



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Report No.9 (2007–2008) to the Storting

# Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises





# Contents

<b>Summary</b> .....	5	4.2	Health security .....	38
<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	7	4.3	Urban planning and good governance .....	39
1.1 New challenges .....	7	4.4	Protection of the civilian population .....	41
1.2 The purpose of this white paper .....	8	4.4.1	The role and participation of women, children and young people .....	41
1.3 Main priorities .....	10	4.4.2	Minorities and indigenous peoples .....	43
1.4 Two main perspectives .....	10	4.4.3	Ban on weapons with unacceptable humanitarian consequences .....	44
<b>2 Risk, vulnerability and participation</b> .....	13	4.5	Strengthening the UN .....	45
2.1 Key risk factors .....	13	4.5.1	Strengthening the UN's mediation and peacebuilding capacity .....	45
2.1.1 Sudden- and slow-onset natural disasters .....	13	4.5.2	Humanitarian response and preparedness .....	46
2.1.2 Environmental and climate change .....	14	4.6	Closer partnership with the World Bank .....	49
2.1.3 Urbanisation .....	15	4.7	Build back better .....	50
2.1.4 Conflicts and civilian losses .....	16	4.7.1	Robust financing mechanisms .....	51
2.1.5 Health .....	17	4.7.2	Rapid and flexible response .....	52
2.2 Vulnerability and participation .....	18	4.7.3	Better leadership and coordination .....	52
2.2.1 Gender perspectives .....	19	<b>5</b>	<b>South-South cooperation and regional partnerships</b> .....	54
2.2.2 Children and young people .....	20	<b>6</b>	<b>Economic and administrative consequences</b> .....	57
2.2.3 Hotspots .....	21	<b>7</b>	<b>The Government's action plan for the prevention of humanitarian crises</b> .....	58
2.2.4 Fragile states .....	21	<b>Appendix</b>		
<b>3 Bilateral partnerships on disaster risk reduction</b> .....	23	1	Brief overview of key processes and actors .....	64
3.1 Local mobilisation .....	23			
3.2 Risk management and poverty reduction .....	26			
3.3 Building bilateral partnerships .....	27			
<b>4 Multilateral partnerships</b> .....	30			
4.1 Adaptation to climate change .....	30			
4.1.1 International efforts to develop early warning systems .....	34			
4.1.2 Food security .....	35			



# Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises

Report No. 9 (2007–2008) to the Storting

*Recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 7 December 2007,  
approved in Council of State the same date.  
(White paper from the Stoltenberg II Government)*

## Summary

Humanitarian crises are increasing in number and scale, and they are also becoming more complex. In the period from 1990 to 2005, bilateral humanitarian assistance worldwide was increased by a factor of five – from USD 1.4 billion to USD 7.1 billion – according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Norway's humanitarian assistance has also increased significantly in the same period – from around NOK 1 billion in 1990 to around NOK 4 billion today.

But despite the size of the humanitarian budgets, the resources available are insufficient to meet the dramatically growing needs. In the Government's view, Norwegian and international development efforts need to be reorganised in order to respond to the following risk factors:

- *The climate is changing* : 2007 may prove to be the warmest year since systematic records began some 150 years ago. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), environmental and climate change could force 150 million more people to flee their homes by 2050.
- *Settlement patterns are changing* : By the end of 2007, more people will be living in urban than rural areas. Migration, urbanisation and the

growth of slums in already vulnerable areas is increasing the risk of humanitarian crises.

- *The nature of crises is changing* : Complex crises are increasingly affecting countries where governance and administrative capacity are weak. This is creating a vicious circle and is probably part of the explanation for the increase in the number of fragile states.

These risk factors have contributed to the increase in the number of humanitarian crises and underline the need to think along new lines in both foreign policy and development policy. Long-term measures to reduce vulnerability to humanitarian crises are first and foremost a development policy concern, but there is also an interface with key areas of foreign policy. Norway's international development cooperation should focus more on risk reduction, including strengthening local emergency response capacity. We must also increase our ability to meet acute humanitarian needs through humanitarian preparedness systems, flexible financial mechanisms and rapid response. It is moreover important to increase the effectiveness of reconstruction efforts in the critical phase following a humanitarian crisis by reducing vulnerability and preventing similar humanitarian consequences in the future. In many countries,

we are seeing recurring and, in some cases, chronic humanitarian crises, which underlines the importance of increasing and improving the coordination of risk reduction efforts.

In the Government's view, we need a more integrated policy for Norway's efforts to prevent humanitarian crises, based on a three-part strategy:

- We will improve coordination between short- and long-term assistance, with particular focus on the reconstruction phase, cutting across budget lines and divisions of responsibility. Norad will play an important role in these efforts and will be responsible for strengthening Norwegian expertise in this area, in close dialogue with the Ministry and external experts.
- We will establish long-term strategic partnerships with national authorities, the UN system, international financial institutions, NGOs and other expertise on risk reduction measures in the most vulnerable countries, with the clear aim of strengthening the resilience of local communities and vulnerable groups to humanitarian crises.

- We will seek to increase understanding of the importance of risk reduction and to enhance knowledge in this area, including through support for South-South cooperation and exchange of experience between relevant countries, with a view to promoting the dissemination of knowledge at regional level. Although the challenges they face are often similar, we see very different emergency response measures in different countries. Countries such as China, Bangladesh, Cuba and Vietnam have important knowledge and experience of risk reduction in relation to natural disasters that could benefit others.

This white paper examines the global challenges we are facing (Chapter 2), and discusses how Norway can make the most difference through its bilateral development cooperation (Chapter 3), through multilateral institutions (Chapter 4) and through support for South-South cooperation (Chapter 5).

Local risk reduction efforts, local capacity building and active local participation will be the Government's main priorities in the ongoing efforts in this area.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 New challenges

Humanitarian crises are increasing in number and complexity. The international community is increasingly facing situations where fragile states are affected by conflicts and natural disasters at the same time.

In the period from 1990 to 2005, bilateral humanitarian assistance worldwide was increased by a factor of five – from USD 1.4 billion to USD 7.1 billion – according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Norway's humanitarian assistance has also increased significantly in the same period, and is now over NOK 4 billion. But despite the size of the humanitarian budgets, the resources available are insufficient to meet the growing needs.<sup>1</sup>

The primary responsibility for protecting people from the impacts of conflicts and disasters rests with the national authorities. They have an obligation to safeguard the livelihoods of vulnerable groups and ensure that fundamental human rights are respected. This responsibility is set out in the international human rights conventions.

However, international humanitarian assistance is necessary to save lives, provide protection and assist vulnerable groups that the national authorities are unable or unwilling to help. But emergency relief is a last resort, when everything else has failed. And by the time a humanitarian crisis is a fact, a great deal has failed. Essentially, humanitarian crises reflect the fundamental problems many developing countries are facing: poverty, war and conflict, weak institutions, poor governance and over-exploitation of natural resources.

In addition, the international development system is fragmented. It is better at providing emergency relief than preventing crises, and it is not good at rebuilding robust societies after a conflict or a natural disaster. This also applies to Norwegian development actors.

We know that it is better to take a precaution-

ary approach and prevent humanitarian crises from arising. However, it is easier to find funding and attract political attention when disaster has already struck. Another problem is that the coordination of emergency relief and long-term development cooperation is weak. This is an area where there is a clear potential for improvement.

Thus, in the Government's view, Norwegian and international development efforts need to be reorganised, and stronger focus needs to be given to risk reduction and preparedness, in order to respond to the following risk factors:

- *The climate is changing* : 2007 may prove to be the warmest year since systematic records began some 150 years ago. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), environmental and climate change could force 150 million more people to flee their homes by 2050.
- *Settlement patterns are changing* : By the end of 2007, more people will be living in urban than rural areas. Migration, urbanisation and the growth of slums in already vulnerable areas is increasing the risk of humanitarian crises.<sup>2</sup>
- *The nature of crises is changing* : Complex crises are affecting fragile states where governance and administrative capacity are weak. As a result, new crises are arising that affect the civilian population, particularly women, children and young people.

These risk factors have contributed to the increase in the number of humanitarian crises, and this trend will continue unless we strengthen

<sup>1</sup> The UN's humanitarian appeals raise an average of 60-70% of the funds needed. Many humanitarian crises are severely underfinanced.

<sup>2</sup> *State of the World 2007: Our Urban Future*, Worldwatch Institute (2007) focuses on issues arising from increased urbanisation in developing countries. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has produced a position paper on Norwegian urban development policy in an international perspective, *Byer – håp og utfordringer. Om byutvikling og internasjonalt samarbeid* (October 2007), which analyses the current urbanisation processes with particular emphasis on the least developed countries. It discusses urbanisation in relation to the main priorities set out in the Government's policy platform and sets out specific follow-up measures.

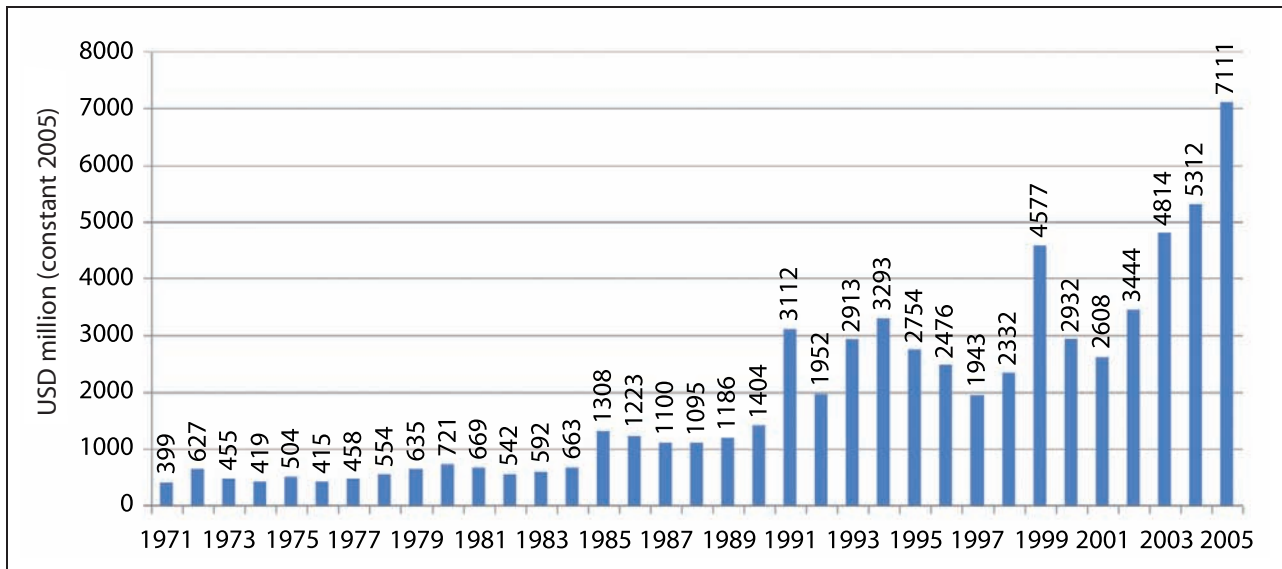


Figure 1.1 Total bilateral humanitarian assistance, 1971-2005

Source: OECD/DAC 2007

resilience at individual and societal level and learn from the experience of states and other actors that have sought to prevent such crises. Moreover, violent conflict can be a direct cause of environmental and climate change and increased migration. These factors can further destabilise fragile states and form a breeding ground for new conflicts.

## 1.2 The purpose of this white paper

Risk reduction produces results. In October 2007, China evacuated around 1.4 million people in the southeastern parts of the country in response to the typhoon *Krosa*. The typhoon caused floods and serious material damage, but no fatalities were reported. Hurricanes *Dean* and *Felix*, which hit the Caribbean and Central America respectively in August 2007, showed what good planning, early warning systems and rapid response could achieve; there was very little loss of life. The tsunami warnings in South Asia in September 2007 demonstrated that the early warning systems are working, and that the local population know what to do in the event of a sub-sea earthquake. We are also seeing the results of long-term efforts to promote peace and reconciliation and to ban weapons with unacceptable humanitarian consequences such as landmines and cluster munitions.

Today, the international community has expe-

rience, resources and technology that can make a difference. Increasingly accurate risk and vulnerability analyses have given us a considerable capacity to predict where natural disasters will strike. A good deal of information is also available on political developments in fragile states.

What is missing is a long-term political and economic perspective, which is necessary to reduce vulnerability in many more of the countries that are most at risk. We also need a greater willingness to act. Risk reduction, preparedness, emergency relief and reconstruction are primarily the responsibility of national authorities, but international organisations and donor countries like Norway can play an important role in these efforts by providing both expertise and funding. The Government therefore intends to strengthen Norway's efforts to prevent humanitarian crises.

The new risk factors mean that we have to think along new lines in both foreign policy and development policy. Long-term measures to reduce vulnerability to humanitarian crises are first and foremost a development policy concern, but there is also an interface with key areas of foreign policy. Norway's international development cooperation should focus more on risk reduction, including strengthening local emergency response capacity. We must also increase our ability to meet acute humanitarian needs through international preparedness systems, flexible financial mechanisms and rapid response. It is moreover important to increase the effectiveness



of reconstruction efforts in the critical phase following a humanitarian crisis, which will in turn give more effective risk reduction. This will require closer coordination of policy instruments and budgets.

We therefore need a more integrated policy for Norway's efforts to prevent humanitarian crises. Which areas and partners should be given priority? How should the relevant embassies approach this issue at country level? How can international cooperation be improved? In brief, how and where can Norway make a difference?

The purpose of this white paper is to discuss these issues and outline the Government's priorities for future efforts, on the basis of the risk factors set out above (section 1.1). This document should be regarded as a step towards the development of a more coordinated approach to emergency relief, transitional assistance and long-term development cooperation.

A number of risk reduction processes have already been established, and we will build further on these.<sup>3</sup> Norway has expertise in several relevant areas, which we intend to develop further. But we also have to address more directly the political and systematic challenges that we are facing – both in Norway and in other countries.

*The Government has developed a three-part strategy for this work:*

- Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we will improve coordination between emergency relief and long-term development, focusing particularly on the reconstruction phase, cutting across budget lines and divisions of responsibility. Norad will play an important role in strengthening Norwegian expertise in this area in close dialogue with the Ministry and external experts.
- We will establish long-term strategic partnerships with national authorities, the UN system, international financial institutions, NGOs and other expertise on risk reduction measures in the most vulnerable countries, based on the principle of subsidiarity<sup>4</sup> and with the clear aim of strengthening the resilience of local communities and vulnerable groups to humanitarian crises.

<sup>3</sup> Some key actors and tools are described in more detail in the appendix.

<sup>4</sup> The subsidiarity principle is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.1.

### Box 1.1 Complex crises

Norway is involved in international efforts in response to complex crises in Sudan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Haiti. The authorities in these countries are facing serious political and humanitarian problems in terms of meeting the population's need for protection from conflict. At the same time, they are facing the social and economic consequences of large-scale natural disasters – drought in the case of Sudan and Afghanistan, the effects of the tsunami in Sri Lanka, and several years of destruction from hurricanes in Haiti. Many of the countries where Norway is engaged in long-term development cooperation, peace and reconciliation efforts and humanitarian assistance are unstable. And this instability persists even after extensive international stabilisation and humanitarian efforts. One in five resolved conflicts reignites, as we have seen in Sri Lanka, DR Congo and Lebanon. Countries that are in or emerging from conflict are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters. Likewise, countries that are affected by natural disasters can experience increased political tension and disquiet. In such situations, conflict resolution, humanitarian efforts, transitional assistance and development cooperation cannot simply be carried out one after the other. We have to regard these responses as complementary tracks in a broad international strategy, and we must plan and act along all these lines simultaneously.

- We will support South-South cooperation on knowledge generation and exchange of experience, to promote the dissemination of knowledge at regional level. Countries such as Bangladesh, China, Vietnam and Cuba have important knowledge and experience of risk reduction that could benefit others.

This white paper does not review every aspect of Norway's risk reduction efforts.<sup>5</sup> The new challenges described in section 1.1 are such that *additional* efforts are needed to reduce vulnerability, including on the part of Norway. Norway should strengthen its engagement in the security of vulnerable people, which is the main focus of this document.

### 1.3 Main priorities

---

In the Government's view, local risk reduction, local capacity to cope with disasters and active local participation are the most important tools in risk reduction and emergency response efforts. The people we wish to help must themselves have a key role. The authorities, the private sector and civil society all have important parts to play as well. The participation of a wide range of social groups is of crucial importance. Strengthening local risk reduction and emergency response capacity is the Government's main priority.

Local and national authorities, international organisations and donor countries have an obligation to facilitate local participation and the realisation of fundamental human rights through risk reduction and humanitarian efforts. We must also help to ensure that the countries with long experience of humanitarian crises and risk reduction efforts share the lessons they have learned with others, for example in a regional context. These efforts will not only increase resilience but also improve livelihoods.

Local ownership is vital, but not always sufficient, to improve risk reduction efforts. For example, environmental and climate change has regional and global dimensions that require extensive knowledge of their impacts and international action to address them. Better coordination of international efforts is also necessary if risk reduction is to play an important role in combating poverty, particularly in the reconstruction phase. Norway's participation in the management of international organisations and institutions also provides important opportunities to promote our risk reduction policy.

The Government wishes Norway to build long-term partnerships with relevant actors at bilateral, regional and international level on risk reduction and preparedness. Priority will be given to the partners that are situated closest to existing

and potential humanitarian crises, particularly partners in the increasing number of fragile states. We must also improve the coordination of these partnerships.

The types of action and partnerships that are most appropriate will vary from country to country and between different areas. Norway's efforts will be tailored to what we consider to be the main causes of increased vulnerability. Chapters 3 to 5 discuss the different types of partnerships in more detail.

### 1.4 Two main perspectives

---

In its policy platform, the Government highlights the importance it attaches to the Millennium Development Goals, combating poverty and efforts to achieve sustainable development, and the key role of environmental efforts in this context. The Government sets out its intention to promote a democratic legal order, human rights and gender equality. It states that Norway is to have a clear profile as a nation of peace, and that it will intensify Norwegian efforts to prevent, reduce and resolve conflicts.

The policy platform thus sets out important guidelines for efforts to prevent humanitarian crises. Conflicts and natural disasters cause extensive loss of life and violations of fundamental human rights. In addition to destroying people's livelihoods they damage a country's business sector and critical infrastructure, including political structures. It is the poorest countries and the most vulnerable groups that are hardest hit by humanitarian crises.

The first main perspective of this white paper is the humanitarian imperative: risk reduction efforts must be based on the obligation to save lives, relieve suffering and protect people in a crisis. Risk reduction efforts are also a natural starting point for fulfilling the requirements of this imperative, since they are targeted to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable people, local communities and states to crisis. Such efforts should be based on the different resources and potential vulnerability of different groups, including indigenous peoples, women and men.

The second main perspective is that risk reduction is vital for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Without risk reduction efforts, it will be far more difficult to meet the MDGs, particularly the target of halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015.

---

<sup>5</sup> A number of measures and processes could have been included in this white paper, but this would have diverted attention from the main focus. For example, we do not examine Norway's role as a facilitator in peace and reconciliation processes, although the countries concerned may at times be affected by serious humanitarian crises. There are also areas of Norway's development cooperation that could have been discussed in more detail. It has not been our aim to give an exhaustive list of all the measures and processes relating to risk reduction that we support, but to focus on how Norway can *strengthen* its efforts to reduce vulnerability and help to prevent humanitarian crises in the light of new developments such as climate change. This is as much a question of awareness, organisation and process as concrete projects and measures.

These perspectives will form the basis for Norway's risk reduction efforts. The humanitarian imperative and the MDGs indicate the main thrust of our policy for addressing the global challenges, which will require better coordination and integration of our efforts. The Government will seek to encourage our various partners to follow this approach and thus help to promote a new international agenda.

The Government has analysed the key risk factors that increase vulnerability to humanitarian crises (Chapter 2), and considers it important to focus on the potential for social and economic development that risk reduction measures and successful reconstruction efforts represent. This is particularly important in countries where the risk factors constitute a threat to sustainable development. The Government has therefore proposed that increased funding is made available for these efforts via the national budget.

**Box 1.2 Three key concepts**

- A *humanitarian crisis* occurs when there is extensive loss of civilian lives and violations of fundamental human rights as a result of natural phenomena and /or conflict, and the economic damage exceeds a society's capacity to deal with the situation unaided.
- *Risk* is a real or potential threat to peace and sustainable development that can lead to major loss of life, livelihoods and infrastructure.
- *Vulnerability* relates to the ability of individuals, social groups and societies to plan for, adapt to and address risk factors, and recover after a crisis has occurred.

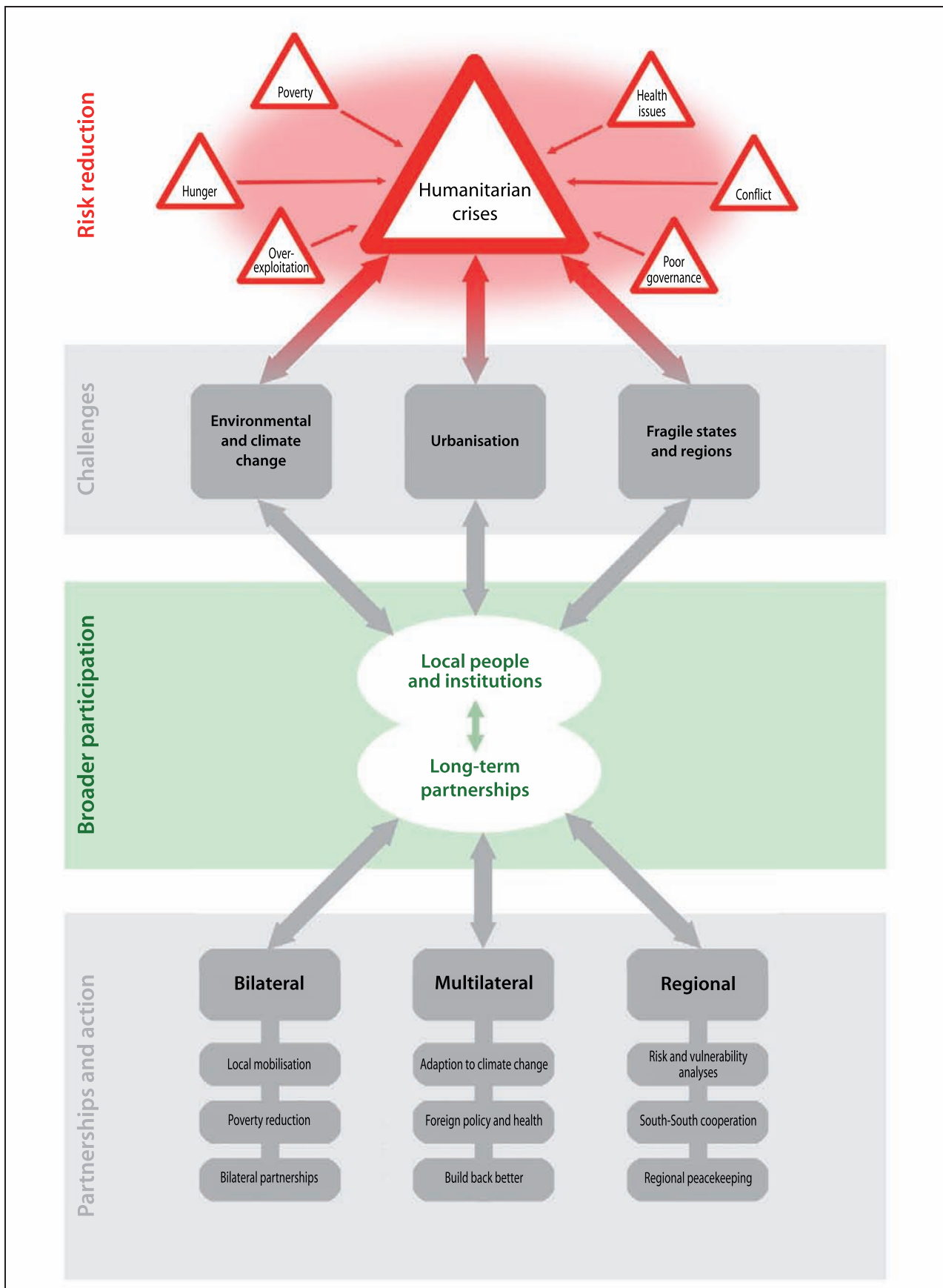


Figure 1.2 Risk reduction: problems and responses

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

## 2 Risk, vulnerability and participation

### 2.1 Key risk factors

#### 2.1.1 Sudden- and slow-onset natural disasters

The figures speak for themselves. The number of natural disasters is increasing dramatically. The Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) registers an average of 700 a year.<sup>1</sup> More than 255 million people were affected by natural disasters between 1994 and 2003.

Although the death toll has declined over the last 20 years (more than 21 000 people died as a result of natural disasters in 2006, compared with some 100 000 in the previous year and 250 000 in 2004) there are major disparities in the global distribution of casualties. Almost 70% of deaths occur in countries at the bottom end of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index. Today, natural disasters affect three times as many people and cause five times as much economic damage as in the 1980s. Environmental and climate change could accelerate this trend. The combination of urbanisation and hydrometeorological phenomena (e.g. floods, droughts and hurricanes) gives particular cause for concern.

The reports of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)<sup>2</sup> indicate that climate change is happening faster and sooner than previously forecast, and that small island states and coastal cities are at particular risk. According to the IPCC, it is very likely that extreme weather conditions will become more severe and more frequent as a result of climate change, and that extensive adaptation is both possible and necessary to reduce vulnerability in the countries at greatest risk.

<sup>1</sup> *World Disasters Report 2006*, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2006).

<sup>2</sup> In 2007, the IPCC published working group reports on 1) the physical science basis of climate change, 2) impacts, adaptation and vulnerability, and 3) mitigation of climate change. In the first of these, the IPCC discusses observations of climate change and concludes that most of the climate change now taking place is very likely due to an increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. In the second report, the IPCC establishes that observational evidence shows that many natural systems are being affected by regional climate changes, particularly temperature increases.

It is the major disasters that dominate the headlines – earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes. But every day, smaller-scale emergencies are hitting local communities, exacerbating poverty and forcing people to migrate. These are crises that the international community barely hears about.

In addition to sudden-onset humanitarian emergencies, we are also faced with several slow-onset disasters with major humanitarian and socio-economic costs. The most important examples of this type of disaster are damage to ecosystems, low food security, famine and malnutrition, for example

#### **Box 2.1 The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015**

The *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* was adopted by 168 countries at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan in January 2005, immediately after the Indian Ocean tsunami. The plan includes the following five priorities for action to reduce losses of life and of social, economic and environmental assets:

- 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.

Norway has undertaken to focus on these priorities, which also form part of the basis for this white paper. At global level, the progress made in these five areas is not yet sufficient to achieve the goal of a substantial reduction of disaster losses by 2015. Only 38 countries have established national disaster risk reduction platforms.

in several African countries, the health crisis in countries that are badly affected by HIV/Aids, and the negative consequences of increased migration and uncontrolled urbanisation. The World Food Programme (WFP) estimates that some 850 million people are unable to meet their day-to-day food needs, and the number of chronically undernourished has risen by 3–4 million every year since the mid-1990s.<sup>3</sup> The severity of the situation is illustrated by the fact that the first UN Millennium Development Goal – MDG 1 – is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

### 2.1.2 Environmental and climate change

Damage to the environment from deforestation and desertification, land degradation, loss of biological diversity, floods, droughts, fires and landslides already constitutes a major threat to populations in a number of our partner countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and in the Himalayan region.

Environmental problems are intensified by climate change, which poses a threat to human security and our efforts to achieve the MDGs. Today, human activity is disrupting ecosystems faster than ever before. This is increasing the vulnerability of ecosystems and undermining their ability to act as a buffer against natural disasters such as floods, fires and hurricanes.

According to the IPCC, human activity is increasingly being adapted to both observed and projected climate change, but these adaptations are still very limited. An increase in temperature is unavoidable regardless of what measures are implemented to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the future, due to the emissions that have already taken place. Adaptation is therefore vital in any case to reduce vulnerability to future climate change.

The IPCC also points out that many of the impacts of climate change can be avoided, reduced, or delayed through emission reduction measures. According to the IPCC, «Unmitigated climate change would, in the long term, be likely to exceed the capacity of natural, managed and human systems to adapt.»

One way of increasing adaptation capacity is to integrate considerations of climate change into development plans, for example by including adaptation considerations in land area planning and infrastructure development, and incorporat-

ing vulnerability reduction measures into existing poverty reduction strategies.

Investment in measures to increase preparedness for and prevent climate-related humanitarian crises will therefore be decisive both for the present and for future generations. The world's poorest countries, which bear the least responsibility for global warming, will be hardest hit by stronger hurricanes and more frequent and long-lasting floods, droughts and water shortages, which will in turn increase famine and the spread of infectious diseases, particularly in Africa, South Asia and Central America. The vulnerability of these countries to climate change is due in part to natural conditions, but is intensified by overexploitation of natural resources, widespread poverty, rapid population growth and poor governance.

We do not know for sure what effect global warming will have on the frequency and scale of humanitarian crises in the future, but the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report gives clear indications. Unless steps are taken to reduce present emission levels, temperatures could rise by several degrees by the end of the century, which would entail a risk of a significant rise in sea level. A number of small island states and heavily populated coastal areas are in danger of flooding. The World Bank has estimated that a one-metre rise in sea level would affect 56 million people in 84 developing countries.

More than half of the world's population live less than 60 kilometres from the sea, and 75% of all

#### Box 2.2 Ecosystems under pressure

Many ecosystems are under so much pressure today that they have lost their resilience to fluctuations in natural conditions. Various types of disturbance caused by human activity are tending to disrupt natural regulatory mechanisms. These include deforestation, which is for example affecting rain forests in the Amazon and Congo basins, the large savanna forests in Africa, the mountain forests in the Himalayas and the mangrove forests bordering the Indian Ocean, the construction of dams in rivers, and drainage of wetlands. Such developments increase the risk of humanitarian disasters. Soil degradation in many parts of Africa has become so serious that the process is irreversible, and the basis for food production has been permanently weakened.

<sup>3</sup> www.wfp.org (October 2007).

the world's cities are situated on the coast. All these people are therefore vulnerable to increases in sea level. Among the regions most at risk are East Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. Higher sea temperatures could also cause stronger winds due to changes in meteorological conditions.

According to the IPCC, climate change will cause greater variations in precipitation (amounts, intensity and geographical distribution). The rainy seasons will become less predictable. In the short term, the melting of snow and glaciers and an altered precipitation pattern in the Himalayan region (China, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Afghanistan) will cause glacial lake outburst floods and landslides in the highlands and floods in the lowlands. Settlements in both mountain and lowland areas are already experiencing more frequent and more extensive flooding. Moreover, flood water is often polluted and can spread disease to people living along waterways. In the longer term, the melting of glaciers could lead to a general water shortage in the Greater Himalayan region – the most heavily populated region in the world – due to reduced melt water.

In Africa, longer periods of drought will exacerbate the problems associated with low food security and will lead to further famine and water shortages. Flooding is also an increasing problem. The occurrence of diseases such as malaria is closely linked to climate conditions. As a result of warmer conditions, malaria mosquitoes have already spread to higher ground in East Africa that were malaria-free 10 years ago. The spread of locusts and other pests is also affected by meteorological conditions.

The Horn of Africa, for example, is already experiencing an altered weather pattern, which is having serious effects on agriculture in marginal areas. Vulnerable groups such as pastoralists, who have lived with natural variations for centuries, are gradually losing their livelihoods. Urban slums in the region are growing as a result of the agricultural crisis and the streams of refugees and internally displaced persons fleeing conflict areas.

Although research so far has not shown any systematic correlation between inadequate resources and conflict, many humanitarian actors have experienced at close quarters that limited access to resources such as food and water can lead to political unrest and a higher level of conflict between clans, ethnic groups and villages. Violent conflict may also be a direct cause of environmental damage and shortage of resources.

### 2.1.3 Urbanisation

Today, half of the world's population is living in cities. In 2030, it is expected that 60% will do so. Population growth is now three times higher in cities than in rural communities, and it is highest in the South. The average rate of growth in African cities is twice as high as in cities in Latin America and Asia.

It is particularly small cities (with fewer than 500 000 inhabitants) that have a rapid and unregulated pattern of growth. Many of these do not have adequate physical, social or economic infrastructure such as roads, health and education services, communications systems, banks, etc.

The world population is expected to reach nine billion by 2050, and most of this growth will take place in towns and cities. This will affect the security and development policy challenges we face. The growth of cities is taking place against a backdrop of rapid, but unevenly distributed economic growth. As it is, local authorities in fragile states lack the resources needed to provide security and basic social services.

Many towns and cities are situated in areas that are particularly vulnerable to natural phenomena such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, rising sea levels and extreme winds. Population growth in cities with weak regulation of business activities and settlements increases the risk of industrial accidents with serious humanitarian consequences.

Poor people settle where it is cheapest to live. Slums grow up in marginal land areas that may be vulnerable to earthquakes, floods, landslides and health hazards, and slum dwellers tend to be without property rights and personal security. These factors can reinforce existing conflict patterns, and create new ones. Violence and crime, often perpetrated by mafias or gangs of youths, is an increasing problem in the world's slum areas. These social developments are also having an effect on recruitment to religious movements, particularly among unemployed young men, and could create a breed-

#### Box 2.3 Endangered rain forests

According to the Rainforest Foundation Norway, 240 million people, mainly in the tropics, are dependent on forests for their livelihoods. At the same time, an area of 150 000 km<sup>2</sup> of forest is being lost every year in these regions.

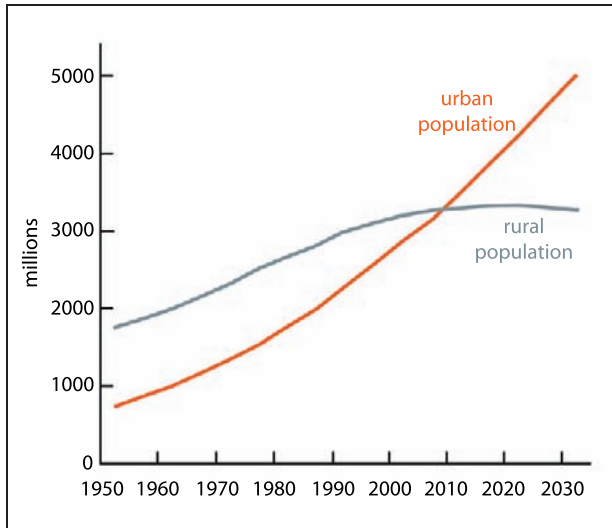


Figure 2.1 World population growth 1950–2020

Source: World Urbanization Prospects: The 2001 Revision

ing ground for more serious conflicts between different social groups in urban areas in the future.

Towns and cities account for around 3% of the world's landmass, and many of these densely populated areas do not have adequate local governance. Some one billion people are currently living in slums, and at the present rate of urbanisation, this figure will surpass two billion in 2030. Unregulated urbanisation is a challenge for efforts to prevent humanitarian crises in densely populated areas in poor countries with poor governance and insufficient capacity for urban planning and political governance at local level.

Cities are centres of political decision making and play a very important role in economic growth and development, and for the private and cultural sectors. Natural disasters and violent conflicts that affect strategically important cities and industrial zones will therefore lead to significant material losses.

Meanwhile, development in rural areas could mitigate the problems caused by increasing urbanisation. Three-quarters of the world's poor still live in rural areas, and sustainable development of these communities would help to mitigate the negative consequences of urbanisation, and thus reduce the adverse impact of humanitarian crises in urban areas.

#### 2.1.4 Conflicts and civilian losses

Many humanitarian crises are a direct consequence of armed conflict, and nearly 650 000 peo-

ple lost their lives in conflicts between 1995 and 2005<sup>4</sup>. The number of wars and the number of fatalities due to conflicts have, however, declined since the beginning of the 1990s. Norway is participating actively in international conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts, and the Government emphasises in its policy platform that we will maintain our commitment to peace.

The reduction in the number of fatalities is also due to changes in conflict patterns. Most conflicts today are between ethnic and/or religious groups within a country, and such groups rarely have access to heavy weapons. We therefore tend to see low intensity conflicts involving poorly equipped rebels, who – due to their inferiority in terms of conventional military strength – use strategies that particularly hit civilians, such as sexual violence, suicide attacks, kidnapping, etc. Many of these conflicts take place in the growing number of fragile states.

At the same time, there is greater international focus on prohibiting weapons that primarily hit civilians, during or after a conflict. This also helps to explain the reduction in the numbers of people killed.

On the other hand, there has been an increase in reported attacks on civilians in connection with conflicts, even though the number of fatalities seems to have declined.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, people are often systematically forced to flee their homes in internal conflicts, and this further destabilises countries and regions that are already vulnerable. At the beginning of 2007, a total of some 38 million people were displaced due to violent conflicts. In a civil war, there is often no clearly definable battleground or dividing line between the warring parties. This too makes the civilian population vulnerable. Conflict within a country often has consequences for the neighbouring countries. Today, there are very few conflict-affected countries that do not have one or more neighbouring countries that are also affected by conflict. Efforts to prevent violent conflict must therefore be seen in a regional perspective.

Conflicts also have indirect consequences in the sense that living conditions deteriorate and infrastructure is damaged. Very many people die as a result of disease and inadequate access to

<sup>4</sup> Data from Uppsala University and the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO)

<sup>5</sup> *Human Security Report 2006*. The figures are, however, uncertain. It is difficult to obtain reliable data as civilian fatalities are often counted as collateral damage in warfare. It is therefore likely that the number of fatalities is underreported.



food, medicines and clean drinking water. From a gender perspective, men are overrepresented among those who are directly killed in a conflict, while women and children account for the greater part of those who are indirectly affected through disease, food shortages, violence and sexual abuse.

One in five peace agreements fails within five years.<sup>6</sup> It often takes a long time to rebuild essential government structures and restore economic activity after a war or conflict. This increases the vulnerability of the population. Many of the countries that are finding it most difficult to achieve the MDGs are countries that are in or have recently emerged from conflict. Many of these conflicts are found in Africa, but there is also a pattern of conflict in Asia that gives increasing cause for concern.

Conflict-ridden areas and countries are vulnerable to local, regional and global environmental and climate change, at the same time as conflicts are often a direct cause of environmental degradation. This may lead to new security challenges, and conflicts over control of freshwater, arable land and marine resources may arise. Major changes to local settlement patterns may also cause greater social tension and political conflict.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has recently published a study of the environmental situation in Sudan,<sup>7</sup> which shows a strong correlation between land degradation, desertification and conflict in Darfur. Northern Darfur in particular has experienced ecological collapse as a result of rapid population growth and increasing environmental problems, and the political, tribal and ethnic differences in the area will not be resolved unless there is a major improvement in the population's food security and living conditions.

### 2.1.5 Health

Humanitarian crises are about the health and lives of our fellow human beings. Epidemics and particularly pandemics are themselves a cause of humanitarian emergencies, in addition to being a major cause of poverty and lack of development.

Due to globalisation, environmental and climate change and changes to settlement patterns, diseases are now spreading faster. According to

the World Health Organization (WHO), 77 000 people in the Western Pacific region are now dying every year of diseases that are directly or indirectly related to climate change, accounting for half of those thus affected globally. Diseases are spreading into new areas or reoccurring in areas where they had previously been brought under control.

Preparedness for this risk factor is an international task as all countries and population groups are becoming more vulnerable and have a direct interest in preventing outbreaks. Therefore, the increasing complexity of conflicts and crises gives grounds for concern, as this has impeded the implementation of vaccination programmes and other measures to prevent infection.

Diseases and other health problems can also be directly caused by disasters, especially in areas with insufficient supplies of food and drinking water and poor sanitation. Shelter and education are also factors that directly affect health, as are

#### Box 2.4 Health and the Millennium Development Goals

On 26 September 2007, the Global Campaign for the Health MDGs was launched by Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg together with Canada, France, Indonesia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Germany and the UK, and in cooperation with WHO, UNICEF, the World Bank and other international organisations. The campaign is intended to mobilise political support and commitment and financial resources, and to accelerate progress on the health MDGs. An international Network of Global Leaders will help to ensure that particularly vulnerable groups, for example women and newborn children, have access to essential health services, and that the health MDGs are achieved. Much more effective and coordinated action is needed for this to happen.

This campaign is in accordance with the conclusions drawn by the UN Reform Panel. It will include a number of different initiatives. These will be based on national plans and will focus on capacity building, better access to health services, and efficiency and performance. Norway has pledged USD 1 billion to the campaign for the period up to 2015, and we are seeking the involvement of more partners.

<sup>6</sup> *What's in a Figure? Estimating Recurrence of Civil War*. Chr. Michelsen Institute (2007)

<sup>7</sup> *Sudan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment*, UNEP (2007).

social factors such as gender, poverty and discrimination. Here too we see the cumulative effect of climate change, new settlement patterns and the growing complexity of crises. Groups that are already vulnerable become twice as vulnerable in a crisis situation.

Maternal and child health should be given particular focus, because this is literally a question of the future of society. These are essential health needs that must be met, and meeting these needs is essential for development. This is one of the reasons why the health dimension has such a central place in the MDGs, and why the Government has decided to mobilise its own and others' resources in a global campaign to meet the health-related MDGs.

The very first humanitarian aid is provided by family, friends, neighbours and the local community affected. The ability to provide this aid depends, of course, on the nature of the crisis, but also on the general level of preparedness. It is also decisive that this initial help is kept up and intensified through national or international efforts. The local community's ability to cooperate is just as important as the humanitarian actors' ability to respond to local needs. We often overlook the fact that the need for general medical help is in addition to the humanitarian needs that arise in a disaster.

A well-functioning health system is vital not only for responding to a disaster, but also for subsequent reconstruction. Here too there is a tendency for international efforts to stop too soon. The restoration of health services takes time and requires targeted efforts.

HIV/Aids is an integral factor in the whole breadth of the crisis and development challenges we are facing, including preventative efforts, especially in African countries. The spread of the disease has been particularly rapid in slum areas, but it is also spreading in rural communities. Higher population densities increase the risk of the disease spreading due to inadequate physical and social infrastructure. The lack of proper water supplies and sanitation in unregulated urban areas is a major risk factor. Despite advances in the understanding of the risk and treatment of the disease, HIV/Aids is still on the increase.

## 2.2 Vulnerability and participation

The tendency to differentiate between «man-made» and «natural» humanitarian crises is one of the barriers to better coordination in many of the

countries in which Norway is actively engaged. Conflicts and natural disasters are, to some extent, dealt with by different actors, and the risk factors and approaches are also often different. The prevention of and response to conflicts is generally more complex than that required when dealing with climate- and environment-related natural disasters, partly due to the fact that the authorities are generally involved in a conflict, and access for humanitarian personnel is therefore limited. It is important that we respect these differences, but at the same time we should also seek to identify links between the two types of crisis, because these will enable us to achieve better results.

Vulnerability is a measure of the susceptibility of individuals and societies to such hazards as conflict and climate change, and their capacity to plan for, adapt to and resist changes in their environment and living conditions. Human vulnerability depends on such factors as housing, ecosystem resilience, gender, age, social status, ethnic affiliation and the realisation of human rights.

The consequences of humanitarian crises are serious regardless of where in the world they occur, but the impact is generally even more severe in developing countries. This is due to such factors as degradation of the environment, poor quality of buildings and infrastructure, settlement patterns in particularly vulnerable areas, poor governance and inadequate social planning. The poor live in the most marginal and vulnerable areas, even in rich countries like the US – as we saw in connection with the hurricane in New Orleans in 2005.

The population's ability to resist and deal with external shocks is a decisive factor in whether a conflict or natural phenomenon has major humanitarian consequences. A society's vulnerability increases when its capacity for strategic planning and preparedness is undermined, for example due to poverty or conflict. The combination of population growth, migration, urbanisation and a fragile state increases the risk associated with inadequate urban planning and governance. Throughout the world, degradation of natural ecosystems is already affecting large numbers of indigenous people, who are the most dependent on local natural resources for their livelihoods. Greater focus on disaster risk reduction tends to encourage reviews of existing early warning and preparedness systems with a view to identifying weaknesses in humanitarian response mechanisms and insufficient capacity in international

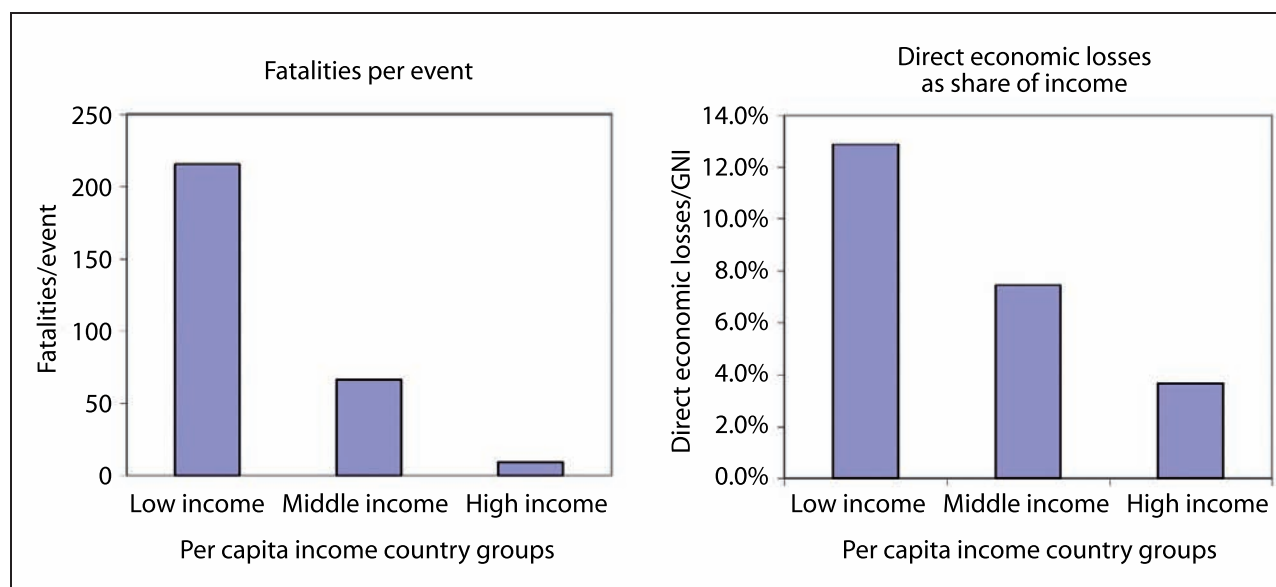


Figure 2.2 Humanitarian and economic impacts of natural disasters

Source: Munich Re

organisations, etc. This white paper is no exception. These tools must be included in the analysis. But effective disaster risk reduction efforts must first and foremost focus on the people who are affected.

These efforts must be based on the rights of the vulnerable. These rights are defined in the human rights conventions and require states that are vulnerable to humanitarian crises and the international community to provide assistance and protection to vulnerable population groups.

However, people who are affected by humanitarian crises are not just vulnerable, passive victims; they are subjects, they have rights, they are participating members of society. From a rights perspective, it is important that their participation is strengthened through risk reduction efforts so that they are better able to take responsibility for their own lives and their local communities. Those we are seeking to help should be regarded as resource persons, recipients of help to self-help, agents of change in efforts to make the national authorities take responsibility for fulfilling their obligations with regard to reducing vulnerability.

### 2.2.1 Gender perspectives

Women and men, and girls and boys are affected differently and play different roles in humanitarian crises. As much as 70–80% of the world's approximately 25 million internally displaced per-

sons are women and children.<sup>8</sup> Significantly more women than men die in connection with natural disasters, and this affects the life expectancy of women in the countries that are hit/affected.<sup>9</sup> Seven out of ten people who are affected by famine are women or children. Women and girls who are displaced are particularly vulnerable to violence and sexual abuse in connection with armed conflicts. Moreover, in many cases such abuses increase once a war or armed conflict has come to an end and may continue for a long time after a peace agreement has been signed.

Poverty is unevenly distributed in terms of gender. The majority of the world's poor are women and therefore more vulnerable to humanitarian crises. This also applies to rich countries such as Japan, where one and a half times as many women as men died in the Kobe earthquake in 1995. This was because many older women were living in poor housing.

The gender perspective is often neglected in the period immediately after a conflict. Women

<sup>8</sup> *Internal Displacement. Global Overview of Trends and Developments 2006*, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre/Norwegian Refugee Council (April 2007). The figures are somewhat lower for refugees.

<sup>9</sup> Eric Neumayer and Thomas Plümper: *The Gendered Nature of Natural Disasters: The Impact of Catastrophic Events on the Gender Gap in Life Expectancy 1981-2002*. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 97,3 (2007). The stronger the natural disaster, the more women's life expectancy is reduced relative to that of men. This is because more women than men die, and many of them are girls and young women.

possess important knowledge of how society deals with different types of stress and have an important role to play in peace and reconciliation processes. Involving women and women's organisations in reconstruction efforts is important both in terms of creating lasting stable peace, and for enhancing women's opportunities to participate in political, economic and social life after the peace process is over. At the same time, women's participation in the reconciliation process can make them more vulnerable to attack from actors who have an interest in the conflict continuing.

Population growth and urbanisation have major consequences for relations between men and women. The number of women-headed households is increasing, particularly in the growing slum areas. These women have limited financial resources but they have major care-giving tasks. They play a key role when local communities hit by disaster try to restore «normal» conditions.

Efforts to put an end to impunity for crimes such as sexual and gender-based violence are vital from a disaster risk reduction perspective. It is important that a gender perspective is applied in the (re)establishment of the rule of law in order to ensure that women are as well protected under the law as men. Women and girls must therefore be actively drawn into these processes from the start, and must have real influence on the final design of institutions and legislation.

The Government gives priority to the particular vulnerability and needs of women in connection with humanitarian crises. This does not mean that women are vulnerable in every crisis situation. Nor does it mean that boys and men are not particularly vulnerable in certain situations. The vulnerability of both sexes and all age groups must be seen in the light of the situation and context in question.

The fact that so many boys and men are killed in connection with violent conflict is an important reason why the proportion of women and girls among refugees and internally displaced persons is so high. The loss of a parent has both economic and social consequences for the rest of the family, and the splitting up of families, as often occurs during humanitarian crises, also affects all the family members.

### 2.2.2 Children and young people

Both natural disasters and complex crises create particular challenges in terms of protecting the civilian population, not least children and young

people. Such crises entail greater risk of violence, abuse, discrimination and neglect, as well as a deterioration of health and sanitation conditions and disrupted schooling. In conflict situations there is also a risk of children and young people with no alternative means of providing for themselves being recruited by armed groups.

The sooner children's and young people's rights are incorporated into ceasefire and peace agreements the better. Important tools in disaster risk reduction efforts relating to children and young people are the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, as well as Security Council resolution 1612 (2005) and the Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (February 2007).

In many countries, children and young people under the age of 24 account for 40–50% of the urban population. These are vulnerable groups in crisis situations caused by political polarisation, ethnic rivalries, violent conflict and the loss of their parents in natural disasters. However, new studies show that children and young people have never been healthier or better educated than today.<sup>10</sup> They therefore have a better starting point for participating in risk reduction efforts that relate to their own situation.

Developing safe and secure cities will be a core element in national authorities' efforts to prevent armed violence and protect civilians in the years to come. The increasing violence and potential for conflict in densely populated areas is a risk for young people, particularly young men, who are easily recruited by the warring parties.

Formal schooling is an effective means of protecting children. Schooling involves registration, supervision and follow-up and helps to prevent recruitment, abuse and human trafficking.

Children and young people are already often involved in a number of activities through their family, school, sports clubs, youth organisations, youth clubs and other local networks. Much can be achieved by developing existing activities and organisations and building on the motivation and commitment that young people have. Children and young people are a resource that can be mobilised in disaster risk reduction efforts both before and after humanitarian emergencies; they are a resource that is often not recognised. It is impor-

<sup>10</sup> *Development and the Next Generation*, World Development Report, World Bank (2006).

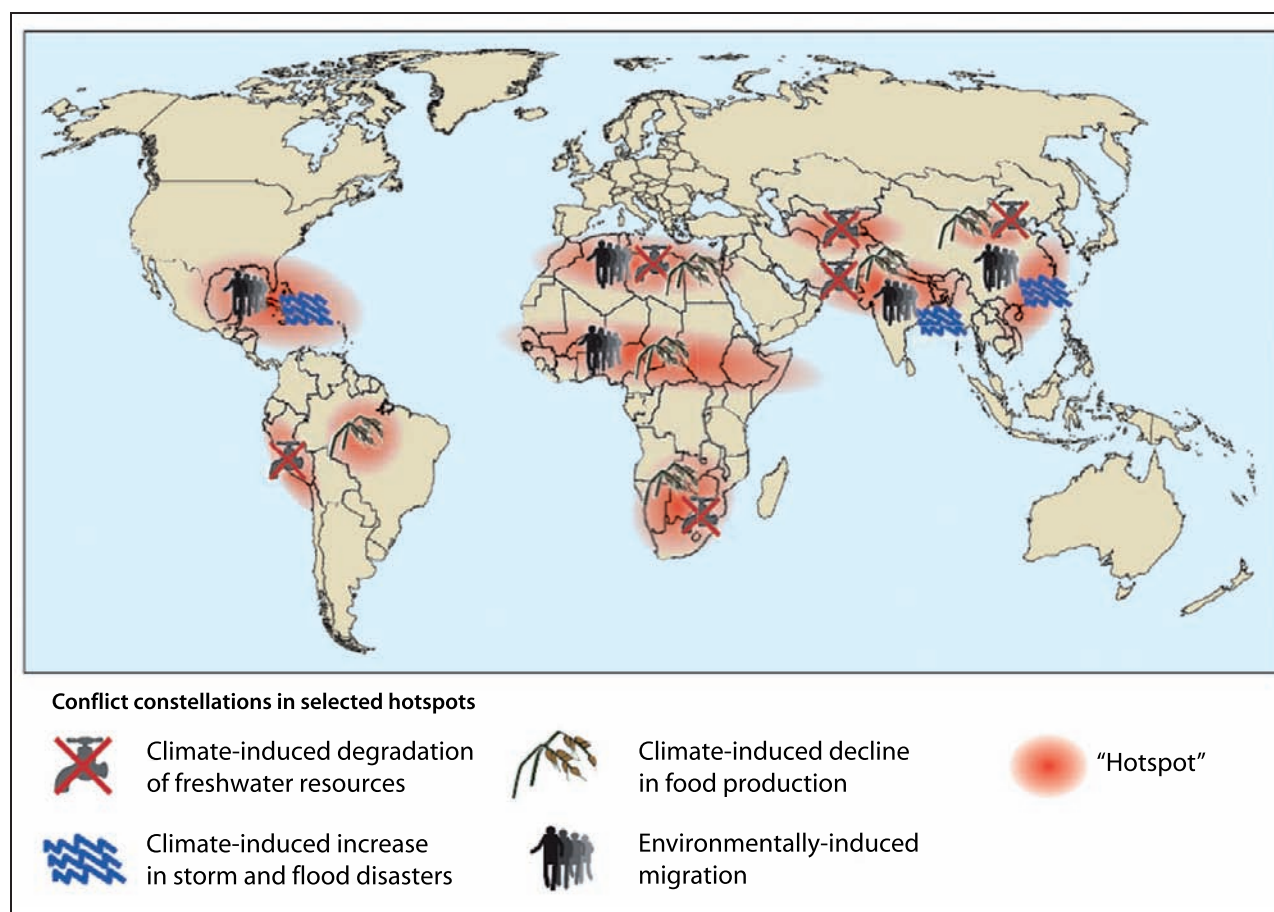


Figure 2.3 Conflict constellations in selected hotspots

Source: German Advisory Council on Global Change

tant that special measures are implemented to reintegrate children and young people in connection with reconstruction efforts. Special measures are particularly important for young people and children over the age of 12. Vocational training is vital for utilising young people's resources in the local community.

### 2.2.3 Hotspots

Together with the World Bank, ProVention has identified hotspots – countries and areas that are most vulnerable to natural disasters.<sup>11</sup> Studies show a strong correlation between population density, geography and natural disaster risk. Some 3.4 billion people – more than half the world's population – are highly vulnerable to at least one type of natural disaster (earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, flooding, drought, hurricane). Over 100 million people are vulnerable to

three or more such risk factors. The most vulnerable countries and cities risk major humanitarian loss and economic setbacks due to the high concentration of people, infrastructure and business activity within limited geographical areas.

We cannot avoid exposure to risk. But, by increasing resilience, we can help to prevent crises in hotspots developing into humanitarian crises. An important factor is the extent to which crisis preparedness and planning have been institutionalised and coordinated. Insufficient decentralisation and poor coordination between central and local authorities undermine disaster risk reduction capacity. Out-dated and poorly maintained warning and information systems increase vulnerability, as do inadequate involvement, training and awareness raising of the population.

### 2.2.4 Fragile states

States that do not function well politically, economically or socially are a danger to their own population and to the world at large. The Palestinian Ter-

<sup>11</sup> *Natural Disaster Hotspots. A Global Risk Analysis*, World Bank (2005).

### Box 2.5 Fragile states

Some important features of the group of low-income countries known as fragile states are:

- considerably lower life expectancy and higher child mortality than in other low-income countries
- unstable political institutions and poor governance
- violent conflict (in most cases) or its aftermath
- their inability to achieve the MDGs by 2015
- their potential for adverse impacts on political and economic developments in neighbouring countries, possibly with global spillover effects.

These countries lack the capacity or will to safeguard their citizens' human rights and security, and to provide basic services such as health and education. This also means that they do not have the capacity to adapt to new risk factors such as environmental and climate change. There is a risk that persistent vulnerability will spread to neighbouring countries through processes such as migration.

The OECD-DAC has drawn up a list of 38 fragile states (2006), while the World Bank has defined the following 26 countries/areas as frag-

ile (2006): Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kosovo, Lao PDR, Liberia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Togo, Vanuatu, West Bank and Gaza, Zimbabwe.

The OECD-DAC has set out the following principles for good international engagement in fragile states and situations:

- take context as the starting point;
- move from reaction to prevention;
- focus on state-building as the long-term vision;
- align with local priorities;
- recognize the political-security-development nexus;
- promote coherence between donor agencies;
- agree on practical coordination mechanisms between international actors;
- do no harm;
- mix and sequence instruments;
- act fast but stay engaged long enough to give success a chance; and
- avoid pockets of exclusion.

ritory, Sudan, Afghanistan, DR Congo, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Burundi are examples of states and areas that are struggling to build a viable polity and stabilise the political, economic, social and to some extent environmental situation. It is in such places that the capacity for adaptation to new risk factors is lowest. Fragile states have the potential to create fragile regions through the ripple effects of conflict, and climate and environmental change, etc., as we have seen in countries like Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic.

According to the World Bank, the number of fragile states has risen from 17 in 2003 to 26 in 2006. This sharp increase entails a serious risk for regional and global security. Today, around 500 million people are living in fragile states, including a third of the world's poorest. Unless decisive action is taken to reduce these countries' vulnerability to humanitarian crises, we will see an increase in the number of fatalities and internally displaced persons, setbacks in the social and economic development in many countries, and deeply entrenched poverty.

In the course of the next few years, extreme poverty will become even more geographically concentrated. An increasing number of the world's poor will live in fragile states.

There is international agreement that development assistance to fragile states must be increased and better coordinated between donors on the basis of the OECD-DAC Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States. In these efforts, a conflict sensitive approach must be employed which is based on the particular country's situation and the need to consider statebuilding and peacebuilding in relation to one another.

Efforts to build up civil society in fragile states must also be intensified. Civil society plays an important role as a provider of services and a driving force in efforts to improve governance and to ensure that the authorities take greater responsibility for the population. This is also a decisive factor in efforts to reduce vulnerability to various types of humanitarian crises.

### 3 Bilateral partnerships on disaster risk reduction

The Government intends to strengthen long-term, strategic cooperation with Norway's bilateral, multilateral and regional partners on measures to prevent humanitarian crises, with a particular focus on environmental and climate change, urbanisation and growing humanitarian needs in fragile states.

To be effective, disaster risk reduction measures, such as adaptation to climate change, must primarily be implemented at local and regional level, but extensive international coordination is also required to provide the long-term perspective needed to ensure that such measures are effective and help to reduce vulnerability and poverty.

The Government's priorities are based on what it believes will be the key risk factors in the years to come, as well as on the gaps in and shortcomings of the international system. There is a particular need for stronger political leadership and better international coordination, both within the UN system and between the UN and the international financial institutions. This will also raise awareness in donor and recipient countries.

The Government also regards knowledge, knowledge development and capacity-building in the education and research sector as a key tool in all the priority areas in Norway's foreign and development policy, including the prevention of humanitarian crises.<sup>1</sup>

#### 3.1 Local mobilisation

The Government has noted that preparedness and response mechanisms at local level have been found to be the most effective, for example by the

<sup>1</sup> This is discussed in a report commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs *Mot en mer kunnskapsbasert utviklingspolitikk: Plattform for bilateral bistand til høyere utdanning og forskning i utviklingslandene (Towards more knowledge-based development policy: platform for bilateral development cooperation on higher education and research in developing countries)* (August 2007). In the Government's view, Norwegian education and research institutions must be involved systematically in foreign and development policy efforts, Norway must help to strengthen national and regional higher education and research institutions, and multilateral organisations must make greater use of research results.

Tsunami Evaluation Coalition<sup>2</sup>. It is families, neighbours, friends and local institutions such as churches and mosques that provide help during the first critical hours of a humanitarian crisis. This is why strengthening civil society in cooperation with the local authorities should be one of the main priorities in efforts to enhance local disaster risk reduction and preparedness.

The lessons learned from the tsunami also showed that areas with intact mangrove forests sustained less damage, as the natural vegetation reduced the impact of the tsunami on land. This is why maintaining local ecosystems must be a key element of efforts to prevent natural disasters.

The Government therefore considers it important for Norway's dialogue on risk reduction efforts with national authorities and multilateral organisations to be based on the principle of subsidiarity.

However, the practical implementation of the principle is challenging. In the acute phase of a crisis, emergency relief measures implemented by the UN and international NGOs can easily push aside local resources and efforts. The reasons for this include time pressure, lack of knowledge about the local community and local conditions, the desire to maintain control of humanitarian funds, and the fear of corruption. On the other hand, the use of local partners ensures better use of resources. And international coordination of emergency relief is generally better if local risk reduction and preparedness capacity is available.

The most important means of implementing the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015* (Kobe, 2005) is to establish national disaster risk reduction platforms. Only a very few of the most vulnerable countries have done so thus far.<sup>3</sup>

It is the authorities in each country that are responsible for implementing risk reduction measures, while donor countries are responsible for ensuring that humanitarian organisations do not

<sup>2</sup> The Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) was established in February 2005 to evaluate the international response to the Indian Ocean tsunami, with funding from various sources including Norad. Its comprehensive reports were published in July 2006.

<sup>3</sup> See box 2.1.

bypass local authorities, organisations and networks in their humanitarian efforts. In countries where there is no effective central government, or where the authorities themselves are causing a humanitarian crisis, for example through warfare, local and regional structures need to be found that can fill the vacuum, such as local councils, schools, churches and mosques, social movements and clinics.

The decentralisation of power, authority and resources to local authorities is crucial for good governance. Without a certain degree of decentralisation, it becomes difficult to motivate civil society and individuals to make an effort. It is also important to improve communication and cooperation between the local and national bodies wherever possible, to ensure that risk reduction measures help to reduce the vulnerability of the target groups. The principle of subsidiarity is important, but is not in itself enough to achieve the goal of increased resilience.

The Government would like to emphasise that precisely because a humanitarian crisis acts as an incentive to implement disaster reduction measures that will reduce vulnerability, it is vital that ownership of the reconstruction process lies with the local people themselves and the local and national authorities. Self-help during the reconstruction process reduces vulnerability because it also builds competence. Disaster risk reduction measures are not only a means of improving people's resilience, but can also improve livelihoods.

Local communities where property and/or user rights are clearly established are much more likely to manage natural resources sustainably than societies where rights to natural resources are unclear, as this situation often encourages short-term strategies and a race for potential profits. Sustainable management, which results in greater resilience to humanitarian crises, is only possible where the local people have reason to believe that long-term strategies will benefit both them and their descendants.

Local capacity is a broad term that includes local NGOs, networks and official structures that have the necessary knowledge and capacity to identify vulnerable groups, humanitarian needs, relevant preventive measures, etc. and have a role to play in implementing measures. It is equally important to bear in mind that such actors have valuable local knowledge, for example as regards environmental measures, and are able to determine priorities.

### Box 3.1 The principle of subsidiarity

This principle has been incorporated into all crisis management efforts, in Norway as well as other countries. It entails dealing with crises of different kinds at the lowest possible level. This white paper uses the following interpretation of the principle in the context of disaster risk reduction:

- the people who are closest to the problem generally know most about which solutions are appropriate;
- local consultations will give the best information on effective and sustainable measures and suitable priorities;
- decisions should be taken at the lowest possible level with a view to developing a good emergency response system and rapid, flexible crisis management;
- existing local resources should be mobilised as far as possible; and
- the closer you are to the problem, the easier it is to take a conflict-sensitive («do no harm») approach.

The Government considers that a vital first step is to improve the dissemination of information and raise general levels of knowledge, particularly about risk and vulnerability. There are a number of tasks in this area for international organisations and media networks, in cooperation with schools and higher education institutions, journalists' organisations and the voluntary sector. The media also have an important watchdog function vis-à-vis national and local authorities regarding the management of scarce resources, planning, and so on.

These efforts must build on traditional knowledge of crisis management and survival strategies, and be supplemented with support for organisational and capacity-building efforts. Local knowledge of topographical, environmental, social and technological and other factors is often ignored. In the worst case, this can increase vulnerability to humanitarian crises.

A number of local and regional organisations are producing information and training material that is tailored to local needs, and Norway is prepared to increase support for such measures. Disaster risk reduction begins in schools. There is a school in every local community, and teachers are often the largest group of public employees in



a country. They are an important resource in efforts to increase the knowledge and political will needed to strengthen the resilience of local communities, for example through teaching programmes for children and young people.

The Government therefore intends to focus on better integration of disaster risk reduction into Norway's efforts in the education sector. In this connection, the relevant embassies have a particular responsibility for carrying out analyses and evaluations and for suggesting possible activities. Several of the countries where Norway has a broad engagement in the education sector are among those that are most vulnerable to humanitarian crises.

If we are to take the principle of subsidiarity seriously, we must also focus on the importance of local markets in connection with disaster risk reduction. Increasing purchasing power in response to a humanitarian crisis can help to

reduce vulnerability if the local markets are able to provide sufficient volumes of necessities and transport is available. As yet, we have very little experience of the use of direct cash transfers insurance schemes, etc. in response to a humanitarian crisis and as means of developing welfare and social protection, but there are strong indications that this is a more effective approach in many situations than for example providing food aid.

*The Government will:*

- request UN organisations and NGOs that receive funding from Norway for humanitarian efforts to cooperate with local partners and networks, with a view to reducing vulnerability to future disasters;
- give priority to efforts by authorities, NGOs and other relevant partners at local level that

### Box 3.2 Cooperation between public and private actors

Broad cooperation between public and private actors on disaster risk reduction is one of the pillars of the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015*. The underlying principle is that no private actor of any size can escape social responsibility; in other words, private actors are responsible for working together with the public sector to prevent natural disasters. This approach also recognises that it is in the interests of individuals, firms, organisations and others to reduce humanitarian suffering and the social and economic costs that natural disasters entail.

Cooperation of this kind expands the resource base for carrying out preventive measures. It also strengthens the social ties between different groups at local and national level, which can reduce conflict. Firms in high-risk areas are dependent on properly functioning infrastructure, and the business sector, the authorities and civil society all share an interest in reducing risk and reducing the impacts of any natural disasters. Firms can also benefit from being able to use safety measures as an important element of their market profile. One example is that hotels in Phuket in Thailand are deliberately using the recently installed tsunami warning system, including clearly marked escape routes, as a competitive factor.

A great deal has already been done to establish closer cooperation between public and private actors in this field, particularly since the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe in January 2005. Organisations such as the ISDR and the ProVention Consortium, which Norway supports, are playing a key role in creating meeting places. The World Economic Forum in Davos has also become involved in this type of cooperation, as has the Global Humanitarian Forum, which was recently established in Geneva by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Such initiatives are important, but here too, we would like to stress that the best results can be obtained through grass-roots initiatives and by involving both traditional actors in local communities and local firms. In both Japan and Bangladesh, for example, good results have been obtained through constructive cooperation on disaster risk reduction between actors who have realised that this serves both their own interests and those of the community.

Norway is supporting several actors who are working actively to encourage closer cooperation between the public and private sectors. Support for these efforts should be continued, and Norway should also encourage innovation in this field.

can help to reduce vulnerability to humanitarian crises;

- consider giving direct support to local organisations that can help to reduce vulnerability and disaster risk;
- strengthen its partnership with the Red Cross and Red Crescent and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) on local disaster risk reduction and preparedness, and help to strengthen cooperation between the IFRC and the UN's International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR);
- increase support for implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, in close cooperation with the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the World Bank;
- ensure that Norway's bilateral and multilateral support for the education and health sector is used to strengthen public health services and increase their capacity for responding to crises;
- include disaster risk reduction programmes in Norway's efforts within the education sector;
- develop partnerships with the private sector with regard to investment in infrastructure, increased food security, job creation for vulnerable groups, etc; and
- enhance knowledge and exchange of experience on innovative financing mechanisms (e.g. cash transfers) that can help to reduce vulnerability.

### 3.2 Risk management and poverty reduction

*Fighting Poverty Together* (Report No. 35 (2003–2004) to the Storting) sets out Norway's policy on poverty reduction. The premise is that extreme poverty is the greatest human rights challenge of our time and that development and poverty reduction are national responsibilities. But they are responsibilities that the international community must share.

Vulnerability to humanitarian crises is largely synonymous with poverty. Poor people are more vulnerable in a crisis, and intensifying efforts related to disaster risk reduction and emergency response is a vital part of our efforts to reduce poverty. Most of the world's poor are women, and efforts to strengthen women's rights are also an integral part of the fight against poverty.

Most developing countries have drawn up national poverty reduction strategies and sectoral

plans based on the MDGs. Norway is supporting these efforts through direct budget support, as well as through sector programmes and individual projects. Most of Norway's funds for long-term development assistance, whether bilateral or via the World Bank or the UN, are used to support such plans.

In its dialogue with relevant countries, Norway should emphasise the need to relate development plans and strategies more closely to the underlying causes of humanitarian crises, including the political, economic, social and environmental causes. Efforts should be based on thorough, local analyses of the risk factors that are most relevant in each case, for example earthquakes (construction methods, fire protection, land-use planning), flooding (forest protection, afforestation, protection of river banks and infrastructure), extreme winds and precipitation (warning, evacuation and protection, drought (sustainable resource management, protection of traditional rights to land and water), epidemics (investments in infrastructure, emergency stocks, health services, education), low food security (early warning systems, adaptation of agriculture to climate change, including diversified production and new production methods, effective distribution systems) and conflict (dialogue, democracy-building and reconciliation measures, conflict-sensitive development assistance). Plans and measures should also provide opportunities and arrangements for economic compensation for the victims of conflicts, such as micro-credit and systems for the return of property.

It is also important for Norway to direct efforts towards building up education and research capacity in its partner countries, so that they are able to make thorough local analyses of risk factors and disaster risk reduction measures.

There are a number of middle-income countries, for example in Latin America, that have not drawn up poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), but that in fact have a poverty problem because of large internal economic disparities. This means that a large proportion of the population is vulnerable to humanitarian crises. In such countries, relevant measures may include institutional reform and the establishment of national insurance schemes similar to the Norwegian National Fund for Natural Damage Assistance.

The amount Norway can achieve on its own or through bilateral assistance is limited. We must therefore seek to ensure that risk reduction measures are given priority in relevant national politi-

cal bodies and in international forums that focus on poverty reduction. It is here that we can achieve the greatest results. The Government needs allies in its disaster risk reduction agenda, and we must channel our efforts in the way we consider will have the greatest practical impact on implementation of disaster risk reduction measures at local and global levels.

The Government will consider utilising new networks and forms of cooperation in this regard, such as the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative, in which the foreign ministers of Norway, Brazil, France, Indonesia, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand are working together in an effort to bring health into greater focus in foreign policy. Disaster and conflict management, preparedness and disaster risk reduction are at the top of this network's agenda.

Creating good incentives is an important element of efforts to improve disaster risk reduction. Lack of incentive is one reason why it is difficult to ensure sufficient political focus on precautionary measures. Many governments view such measures as expenses that there is no room for in a tight budget, rather than as investments in and insurance for society as a whole. There is an urgent need for sound economic analyses of the increase in risk resulting from insufficient investment in risk reduction measures. The Stern Review<sup>4</sup> has helped to increase awareness of this issue.

However, there have been encouraging developments in recent years in international financial mechanisms and schemes in the UN system, the World Bank and other international financial institutions. Most of these are relatively new and are still competing with each other to win ground and attention as a means of financing development and humanitarian action, but they are helping to increase awareness of the challenges many countries are facing in this area. The Government will consider more closely how Norway can create better economic frameworks and incentives for investments in disaster risk reduction measures.

The international community, including the UN and the World Bank, has so far taken too reactive an approach, and should take the offensive more, using strategies to identify and respond proactively to new, complex patterns of risk. We are seeing clear signs of greater political will to

integrate risk reduction measures into long-term development efforts, and it is important to strengthen incentives for this and to coordinate the implementation of practical measures. This will make new demands on our dialogue with international organisations, national authorities and other actors in the countries we cooperate with, as well as making new demands on Norad (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation) and the embassies in the countries in question.

#### *The Government will:*

- give higher priority to disaster risk reduction and preparedness in its poverty reduction and development efforts;
- emphasise measures to reduce risk and vulnerability in relation to different types of humanitarian crises in dialogues with the authorities in relevant partner countries concerning the development and follow-up of PRSPs and other relevant planning and policy documents;
- further develop partnerships with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and ProVention on the provision of advice on the practical implementation of strategies and plans for disaster risk reduction in fragile states; and
- further develop the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative, among other things with a view to international mobilisation and policy development in relation to humanitarian disaster response efforts.

### **3.3 Building bilateral partnerships**

In the Government's view, a more integrated approach to development cooperation in a broad sense will highlight the strategic links between poverty reduction, vulnerability and targeted measures to increase resilience to humanitarian crises, particularly in the countries where Norway is engaged. We need to develop a better understanding of how poverty is affected by the combined impact of environmental and climate change, urbanisation and the development of fragile states. The complex interaction between these risk factors will also have consequences for the conflict situation in many countries.

A recent evaluation report on Norway's humanitarian efforts in response to natural disasters states that:

<sup>4</sup> *The Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change*, HM Treasury, London (2006). The ISDR and the World Bank are currently carrying out a joint study on the economic returns on investments in disaster risk reduction, which will be completed during the course of 2008.

«The challenge for Norway as a donor lies not only in contributing to increased response capacity through improved funding and coordination, but also in helping to put in place strategies that focus on long-term vulnerability reduction and local response capacity. This indicates a need for selective choices of channels on the basis of three overarching objectives: (1) effective humanitarian relief, (2) rehabilitation, livelihood development and vulnerability reduction, and (3) coordination of relief, rehabilitation and livelihood development.»<sup>5</sup>

The Government agrees with the findings of the report, which highlight the need both for a more streamlined organisational approach, across the relief–development spectrum, and for greater expertise in this area. A number of units in the Ministry are involved in local capacity building, disaster risk reduction and preparedness, better international coordination and setting priorities for risk reduction measures, and these efforts are not adequately coordinated.

Both donor countries and international organisations have dealt with humanitarian assistance and development cooperation as two separate areas, and have taken different approaches and set different priorities according to the different needs in these two areas. However, this has led to institutional barriers that have prevented the development of a clear, comprehensive and proactive policy for disaster risk reduction.

This has particularly affected the embassies, which play a key role in ensuring the necessary focus on disaster risk reduction and in supporting local and national initiatives in this area. The embassies need more streamlined organisation of foreign policy initiatives and measures across traditional areas of responsibility, and they need better follow-up from the Ministry.

Disaster risk reduction and preparedness efforts are highly complex. This is an area that is constantly changing and involves many actors, some of them new. We must expand our knowledge, disseminate it and use it systematically. Coordination of humanitarian assistance and long-term development can be strengthened by actively drawing on and developing Norad's disaster risk reduction expertise. It is particularly important that Norad plays a greater role as regards systematic use of evaluations and lessons

learned in connection with risk reduction measures, in close cooperation with the Ministry and external expertise. These efforts must be closely linked to our ongoing efforts to enhance our understanding of conflict and to strengthen the gender equality perspective in development.

There are strong indications that humanitarian assistance to areas and groups affected by disasters does not result in any significant reduction in the vulnerability of these people. The growing focus on the need to reduce vulnerability, combined with the recognition that local capacity is decisive for disaster risk reduction, indicates that there is a need to reform the way international development assistance is provided. The key is a stronger focus on how vulnerable groups perceive their own risk and vulnerability, combined with concrete measures to encourage and support local capacity for overcoming this vulnerability.

This would primarily mean a closer international focus on local measures to reduce vulnerability and the development of local capacity to prepare for and respond to humanitarian crises.

The Government supports this approach, which will involve a number of organisational challenges for Norwegian development cooperation, such as how to improve internal coordination and cooperation, how to determine priorities for channels for Norwegian development funds, and the question of developing closer partnerships with NGOs on preventive measures. Similar challenges have been solved before. Norway has developed a long tradition of coordinating humanitarian efforts, conflict resolution and development. It is now time to go a step further and look at the links between humanitarian efforts, complex disaster risk reduction and poverty reduction.

The Ministry has undertaken an internal survey that shows some major variations in knowledge, competence and activity in this area between the embassies, and a need for more knowledge in the Ministry itself. We need to boost both knowledge and awareness in the Ministry in order to increase our ability to implement targeted disaster risk reduction measures across traditional dividing lines. More information and training is needed, and the Ministry, together with Norad, will give priority to providing information to the embassies on what disaster risk reduction involves, including the ways in which this work differs from the development efforts that are already being carried out, and how it can to a

<sup>5</sup> *Humanitarian Response to Natural Disasters: A Synthesis of Evaluation Findings, 1/2007* (Norad).

large extent be integrated into the ongoing development efforts.

The two main perspectives of this white paper – the MDGs and the humanitarian imperative – indicate the main thrust of our policy, but the details need to be determined. The Government's priorities are intended to help in this work, but they must be further developed and concretised if we are to achieve the targets we have set ourselves.

The Government also proposes support for measures to raise levels of knowledge in Norwegian NGOs about reducing the risk of natural disasters and complex crises, for example in the light of environmental and climate change. Here we will draw on both Norwegian and international expertise.

A greater focus on long-term, strategic partnerships with relevant actors at different levels will mean that we must improve our ability to evaluate their expertise and capacity. We will therefore need to develop methods for evaluating our partners, including their efforts in the field. These evaluations will include political, technical and organisational evaluations carried out in cooperation between the Ministry, the embassies, Norad and external expertise. Partner evaluations will form a key part of the quality assurance of Norway's development efforts, for which Norad is responsible.

In the Government's view, there is a special need to analyse how developments in fragile states are creating new threats to vulnerable groups, who therefore need new forms of protection. Greater knowledge of risk factors and a focus on new opportunities for reducing poverty in vulnerable states will help us to develop partnerships with relevant actors.

*The Government will:*

- strengthen coordination of Norway's humanitarian efforts, transitional assistance and long-term development cooperation with a view to reducing vulnerability to humanitarian crises in vulnerable countries;
- draw up guidelines for how disaster risk reduction measures can be integrated into Norway's long-term development cooperation;
- increase expertise in the foreign service on practical disaster risk reduction, use of risk and vulnerability analyses, conflict analyses and so on, particularly with a view to helping the embassies in this work;
- strengthen Norad's role in the evaluation of partners, general evaluations and quality assurance in this area; and
- increase support for the development of expertise in this area in NGOs and other sources of expertise.

## 4 Multilateral partnerships

### 4.1 Adaptation to climate change

Efforts to prevent natural disasters as a result of climate change and environmental degradation are vital for saving lives and preventing serious setbacks in the fight against poverty. Adaptation to climate change and the prevention of climate-related disasters must be given as prominent a place on the international agenda as efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Sound management of land and natural resources is a vital part of efforts to prevent violent conflicts and to establish a basis for long-term peace once a peace settlement is in place.

Climate policy involves all sectors of society. Norway should therefore seek to ensure that climate considerations are integrated into national plans and strategies for disaster risk reduction, emergency response and development (see Chapter 3.2). At present, these considerations are not being taken sufficiently into account, and until this is done, it will be difficult to provide integrated and systematic support for other countries' adaptation efforts.

We should work towards climate proofing of all Norwegian development cooperation. This means that all projects with Norwegian funding as far as possible include adaptation to future climate change. All support for infrastructure projects, including water and sanitation and the construction of housing and roads must be assessed in relation to the risk of a rise in sea level, higher precipitation, flooding, landslides and extreme winds. The same requirements for climate proofing should also apply to our international cooperation partners. In addition, we must ensure that development cooperation measures do not have negative impacts on ecosystems that will impair their resilience to damage. It is also important to ensure that climate-related measures do not have unintentional negative consequences for other aspects of vulnerability such as poverty and health.

Adaptation, disaster risk reduction and preparedness in relation to climate change is a relatively new area for most countries. The IPCC's

reports should therefore be followed up with further analyses in order to increase knowledge and understanding of what adaptation measures will reduce vulnerability most effectively. The Norwegian research and scientific community possesses considerable expertise in the field of climate change, and will be able to contribute to this process together with research and scientific institutions in other countries, particularly those in developing countries. The Government

#### **Box 4.1 Mozambique and adaptation to climate change**

Mozambique has ratified the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, and has produced a draft National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA). This focuses on the increased risk of drought, flooding and cyclones, and on severe coastal erosion as a result of the rising sea level.

The adaptation measures proposed include: better early warning systems for extreme weather events, measures to reduce the impact of climate change on vulnerable coastal areas, and better regulation of river systems.

The programme, which was drawn up by Mozambique's Ministry for the Coordination of Environmental Affairs, which is probably one of the weakest ministries in terms of capacity and competence. Only one half-time position was earmarked for the work on climate change. Moreover, coordination between the ministries responsible for climate change and environmental issues was poor. There was little involvement of civil society in the process of drawing up the NAPA.

This situation is not unique to Mozambique; it is also true of a number of other vulnerable countries that need more support to build capacity and improve coordination of risk reduction and preparedness measures between national and local actors.

Table 4.1 Examples of measures that could help to reduce poverty and improve adaptation to climate change

Vulnerability factors for the poor	Types of measure
<b>Climate change related risks</b>	
Danger to life and livelihoods from flooding, drought, heat waves, cyclones	Better early warning and evacuation systems
Reduced agricultural production due to climate change	Diversification of agriculture, insurance schemes
Glacier melt, flooding and drought are a threat to poor people's water supplies	Better access to water harvesting techniques, well-drilling
Damage to infrastructure and reduced access to social services	Better infrastructure. Provide suitable transport options for the poor (e.g. cycle paths and footpaths along roads)
Spread of disease in connection with drought and flooding	Better health and sanitation facilities for the poor that are particularly designed for areas prone to drought and flooding
<b>Adaptation strategies for the poor</b>	
Diversification of sources of income	Strengthening the economic sectors that poor people have access to
Labour migration	Facilitating labour migration, including seasonal migration and cross-border migration
Moving livestock in pursuit of water and grazing	Safe herding routes, better water points, markets and veterinary services along these routes, access to grazing that can be used during drought
Utilisation of social networks and informal economic activities	Ensuring equitable access to resources that are vital during drought, such as water supplies and forests
Utilisation of forest products	Promoting value creation from and processing and management of forest products, encouraging the planting of valuable local tree species, and developing market opportunities for products that are adapted to the local climate (e.g. resin, honey, etc.)
<b>Social changes that affect vulnerability</b>	
Marginalisation of agriculture and other rural means of livelihood	Investment in small-scale agriculture and improvement of small farmers' access to market information and structures. Legalising rural means of livelihood such as charcoal production. Preventing privatisation from reducing poor people's access to natural resources
Decline in jobs in the formal sector	Improving employment opportunities and reducing restrictions on the urban informal sector
Spread of HIV/Aids	Strengthening health services and the distribution of HIV/Aids drugs
Conflict and political instability	Strengthening local peace committees and civil society, and improving local security, for example the police service
Greater social differences and processes that create poor groups	Social welfare programmes, strengthening the rights of the poor to natural resources, common land and collective management
Environmental degradation exacerbated by climate change	Increasing local participation in the management of natural resources and other environmental measures (e.g. relating to water quality, vegetation, air quality)

Source: Global Environmental Change and Human Security (GECHS)

#### Box 4.2 Mangroves for the future

Studies of the tsunami in South East Asia in December 2004 have shown that the scale of the disaster was partly due to the fact that large areas of mangroves and other coastal vegetation had been cleared and used for other purposes. In response to this, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) together with tsunami-affected countries developed the *Mangroves for the Future* initiative to promote the sustainable management of coastal areas, safeguard livelihoods and reduce the vulnerability of coastal populations to natural disasters. The initiative was launched in cooperation with the United Nations Office of the Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, headed by Bill Clinton. The main focus is on the countries that were hardest hit by the tsunami: Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, India, the Maldives and the Seychelles. Norway is providing NOK 30 million for the first phase of the project (2007–09).

intends to strengthen Norwegian institutions so that they become a leading resource for both Norwegian and international administrative bodies, particularly when dealing with the problems developing countries are facing in relation to climate change.

Most of the least developed countries (LDCs) are currently developing national adaptation programmes of action as part of the adaptation efforts funded by the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), which was established under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and is administered by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). This work is providing useful information and should be built on further, but the most important task is to integrate the programmes of action into national development and poverty reduction plans.

Sound land-use and natural resource management is important in reducing the risk of natural disasters, even without the added problem of climate change. In addition, this reduces the impacts of climate change. For example, the conservation of forests in mountainous areas prevents soil erosion and landslides, good agricultural management in rural areas reduces the damage caused by droughts, and intact coral reefs and coastal vegetation such as mangroves reduce the damage

caused by extreme winds and high waves. The Government will intensify its efforts to improve the land-use and natural resource management and the protection of the natural resource base in vulnerable countries by increasing its funding for bilateral and regional environmental and natural resource programmes.

The Government will help to strengthen institutions that are responsible for the management of natural resources at both national and local level in relevant partner countries. Measures to strengthen the capacity to prevent humanitarian crises and to respond to early warning signs should be linked up to our long-term support for natural resource management. We should also help to ensure that global institutions such as the UN, the development banks and the environmental convention secretariats increase their focus on the prevention of humanitarian crises.

Developing an integrated natural resource and environmental management regime is a challenging process for many developing countries. The Government will support processes where natural resource management is seen in an overall perspective, i.e. across sectors and different administrative levels, and where the various authorities develop close cooperation both with one another and with the local community.

We must focus more on cross-sectoral urban planning. This must be an inclusive process in order to gain legitimacy in the local communities concerned. Urban planning that takes into account risk and vulnerability analyses and follows them up with political action and resources will be an important tool in efforts to increase resilience, including in poor urban areas.

#### *The Government will:*

- base work on adaptation to climate change on local, traditional strategies for disaster risk reduction and preparedness in relation to extreme weather events;
- contribute to sustainable land-use and natural resource management by promoting good governance and local participation;
- support efforts and processes where resource management is, as far as possible, rights- and community-based;
- support efforts to develop plans for integrated water resource management at both national and regional level;
- climate proof all Norwegian long-term development efforts;



### Box 4.3 The impact of climate change in Africa

*The Impact of Climate Change in Africa* produced by scientists from South Africa, Nigeria and Tanzania was one of the supporting documents for the *Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change*, which was commissioned by the UK Chancellor of the Exchequer.

According to *The Impact of Climate Change in Africa*, a temperature increase of 2 C would result in the following:

- Africa would suffer total losses of USD 133 billion (equivalent to 4.7% of GDP), most of which will be in the agricultural sector;
- Ethiopia, Mozambique and Nigeria would be worst affected, suffering losses equivalent to 17.7%, 19% and 11.2% of GDP;
- Losses in the agricultural sector would be highest in Nigeria, Sudan, Algeria, Cameroon, South Africa, Morocco and Gambia, accounting for half of the total for Africa;
- an additional 12 million people would be at risk of famine as a result of lower crop yields; and
- an additional 20 million people would be affected by flooding.

A temperature increase of 2.5–5 C would result in the following:

- 128 million people would be at risk of famine;
- 108 million people would be affected by flooding;

- income from animal husbandry would fall by several billion dollars; and
- the sea level would rise by 15–95 cm (with a 95-cm rise in sea level, Gambia's capital city, Banjul, would be completely submerged).

The impacts of climate change will make marginal agricultural areas unsuitable for food production and millions more people will be at risk of malaria. Zambia and South Africa will be among the countries with the greatest reduction in agricultural production. In South Africa, a total of 7.8 million people will be at risk of malaria in 2100.

Water shortages will be further exacerbated. Climate change will reduce the discharge volume of the Nile, which will reduce the area of wetlands in Sudan significantly. Normal irrigation practices cease once annual flow of water is reduced by 20%. The likelihood of this occurring before 2020 is over 50%. Tanzania and South Africa are two of the countries that will be worst affected by water shortages. The icecap on Kilimanjaro will disappear in the course of the next 15 years if the current rate of recession continues.

Sea level rise will be a threat to coastal areas, mangroves and lagoons in Mozambique, Tanzania and Angola. Flooding will claim millions of lives. With rising temperatures, there will be a risk of the extinction of threatened plant and animal species.

- seek to ensure that risk and vulnerability reduction measures become a core part of adaptation efforts and are given the same priority as measures to cut greenhouse gas emissions both before and after the end of the first Kyoto commitment period in 2012;
- seek to ensure that reducing disaster risk and vulnerability is an integral part of the work under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification;
- ensure that Norway's humanitarian efforts do not cause environmental degradation and seek to raise our partner countries' awareness of environmental and climate-related problems;
- seek to ensure that the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) focuses on the prevention of climate-related natural disasters in its efforts relating to agriculture, rural development, drought, desertification and sustainable development in African countries;
- support the efforts of the UN and the development banks to increase access to clean drinking water and satisfactory sanitation systems;
- support international studies and research projects that further increase our knowledge of the impact of environmental and climate change on efforts to achieve the MDGs, on the fight against poverty and on vulnerability to humanitarian crises, as follow-up to the IPCC's reports; and
- support further research on national and local impacts of climate change as a basis for plans and strategies for reducing disaster risk and vulnerability.

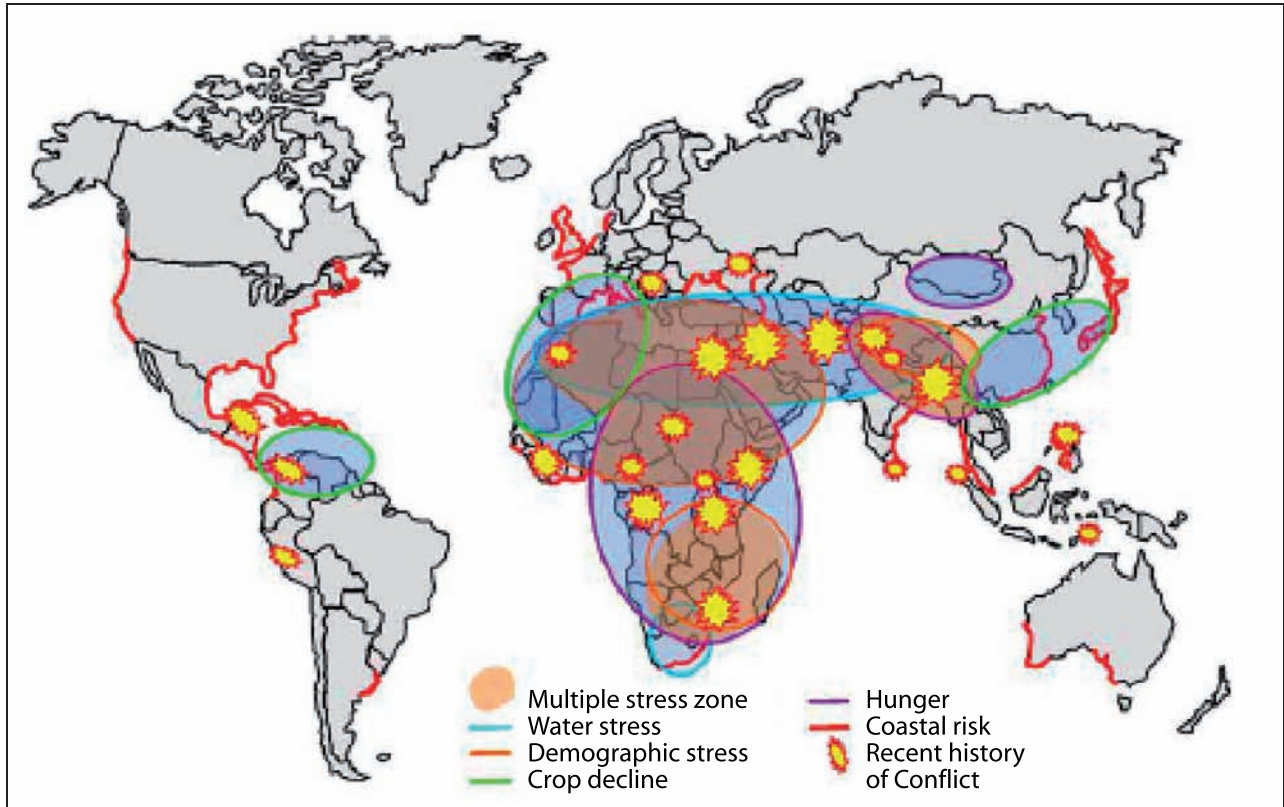


Figure 4.1 Risk zones for complex environmental crises

Source: Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre (DCDC)

#### 4.1.1 International efforts to develop early warning systems

Much loss of human life could be prevented with better monitoring and early warning systems. We frequently see that the present systems are not good enough and that although sound plans do exist, they are not followed up. This is particularly the case in developing countries.

The tsunami in December 2004 was a wake-up call and triggered initiatives to improve regional early warning systems not just for the Indian Ocean, but also for the Caribbean Sea, Central America and the Mediterranean.<sup>1</sup> The tsunami also made us realise that future early warning systems would have to take a broad range of risks into account, such as rising sea levels, droughts and food shortages in central parts of Africa, the melting of glaciers in the Himalaya region and the resulting flooding, landslides and subsequent water shortages and drought in the Greater Himalayan region.

For several years, Norway has provided economic and technical support for the development of early warning systems. We have emphasised the importance of basing these systems on sound

knowledge of risk factors, appropriate monitoring systems, the ability to provide clear information to the public and the development of local preparedness systems.

The most important early warning systems are not fully financed; neither is the vital work of identifying «hotspots»,<sup>2</sup> which is one of the prerequisites for increasing the effectiveness of early warning systems. The climate change that is currently taking place is making the identification and early warning of potential threats even more important than before, not only in connection with

<sup>1</sup> Concrete plans for the establishment of an early warning system for the Indian Ocean were included in the Framework for Action adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe 2005, where UNESCO, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (ISDR) were given responsibility for this task. The system will primarily focus on early warning of earthquakes and tsunamis, but the aim is that it will gradually be expanded to a multi-risk management system. Part of the Norwegian funding for this work is earmarked for building expertise on tide measurement under the auspices of the European Sea Level Service, which is currently chaired by Norway (represented by the Norwegian Mapping Authority). Norway's support has enabled the IOC to intensify its coordination efforts in the Indian Ocean and to provide expert advice in connection with the recently initiated work on developing more early warning systems of this type.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 2.2.3.

tsunamis and earthquakes, but also in connection with threats to food security and water supply. This will require increased efforts at national, regional and international level. In order to meet these challenges, it is important to give priority to the development of national platforms for reducing vulnerability and strengthening local expertise and preparedness. This work will be undertaken in close cooperation with the ISDR, in connection with the follow-up of the Hyogo Framework of Action agreed on at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe in 2005. Emphasis will be placed on developing gender sensitive indicators in this work.

The Government wishes to increase support for preventing natural disasters. With this in view, we need to forge more alliances and partnerships at local and regional level, particularly in relation to early warning systems. Countries that have knowledge and experience of disaster risk reduction, such as Cuba, Bangladesh, China, Vietnam, etc, have a great deal to offer other countries in similar situations.

The political framework for efforts to establish early warning systems is just as important as economic support. Early warning systems are based on trust; where there is a lack of trust between different sectors of society, the effectiveness of such systems will be undermined. Norway can play a role here through confidence-building and peace efforts and in connection with our peace and reconciliation efforts, etc. There is potential here for far more streamlining of preventive efforts relating to different types of disaster.

The current international efforts to develop early warning systems for conflicts are mainly being carried out by research communities and NGOs. This work involves some sensitive political issues, and the governments of the countries in question are often reticent to allow these issues to come into the public spotlight. The UN's political bodies have not been among the most proactive in the efforts to establish sound norms and practices in this area. The Government will seek to ensure that the members of the Security Council and other key actors have better access to up-to-date analyses of potential conflict situations. Cooperation with external research communities will be vital in this connection. These should also be involved in further development of methodologies and indicators for this area. Norway is in a dialogue with the UN on how we can help to strengthen the UN's capacity for early conflict prevention.

A number of UN organisations have key information on potential natural disasters and conflicts, and various UN funds and programmes are carrying out important work on early warning systems. This data and knowledge should have a broader application, and this would require better coordination between these organisations than is the case today.

The Government intends to support measures for better utilisation of the UN system's total resources for analysing situations where there is a risk of unrest and conflict, before violence actually breaks out. In potential conflict areas, the operative part of the UN system is well positioned at country level to strengthen the political dialogue and preparedness planning process, which can help to prevent conflict and humanitarian crises. Prevention is a key element in the mandates of the UN's integrated operations.

#### *The Government will:*

- increase support for the establishment and operation of effective regional and international early warning systems for natural disasters;
- support efforts to develop national platforms for risk reduction and preparedness through our partnerships with the ISDR and the IOC/UNESCO, and with institutions such as the Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning, the Norwegian Geotechnical Institute, the International Centre for Geohazards, NORSAR, the Norwegian Mapping Authority and the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate;
- help to strengthen the UN system's analysis capacity in relation to countries and areas where there is a particular risk of unrest and conflict; and
- seek to strengthen cooperation between the UN and international NGOs to ensure good access to information and analyses on potential political unrest and violent conflict.

#### **4.1.2 Food security**

The Government believes that improving food security is vital for the capacity of local populations to deal with both long-term and acute crises. Malnutrition and mineral deficiencies are important factors in the incidence of disease and high mortality rates, particularly among children, pregnant women and people affected by HIV/Aids.

Low food security weakens people's resilience in crisis situations.

Food security is a contentious and sensitive issue on which both politicians and experts sometimes disagree. Environmental and climate change, population growth and rapidly growing urban areas, as well as political and violent conflicts in countries with good agricultural potential make the need to find effective solutions even more urgent. The main message in the World Bank's *World Development Report* (2008) is that agricultural development is decisive for poverty reduction efforts.

The international community has come a long way towards accepting low food security. It waits for the next drought or flood, and then expresses surprise and sends food aid. The reason this pattern of reaction has survived for so long is that there has been a surplus of food on the international market. This has resulted in cheap food imports and easy access to emergency supplies in crisis situations. Cheap food has been an important factor in improving the quality of life of the poor, including the rapidly growing slum populations.

The Government can see that the global food situation could change, for example due to environmental and climate change and due to the present trend of rising food prices. These changes could easily reduce food security at local level. The most vulnerable parts of the population are often directly dependent on the natural resources in their immediate surroundings to meet their basic needs, including food. Some of this food

supply, for example agricultural produce that is consumed locally and fish from local fisheries, could be used in a crisis situation. However local food production does not have a very high profile and is easily overlooked. The Government attaches importance to ensuring that the basis for local food production is not undermined.

Norwegian policy in this area is designed to benefit the people who are suffering from long-term and acute hunger, with a view to improving food security for vulnerable groups. In partner countries where this is a priority issue, Norway should follow a policy of addressing hunger and malnutrition as symptoms of poverty and poor governance, and thus promote agricultural developments that can better meet the domestic needs for food.

There are many political leaders who do not pursue policies to protect the population from hunger. We will raise this issue in bilateral talks. Another fundamental problem is that the large food surplus from rich countries is being dumped in poor countries. We will continue to deplore this practice.

The Government's aim is to help its cooperation partners to strengthen their preparedness for food crises, where appropriate, through developing more robust production systems that are adapted to changes in precipitation patterns. It is important to build up local food and seed stores and develop good trading mechanisms at regional level to ensure that food can be distributed rapidly. Support should also be provided for studies and research on the development and use of plant varieties and

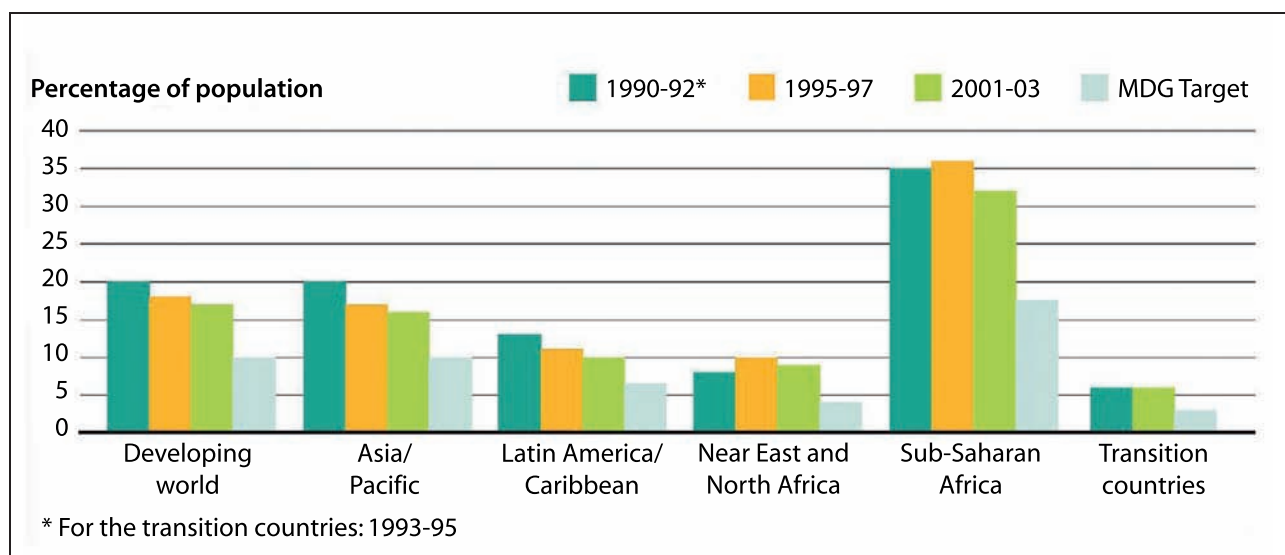


Figure 4.2

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

cultivation methods that are adapted to a changed climate. Support for institutions that are responsible for emergency preparedness should be provided alongside support for general institution building, so that close links between crisis management and long-term risk reduction can be ensured. For example, support should be provided for political processes that ensure access to land.

The accelerating loss of biodiversity in food and agriculture constitutes a serious threat to food security. Much has been done in recent years to safeguard seed diversity through the establishment of national and regional gene banks in developing countries. Unfortunately these gene banks may be at risk in the event of natural disasters and conflicts, and may be lost. A global gene bank is therefore vital to provide additional protection against irreplaceable losses. The Government has taken the initiative to establish such a facility – the global seed vault in Svalbard. This depository of seeds is a unique contribution to ensuring global food crop diversity, and it has the capacity to store over three million different types of seed. In cooperation with the UN, developing countries are ensured free transport and storage of their seed collections in the Svalbard vault. The Nordic Gene Bank is responsible for operating the seed vault, which is a joint project between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry of the Environment.

Food distribution is necessary in crisis situations, but this should take into account the population's needs and cause the least possible damage to local production and markets. This requires sound analyses of the local food supply situation and careful assessment of what measures will give the best results (for example providing agricultural tools, seed, fertiliser, cash, etc.).

Distribution of seed can also have negative consequences for local food security. It is important to prevent seed being eaten in a humanitarian crisis in order to safeguard the livelihoods of small-scale farmers. It may not be an absolute shortage of seed that is the problem in a disaster area, but rather a relative shortage due to lack of purchasing power. In the longer term it is important to ensure that the seed on offer is suitable for the local environmental, social and economic conditions. It will also be important to support the development of food crops and agricultural methods that are more adaptable to changes in precipitation levels and patterns. In the Government's view, there is a need for more realistic exit strategies with milestones for phasing out and discon-

tinuing the distribution of food, and for replacing it with other forms of support where appropriate. Cooperation between the World Food Programme (WFP), FAO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and other international actors will be vital to coordinate support in the transition phase and to develop a more common needs analysis.

The Government underscores that food aid is neither the only possible nor the best approach in all food crises. It is important that assistance is provided in a way that does not undermine local or regional production or markets, for example by purchasing food and necessary services within the country or region in question as far as possible. However, making accurate assessments of the real food needs is difficult especially when there is time pressure.

Direct cash transfers have been found to be more effective than food aid in certain situations. Measures to increase purchasing power were implemented in response to the Indian Ocean tsunami (2004) and the South Asian earthquake (2005). This enables the affected population to decide themselves what food and other necessities they most need. However, this form of assistance must be considered in the light of local market capacity to provide the goods and distribute them to those in need. Measures should be designed to ensure that priority is given to women and children, and that they and other target groups are involved, for example by taking part in food distribution. It is also important to ensure that the local population has access to financial services in the reconstruction phase.

Today, most of the international food aid is tied. This means that it is given directly by the donor country to the national authorities in the country in question or to humanitarian organisations. Many studies show that untied aid is generally more effective, as it can be tailored to the relief operation in question in terms of cost effectiveness, delivery time, appropriate types of food, etc. The Government will seek to ensure that all food aid is untied and that the international instruments and agreements on food security become more effective. We will also help to develop international methods and standards to ensure more prudent and effective use of food aid.

WFP, FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have established Food Security Team Groups at country level with a view to improving the coordination of the UN's food security and agricultural development

efforts. The Government considers this to be a very positive step and an important follow-up on the UN reform initiative.

*The Government will:*

- improve coordination of Norwegian humanitarian relief, transitional assistance and long-term development cooperation with a view to increasing food security in vulnerable countries;
- continue to deplore international dumping of food and seed in vulnerable countries, and encourage a broader debate on the effects of large-scale seed distribution;
- promote environmental and resource management that as far as possible takes into consideration local food production in vulnerable countries and areas;
- contribute to the preservation of locally adapted types of seed at national level and ensure long-term storage of seed in the global seed vault in Svalbard through the Global Crop Diversity Trust;
- seek to improve UN coordination in the field of food security, for example by supporting Food Security Team Groups at country level;
- request that the UN, particularly the World Food Programme, incorporates the purchase of food from local and regional markets as far as possible in its emergency relief efforts;
- support the transfer of cash instead of food aid where appropriate, with a view to safeguarding vulnerable groups, and build up the knowledge base on the effect of this form of emergency relief;
- support measures such as the food-for-work and food-for-education initiatives where relevant;
- support agricultural reform efforts, including equal rights for women to own land, with a view to reducing vulnerability;
- help to strengthen higher education and research institutions in the field of food security in partner countries; and
- promote greater North-South and South-South exchange of expertise and experience between planning, research and educational institutions.

## 4.2 Health security

The Government intends to strengthen the health perspective in foreign policy. Political decisions often have consequences for health, and the health arena is also useful for achieving foreign

policy goals. Together with France, Norway launched the Foreign Policy and Global Health initiative in 2006. This led to the presentation of a joint statement and action plan by the foreign ministers of Brazil, France, Indonesia, Senegal, South Africa, Thailand and Norway in March 2007.

The World Health Organization (WHO) is the leading international body in relation to global health issues, while other UN organisations have operational responsibility for meeting acute health needs in crisis situations. Health security is the topic of the WHO's *World Health Report* for 2007 for the very reason that crises and conflicts undermine health security. WHO is the lead agency of the Global Health Cluster,<sup>3</sup> and has established the Health Action in Crises (HAC) network to implement these efforts. In the Government's view it is important that such a prominent and normative body as the WHO is helping to strengthen health efforts in crisis situations.

As was discussed in Chapter 2.1.5, vulnerable groups become particularly susceptible in crisis situations. Women, for example, become even more vulnerable in a conflict situation and, as a group, have caught the attention of the Security Council. The Government will help to maintain sharp focus on the health sector, including on the issue of sexualised violence both during and after a conflict. We need more knowledge about this area, and we need to promote changes in attitude on the basis of the knowledge we already have.

The connections between food aid and health security should be taken into consideration in tropical areas, where food rapidly spoils, the food production chain is poorly equipped for preventing the spread of disease, and disasters such as floods cause farm manure and sewage to be spread, causing life-threatening epidemics.

A well-functioning health system is an important factor in local preparedness capacity. And this has also become a key issue in multilateral arenas. However, given the large number of international health initiatives, and not least the growing number of private initiatives and resources, it is vital to ensure that international efforts do not overburden local management capacity, and that the international management of health security is improved, given the mutual dependency of countries in this area.

<sup>3</sup> The new cluster approach to humanitarian response is described in more detail in section 4.5.2.

#### **Box 4.4 Foreign policy and global health**

Health security is moving up the international agenda. Norwegian foreign and international development policy should support this international effort. In the spring of 2007, a Norwegian-French initiative resulted in a joint statement by the foreign ministers of Brazil, Indonesia, France, Senegal, South Africa, Thailand and Norway that sets out ten focus areas where foreign policy engagement can contribute to the world's health agenda. The Foreign Policy and Global Health initiative highlights three levels of response:

*I. Make the health impact of foreign policy visible to political leaders*

- foreign policy needs to be more health sensitive and health responsive
- we should act on political policies that have negative impact on survival

*II. Put a focus on some specific policy areas where we together can add concrete and substantial value*

- areas dependent on policy changes and advances that can eliminate major bottle-

necks that impede achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals, such as trade (pharmaceuticals and technologies), migration and health workforce issues

- areas that are not currently being given the attention required, where a concrete focus can drive change, such as:
  - development and use of health indicators to better assess peace and reconstruction processes
  - roadmaps for health recovery as a peace-making tool
  - more empirical knowledge of the effect of health intervention at different stages of conflicts

*III. Apply a «health lens» (giving visibility to health impact) to ongoing intergovernmental processes, where such an initiative can give added value*

- WHO processes on trade, patents and innovation
- strengthening pandemic preparedness with particular focus on the response to avian flu.

*The Government will:*

- intensify efforts to promote the health perspective in foreign policy;
- help to strengthen the WHO's efforts in relation to humanitarian crises in general and its leadership of the Global Health Cluster in particular, for example through the Health Action in Crises (HAC) network;
- emphasise the health perspective in connection with the discussion of the vulnerable situation of women and girls in armed conflicts;
- seek to ensure that the UN Peacebuilding Commission enhances understanding of the importance of the health dimension as a goal in itself, as a means for achieving peace, and as an indicator of progress in peace and reconstruction processes; and
- identify and engage research communities to consider the health consequences of foreign policy in general and the health aspects of conflict management in particular.

### **4.3 Urban planning and good governance**

The Government gives high priority to the promotion of human rights and democracy. Democracy is both a good in itself and a means of bringing about sustainable development. It is also a means of making a society more resilient to humanitarian disasters.

Sound, effective and inclusive local political institutions play a key role in preventing tensions between different social groups from developing into violent conflict. This also applies to trends we are seeing in rapidly growing urban areas.

If we are to have any hope of increasing resilience to conflict in urban areas, we must focus on strengthening local government capacity to provide basic social services. This would put local authorities in a better position to deal with various crisis situations.

**Box 4.5 Gaza – an urban pressure cooker**

Gaza is home to several hundred thousand refugees, most of whom are unemployed, and according to the UN this means that many of them are living below the poverty line, i.e. on less than one dollar a day. Some 1.4 million people are living in the Gaza Strip – an area of 360 km<sup>2</sup>. Most of them live in urban areas or refugee camps. The refugee camp Jabaliya is believed to be the most densely populated area in the world, more densely populated than Hong Kong. Around 70% of the inhabitants are refugees, and most of them are third or fourth generation refugees. These are the living conditions of a quarter of a million people under the age of 20, who account for around 60% of the population of Gaza (2007). To them, the world's most densely populated area is like a big prison. The result is radicalisation among young people and increased risk of conflict between different Palestinian factions and between Palestinians and Israelis.

Political will and budgetary priorities are also required at national level. The fact that the authorities in many countries are not doing enough, or not doing anything, in relation to disaster risk reduction is a major challenge. Disaster risk reduction is partly a question of national measures, but it is primarily the responsibility of local authorities, and they generally do not have the resources to fulfil this responsibility. The result is increased vulnerability.

At the same time, the prospects of reducing risk for large numbers of people are particularly good in densely populated areas. There are better opportunities for participating in the planning and organisation of measures in towns and cities. It is also possible to reduce vulnerability through the formalisation of user and property rights at both collective and individual level. The Government therefore recognises that there is a growing need for an active risk reduction policy for all densely populated areas, with particular focus on areas that have been poorly planned. It is important that risk reduction is integrated into efforts to promote good governance.

The Government does not believe that investing in sustainable development in rural communities alone is enough to address problems such as

drought and flooding that are leading to urbanisation. More attention should be directed to helping local authorities to deal with rapidly growing urban populations.

Important elements in this work include effective land-use planning and better coordination between different social sectors, for example with a view to improving investments in physical and social infrastructure, particularly water and sanitation and the general physical environment. Local and national authorities must plan the development of housing and public buildings in less vulnerable areas. In particular, low-income groups should be given the opportunity to buy, rent or build secure homes on secure sites.

Risk reduction measures must be based on thorough analyses of risk and vulnerability in the area in question. It is particularly important to ensure good environmental assessments and site analyses, standards, control and follow-up of construction and housing projects. A focus on densely populated areas increases the need for cross-sector cooperation. The impacts of climate change, for example in relation to water supply, must be taken into greater consideration in this work. Competence and knowledge in this area needs to be strengthened in countries in the South and more widely shared between them.

The Government will take the initiative with other like-minded countries to move urbanisation issues relating to humanitarian crises higher up on the international development agenda in the UN General Assembly, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), UNDP, the World Bank, the regional development banks, the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), the Development Assistance Committee in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC), WHO, FAO and the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Emphasis should be given to the links between conflict, the environment and urbanisation in the forthcoming «One UN» pilot projects at country level. For example, greater attention should be given to preparedness for urban humanitarian crises. There is also a need for response mechanisms specially adapted to local conditions with a basis in local government to respond to any crisis situations that may arise, including good early warning systems, evacuation plans and transport facilities. Education and awareness raising are also very important factors in risk reduction efforts. The Government will also seek to enhance the development and



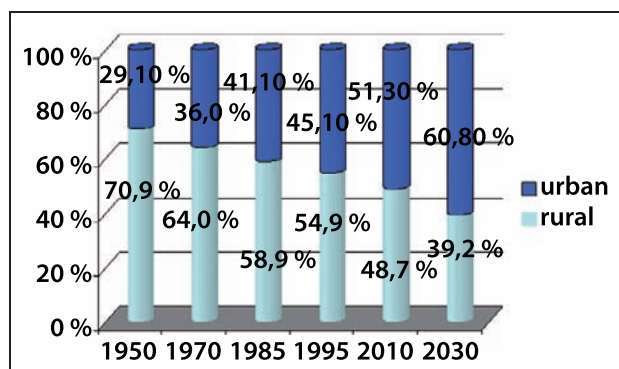


Figure 4.3 World population

Source: World Urbanization Prospectus. The 2003 Revision

exchange of expertise between planning, research and educational institutions in the North and South as well as between institutions in the South.

Most of Africa's poor are still to be found in rural communities. The fight against poverty in rural Africa is vital for preventing destitution. Food security is a key factor, but there are a broad range of challenges that need to be met in order to address poverty in rural communities.

Disasters destroy not only lives, health, property and nature, but also the economy in parts of a country or in the country as a whole. In addition, disasters can affect people's socio-economic status in different ways, and can hit different geographic areas with differing degrees of severity. Neighbouring areas that are less severely affected or unharmed may have resources that can help the worst hit areas. At the same time, «resource economies» in the vicinity of a disaster area may also be negatively impacted if they are excluded from participating in the humanitarian and rehabilitation efforts that are implemented. Private sector actors and local markets have the potential to restore economic balance. Analyses of the local, national and regional economies in the wake of a disaster can reveal what opportunities that are present in both the formal and the informal sector and how they can be strengthened, for example through private remittances from other countries.

*The Government will:*

- promote the decentralisation of authority and resources for disaster risk reduction and preparedness to local and regional authorities through national and regional development plans, etc;

- strengthen cooperation on disaster risk reduction between UN-HABITAT, UNDP and OCHA in vulnerable areas, particularly in the reconstruction phase, in close consultation with local authorities and organisations;
- support efforts to improve urban development strategies that take into account environmental considerations, land-use planning and infrastructure in urban slum areas, for example in cooperation with the regional development banks and Cities Alliance;
- support programmes to formalise the user and property rights of the poor in slum areas and vulnerable rural areas, for example through UN-HABITAT and UNDP;
- seek to ensure that towns and cities that are vulnerable to climate change invest in improvements to infrastructure, including drainage, water supply and sewage treatment systems, so that it can withstand various kinds of natural disaster;
- support infrastructure projects in coastal cities, with a particular view to increasing protection against rising sea levels (dikes and dams, alterations to harbours, flood barriers and protection against tsunamis, etc.);
- strengthen international efforts on risk assessment and vulnerability analysis for particularly vulnerable urban areas, including systems for early warning and evacuation plans;
- strengthen the efforts of UN-HABITAT and other relevant organisations to develop and disseminate information on measures that can reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in urban areas, such as developing better transport systems and more effective insulation and building materials;
- help to ensure that the links between conflicts, natural disasters and urban development is given priority in UN plans and efforts at country level; and
- support UN humanitarian appeals for the vulnerable urban poor.

#### 4.4 Protection of the civilian population

##### 4.4.1 The role and participation of women, children and young people

The Government considers it important to improve the protection of particularly vulnerable groups in various crisis situations. Women, children, members of minority groups, the disabled and the elderly are often the most at risk. In

order to reduce vulnerability to humanitarian crises, it is necessary to understand the underlying processes that cause poverty and lack of resilience and that to some extent have very different effects on women and men, and boys and girls.

Children are the primary victims in wars and conflicts. In the last decade, two million children have been killed, between four and five million have become disabled, one million have lost or become separated from their parents, and ten million have been traumatised. A total of 39 million children, more than half of the 77 million children in the world who do not attend school, live in war- and conflict-affected countries. Approximately two thirds of them are girls.

Children are less vulnerable if they have learned what to do in the event of a disaster, and the school system has obvious opportunities to provide this knowledge. It is also important that children who are affected by disasters return to school as soon as possible. Schools occupy children and young people during a period of their lives when they are vulnerable to recruitment to armed forces and military groups and other forms of exploitation. Education can also play an important role in the fight against poverty, control of population growth and spread of epidemics, as well as increasing people's ability to take care of themselves. Furthermore, education can help to normalise children's daily lives, reduce traumas and create hope for the future.

Education should be forward-looking and relevant, and should also look ahead to the period when the crisis or conflict is over. It is vital that the right to education for all children is formally recognised, so that children are able to continue their education once the situation is normalised. It is also important to ensure that efforts to make education relevant include taking local customs and value systems into account.

The promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women is one of the UN's Millennium Development Goals. Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) is an important step in the effort to enable women to participate on the same terms as men in peace and security efforts. Women are also to be given priority in Norway's development cooperation. Together with the *Action plan for women's rights and gender equality in development cooperation* (2007–2009), these documents are to form the basis for efforts to prevent humanitarian crises in a broad sense, not just in connection with conflicts.

Women are not only victims but also important actors, and should be involved at all levels of risk reduction efforts, on the same terms as men. The recruitment of more women volunteers will increase women's access to various welfare services and thus reduce their vulnerability. In increasing the focus on the gender perspective, the Government is seeking to foster a more integrated, inclusive and not least more effective approach to risk reduction efforts, including in reconstruction processes.

However, the Government does not believe that including the gender perspective in political dialogues and international humanitarian efforts at a general level is sufficient to increase the involvement of women in disaster risk reduction or reduce their vulnerability to humanitarian crises. Targeted measures are also needed to secure women's rights, their participation and the consideration of their needs in efforts to prevent both conflicts and complex crises.

Preparedness measures and humanitarian efforts in a disaster situation can provide women with new opportunities to participate in political and economic processes. The principle of subsidiarity can be used as a means to mobilise women as a resource in disaster risk reduction and to secure their right to participate. From Norway's point of view, this is basically a question of good leadership of risk reduction efforts at various lev-

#### **Box 4.6 Security Council resolution 1325 and the Government's action plan**

The Government's action plan for the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security is a key normative document for Norwegian conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. Both the resolution and Norway's action plan emphasise the fact that war and conflict affect men and women differently, and point out that women must be involved in conflict prevention if these efforts are to be sustainable. Women need to participate in peacekeeping, in peace negotiations and in security sector reform. Meanwhile, the gender perspective is to be mainstreamed into all areas of peace, security, development and democracy efforts. The resolution underlines the need to protect women against violence and abuse and to safeguard their rights in conflict-affected areas.

els, but all too often those in charge fail to meet their obligations.

The Government underscores the importance of intensifying efforts to identify and provide support for women's organisations involved in risk reduction and preparedness. The lack of gender-sensitive analyses and information on the situation of women in vulnerable areas continues to be a problem. When a disaster strikes, this is often one of the first areas to be given lower priority. Efforts by the UN and humanitarian organisations in this area have lacked local ownership, which has reduced their effectiveness and, in the worst case, increased vulnerability.

It is also essential that children and young people are involved as resource persons and agents of change, not only because the right to participate is at the core of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, but also because children account for one of the most vulnerable groups in crisis situations. With this in view, support should be provided for existing children's and young people's groups and organisations in addition to fostering new groups and networks. Partnerships with NGOs are particularly important in efforts to mobilise children and young people in the local community.

#### *The Government will:*

- seek to ensure that Norway actively promotes a stronger role for women in risk reduction efforts as a key element in the fight against poverty;
- give priority to measures to involve women and women's organisations in peace processes and risk reduction efforts at the local level, and measures to give them more authority and responsibility;
- request Norway's cooperation partners to hold local consultations in connection with their risk reduction efforts, to seek input from and about women, and to ensure that standardised routines and guidelines for early rehabilitation and reconstruction are adapted accordingly;
- promote support and loan schemes for women affected by natural disasters, such as micro-finance, insurance, pension and cash transfer schemes;
- seek to ensure that education is included in all humanitarian relief plans and that sufficient funding is rapidly made available for the education of children affected by war and conflict;
- help to involve children and young people in long-term risk reduction and preparedness

#### **Box 4.7 The experience of Sri Lanka**

Studies of emergency relief efforts in Sri Lanka after the tsunami in December 2004 show that women organised a large part of the local relief work immediately after the disaster struck, particularly in the east of the country. In addition to adapting efforts to take account of ethnic and religious factors, these women organised the response in such a way that fostered social cohesion. When international aid workers arrived on the scene, they overlooked most of the local efforts during the first critical phase of the relief operation. A great deal of money was in circulation, and there was intense coverage by western media and a false sense of urgency. Relief efforts were started without consulting local people. After a few months, little remained of what could have become an emergency response system with a firm basis in the local community, a well-balanced gender perspective and a good degree of sustainability. Instead, tension between different social groups increased. Moreover, little attention was paid to protecting women from sexual violence. This issue was considered to be too time-consuming and «sensitive», and other needs were given higher priority.

- efforts through partnerships with UN organisations such as UNICEF and UNHCR, and through alliances of international NGOs;
- request partners to ensure that children and young people have the opportunity to express their views on issues that affect them;
- support efforts to ensure universal access to primary school education in fragile states;
- ensure that Norwegian development policy is based on minimum international standards for education during humanitarian crises and in the early reconstruction phase; and
- contribute to knowledge building and research aimed at increasing the effectiveness of disaster protection systems for children and young people.

#### **4.4.2 Minorities and indigenous peoples**

In many countries, economic and social conditions for ethnic minorities are far more difficult than for the majority of the population. Minorities are also

frequently marginalised in terms of political participation. As a result, ethnic minorities are among the most vulnerable groups in humanitarian crises.

Many ethnic groups and indigenous peoples are directly dependent on a healthy natural resource base to survive, and will be particularly hard hit by environmental disasters caused by climate change. At the same time the way of life and sustainable resource management practised by indigenous peoples may in many cases provide part of the solution to preventing environmental disasters.

Their distinctive way of life and cultural traditions mean that many ethnic groups, particularly indigenous groups, have special needs in a humanitarian crisis. It is therefore important that their needs are taken into consideration and that the groups involved take part in developing the humanitarian response.

Despite the fact that failure to consider minorities' rights and interests has been a factor in a number of conflicts, minority issues have not been given sufficient attention in international conflict prevention and reconstruction efforts. Protecting minority rights is an important aspect of conflict prevention.

Violations of minority rights can be seen as a clear indication of an increased risk of conflict. In conflict prevention efforts, it is important to monitor minorities' opportunities for political and economic participation, their property rights and their access to the legal system.

*The Government will:*

- seek to foster greater understanding of minority rights at various levels – local, national, regional and international, and focus on the inclusion and participation of minority groups in risk reduction efforts;
- promote dialogue between national authorities and ethnic minorities, and between different ethnic minorities, on measures to reduce vulnerability and on the importance of participation;
- give priority to efforts to maintain robust ecosystems that reduce the risk and scale of humanitarian crises; and
- seek to ensure that efforts to ensure the recognition of traditional property and user rights are high up on the risk reduction agenda in areas inhabited by indigenous peoples and other groups who depend on local natural resources.

#### 4.4.3 Ban on weapons with unacceptable humanitarian consequences

The Government considers it important to strengthen the international efforts to bring about a ban on weapons with unacceptable humanitarian and development consequences.

Anti-personnel mines and certain types of cluster munitions affect civilians particularly severely, both during and long after conflicts. The long-term negative economic consequences have been well documented. These weapons impede development. They have serious impacts on agricultural production and on the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and they make reconstruction efforts much more difficult. Children and young people are particularly severely affected. In addition, the spread of small arms and light weapons draws out conflicts in many countries and regions.

According to UNDP, 23 developing countries are currently affected by cluster munitions. In response to this situation, Norway has taken the initiative for an international ban on cluster munitions with unacceptable humanitarian consequences. An important goal is to prevent existing stocks of these weapons being spread to new countries. This could cause a greater humanitarian crisis than the damage caused by landmines in the 1980s.

Cluster munitions tend to kill and injure civilians rather than military forces, both because they do not always explode as intended and because they affect such a wide area that it is impossible to differentiate between military and civilian targets. In 2006, it was documented for the first time that 98% of the registered casualties are civilian.<sup>4</sup> Ten years after the Mine Ban Convention was adopted – a process involving active diplomatic efforts on the part of Norway – cluster munitions are creating a new «minefield» that could take decades to clear.

*The Government will:*

- work towards an international ban on the production, use and transfer of cluster munitions;
- increase Norway's support for efforts to clear cluster munitions in conflict areas;
- strengthen Norway's efforts to help the victims of cluster munitions, with a view to provid-

<sup>4</sup> *Fatal Footprint: The Global Human Impact of Cluster Munitions*, Handicap International (2006).

ing better information, medical assistance, physical rehabilitation, psycho-social support and economic rehabilitation;

- strengthen Norway's partnership with Handicap International and other key actors in the international Cluster Munitions Coalition (CMC);
- contribute to continued international efforts to ban the use of landmines; and
- support new measures to reduce the number of small arms and light weapons.

## 4.5 Strengthening the UN

### 4.5.1 Strengthening the UN's mediation and peacebuilding capacity

The growing number of weak states is increasing the risk of political instability, conflicts and complex humanitarian crises. Meanwhile, there is a considerable risk of a return to conflict relatively soon after a peace agreement has been signed, and the combination of these two factors is placing new demands on the UN's and the world community's overall capacity for peacemaking. The Government considers that this capacity should be strengthened, primarily with a view to closing the largest gaps in the present security architecture.

The UN's mediation capacity has been limited for a long time. This area has been poorly structured and is generally based on ad-hoc solutions. There has been a shortage of both qualified personnel and systems to develop and maintain skills and expertise. In contrast to the UN's peacekeeping efforts, where faults and deficiencies are constantly in focus, mediation is carried out discreetly, and neither progress nor setbacks receive much attention.

As part of the process of modernising and strengthening the UN, it is necessary to expand the UN's role in mediation efforts to prevent or resolve conflicts. The UN has a unique mandate to maintain international peace and security, and must be given the necessary capacity to fulfil this role. Norway is engaged in efforts to increase the UN's overall mediation capacity. In concrete terms, this has involved support for the establishment of the Mediation Support Standby Team for the Mediation Support Unit under the UN Secretariat's Department of Political Affairs (DPA). The standby team will provide relevant personnel, including women, who are at present strongly underrepresented in this area. Norway will con-

tinue to be involved in these efforts in the time to come.

The UN should ensure that the experience from mediation efforts is gathered and systematised, and that it is utilised on later occasions. Furthermore, UN peace mediators should have good access to expert advice and support. To ensure that they can respond satisfactorily as problems arise, there should be arrangements for putting them rapidly into contact with relevant expertise, both within and outside the UN. The Government believes the planned Norwegian peacebuilding centre will be a relevant partner for the UN in this context.<sup>5</sup>

The DPA intends to focus particularly on areas where there seems to be a connection between environmental and climate change and conflict. This is particularly relevant in Central African countries. The plans are at an early stage at present, but the Government will follow up this project in cooperation with the DPA.

The Government also considers it very important for Norway to continue its active involvement in the UN Peacebuilding Commission, which has a special responsibility for strengthening peacebuilding in the UN and for coordinating efforts in countries that are considered to be particularly at risk of relapsing into war or other forms of violent conflict.

#### *The Government will:*

- fund a standing group of peace mediation experts – under the administration of the Norwegian Refugee Council – that is at the disposal of the UN, and will seek to boost the UN's capacity to resolve conflicts;
- establish a Norwegian peacebuilding centre with links to the existing Norwegian research community and international networks, with a view to boosting UN capacity in this area;
- strengthen Norway's engagement in the UN Peacebuilding Commission; and
- cooperate with the DPA to put the links between climate change, the environment and conflict on the agenda in areas where this is relevant.

<sup>5</sup> The Norwegian peacebuilding centre is currently being established. One of its objectives will be to boost the UN's capacity for mediation, peacebuilding and statebuilding through systematic development of expertise and dissemination of information. Indirectly, this will also further develop Norwegian expertise in the field, for example through cooperation with international experts.

#### Box 4.8 Peacebuilding under the auspices of the UN

The Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office in the UN Secretariat together play an important role in the efforts to develop an integrated, coordinated and robust response to post-conflict situations on the part of the international community. This is essential to prevent the return to previous conflicts and the development of new conflicts. So far, Burundi and Sierra Leone have been put on the Commission's agenda. Norway is chairing the Commission's efforts in Burundi. In order to increase the benefit of these efforts, they should be extended to other countries. Furthermore, UN reform should be consolidated and further developed. Norway will continue its active engagement in this work.

#### 4.5.2 Humanitarian response and preparedness

A rapid, coordinated and effective humanitarian response is vital to save lives and relieve suffering. Norway's humanitarian efforts are intended to promote local ownership, an early response on the basis of early warning systems, and response mechanisms that are as predictable and well coordinated as possible. Our efforts are designed to increase resilience to humanitarian crises at local level on the do-no-harm principle, including through humanitarian partnerships with the UN, NGOs and other actors. We will also intensify our efforts to ensure that emergency relief is gender-sensitive.

The Government will focus on the need for more funding for risk reduction and measures that can streamline emergency relief, transitional assistance and long-term development cooperation. We view this as a key element of good humanitarian donorship. Better donor coordination is becoming increasingly relevant as our capacity to chart vulnerability and predict humanitarian crises improves.

Humanitarian institutions and organisations play a key role in risk reduction efforts, particularly in three areas:

i) *Firstly* as advocates and champions of risk reduction efforts. Raising awareness of the need for risk reduction has mainly been a task carried

out by humanitarian actors and financed over humanitarian budgets. Their advocacy function is important given the fragmented nature of the development system.

The UN has the main responsibility for spearheading this work in close cooperation with national authorities, international financial institutions and NGOs. The Government considers that the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is, on the basis of its existing mandate, in the best position to act as a global advocate for risk reduction at all levels – global, regional, national and local. These efforts should be organised through the various OCHA offices, and through support to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). These advocacy efforts should be undertaken in close cooperation with the UN Secretary-General.

In addition, efforts to develop new international norms and rules in this area, such as the ICRC's International Disaster Reduction Laws project, are very important. This project drew up guidelines for domestic facilitation and regulation of international relief and initial recovery. According to plan, these are to be adopted at the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent.

ii) *Secondly*, humanitarian response reform will save more lives and provide better protection for people who are affected by humanitarian crises. Norway will continue its active involvement in the reform effort, with the aim of improving financial mechanisms, coordination, the system of resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators, and partnerships between the UN and other humanitarian actors, primarily NGOs. This will increase the predictability and effectiveness of humanitarian efforts.

New financial mechanisms such as the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the common humanitarian funds for Sudan and DR Congo have provided strong incentives for closer coordination and are paving the way for less project-based and more partnership-based humanitarian operations in the future. Together with other emergency relief funds, they increase the speed and flexibility of the humanitarian response to new crises and help to prevent existing crises from worsening rapidly. Such mechanisms will become increasingly widespread and important in the countries that we know are most vulnerable to humanitarian crises.

The same applies to the new cluster approach for humanitarian response.<sup>6</sup> The objective of this

#### Box 4.9 Civilian-military coordination

Humanitarian assistance is often provided during a conflict and under difficult security conditions, where access to the civilian population is very restricted. In many conflicts, humanitarian aid organisations work alongside international military forces, and this places considerable demands on coordination and distribution of roles. The protection crises in the Darfur region of Sudan and in DR Congo, the build-up of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan and the situation in Iraq.

The Government considers it important that humanitarian efforts are as a general rule carried out by civilian aid agencies. However, in some cases, it may be necessary to draw in military resources if the civilian capacity is insufficient. This must be done on the basis of international guidelines for such operations, to ensure that humanitarian principles and considerations are not undermined. Decisive importance must be attached to the cost efficiency and technical humanitarian expertise of the various actors.

OCHA has drawn up guidelines for the use of military personnel in humanitarian crises – the Oslo Guidelines for disaster relief, and the MCDA Guidelines for complex emergencies. The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and OCHA have also produced guidelines for how «quick impact» or «hearts and minds» projects to be carried out by international military forces should be planned, coordinated and implemented to ensure that they harmonise with civilian humanitarian efforts.

In recent years, military resources have been employed in the humanitarian arena primarily in connection with major natural disasters (for example, for search and rescue, rebuilding infrastructure, transport). Other actors, such as private companies, have also been playing an increasingly important role. There is no doubt that in exceptional circumstances, military

transport and logistics capacity can be decisive in inaccessible areas, as we saw after the earthquake in Pakistan in 2005. Many member countries therefore wish to strengthen cooperation between the UN and military authorities in this area.

In conflict situations and complex crises where we are confronted with a combination of general poverty, violent conflict and a need for humanitarian protection and assistance, civilian-military coordination presents both opportunities and challenges. Humanitarian organisations and military forces have different departure points in terms of security and the capacity to operate in conflict areas. The main purpose of military operations is to provide stability and security, and thus protect and safeguard the humanitarian space. Humanitarian actors also depend on the trust and support of the local population. It is therefore important that military forces and civilian actors show mutual respect and understanding for each other's roles, so as to ensure that aid personnel are not exposed to threat or attack, and that their access to those in need is not limited.

The Government supports the development of a more integrated approach to peace operations under UN management, and is involved in efforts to coordinate the UN's efforts at country level («One UN»). We are also supporting NATO's efforts to improve the coordination of operations in which it is involved. Integrated UN operations are based on a concept where the UN's military, political, police, humanitarian and development efforts are fully or partially under joint command. One of the main objectives of a more integrated approach is to ensure a clearer and more efficient distribution of tasks that also respects humanitarian actors' needs for independence and impartiality.

reform is to fill gaps in the humanitarian system by clearly designating the UN agencies responsible for coordination and priorities in different areas of activity. This approach helps to improve prioritisation between existing humanitarian needs and acts as an early warning system for new crises. This reform has strengthened the

partnership between the UN and NGOs, including the ICRC.

UNDP is responsible for coordinating early recovery, which means planning for long-term development during the humanitarian relief phase and the transitional phase. This work must start at the same time as the humanitarian response so

that steps can be taken as early as possible to reduce the risk that a new crisis will have the same impacts. UNDP will have to increase its capacity considerably before it is in a position to implement such measures at country level.

However, the fragmentation of the development system and the lack of budget flexibility among donor countries make it difficult to obtain sufficient resources for this work. Norway can provide transitional assistance and budgetary flexibility. We have provided political support and funding for UNDP's risk reduction efforts, and will increase our cooperation, also with a view to improving coordination between the UN and the World Bank in the transitional phase. OCHA should also cooperate more closely with the actors involved in the transitional phases between emergency relief, early recovery and development.

*The Government will:*

- to an increasing degree, request that risk reduction measures are included as an integral part of the international humanitarian response;
- seek to ensure that new financial mechanisms, such as the CERF and common humanitarian funds for particular countries, help to reduce vulnerability, improve living conditions and underpin long-term solutions;
- ensure that Norway takes steps to increase the focus on risk reduction and preparedness at the UN General Assembly;
- actively support risk reduction efforts by UN bodies and the international financial organisations and take the initiative for international conferences and other measures that give this area a more prominent position on the international agenda;
- help to increase focus on risk reduction in connection with the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) efforts, with a view to improving donor coordination and joint efforts; and
- support measures that can highlight the humanitarian and economic benefits to be

<sup>6</sup> A cluster is a partnership between the UN, NGOs and national authorities with a view to supporting the authorities' own efforts. Thus, a cluster is also a channel for political dialogue on humanitarian and development priorities, and provides opportunities for improving reconstruction efforts and risk reduction measures. Humanitarian action plans are also used for this purpose. There are a total of 11 clusters that are organised both at central level within the UN organisations and in the field, with the objective of improving preparedness and coordinating humanitarian efforts.

gained from increased investment in risk reduction.

iii) *Thirdly*, providing emergency humanitarian standby capacity is an important aspect of risk reduction. Norway is playing a key role in efforts to strengthen the response capacity of humanitarian institutions. Since the establishment of the emergency preparedness roster NORSTAFF under the Norwegian Refugee Council in 1991, Norway has become a leading partner in this field for the UN system and others, including the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Norway has also supported the establishment of the SURGE project under UNDP, which is designed to enhance capacity to respond in the recovery phase of a crisis. We have thus gained a strong profile in the humanitarian field.

Norway has also supported the Save the Children Norway's crisis response team since it was established in 1995. The team is made up of personnel with expertise on children in war and other crises. Save the Children Norway has an agreement with UNHCR to deploy personnel to a crisis within 72 hours to provide care and protection. The crisis response team has also been used by other organisations such as UNICEF and the International Save the Children Alliance, and plays an important role in ensuring psychosocial care during acute crises and conflicts.

The Government advocates strengthening Norway's support for standby capacity, both to prevent loss of life and as part of the international humanitarian reform. This will be an important contribution towards closing current gaps in the humanitarian system. Norway will cooperate closely with OCHA, UNHCR and other UN institutions, and these efforts will help to improve international coordination and rapid response capacity. They are to be primarily field oriented.<sup>7</sup>

The existing response capacity should be strengthened and supplemented. The Government will take a proactive approach to the UN's efforts, in

<sup>7</sup> Experience shows that present response capacity for dealing with acute and unexpected flows of migrants by sea or by land is inadequate. There are international mechanisms for dealing with people who have fled their homes if they fall under the definition of refugees set out in the Refugee Convention. However the rules, procedures and assistance systems are unclear or non-existent for other types of migrants, such as climate or environmental refugees. The number of natural disasters and complex crises is likely to rise as a result of environmental and climate change, and the international community therefore needs to be better equipped to meet these problems. Norway should contribute to this effort.



#### **Box 4.10 A brief outline of Norway's emergency response system**

- 1991: the emergency preparedness roster NORSTAFF is established in response to the large number of Kurds fleeing from Iraq during the Gulf War
- 1994: an agreement is concluded with the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights on the recruitment and training of personnel for the Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (NORDEM)
- 1995: the NORAFRIC roster is established
- 1996: the deployment team NORTEAM is established
- 1998: a WHO force is established to coordinate health efforts in complex crises
- 2005: NORMIDEAST is established
- 2005: PROCAP – a UN inter-agency project to provide standby capacity for protecting refugees and internally displaced persons – is established
- 2006: GENCAP – a project to provide gender standby capacity for emergencies – is established

The Norwegian Refugee Council's emergency standby forces constitute one of three pillars in the Norwegian Emergency Preparedness System NOREPS. Altogether NOREPS has a roster of some 650 men and women who can be deployed to an emergency within 72 hours. NOREPS is a partnership between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning, the Norwegian Red Cross, major NGOs and the Norwegian private sector. The system was established to ensure rapid delivery of previously approved Norwegian goods and services to the UN and NGOs for use in crisis situations. Ready-to-deploy stocks make it possible to fly out suitable relief products within 24 hours.

cluding the plans to establish a roster of well-qualified humanitarian/resident coordinators, for a pool of gender experts (GENCAP), rosters of field personnel at different levels, and the new Mediation Support Unit (see section 4.5.1). Norway will focus on the important role of women in response capacity, and will seek to raise awareness of this issue in our work with UN emergency response systems, including the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team.

*The Government intends to strengthen Norway's profile as a standby partner in international emergency response systems by:*

- improving coordination at national level through closer cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norad (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation), the Norwegian Refugee Council, the Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning, the Norwegian Emergency Preparedness System (NOREPS)<sup>8</sup> and other Norwegian actors with a view to developing new preparedness niches for future humanitarian efforts;
- improving the financial position of key Norwegian actors so that they can systematically

recruit, train, administer and follow up standby personnel, and maintain closer contact with international partners;

- taking part in steps to strengthen UN personnel resources for emergency relief operations, through the secondment of civilian personnel, including from the South;
- promoting a stronger gender perspective in international preparedness efforts;
- improving the quality of UN personnel for field operations, and ensuring that Norwegian standby rosters meet the same quality standards as the UN sets for its field personnel in leading positions ; and
- improving systems of emergency stockpiles in cooperation with the UN and NGOs.

#### **4.6 Closer partnership with the World Bank**

International financial institutions are not just providers of loans, they also set important standards in efforts to resolve international issues. The World Bank, for example, plays an important role in key areas such as poverty reduction, sustainable development, reconstruction after conflict and adaptation to climate change.

<sup>8</sup> NOREPS is described in more detail in box 4.10.

The Government wishes to strengthen its partnership with the World Bank on measures to reduce vulnerability. The recently established Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) is an important tool for integrating risk reduction and preparedness into strategies for poverty reduction, economic growth and good governance in low- and mid-income countries. This is the facility's first three-year period.

*The Government will:*

- Strengthen Norway's partnership with the World Bank on risk reduction and poverty reduction through active support for the GFDRR; and
- Seek to ensure that the GFDRR provides long-term support for risk reduction efforts in the most vulnerable countries.

#### 4.7 Build back better

In the Government's view, a satisfactory response to the challenges that arise immediately after a humanitarian crisis is of crucial importance for successful reconstruction and long-term development. The slogan *build back better* reflects the importance of ensuring greater resilience to future natural disasters. Rapid and systematic measures to resolve or address the causes of violent conflict reduce the risk that it will flare up again. Reconstruction after natural disasters also provides a unique opportunity for dialogue and cooperation that can reduce the risk of conflict, although we have also witnessed examples where the opposite has been the case. The reconstruction phase is therefore of major strategic importance for risk reduction efforts and is consequently receiving increasing political attention.

Nevertheless, there are still gaps in the international response to post-crisis situations. For example, there is no overall, effective responsibility for coordination. The transition from humanitarian to development efforts is not just a question of transition from one form of funding to another; it is also a transition from mainly international efforts to national efforts and national administration.

It is difficult to mobilise enough funding for reconstruction while acute humanitarian needs are still in focus. The present system is based on the individual actors' assessment of priorities and appropriate channels. This leads to fragmented

#### Box 4.11 Building back better in Guatemala

After the havoc wrought by Hurricane Stan in 2005, the authorities in Guatemala directed considerable political attention to risk reduction. The country now has a national policy for natural disaster risk reduction, which was drawn up after extensive consultations between the public and private sectors, including the universities. A national body has also been established, with offices in all departments and a particular focus on the school system. At local level, these efforts have resulted in greater willingness to cooperate by focusing on the common interests of the local community as a whole, and have thus had a positive effect on peace and reconciliation processes in the country. Together with other international donors, Norway has helped to increase awareness of the importance of risk reduction among national politicians in Guatemala. We are now seeing the results of this work, which was started while the memories of the hurricane were still fresh.

efforts without an overall plan or strategic approach, and makes it more difficult to achieve a good dialogue with national and local authorities. Just as international media attention fluctuates, so too national authorities come under pressure to address other urgent tasks as soon as the most acute humanitarian situation has been dealt with. Scant resources weaken the determination needed to ensure sustainable reconstruction. The result is lower resilience to future crises and an increased risk of a return to violence and conflict.

Low or non-existent capacity to ensure effective reconstruction in the recipient country, for example in fragile states, is one reason why the transition stage is so difficult. It can also legitimise longer transition phases to allow for the planning and building of institutional capacity to reduce risk. This applies in particular to humanitarian assistance in connection with a temporary breakdown in the authorities' capacity to provide services (such as health, education, water, sanitation and transport), as opposed to assistance to meet temporary humanitarian needs (such as food, shelter and first aid).

In recent years, however, we have seen several initiatives and reforms that in the long run can

have a positive effect on reconstruction, and thus on the prevention of future crises. One of these is the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005), which Norway has also endorsed. It sets out important guidelines for integrating disaster risk reduction into the planning and implementation of development programmes. The cluster approach to humanitarian reform is another example (see section 4.5.2). *Delivering as One*, the report of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on System-wide Coherence, which included Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg as one of the co-chairs, also provides important guidelines for achieving a more robust funding system and better coordination and effectiveness of the reconstruction phase.

The Government will work towards further strengthening of the international response to essential reconstruction measures. The overall aim is to develop an integrated approach that emphasises effective and rapid results. This is the only way to prevent a return to conflict, ensure a satisfactory transition phase, and lay the foundation for stability and long-term development. There are three areas where efforts should be bolstered: we need more robust financing mechanisms, a rapid and flexible response, and better leadership and coordination.

#### 4.7.1 Robust financing mechanisms

The reconstruction phase requires rapid, flexible, predictable and, not least, adequate financing. There is far less funding available for reconstruction than for humanitarian relief and long-term development. In addition to increasing the volume, one of the main goals is to ensure that bilateral and multilateral donors and NGOs to a greater extent work within a common framework based on common needs assessments. The World Bank and the UN have developed such a framework for post-conflict situations, the Post-Conflict Needs Assessment (PCNA), which is a very positive step forwards. This model now needs to be consolidated and further developed. An equivalent framework for reconstruction after natural disasters is also needed. A good needs assessment at an early stage helps to ensure clearer priorities, better planning of the further efforts, and better utilisation of resources.

A more flexible response will require less earmarking of funds. Major actors such as the World Bank and the UN system should have sufficient room for action to be able to channel funds to where they are most needed, rather than funds

#### Box 4.12 Experience of multi-donor trust funds (MDTFs)

In recent years, Norway has provided NOK 500–600 million a year to multi-donor trust funds (MDTFs) for countries and territories affected by war and other crises, for example Sudan, Sierra Leone, Iraq, the Palestinian Territory, Afghanistan, Indonesia and East Timor, in addition to providing funding for the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP) for Central Africa. These are administered by the World Bank or the UN.

Experience shows that MDTFs are very useful for focusing donor efforts on priority targets, particularly for funding reconstruction projects under local administration. They have been able to obtain financial support from donors that would not otherwise have contributed, reduced donors' exposure to risk, and simplified the negotiation process for recipient countries. Such funds are used in combination with efforts to strengthen financial management in recipient countries, and create valuable forums for dialogue between donors, recipient authorities and in some cases other actors, such as NGOs.

However, in some situations MDTFs are inefficient in the early phase of reconstruction efforts following a conflict or natural disaster. This is particularly true in conflict situations in particular and Sudan is a prime example. We should therefore seek to make the funds more effective in such situations, so that they can have the best possible preventive effect.

being tied up by the individual donor's own priorities. Predictable and adequate funding must be made available. Norway should continue to provide multilateral actors with substantial unearmarked funds, both as core contributions, and as funding for reconstruction efforts, and we should spearhead efforts to establish joint financing mechanisms in the reconstruction phase.

Multi-donor funds clearly have drawbacks. Nevertheless, the opportunities they offer should be better utilised and further developed, particularly in terms of flexibility, speed and coordination with NGOs. Donors should be willing to accept greater risk and responsibility, and the purpose of the fund – for example risk reduction – should be

far more clearly defined. The Government therefore considers it important to take an active part in efforts to improve cooperation between the World Bank and the UN system and the development of a true partnership.

Establishing a multi-donor fund can take some time. The Government therefore sees a need for permanent funds that can be drawn on quickly and unbureaucratically and/or appeals that can raise funds within a short space of time. The UN Peacebuilding Fund is a mechanism of the first type. The Government will continue to provide substantial support to the Peacebuilding Fund and will encourage other donors – both traditional and non-traditional – to contribute to the fund so that it can be used more widely. At the same time, we recognise that in the early phase of a crisis, other actors, particularly civil society actors, are often able to provide a faster and more flexible response than a fund.

#### 4.7.2 Rapid and flexible response

OCHA and other humanitarian actors have developed considerable flexibility and response capacity and can deploy personnel and emergency supplies rapidly to humanitarian crisis areas. The same speed and flexibility now needs to be developed by the key actors in the reconstruction phase.

One of the main challenges is to strengthen capacity in the organisations that deploy resources to meet transitional needs, for example to ensure self-reliance and safeguard livelihoods. The overall capacity, flexibility, ability to respond and cost-effectiveness of these organisations should be carefully assessed. So should their roles and mandates. Rapid deployment of personnel with the right technical and personal profile to initiate necessary measures is vital. This is also a way of strengthening and further developing the cluster approach (see section 4.5.2).

The cooperation between the UN and Norwegian NGOs on standby arrangements in the fields of humanitarian relief and human rights and democracy provides a good model (see section 4.5.2). This is an area where Norwegian actors have considerable expertise, which will be valuable as more parts of the UN system develop greater flexibility and capacity for deploying personnel. Norway's present standby system includes personnel who could be used in reconstruction efforts. Better utilisation of these resources should therefore be considered. Nor-

wegian emergency response experts could make a valuable contribution as advisers for the UN and other institutions with a view to establishing similar systems elsewhere.

#### 4.7.3 Better leadership and coordination

National capacity to deal with development assistance in post-conflict situations has tended to be very low. Once national elections have been held, the international community quickly loses interest in a country even though there may still be major humanitarian needs and the long-term funding for development is not yet in place. At the same time, the population tends to have high expectations of rapid improvements. Therefore, in post-conflict situations, risk reduction will to a large extent mean meeting these expectations through positive results on the ground.

In line with its policy platform, the Government will engage in efforts to enable the UN to take strategic leadership of the vital transition phase from war to lasting peace. During the reconstruction phase, the management role of the UN resident coordinator involves a number of different functions, including coordination, strategic planning, dialogue with the authorities, mobilisation of the necessary resources and external communication. In order to achieve optimal utilisation of resources, we need a broader consensus on the resident coordinator's core activities during the reconstruction phase, priorities, and how the organisational structure can best be adapted to the tasks at hand.

We should have realistic expectations of what a resident coordinator can achieve. Besides, it is important to ensure that strengthening international efforts does not undermine the national authorities; international efforts should rather help to bolster national capacity.

The Government considers it important to strengthen the role of UN resident/humanitarian coordinators. This is vital in order to protect the humanitarian space and is also relevant in terms of following up the report of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel. It is extremely important that resident/humanitarian coordinators have high levels of competence and good leadership skills. More emphasis should be given to strengthening analysis and planning capacity and the mobilisation of resources, so that the UN's efforts in the transitional phase are well adapted to local conditions and needs, particularly as regards the links between risk reduction and the

#### Box 4.13 Security sector reform

Security sector reform involves a broad range of tools designed to strengthen the security sector's legitimacy and effectiveness. Measures are mainly targeted at the defence authorities, the police, the justice sector and the prison service. Strengthening and modernising the security sector is an important part of democratisation and of efforts to rebuild states after a conflict.

Security sector reform is vital for stabilisation and normalisation. It is also vital for preventing gender-based violence. If the security sector does not function properly, this undermines the legitimacy of state institutions, impairs the prospects of peace and reconciliation and hampers economic and social development. It is important that the international community can provide rapid and visible improvements in security that meet the local population's expectations. Unfulfilled expectations and impunity lead to disappointment and distrust, and thus increase the risk of a return to conflict.

There is a great need for international support for security sector reform, and the Government regards Norway's efforts in this area as an important contribution to preventing conflict and complex humanitarian crises. Norway is supporting security sector reform through bilateral projects and in cooperation with international organisations such as the UN, NATO, the

OSCE and the EU. A number of international organisations are seeking to strengthen their civilian crisis management capacity. The UN is focusing on security sector reform in the context of its efforts to develop integrated peace operations.

Today, up to 1% of Norway's operative police force can serve abroad. Some of the military personnel posted abroad are also promoting security sector reform, mainly by training military personnel in Afghanistan. In addition, Norway has a crisis response pool of experts in the justice sector, and a crisis response team for defence sector reform. Experts on democracy building and human rights are recruited through the Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (NORDEM). This is an area where the demand for qualified personnel may rise, and we propose that the system should be further developed, for example with a view to seconding personnel to regional organisations.

In 2007, Norwegian personnel working with general security sector reform were posted in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Liberia, Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia and Sudan. Afghanistan is one of our priority countries, and Norway is providing personnel in several areas of security sector reform.

fight against poverty. This will also be important for the efforts to develop a better coordinated international response through integrated peace operations.

#### *The Government will:*

- support the UN's and World Bank's reconstruction efforts with a view to ensuring clearer priorities, better planning processes and more efficient use of resources;
- seek to strengthen the UN's coordinating role at country level, for example through the pro-

posals set out in the report of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel;

- continue to provide substantial unearmarked funds for our multilateral partners, both as core contributions and as funding for reconstruction efforts;
- play an active role in developing common financial mechanisms in the reconstruction phase;
- support reconstruction measures through the UN's humanitarian appeals; and
- strengthen standby arrangements for personnel for early recovery and transitional assistance.

## 5 South-South cooperation and regional partnerships

The Government wishes to see an intensification of efforts to strengthen risk reduction capacity and expertise in our partner countries in the South. It is vital to facilitate competence-building in these countries so that they are better able to meet the challenges outlined in this white paper. Risk reduction should therefore be incorporated into efforts to improve governance. Efforts to strengthen civil society are also very important. The Government would like Norad to have a particular responsibility for ensuring a closer dialogue with NGOs on the links between humanitarian relief and long-term development cooperation, in consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Government wishes to develop partnerships with actors that actively disseminate knowledge and information with a view to strengthening risk reduction at both bilateral and regional level. Such partnerships should include exchange of experience of peace and reconciliation measures, dialogues on reducing vulnerability to different types of humanitarian crisis, efforts to increase understanding of risk and conflict, and discussions on emergency response, gender issues and crisis management, with a view to strengthening local capacity.

A number of preparedness and adaptation measures such as building up emergency food stocks, developing new agricultural methods, initiatives to provide employment during the reconstruction phase, and measures to address migration issues, etc, could benefit from regional cooperation. The same applies to research into and studies of regional and local impacts of climate change.

There is also potential for far closer South-South cooperation in the early reconstruction phase. Countries that have emerged from conflict and have started reconstruction have valuable experience to share with countries that are about to start such efforts. There are often sensitive issues at stake, and the competence of these countries may be particularly relevant in this context, for example with a view to preventing a return to violence.

The Government wishes to encourage more South-South cooperation on disaster risk reduction and to help to facilitate such efforts through the UN, the World Bank, the ISDR, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and subregional organisations. We see this as a way to generate greater political commitment to risk reduction measures on the part of national and local authorities.

Environmental and climate change, new migration flows and the risk of increasing conflicts over limited resources will generally have a regional dimension. Most of the world's conflicts occur in regions where at least one of the neighbouring countries is also affected by conflict. There is a need for closer bilateral cooperation between countries in the South on such questions and for closer regional cooperation with a view to preventing different types of humanitarian crisis.

There is clearly a need for regional and subregional organisations, such as the African Union (AU), the Arab League and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), to draw up a common policy and strategy for protecting civilians. Fragile states in particular are facing major challenges in terms of environmental and climate change.

In recent years, a number of new regional initiatives and forums have been established to improve the coordination of risk reduction and emergency response, particularly with respect to natural disasters. These present us with new opportunities for coordination and partnerships.

The need for more regional cooperation is increased by the lack of a clear UN mandate for preparedness, risk reduction, early warning, etc. So far, the UN's most important role has been responding to humanitarian crises, but in recent years it has played an increasing role in preparedness. Organisations such as the ISDR and ProVention have addressed the issue of coordination to some extent, but much more needs to be done.

In regions where there are many small countries, cooperation will be of major significance, but it is important that regional organisations and forums involve the whole region, not just a few

countries. If not, there is a risk of creating more bureaucracy rather than building up functional organisations.

Norway provides support for small-island developing states (SIDS), for example through contributions to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the special funds operated by the GEF, as well as providing support for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Shelf Programme and research cooperation between Cicero (Center for International Climate and Environmental Research) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Climate Change Centre on adaptation to climate change. SIDS are particularly vulnerable to extreme weather and rising sea levels. New waves of refugees can be expected from these states, as adaptation to climate change will entail huge costs.

The development of good regional risk and vulnerability analyses should be encouraged. Such assessments can also play an important role in strengthening cooperation and dialogue between parties to a conflict. Regional cooperation has been established in Latin America, for example the coordination centre for the prevention of natural disasters in Central America, CEPREDENAC, which was set up in connection with the regional cooperation between Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

We need more such examples. There are a number of countries that have had little success with disaster risk reduction, and one of the reasons for this is that they have experienced several crises in a short space of time. Haiti, with its limited resources and expertise, is one such country. It is precisely because national preparedness is poor that local and national resources and emergency response systems are overlooked when disaster hits. Thus little is done to reduce the population's vulnerability in the long term.

Closer regional cooperation on humanitarian and development policy challenges is also a relevant issue for Nordic foreign ministers meetings with other groups of countries, for example the Nordic-African foreign ministers meetings. This model could well be extended to other groups of countries, for example in South Asia, where coordinated measures between what are some of the world's most densely populated countries will be crucial in order to address environmental and climate change in the Greater Himalaya region. The Nordic countries could work together to provide important impetus here.

Security is vital for keeping conflicts in check and achieving development. Developing countries need support for their security sector and the implementation of stabilisation measures involving military forces. The Government is seeking to increase Norwegian civilian and military participation in UN operations in line with its policy platform.

In addition, we should consider providing support for peacekeeping operations under the auspices of regional organisations in the South, monitoring mechanisms in connection with ceasefire and peace agreements, and the training of military personnel in human rights and international humanitarian law. The African Union force in Darfur is one example in this respect. The force has not been able to protect the civilian population, including the internally displaced. But with additional troops, better access to resources, and a mandate that is specifically targeted to protecting civilians, including the internally displaced and humanitarian personnel, a force of this kind could provide effective military support for humanitarian and early reconstruction efforts.

Support for military activities of this kind cannot be reported as official development assistance (ODA). In the long term, the Government will consider whether security measures of this type can qualify for Norwegian funding for the prevention of conflict and humanitarian crises.

#### *The Government will:*

- strengthen regional partners that can deal with emergencies and, through their physical presence, help to prevent humanitarian crises;
- seek to promote closer regional cooperation on risk reduction with particular countries in Africa, Latin America and South Asia (the Greater Himalayan region);
- initially give priority to partnerships with China, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Cuba on South-South cooperation and cooperation with Norwegian centres of expertise on risk reduction and emergency response;
- strengthen cooperation with regional organisations in the South with a view to more systematic exchange of experience and capacity-building;
- help to direct attention to and increase understanding of the impacts of climate change on small-island developing states and vulnerable coastal communities in the Arctic, and support

### Box 5.1 Examples of new regional forums

The *Africa Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction* was established in 2007 by the African Union (AU) with the objective of improving coordination between governments, the UN and NGOs on disaster risk reduction.

The Economic Community of the West African States (ECOWAS) supported the establishment of the subregional *Policy and Mechanism for Disaster Risk Reduction* in January 2007.

The *ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response* has led to the establishment of regional disaster risk reduction mechanisms in Asia, such as the *ASEAN Disaster Management and Emergency Relief Fund*, which is based on voluntary contributions.

The Organization of American States (OAS) has established the *Inter-American Network for Disaster Mitigation* to support good governance and risk reduction measures, including a regional platform for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework.

*CEPREDENAC* (the subregional coordination centre for the prevention of natural disasters in Central America) is coordinating the preparation of the regional *Strategy for Disaster Reduction 2006-2015*.

The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) is drawing up a five-year plan for following up the Hyogo process in the Caribbean, the Strategy and Results Framework for Comprehensive Disaster Management.

On the basis of the *Regional Framework for Action (2005)*, a number of Pacific island states have started work on national action plans in accordance with the Hyogo Framework. A virtual centre of excellence for research into risk and vulnerability is currently being established.

More information can be found at: [www.preventionweb.net/globalplattform](http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplattform).

- measures that can give them a stronger voice in climate negotiations;
- contribute to the establishment of an international mechanism to ensure the transfer of expertise and technology relating to risk reduction, reconstruction and emergency response between countries in the South, in cooperation with the World Bank and the UN;
- support OCHA's efforts to give its regional offices more responsibility for strengthening risk reduction and preparedness capacity and help to bolster OCHA's dialogue with national authorities and regional organisations; and.
- promote the use of the Nordic foreign ministers meetings as a channel for putting humanitarian disaster risk reduction on the international agenda.



## 6 Economic and administrative consequences

The Government will base Norwegian efforts to prevent humanitarian crises on three pillars: better internal organisation, clear priorities and carefully selected institutional channels that bolster risk reduction capacity at local and regional level.

Priority will be given to measures to support local risk reduction, capacity building and democratic participation.

As a donor country and dialogue partner, we are measured against our ability to build successful risk reduction partnerships at different levels. This will require closer coordination of Norwegian support for humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and long-term development, and we will therefore strengthen Norad's role as a centre of technical expertise in this area, with a view to extending our contacts with relevant national actors and strengthening our ties with expert networks in the South. Other organisational measures will also be considered.

Norwegian NGOs, companies and centres of expertise will be important partners for the Ministry. Many of these partners cooperate with the Norwegian authorities today, and it may be relevant to draw in other actors as Norway intensifies its efforts to prevent humanitarian crises.

The measures outlined in this white paper, particularly those involving a greater focus on risk reduction efforts, will have budgetary consequences that will be set out in more detail in the Ministry's budget proposition. These measures will be funded over the budgets of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad.

These efforts will also have administrative consequences, the most immediate of which is that greater focus on risk reduction will require closer coordination of Norway's efforts, both within the Ministry and at the relevant embassies. The strengthening of Norad's role in terms of evaluating partners, developing expertise and evaluating ongoing efforts will also have administrative consequences.

Mention should also be made of adaptation to climate change in this connection, as measures in this area will be in particular focus in the period up to the end of the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period in 2012, and in the subsequent period. These efforts will be included in the Government's climate and environmental policy, on the basis of the current budgetary framework.

A more detailed account of the administrative consequences will be provided when concrete measures are proposed in connection with the budget.

## 7 The Government's action plan for the prevention of humanitarian crises

### I. Bilateral partnerships on disaster risk reduction

#### A. Local mobilisation

The Government will:

- request UN organisations and NGOs that receive funding from Norway for humanitarian efforts to cooperate with local partners and networks, with a view to reducing vulnerability to future disasters;
- give priority to efforts by authorities, NGOs and other relevant partners at local level that can help to reduce vulnerability to humanitarian crises;
- consider giving direct support to local organisations that can help to reduce vulnerability and disaster risk;
- strengthen its partnership with the Red Cross and Red Crescent and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) on local disaster risk reduction and preparedness, and help to strengthen cooperation between the IFRC and the UN's International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR);
- increase support for implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, in close cooperation with the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the World Bank;
- ensure that Norway's bilateral and multilateral support for the education and health sector is used to strengthen public health services and increase their capacity for responding to crises;
- include disaster risk reduction programmes in Norway's efforts within the education sector;
- develop partnerships with the private sector with regard to investment in infrastructure, increased food security, job creation for vulnerable groups, etc; and
- enhance knowledge and exchange of experience on innovative financing mechanisms (e.g. cash transfers) that can help to reduce vulnerability.

#### B. Risk management and poverty reduction

The Government will:

- give higher priority to disaster risk reduction and preparedness in its poverty reduction and development efforts;
- emphasise measures to reduce risk and vulnerability in relation to different types of humanitarian crises in dialogues with the authorities in relevant partner countries concerning the development and follow-up of PRSPs and other relevant planning and policy documents;
- further develop partnerships with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and ProVention on the provision of advice on the practical implementation of strategies and plans for disaster risk reduction in fragile states; and
- further develop the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative, among other things with a view to international mobilisation and policy development in relation to humanitarian disaster response efforts.

#### C. Building bilateral partnerships

The Government will:

- strengthen coordination of Norway's humanitarian efforts, transitional assistance and long-term development cooperation with a view to reducing vulnerability to humanitarian crises in vulnerable countries;
- draw up guidelines for how disaster risk reduction measures can be integrated into Norway's long-term development cooperation;
- increase expertise in the foreign service on practical disaster risk reduction, use of risk and vulnerability analyses, conflict analyses and so on, particularly with a view to helping the embassies in this work;
- strengthen Norad's role in the evaluation of partners, general evaluations and quality assurance in this area; and
- increase support for the development of expertise in this area in NGOs and other sources of expertise.

## II Multilateral partnerships

### A. Adaptation measures

The Government will:

- base work on adaptation to climate change on local, traditional strategies for disaster risk reduction and preparedness in relation to extreme weather events;
- contribute to sustainable land-use and natural resource management by promoting good governance and local participation;
- support efforts and processes where resource management is, as far as possible, rights- and community-based;
- support efforts to develop plans for integrated water resource management at both national and regional level;
- climate proof all Norwegian long-term development efforts;
- seek to ensure that risk and vulnerability reduction measures become a core part of adaptation efforts and are given the same priority as measures to cut greenhouse gas emissions both before and after the end of the first Kyoto commitment period in 2012;
- seek to ensure that reducing disaster risk and vulnerability is an integral part of the work under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification;
- ensure that Norway's humanitarian efforts do not cause environmental degradation and seek to raise our partner countries' awareness of environmental and climate-related problems;
- seek to ensure that the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) focuses on the prevention of climate-related natural disasters in its efforts relating to agriculture, rural development, drought, desertification and sustainable development in African countries;
- support the efforts of the UN and the development banks to increase access to clean drinking water and satisfactory sanitation systems;
- support international studies and research projects that further increase our knowledge of the impact of environmental and climate change on efforts to achieve the MDGs, on the fight against poverty and on vulnerability to humanitarian crises, as follow-up to the IPCC's reports; and
- support further research on national and local impacts of climate change as a basis for plans and strategies for reducing disaster risk and vulnerability.

### B. International efforts to develop early warning systems

The Government will:

- increase support for the establishment and operation of effective regional and international early warning systems for natural disasters;
- support efforts to develop national platforms for risk reduction and preparedness through our partnerships with the ISDR and the IOC/UNESCO, and with institutions such as the Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning, the Norwegian Geotechnical Institute, the International Centre for Geohazards, NORSAR, the Norwegian Mapping Authority and the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate;
- help to strengthen the UN system's analysis capacity in relation to countries and areas where there is a particular risk of unrest and conflict; and
- seek to strengthen cooperation between the UN and international NGOs to ensure good access to information and analyses on potential political unrest and violent conflict.

### C. Food security

The Government will:

- improve coordination of Norwegian humanitarian relief, transitional assistance and long-term development cooperation with a view to increasing food security in vulnerable countries;
- continue to deplore international dumping of food and seed in vulnerable countries, and encourage a broader debate on the effects of large-scale seed distribution;
- promote environmental and resource management that as far as possible takes into consideration local food production in vulnerable countries and areas;
- contribute to the preservation of locally adapted types of seed at national level and ensure long-term storage of seed in the global seed vault in Svalbard through the Global Crop Diversity Trust;
- seek to improve UN coordination in the field of food security, for example by supporting Food Security Team Groups at country level;
- request that the UN, particularly the World Food Programme, incorporates the purchase of food from local and regional markets as far as possible in its emergency relief efforts;

- support the transfer of cash instead of food aid where appropriate, with a view to safeguarding vulnerable groups, and build up the knowledge base on the effect of this form of emergency relief;
- support measures such as the food-for-work and food-for-education initiatives where relevant;
- support agricultural reform efforts, including equal rights for women to own land, with a view to reducing vulnerability;
- help to strengthen higher education and research institutions in the field of food security in partner countries; and
- promote greater North-South and South-South exchange of expertise and experience between planning, research and educational institutions.

#### *D. Health security*

The Government will:

- intensify efforts to promote the health perspective in foreign policy;
- help to strengthen the WHO's efforts in relation to humanitarian crises in general and its leadership of the Global Health Cluster in particular, for example through the Health Action in Crises (HAC) network;
- emphasise the health perspective in connection with the discussion of the vulnerable situation of women and girls in armed conflicts;
- seek to ensure that the UN Peacebuilding Commission enhances understanding of the importance of the health dimension as a goal in itself, as a means for achieving peace, and as an indicator of progress in peace and reconstruction processes; and
- identify and engage research communities to consider the health consequences of foreign policy in general and the health aspects of conflict management in particular.

#### *E. Urban planning and good governance*

The Government will:

- promote the decentralisation of authority and resources for disaster risk reduction and preparedness to local and regional authorities through national and regional development plans, etc;
- strengthen cooperation on disaster risk reduction between UN-HABITAT, UNDP and OCHA in vulnerable areas, particularly in the reconstruction phase, in close consultation with local authorities and organisations;

- support efforts to improve urban development strategies that take into account environmental considerations, land-use planning and infrastructure in urban slum areas, for example in cooperation with the regional development banks and Cities Alliance;
- support programmes to formalise the user and property rights of the poor in slum areas and vulnerable rural areas, for example through UN-HABITAT and UNDP;
- seek to ensure that towns and cities that are vulnerable to climate change invest in improvements to infrastructure, including drainage, water supply and sewage treatment systems, so that it can withstand various kinds of natural disaster;
- support infrastructure projects in coastal cities, with a particular view to increasing protection against rising sea levels (dikes and dams, alterations to harbours, flood barriers and protection against tsunamis, etc.);
- strengthen international efforts on risk assessment and vulnerability analysis for particularly vulnerable urban areas, including systems for early warning and evacuation plans;
- strengthen the efforts of UN-HABITAT and other relevant organisations to develop and disseminate information on measures that can reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in urban areas, such as developing better transport systems and more effective insulation and building materials;
- help to ensure that the links between conflicts, natural disasters and urban development is given priority in UN plans and efforts at country level; and
- support UN humanitarian appeals for the vulnerable urban poor.

#### *F. Protection of the civilian population*

The Government will:

- seek to ensure that Norway actively promotes a stronger role for women in risk reduction efforts as a key element in the fight against poverty;
- give priority to measures to involve women and women's organisations in peace processes and risk reduction efforts at the local level, and measures to give them more authority and responsibility;
- request Norway's cooperation partners to hold local consultations in connection with their risk reduction efforts, to seek input from and about women, and to ensure that standardised rou-

tines and guidelines for early rehabilitation and reconstruction are adapted accordingly;

- promote support and loan schemes for women affected by natural disasters, such as microfinance, insurance, pension and cash transfer schemes;
- seek to ensure that education is included in all humanitarian relief plans and that sufficient funding is rapidly made available for the education of children affected by war and conflict;
- help to involve children and young people in long-term risk reduction and preparedness efforts through partnerships with UN organisations such as UNICEF and UNHCR, and through alliances of international NGOs;
- request partners to ensure that children and young people have the opportunity to express their views on issues that affect them;
- support efforts to ensure universal access to primary school education in fragile states;
- ensure that Norwegian development policy is based on minimum international standards for education during humanitarian crises and in the early reconstruction phase;
- contribute to knowledge building and research aimed at increasing the effectiveness of disaster protection systems for children and young people;
- request partners to ensure that children and young people have the opportunity to express their views on issues that affect them;
- support efforts to ensure universal access to primary school education in fragile states;
- ensure that Norwegian development policy is based on minimum international standards for education during humanitarian crises and in the early reconstruction phase;
- contribute to knowledge building and research aimed at increasing the effectiveness of disaster protection systems for children and young people;
- seek to foster greater understanding of minority rights at various levels – local, national, regional and international, and focus on the inclusion and participation of minority groups in risk reduction efforts;
- promote dialogue between national authorities and ethnic minorities, and between different ethnic minorities, on measures to reduce vulnerability and on the importance of participation;
- give priority to efforts to maintain robust ecosystems that reduce the risk and scale of humanitarian crises;
- seek to ensure that efforts to ensure the recognition of traditional property and user rights are high up on the risk reduction agenda in areas inhabited by indigenous peoples and other groups who depend on local natural resources;
- work towards an international ban on the production, use and transfer of cluster munitions;
- increase Norway's support for efforts to clear cluster munitions in conflict areas;
- strengthen Norway's efforts to help the victims of cluster munitions, with a view to providing better information, medical assistance, physical rehabilitation, psycho-social support and economic rehabilitation;
- strengthen Norway's partnership with Handicap International and other key actors in the international Cluster Munitions Coalition (CMC);
- contribute to continued international efforts to ban the use of landmines; and
- support new measures to reduce the number of small arms and light weapons.

#### *G. Strengthening the UN*

The Government will:

- fund a standing group of peace mediation experts – under the administration of the Norwegian Refugee Council – that is at the disposal of the UN, and will seek to boost the UN's capacity to resolve conflicts;
- establish a Norwegian peacebuilding centre with links to the existing Norwegian research community and international networks, with a view to boosting UN capacity in this area;
- strengthen Norway's engagement in the UN Peacebuilding Commission;
- cooperate with the DPA to put the links between climate change, the environment and conflict on the agenda in areas where this is relevant;
- to an increasing degree, request that risk reduction measures are included as an integral part of the international humanitarian response;
- seek to ensure that new financial mechanisms, such as the CERF and common humanitarian funds for particular countries, help to reduce vulnerability, improve living conditions and underpin long-term solutions;
- ensure that Norway takes steps to increase the focus on risk reduction and preparedness at the UN General Assembly;

- actively support risk reduction efforts by UN bodies and the international financial organisations and take the initiative for international conferences and other measures that give this area a more prominent position on the international agenda;
- help to increase focus on risk reduction in connection with the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) efforts, with a view to improving donor coordination and joint efforts;
- support measures that can highlight the humanitarian and economic benefits to be gained from increased investment in risk reduction;
- improving coordination at national level through closer cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norad (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation), the Norwegian Refugee Council, the Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning, the Norwegian Emergency Preparedness System (NOREPS)<sup>1</sup> and other Norwegian actors with a view to developing new preparedness niches for future humanitarian efforts;
- improving the financial position of key Norwegian actors so that they can systematically recruit, train, administer and follow up standby personnel, and maintain closer contact with international partners;
- taking part in steps to strengthen UN personnel resources for emergency relief operations, through the secondment of civilian personnel, including from the South;
- promoting a stronger gender perspective in international preparedness efforts;
- improving the quality of UN personnel for field operations, and ensuring that Norwegian standby rosters meet the same quality standards as the UN sets for its field personnel in leading positions ; and
- improving systems of emergency stockpiles in cooperation with the UN and NGOs.

#### *H. Closer partnership with the World Bank*

The Government will:

- Strengthen Norway's partnership with the World Bank on risk reduction and poverty reduction through active support for the GFDRR; and
- Seek to ensure that the GFDRR provides long-term support for risk reduction efforts in the most vulnerable countries.

#### *I. Build back better*

The Government will:

- support the UN's and World Bank's reconstruction efforts with a view to ensuring clearer priorities, better planning processes and more efficient use of resources;
- seek to strengthen the UN's coordinating role at country level, for example through the proposals set out in the report of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel;
- continue to provide substantial unearmarked funds for our multilateral partners, both as core contributions and as funding for reconstruction efforts;
- play an active role in developing common financial mechanisms in the reconstruction phase;
- support reconstruction measures through the UN's humanitarian appeals; and
- strengthen standby arrangements for personnel for early recovery and transitional assistance.

#### **III South-South cooperation and regional partnerships**

The Government will:

- strengthen regional partners that can deal with emergencies and, through their physical presence, help to prevent humanitarian crises;
- seek to promote closer regional cooperation on risk reduction with particular countries in Africa, Latin America and South Asia (the Greater Himalayan region);
- initially give priority to partnerships with China, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Cuba on South-South cooperation and cooperation with Norwegian centres of expertise on risk reduction and emergency response;
- strengthen cooperation with regional organisations in the South with a view to more systematic exchange of experience and capacity-building;
- help to direct attention to and increase understanding of the impacts of climate change on small-island developing states and vulnerable coastal communities in the Arctic, and support measures that can give them a stronger voice in climate negotiations;
- contribute to the establishment of an international mechanism to ensure the transfer of expertise and technology relating to risk reduction, reconstruction and emergency response between countries in the South, in cooperation with the World Bank and the UN;

<sup>1</sup> NOREPS is described in more detail in box 4.10.

- support OCHA's efforts to give its regional offices more responsibility for strengthening risk reduction and preparedness capacity and help to bolster OCHA's dialogue with national authorities and regional organisations; and
- promote the use of the Nordic foreign ministers meetings as a channel for putting humanitarian disaster risk reduction on the international agenda. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

h e r e b y r e c o m m e n d s :

that the Recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises dated 7 December should be submitted to the Storting.

---

## Appendix 1

# Brief overview of key processes and actors<sup>1</sup>

Table 1.1

<b>Hyogo Framework for Action</b>	<p>Adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in Kobe, Japan, in January 2005, with participants from 168 countries. With the Indian Ocean tsunami (December 2004) as its backdrop, the World Conference agreed on a framework for natural disaster risk reduction, the «Framework for Action 2005 – 2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters,» known as «The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 – 2015». According to the Hyogo Framework, the authorities of each country are responsible for their own risk reduction measures, as well as for communicating information to the United Nations' principal body for natural disaster risk reduction, the Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). The Framework sets five priorities for action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ensure that disaster reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.</li> <li>– Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.</li> <li>– Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.</li> <li>– Reduce the underlying risk factors.</li> <li>– Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.</li> </ul>
<b>International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)</b>	<p>The UN's global strategy for involving actors in an international effort to reduce the risk of natural disasters and develop a culture of safety and resilience, with a view to ensuring sustainable development. The ISDR system is officially under the direction of the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator and is a partnership of governments, international and non-governmental organisations, international financial institutions, academic and research institutes, civil society and the private sector. The ISDR has special responsibility for following up «The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015» – the declaration on natural disaster risk reduction from the World Conference held in Kobe, Japan, in January 2005. Norway has been supporting the ISDR financially for a number of years; its contribution in 2007 was NOK 6.3 million. The ISDR was established in 2000, and has its headquarters in Geneva.</p>



Table 1.1

<b>ProVention Consortium</b>	The ProVention Consortium is a global coalition of national authorities, international organisations, academic institutions, civil society and the private sector that seeks to raise international awareness of factors and measures that can reduce the extent of damage in the event of natural disasters – primarily in developing countries. The ProVention Consortium focuses on identifying particularly vulnerable areas, as well as carrying out risk and vulnerability analyses. Norway has supported ProVention since its inception, and contributed NOK 2 million in 2007. ProVention was established by the World Bank in 2000. Since 2005, the ProVention Secretariat has been based in Geneva, at the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).
<b>Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery</b>	The Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) was launched in 2006. The partnership is intended to support the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (the declaration from the World Conference held in Kobe in January 2005), while placing special emphasis on low- and middle-income countries that are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters and humanitarian crises. The GFDRR supports the ISDR, the UN's foremost body for disaster risk reduction, and in addition to risk reduction and prevention efforts it provides support for national measures following disasters, taking the countries' own plans for reconstruction as its starting point.
<b>DPA</b>	The UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) plays a leading role in the prevention and resolution of violent conflicts, and works to secure lasting peace in post-conflict countries. DPA monitors global political developments, advises the UN Secretary-General on peacemaking measures, gives guidance to UN peacekeeping missions in the field, and assists Member States directly when required. DPA works behind the scenes with the office of the Secretary-General and his special envoys, and is the lead department in the UN for preventing, limiting and resolving violent conflicts. This work has been further strengthened through the establishment of the Mediation Support Unit (MSU) within DPA, which is to assist mediators in the field by providing expertise and giving advice. In 2007, Norway's contribution to the MSU was NOK 7 million. In addition, the Norwegian Refugee Council received NOK 11 million for an emergency standby force which can be put at the MSU's disposal if required.
<b>DPKO</b>	The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) assists Member States and the Secretary-General in their efforts to maintain international peace and security. DPKO is responsible for planning, preparing and managing UN peacekeeping operations. The Department gives logistical support to peacekeeping missions in the field, and ensures that personnel are trained and that there are sufficient financial resources. DPKO also works to integrate UN peacekeeping operations into the work carried out by national authorities, civil society organisations and other actors. It also gives guidance on issues relating to the military, the police, and mine clearance.

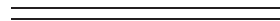
Table 1.1

<b>UNDP/BCPR</b>	The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has initiated risk reduction and recovery efforts in more than 40 countries in the high-risk group for natural disasters, for example to strengthen the countries' institutional capacity. Included in this work is the establishment of a network of specialised advisers who are to be stationed in 13 of these countries. UNDP also has a clearly-defined mandate for disaster risk reduction through its Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR). Norway has a programme agreement with UNDP. A new programme agreement for the 2007-2008 period has been drawn up. Norway will cooperate closely with UNDP on the disaster risk reduction agenda, for example through participating in UNDP's efforts to promote good governance. UNDP/BCPR is one of Norway's key partners in its work relating to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Cluster Munitions Initiative.
<b>OCHA</b>	The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is a department of the UN Secretariat, and it coordinates the international humanitarian response to natural disasters and complex emergencies. Promoting humanitarian preparedness is an important part of OCHA's mandate. Norway's core contribution to OCHA is around NOK 50 million annually.
<b>UN-HABITAT</b>	The United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-HABITAT, has a special programme for «Risk and Disaster Management», which assists governments and local authorities with reconstruction work following conflicts or natural disasters, with particular responsibility for urban and built-up areas. Disaster risk reduction is an important part of the Programme's mandate, and this work includes training local decision-makers and awareness-raising activities. Norway has supported UN-HABITAT's post-tsunami reconstruction work in Sri Lanka. To date, UN-HABITAT's management of an observation system for the housing sector in northern Iraq as part of the UN «Oil-for-Food» Programme is its largest project.
<b>Cities Alliance</b>	Cities Alliance (CA) was established in 1999, with Norway among the countries providing support. The alliance is now a global coalition of 10 major donor countries, a growing number of influential developing countries, and international associations of cities and local authorities, namely United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the World Association of the Major Metropolises (Metropolis). The World Bank and UN-HABITAT are also members and co-chairs of the Cities Alliance Consultative Group. CA aims to reduce urban poverty by focusing on two prioritised areas: city development strategies and citywide and nationwide slum upgrading. CA is endeavouring to integrate preventive work into its strategies to an increasing degree, for instance in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in cooperation with the Norwegian Government and Norwegian Church Aid. Norway is currently a member of the CA's board of directors, the Consultative Group.

Table 1.1

<b>UNEP</b>	The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has a special «Post-Conflict Branch» (PCoB), which seeks to evaluate how environmental damage in the wake of conflicts indirectly affects financial and social conditions, as well as human health. The operational contributions the Branch makes to crisis-affected areas include conducting assessments, capacity building, and giving advice. In this work, UNEP seeks to cooperate with organisations that have humanitarian expertise and competence in various environmental fields. UNEP published its report «Sudan – Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment» in June 2007.
<b>The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement</b>	The humanitarian work carried out by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) covers a range of disaster risk reduction measures and activities, including human rights efforts in accordance with international humanitarian law, and the project «International Disaster Reduction Laws». ICRC is an important actor in relation to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Cluster Munitions Initiative. IFRC has a particularly important role with regard to disaster risk reduction and responding to small and medium-scale natural disasters.
<b>Group on Earth Observations</b>	The Group on Earth Observations (GEO) is an important initiative for the global coordination and exchange of data relating to the environment, security, natural disasters, energy, water, land use, fisheries, climate and ecosystems. Particular emphasis is placed on developing countries' situation and needs. The Secretariat of GEO is based in Geneva, and works closely with the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO). South Africa has played a key role in establishing GEO, and especially in setting up the Capacity Building Committee, which aims to strengthen the capability of all countries, particularly developing countries, to use Earth observation products and data. The Norwegian Government is considering supporting this work.

<sup>1</sup> This overview is not exhaustive, but presents some of Norway's key cooperation partners.















Published by:  
Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Internet adress:  
[www.government.no](http://www.government.no)

Cover photo: Scanpix/AP

Printed by:  
07 Gruppen AS – 02/2008 – Impression 1000

