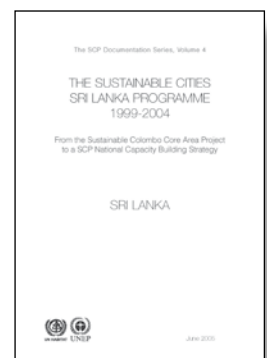
The Local Agenda 21 programmes are based on a clear understanding of the links between development and the environment. This work examines modern urban development in the context of its impact on the environment, and scarce resources. This is a reference work for municipalities and other urban actors in the francophone world.



The Sustainable Cities Sri Lanka Programme

Language: English
 Publisher: UN-HABITAT

The Government of Sri Lanka launched the Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP) under the auspices of UN-HABITAT & UNDP in December 1999. The idea was to help three municipal councils located in the Greater Colombo Core Area to experiment with and develop institutional mechanisms and approaches to building participatory processes to environmental planning and management (EPM). The three municipal councils selected for the programme were Colombo, Sri Jayawardenapura-Kotte and Dehiwala-Mount Lavinia. This gives an interesting and informative account of how it all happened and how it worked



To order these and any other publications, go to www.unhabitat.org and click on publications

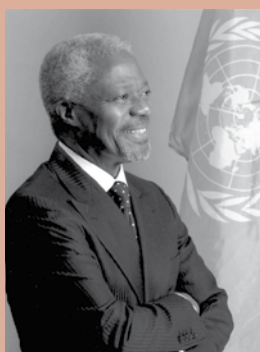
Climate change impacts cities

With half of humanity living in towns and cities around the world, the greatest impact of climate change will be on the planet's urban fabric, said Ambassador Inga Bjork-Klevby, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UN-HABITAT. She was speaking at a news conference during the November 2006 UN Climate Change Conference in Nairobi. The conference drew government ministers from more than 100 countries. "For UN-HABITAT, the agency that deals with the built environment, with cities, towns and villages, we are most keen that the new Fund will help them adapt to climate change at the local level," she said. If sea levels rise by just one metre, many major coastal cities will be under threat: Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Los Angeles, New York, Lagos, and Cairo Karachi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Dhaka, Shanghai, Osaka-Kobe, and Tokyo. To cite just some, those are mega cities with populations of more than 10 million. Never mind the many smaller cities and island nations," she said. Everywhere, Ambassador Bjork-Klevby said, the urban poor live in places no-one else would dare set foot – along beaches vulnerable to flooding, by railway lines, on slopes prone to landslides, near polluted grounds. In this new urban age, the mega-cities therefore loom as giant potential flood and disaster traps. In sub-Saharan Africa, slum dwellers constitute over 70 percent of the urban populations. In other parts of the developing world that figure is a shocking 50 percent.

Asia Pacific Ministers discuss shelter issues

Ministers of housing from some 70 countries across the Asia-Pacific prepared to gather in New Delhi 13-16 December for the region's first high-level meeting aimed at tackling shelter problems in a part of the world that is home to two-thirds of the global slum population. The Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Human Settlements (APMCHHS) was jointly organized by UN-HABITAT and the Indian Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation. The conference whose theme was "A vision for sustainable urbanisation in the Asia-Pacific by 2020", aimed at galvanizing government action and political commitment at the regional level to improve the lives of 581 million slum dwellers.

Tibaijuka lauds Annan



Mrs. Tibaijuka paid a special tribute to outgoing UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in October, telling a youth summit, "our beloved Secretary-General, Mr. Annan is stepping down after 10 years at the helm of the organization. The fact that member governments granted him two terms as Secretary-General is sufficient testimony to his great leadership! Let us applaud him!" Mrs. Tibaijuka told the UN Global Youth Leadership Summit that Mr. Annan left office decrying the fact that labour markets were having difficulty providing

stable occupations with good prospects for young people, barring those who are highly trained.

Kenyan Legislator named UN Person of the Year

United Nations agencies based in Kenya marked United Nations Day 2006 on 24 October with a special tribute to the Kenyan Member of Parliament and women's rights activist, Ms. Njoki Ndungu. Naming her the 2006 "UN in Kenya Person of the Year", the UN Resident Coordinator in Kenya, Ms. Elizabeth Lwanga, cited the way she had spearheaded a 10-year campaign for the adoption of the 2006 Sexual Offences Bill by the Kenyan Parliament, despite vehement opposi-

tion. Mrs. Tibaijuka, urged Ms. Ndungu to now work towards carrying her campaign deep into the East African regional heartland and to continue to speak out against discrimination and exploitation, particularly of young women and girls.

UN-HABITAT opens office in Warsaw

As part of its expansion programmes so as to effectively address human settlements concerns globally, UN-HABITAT officially opened a new office in Warsaw in October to serve central and eastern Europe. Coinciding with World Habitat Day commemorated in cities around the world on 2 October, the opening of the office in Warsaw was presided over by Poland's Minister of Construction, Mr. Antoni Jaszczak, and attended by top government officials, members of the diplomatic corps, as well as representatives of the United Nations and universities.

World Habitat Day marked globally

In keeping with tradition, on the first Monday in October, cities around the world marked the 2006 celebration of World Habitat Day, which was launched at a glittering waterfront ceremony in the ancient Italian city of Naples. The United Nations has designated the first Monday in October every year to reflect on how we manage our cities in the new millennium as humanity now moves from being predominantly rural to overwhelmingly urban. At the same time, never before have the absolute numbers of people on the move been as great as they are today. And mostly, they are moving into cities, whether from the hinterland or abroad. This migration is taking place at a time when cities are growing at unprecedented rates. And this is why UN-HABITAT chose the theme, Cities, magnets of hope, to mark the 2006 events. The annual ceremony moved from Naples this year to a glittering finale in the Russian heartland city of Kazan.

The Africities Summit

Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki opened the Fourth Africities Summit 18 October with a call for better management of African cities. In remarks at a glittering opening ceremony, President Kibaki told the delegates converging at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre that it was imperative for African nations to strive for better management of their cities and municipalities as a way of attracting investment. "We have hosted this great event because we believe that peaceful, clean and efficient cities attract business and investments. They also serve as a good habitat for the huge populations whose lives are intertwined with the socio-economic dynamics of these cities," he said. He said his government was committed to reforming the local authorities so that they are adequately empowered to carry out their mandate adding that the summit provided the necessary environment for sharing of experiences and knowledge in the management of cities in Africa.

Upcoming events

African Summit of Civil Society Organizations

Nairobi 17-19 January 2007

Thirty-fourth Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

New York 16 January – 3 February

Twenty-fourth Session of the Governing Council of the UN Environment Programme

Nairobi, 5-9 February, 2007

Case study: Partnering with the private sector in disaster relief

A new fish market and restaurant for Sri Lankan tsunami survivors

As Habitat Debate goes to press, communities throughout the Indian Ocean region are still dealing with the aftermath of a tsunami killer wave that destroyed countless thousands of lives, homes and communities on Boxing Day 2004. More than 200,000 lives were lost and entire communities disappeared. As the survivors struggled to pick up the pieces, UN-HABITAT has been working with them to recover, rebuild, and rehabilitate.

The BASF AG chemical company and its employees started a worldwide donation campaign in which it matched each donation of its employees to provide 3.8 million euros on various tsunami projects in the region. BASF Sozialstiftung and UN-HABITAT, established a partnership in 2005 which eventually enabled the two organizations to combine their efforts in disaster relief and reconstruction for tsunami survivors.

They found that nearly 90 percent of the small-scale industry had been destroyed, including boats, and harbour infrastructure. The idea of a new fish market and restaurant is to give the devastated fishing community an economic boost by providing a new market.

UN-HABITAT's interventions in Sri Lanka focus on reconstructing homes, community infrastructure, settlement planning and disaster preparedness as part of the inter-agency response to promote a smooth transition from humanitarian relief to long-term recovery and rehabilitation. As UN-Habitat has chosen to implement this bottom-up processed project with innovative technologies an added-value was possible: In support of UN-HABITAT's integrated approach to Sustainable Relief and Reconstruction, BASF and their partners provided capacities and experience.

The new fish market and restaurant complex is scheduled to be ready before the end of 2007.

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