

The International Early Warning Programme: systematic people-centered early warning systems

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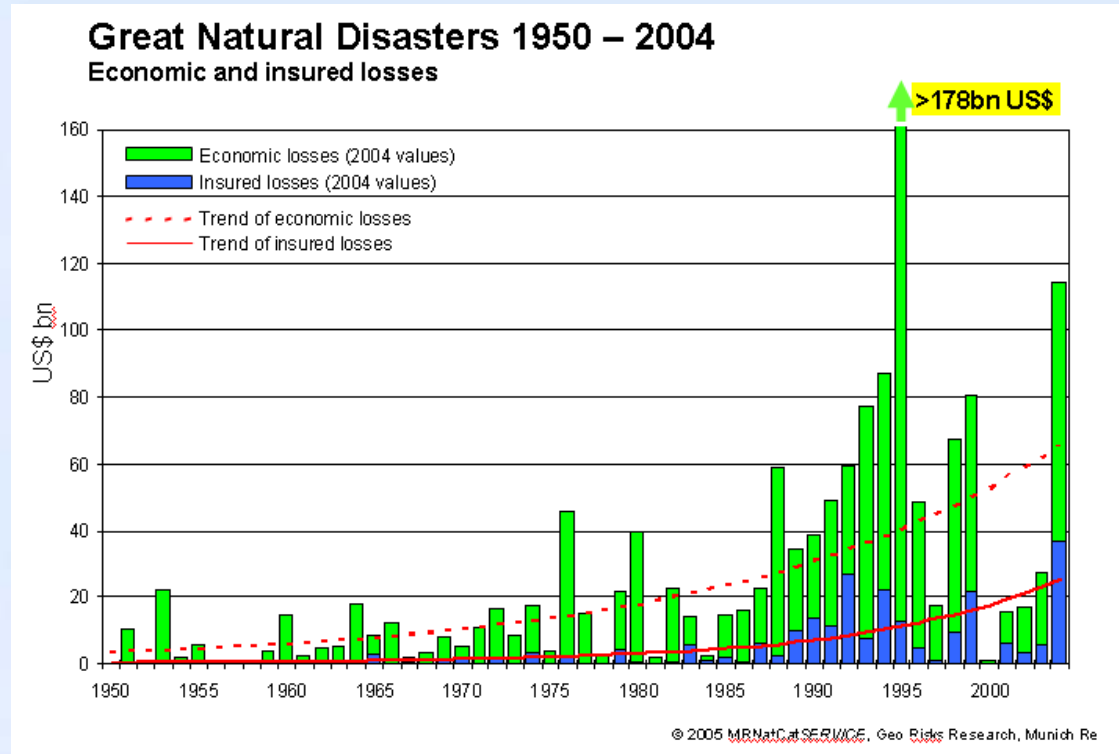
UN/ISDR International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Platform for the Promotion of Early Warning (PPEW), Bonn

- ❑ Changing disaster risk and early warning
- ❑ Needs and action on early warning
- ❑ International Early Warning Programme (IEWP)

Disasters - growing impacts

- Five-fold rise in disasters over 1960s -1990s



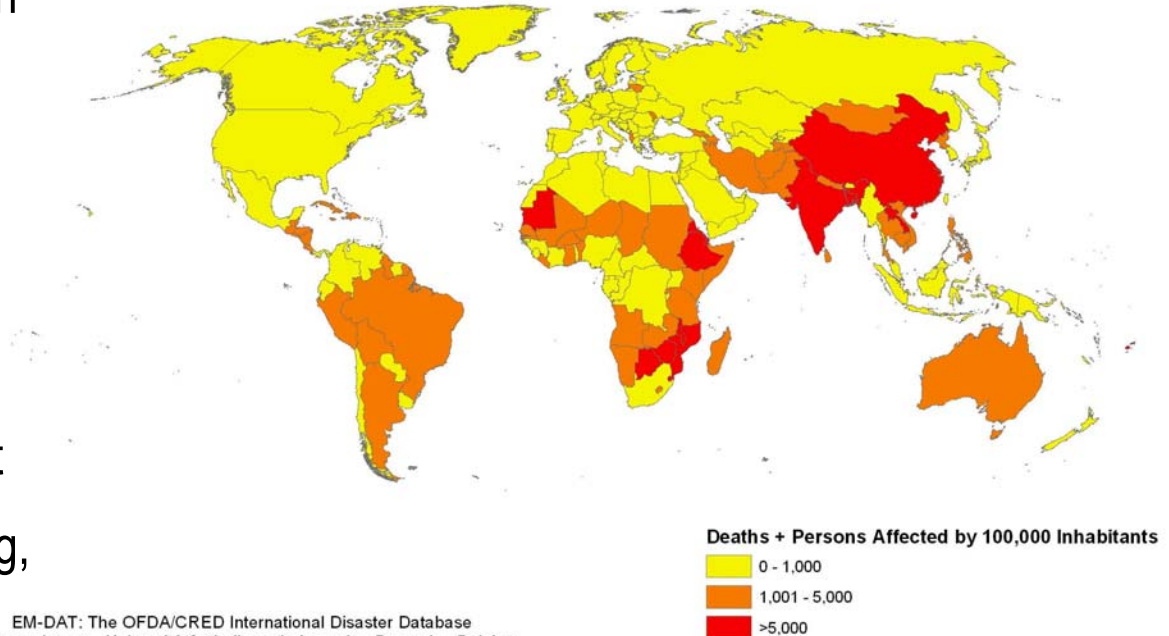
- Severity of 26 December 2004 tsunami, hurricanes in Gulf and Asia; floods in Asia and Europe; fires in North America, Spain and Portugal; will it ever end?

Anatomy of “natural” disasters

$$\boxed{\text{Natural hazard}} + \boxed{\text{Vulnerability}} = \boxed{\text{Disaster!}}$$

- ❑ Over last decade*: 900,000 dead, US\$ 570bn losses, 2,600 million people affected
- ❑ Disasters have mostly hydro-meteorological origins
- ❑ Poor people and countries are most affected.
- ❑ Major handicap to development
- ❑ Fatalities stable** (early warning, preparedness, food aid)

Total Number of Deaths and of People Affected by Natural Disasters by 100,000 Inhabitants: 1974-2003



EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database
www.em-dat.net - Université Catholique de Louvain - Brussels - Belgium

Reasons for rising disaster risks ?

Increasing vulnerability

- ❑ More people and poor people in risky and unsustainable situations
- ❑ **Unsafe development:** floodplain settlement, coastal exploitation, mega-city growth, unsafe houses, wetland destruction, river channeling, deforestation
- ❑ Soil erosion and fertility decline, desertification
- ❑ Exacerbated by poverty and disease, conflict and population displacement

Growing disasters are a sign of unsustainable development

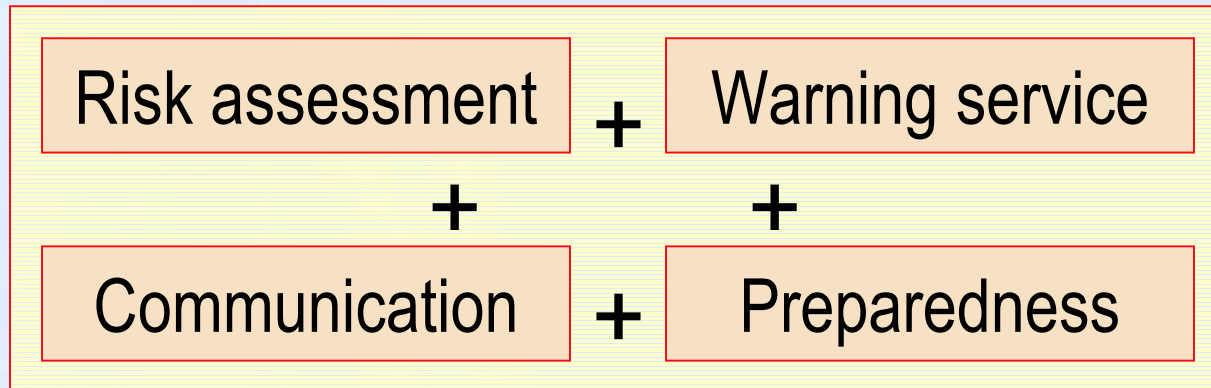
UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)

- ❑ Aims to reduce vulnerability and risk - through governance, risk assessment, early warning, education, community action, etc.
- ❑ Initiated and supported by UN General Assembly
- ❑ Pulls together governments, civil society, UN agencies
- ❑ World Conference on Disaster Reduction, Kobe Japan, January 2005 sets blueprint - ***Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015***
- ❑ ISDR secretariat includes the Platform for the Promotion of Early Warning

Early warning system shortcomings

- ❑ Often isolated and technically based, not people centered, with weaknesses in preparedness and response
- ❑ Often not well integrated into policy and not part of risk management approach
- ❑ Some hazards and vulnerabilities not well covered
- ❑ Lack of capacities in developing countries
- ❑ Fragmented mechanisms for international coordination and action

The four components of people-centred EW systems



- ❑ EW systems typically fail in the communication and preparedness elements
- ❑ With the Indian Ocean tsunami, failures occurred in all four elements

Heat is now on for better early warning systems

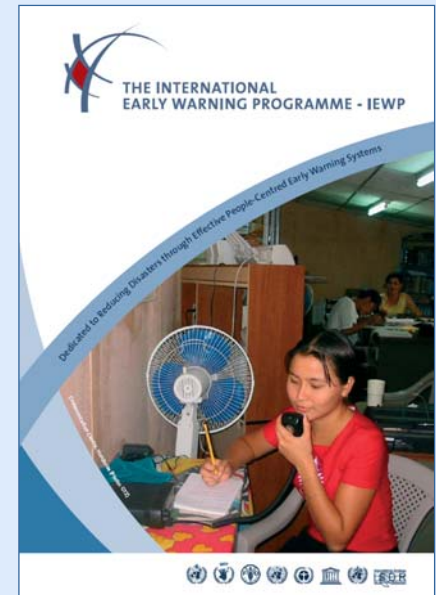
- ❑ Kofi Annan calls for warning systems for all countries, all hazards; requests ISDR to organize global survey of EWS
- ❑ Governments are reviewing early warning for all hazards
- ❑ Hyogo Framework for Action sets agenda for better EWS
- ❑ New International Early Warning Programme (IEWP) launched by UN partners in ISDR at Kobe
- ❑ Germany and ISDR to organize third International Early Warning Conference, with aim to launch concrete projects
- ❑ GEOSS underway – a key element of global early warning
- ❑ G8 issues statement on EW and disaster risk reduction



THE INTERNATIONAL EARLY WARNING PROGRAMME - IEWP

Dedicated to Reducing Disasters
through Effective People-Centred
Early Warning Systems

*Launched at the World Conference on
Disaster Reduction, Kobe, Hyogo,
Japan, 19 January 2005*





THE INTERNATIONAL EARLY WARNING PROGRAMME - IEWP

- Origins in the Second International Early Warning Conference in Bonn, 16-18 October 2003
- Recognition that many countries do not have effective early warning systems
- Taking a global approach; aiming for systematic improvements
- Not a global warning system (but could lead to this)



THE INTERNATIONAL EARLY WARNING PROGRAMME - IEWP

- A vehicle to develop shared and systematic approaches, improved international dialogue, good practices, improved tools, and capacity building
- Early stages - under development: programme definition document, advisory committee, and work programme to be developed consultatively
- Supported by the ISDR Platform for the Promotion of Early Warning



EWC III
**Third International Conference
 on Early Warning**
From concept to action

Advertisement

- ❑ In Bonn, Germany, 27-29 March 2006
- ❑ Novel element - will develop and promote a portfolio of exemplar early warning projects – see call for projects at www.ewc3.org
- ❑ Also scientific/technical programme
- ❑ Hosted by Germany under UN auspices
- ❑ Associated with International Early Warning Programme (IEWP)

Conclusions

- ❑ Disasters are increasing because more people and more assets are at risk
- ❑ We need to get a grip on all the factors that lead to disasters - mostly human factors
- ❑ Broad systems agenda - not just alert technologies
- ❑ Indian Ocean tsunami and Hurricane Katrina demonstrate how far we have to go
- ❑ Time is ripe – interest in EWS is high
- ❑ International Early Warning Programme a vehicle to achieve international cooperation and coordination

Thank you for your attention

“Better to be a decade early, than a minute too late”



www.unisdr.org

Platform for the
Promotion of

Early Warning

www.unisdr-earlywarning.org