International Day for Disaster Reduction 2015
"KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE"

Goal: Use International Day for Disaster Reduction, on 13 October 2015 to:

1. Raise awareness of the use of traditional, indigenous and local knowledge and practices, to complement scientific knowledge in disaster risk management;

2. Highlight approaches for engaging local communities and indigenous peoples in implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction;

Communities, Peoples and Resilience

At the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the international community was reminded that disasters hit hardest at the local level with the potential to cause loss of life and great social and economic upheaval. Sudden onset disasters displace millions of people every year. In 2014, 19.3 million people were newly displaced by disasters. Disasters, many of which are exacerbated by climate change, have a negative impact on investment in sustainable development and the desired outcomes.

It is also at the local level that capacities need to be strengthened urgently. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is people-focussed and action-oriented in its approach to disaster risk reduction and applies to the risk of small-scale and large-scale disasters caused by man-made or natural hazards as well as related environmental, technological and biological hazards and risks.

The focus of this year's International Day for Disaster Reduction is on the traditional, indigenous and local knowledge which complement modern science and add to an individual's and societies' resilience. For example, knowledge of early warning signals in nature can be vital to ensuring early action is taken to mitigate the impact of both slow and fast onset disasters such as droughts, heatwaves, storms and floods. Combined with scientific knowledge such as reports generated by meteorologists, local knowledge is vital for preparedness and can be passed on from generation to generation. New knowledge and coping strategies are being generated all the time as communities in hazard prone locations work out new ways and means to adapt to disaster and climate risk.

In many aspects, indigenous people epitomise the importance of local knowledge and community-level engagement in disaster risk reduction. 370 million people around the world identify themselves as indigenous, in 90 countries. Indigenous peoples' territories span over 24% of the earth's surface and they manage 80% of the world's biodiversity. More than 4,000 of the world's 7,000 languages are spoken by indigenous people. Many traditions, practices and customs which are important to environmental protection and managing disaster risk are embedded in those languages which are threatened with extinction. In both rural and urban settings, indigenous peoples have unique vulnerabilities and needs in disaster risk reduction and in post-disaster recovery. At the same time, indigenous peoples have unique capacities and knowledge.

Over the last four years, the UNISDR Step Up Campaign has focussed on the challenge of including major communities in disaster risk management, communities that have built up stores of knowledge on vulnerability and exposure to disasters from their own unique perspectives: Children (2011), Women and Girls (2012), Persons Living with Disabilities (2013) and Older Persons (2014). All these groups have a communal experience and wisdom which can strengthen preparedness and response for society as a whole. This year's International Day concludes the series with a searching look at how knowledge held by communities united by the common threat of disasters, deploy the knowledge and insight born of place, tradition and experience.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

The Sendai Framework contains multiple direct references to the need for a strong focus on communities and indigenous peoples:

> *7. "While recognizing their leading, regulatory and coordination role, Governments should engage with relevant stakeholders, including women, children and youth, persons with disabilities, poor people, migrants, indigenous peoples, volunteers, the community of practitioners and older persons in the design and implementation of policies, plans and standards."*

> *24. (i) "Ensure the use of traditional, indigenous and local knowledge and practices, as appropriate, to complement scientific knowledge in disaster risk assessment and the development and implementation of policies, strategies, plans and programmes of specific sectors, with a cross-sectoral approach, which should be tailored to localities and to the context;"*

> *27. (h) Empower local authorities, as appropriate, through regulatory and financial means to work and coordinate with civil society, communities and indigenous peoples and migrants in disaster risk management at the local level;*

> *36. (v) Indigenous peoples, through their experience and traditional knowledge, provide an important contribution to the development and implementation of plans and mechanisms, including for early warning;*

Proposed Activities

1. Champions Campaign – press releases/ web news stories

There will be a press release in July to announce the theme of the day and to seek nominations of local communities and indigenous groups from each region of the world, Americas, Africa, Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, Asia, and the Pacific, for formal recognition by UNISDR as Champions of Disaster Risk Reduction.

At least one Champion will be announced at ceremonies in each of the six regions on International Day, Tuesday, October 13.

There will be a press release on October 13, and profiles of all six Champions will be available on the IDDR website and unisdr.org.

The build up to the day will be supported by the publication of a regular flow of stories on www.unisdr.org and PreventionWeb highlighting how hazard-exposed communities are implementing the priorities for action in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction e.g. how they contribute to: risk knowledge and information, investment in DRR, early warning systems and building back better post-disaster.

2. IDDR Statement on Local Knowledge and the Sendai Framework

In consultation with representatives of local communities and indigenous groups, a statement of appreciation and support will be drafted for use on International Day, recognizing the contribution made at community level towards early warnings, protecting the environment and eco-systems, agriculture and food security, cultural heritage and monitoring climate change, weather patterns and other natural phenomena.

3. Web Stories

Working with other partners, UNISDR will post a series of web stories from August to October. These will feature news of community and indigenous-led efforts to reduce disaster risk, and related themes. UNISDR will work through community and indigenous peoples networks to identify leaders to be interviewed and profile communities that have worked to build their resilience reflecting both their success and the challenges they face. This will be done wherever possible in conjunction with partners in the UN family and civil society organizations.

4. IDDR2015 web page

As in previous years, the IDDR campaign will have its own home page and a global strap line that serves as a rallying slogan. This year's strap line is KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE.

UNISDR will develop branding for the page which will be a resource for the entire DRR community to use for posting details of their planned events for the day including photographs, posters and commentary. This page will also be a resource for the media including logos, press releases, news stories, photographs, public service announcement and other useful media resources. These materials can then be utilized around the world to support events in numerous countries and also in support of the social media campaign for the day.

5. THUNDERCLAP

UNISDR will use the Twitter THUNDERCLAP platform to engage and generate support from as many organisations and individuals as possible for the theme of the day, requesting they share the following message, accompanied by a suitable image, with their followers:

KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE…is the local knowledge you use to manage disaster risk & save lives and assets in your community #IDDR2015

6. Social media campaign

UNISDR will work with partners to identify key aspects of community and indigenous resilience, knowledge and experience around the four priorities for action of the Sendai Framework which include: understanding disaster risk; strengthening disaster risk

governance, investing in disaster risk reduction; disaster preparedness for response and post-disaster recovery. These will be the focus of a social media awareness-raising campaign, including a Thunderclap to be released on Tuesday, October 13, International Day. Social media campaign participants will be encouraged to post photographs, to use KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE! and the **#IDDR2015** #SFDRR hashtags, on platforms including Twitter, Flickr and Facebook.

7. PSA/ videos

UNISDR Communications will produce a PSA for the day which will be available for broadcast by media around the world a month in advance.

Videos will also be produced from existing footage, where possible, of communities/indigenous people taking action to protect the environment and applying local and traditional knowledge in disaster risk management.

8. IDDR Global, National and Indigenous Celebrations

Branding and media materials can be shared to inspire national and local celebrations. Indigenous peoples' networks will be invited to provide key reading material, background information on their work or statistics that can be used to guide organizers in planning their celebrations around the world.

9. Outcome

1. Greater global awareness of the importance of traditional, indigenous and local knowledge and practices to disaster risk reduction;

2. Inclusion of indigenous people/ local communities in the design and implementation of national DRR programmes;

3. Public discourse to promote attitudinal and behavioral change towards inclusion of indigenous peoples and consultation at community level;